Risk Management Considerations
for Special Events at Western

What is a Special Event?
A special event is typically short duration and beyond the scope of the university’s day-to-day activities. It may require extra university effort or resources and involve special handling with respect to the considerations listed below. Examples include: festivals or cultural events; music concerts; conventions, conferences or shows; races; and sporting tournaments or competitions. A special event usually:

- Requires university administrative support and approval prior to planning, preparation and engagement;
- Involves safety or security concerns;
- Includes public relations challenges – positive or negative;
- Attracts a relatively large university community audience, non-university community audience, or mixed audience; or
- Involves open air expression issues.

Planning and Preparation

[ ] Identify Leadership
- Identify event leadership and their contact information. These are the individuals accountable for the planning and execution of the event. This information will be provided to university stakeholders.
- Determine sponsorship - university, students or third-party

[ ] Create an Overview and Outcome
- Create a written overview of the event and desired outcomes for the approval processes.
- Explain how the event supports the department, division and/or university mission, vision and goals.

[ ] Seek Approvals
- Seek your supervisor’s approval, and her/his advice regarding other necessary approvals within the area’s chain of leadership.
- Obtain exterior space use approvals – Contact Viking Union Reservations Office
- Obtain interior space use approvals – Contact Space Administration

[ ] Involve Stakeholders
- Depending on safety or security concerns, size of attendance, space and facility needs, etc. you may need to contact or convene a committee of university stakeholders, which may include:
  - Viking Union Reservation Office
  - Risk Management
  - Facilities Management
  - University Police
  - Parking Services
  - Environmental Health & Safety
  - Associated Students
  - Contract Administration
  - Space Administration
  - Student Life
  - University Communications

- The stakeholder involvement may be handled through the exterior or interior space use approvals, so coordinate with those individuals first.
Manage Logistics

- Estimate number of attendees
- Evaluate exterior and interior space needs
- Determine equipment needs and supplies
- Handle transportation requirements (motor pool, charter buses and/or private vehicles)
- Arrange for adequate parking
- Calculate waste/recycle container needs
- Calculate restroom and/or portable toilet needs
- Determine drinking water resources
- Arrange for post-event clean up
- Consider and plan for persons with disabilities
- Prepare for media relations

Manage Risk

- Do a risk assessment and develop mitigation plans
- Determine contract and liability insurance needs for third-party facility rentals, equipment rentals, performers, vendors or any other contractor. The TULIP program (scroll down on webpage) is available for uninsured third-party use of university facilities.
- Create waivers, releases or hold harmless documents, participant entry forms, if applicable
- Inquire about special event liability insurance coverage, if needed
- Determine whether governmental permits or approvals are required
- Large inflatable games (e.g. bouncy house) and other amusements (e.g. dunk tank) require University pre-approval

Provide Public Safety

- Determine university police and security needs, including crowd control
- Create alcohol use/abuse prevention plans
- Determine emergency response plans, including who has current CPR/first aid/AED certification

Keep Event Safe

- Be familiar with the University’s accident reporting procedures
- Determine safety requirements for equipment and personnel, including need for personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Determine fire safety requirements
- Also, see Public Safety and Logistics above

Manage Finances

- Calculate event fees and anticipated revenue
- Calculate Operational costs and funding sources
- Determine sponsorship goals and activities
- Manage cash handling

Promote the Event

- Determine publicity and advertisement needs to make the special event a success!

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