## Planning Your Event - Recommended Timeline

### Nine to Twelve Months Prior to Your Event

1. **Coordinate Your Committee**
   - Develop a timeline unique to your event
   - Delegate person to act as liaison between your group and WWU Conferences
   - Contact the Office of WWU Conferences to arrange a meeting to discuss your event

2. **Strategize Your Event**
   - Determine objectives of your event
   - Choose an event theme
   - Establish a preliminary budget and submit any deposits to guarantee space
   - Select a date(s) and a tentative schedule for your event

3. **Structure the Program of Your Event**
   - Secure speakers and make their travel arrangements
   - Estimate number of participants
   - Calendar appropriate university administrators
   - Develop a participant list of the target audience
   - Secure facilities, including lodging options on and off campus

4. **Marketing Your Event**
   - Create a marketing plan
   - Obtain publishing/advertising deadlines
   - Produce designs for any printed materials

### Six to Nine Months Prior to Your Event

1. **Evaluate Your Facility Needs**
   - Determine lodging concerns of your participants
   - Review room reservation information
   - Evaluate the general session room
   - Evaluate the break-out rooms and special event venues

2. **Review and Evaluate Program Details**
   - Review program objectives
   - Assess food and beverage needs considering dietary restrictions
   - Determine mailing lists of target audiences
   - Confirm speakers and presenters, as well as biographies and abstracts
   - Arrange speaker transportation and determine travel needs of participants
   - Confirm hospitality arrangements for VIP’s
   - Send requests for AV equipment
   - Sign Letters of Agreement
   - Submit Meals and Light Refreshment Form
   - Submit Meeting Authorization Form
Six to Nine Months Prior to Your Event, continued

- Set up with Fiscal Services Specific Event Account
- Confirm and obtain authorization for Speaker Honoraria
- Create and post Web site
- Determine registration process with Committee and Conferences

3. Organize Materials
- Organize mailing lists and arrange postage mailing and e-mail procedures
- Review registration materials for web
- Begin development of brochures and other marketing materials
- Select and order gifts for attendees and speakers
- Purchase other materials (nametags, folders, pens, etc)

4. Re-Evaluate Your Work
- Check management of registration and RSVP’s, confirmations, tickets, etc.
- Produce contingency plans to satisfy unexpected emergencies
- Schedule “walk thru” of event with committee and conferences
- Continue with pre-conference meetings
- Review and adjust budget

One to Three Months Prior to Your Event

1. Finalize Facility and Program Requirement
- Confirm all catering arrangements (menu, set-ups, and times)
- Evaluate technical needs such as access to multimedia devices, special set-ups or devices
- Identify and schedule recreation activities

2. Finalize Material and Marketing Needs
- Compose copy of the program and send to the printer
- Brochures received from printer
- Address and mail brochures and invitations (6-8 week out)
- Work with Office of University Communications to advertise and promote your event
- Determine confirmation materials for participants
- Receive any handouts from speakers

3. Confirm Strategies
- Identify any materials yet to be ordered/purchased
- Review the budget

Three to Four Weeks Prior to Your Event

1. Review Final details
- Finalize all itineraries
- Schedule briefings with all speakers, coordinators
- Prepare table seating assignments and place cards for appropriate guests
- Send out final press alerts to media
- Make directional event signs if needed
2. Implement Final Details

- Finalize event evaluation form for participants
- Collect emergency phone numbers of committee members, service providers
- Make final signs (general session, break-out sessions, special events)
- Compare all room set-ups against registration numbers
- Finalize the audio visual presentation equipment needs
- Identify and assemble conference materials for participant notebooks
- For events attended by the President, Provost or Vice Presidents, send a briefing summarizing the event details

One Week Prior to Your Event

1. Finalize and Confirm Details

- Update registration and rooming information
- Print out the participant list in alphabetical order
- Confirm with catering guarantee numbers for meals
- Review all signs for clarity
- Obtain all necessary keys
- Review and confirm audio visual equipment and staff needs
- Assemble participant and speaker gifts
- Reproduce multiple copies of all written lists, plans, emergency numbers, schedules and staff assignments for easy reference
- Locate any materials shipped ahead of time to WWU
- Prepare your event box with any supplies such as tape, string, zip ties, staplers, etc
- Verify all final changes
- Run all name badges, print extra blank badges

Day of Your Event

- Arrive EARLY
- Place signs
- Set up registration area. Be sure it is ready at least 45 minutes prior to your event
- Check all facilities (including restrooms)
- Act as liaison between your group and WWU Conference staff by notifying them with questions, concerns and recommendations
- Relax and smile. Never intimate to your guests that things might be less than perfect. Chances are, no one but you will notice

ENJOY YOUR EVENT!

Two to Four Weeks Following Your Event

- Finalize income and expenses
- Compile and process evaluation forms
- Send a thank you (speakers, volunteers)