



UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
LA CROSSE
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

EVENT PLANNING GUIDE

For you. For La Crosse. For a lifetime.

Interested in hosting a UW-La Crosse Event? We can help!

The Alumni Association supports UWL by building and maintaining relationships among students, alumni, friends and the university. Our goal is to create a lifetime connection to the university.

This policy will provide assistance to those interested in hosting an alumni event. The Alumni Association's role is to promote your event and offer guidelines that will help you be successful. The policy applies to events held both on and off campus.

Wondering how to get started? Contact the Alumni Association toll free at 877.UWL.ALUM, or alumni@uwlax.edu.



UW-La Crosse Alumni Association will provide:

Advice: Staff will serve in an advisory capacity to answer questions, find campus contacts and make recommendations.

Planning Guide: Includes a recommended timeline and other ideas to ensure your success.

Volunteers: Help in identifying key volunteers to assist with your event.

Invitations: A template that includes: an opening paragraph, date, time, location, cost, and RSVP date. Plus, we'll send a "Save the Date" notice and a final invitation via email. See templates on page 7.

Registration: An online registration system will be set-up to track attendees and process payments.

Publicity: Details will be added to the Alumni Association website, Facebook page, LinkedIn group and included in the monthly the e-newsletter.

Supplies: A final registration list, nametags, Alumni Association membership materials, small give-aways and door prizes.

Budget & Finance: Financial reconciliation and vendor payments will be processed.

Follow-up: Photos posted on website and Facebook.

The organizing group will:

9 to 12 months before event

- Submit information to UWL Alumni Association for calendar of events
- Request UWL Alumni Association and/or other university presence at event
- Reserve event space
- Determine whom to invite
- Reserve block of hotel rooms
- Begin spreading the word; send “Save the Date” email
- Recruit committee members & set meeting dates
- Update contact information, collect email addresses

4 to 6 months

- Finalize reservations and schedule of events
- Prepare budget
- Finalize content and work with Alumni Association to design invitation
- Determine fee, RSVP date, offer discount for Alumni Association members
- Continue to meet with the committee, encourage them to make informal contacts
- Determine catering needs
- Parking

8 weeks

Successful planning makes for a successful event. If details are not received by the Alumni Association eight weeks prior to the event, services may not be available.

6 weeks

- Email invitations
- Reserve entertainment/music
- Determine if awards/prizes are needed
- Recruit speakers/emcee

4 weeks

- Organize follow-up calls
- Secure audio-visual equipment/photographer/videographer
- Recruit bartender/license (if needed)
- Finalize decorations/banner
- Secure door prizes/give-aways

2 weeks

- Send email reminder

1 week

- Finalize menu and count with caterer
- Order flowers/centerpieces/table tents
- Finalize room set-up needs (podium, stage, head table, etc.)
- Prepare welcome/remarks and seating chart
- Prepare handouts, if needed

2 days

- Assemble nametags
- Registration sheets/markers
- Pre-event email

Day of event

- Thank committee for their hard work
- Take candid and a group photo

1 week following

- Submit list of attendees to Alumni Association
- Send thank-you notes with link to photo gallery
- 6 months wrap-up



Want to add a special touch to your event?

These ideas have been used in the past and would make a great project for a committee member!

Video/slide show:

Ask members to submit old photos to be made into a video or PowerPoint presentation.

Booklet:

Include a bio form in your registration materials. Ask one person to be responsible for compiling all of the completed forms into a booklet to be distributed at the event and mailed to absentee members. The forms can be photocopied or the information can be typed for a more polished look.

Photo display:

Ask members to send/bring photos (old or recent) to construct a photo display. This can be done very inexpensively.

Special nametags:

Nametags are a must. Have fun by including old yearbook pictures or nicknames. The same idea can be used for place cards.

Door prizes:

Create a “trivia” contest and award prizes to the winners. Prizes can also be given for the person who traveled the greatest distance or the person who has been a member of the alumni group the longest time.

Traditions:

Try to incorporate traditions in a creative way. If your group spans many years, it may be interesting to learn how the traditions have evolved.

Keepsakes:

Commemorative gifts, such as t-shirts, mugs, hats, etc.



Campus contacts

The UWL Alumni Association will help you identify campus resources that you need. In addition, we will share our expertise and make recommendations for your event.

For assistance please contact:

UWLa Crosse Alumni Association
Cleary Alumni & Friends Center
615 East Ave. N.
La Crosse, WI 54601

877.UWL.ALUM or 608.785.8489

Fax: 608.785.6868

alumni@uwlax.edu

www.uwlax.edu/alumni