



SYMPOSIUM TIMELINE AND CHECKLIST

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Symposiums covering large, ongoing topics can be planned over time. If you're planning an event to respond to a breaking news story, you can condense this checklist as needed.

Three months out ...

- Survey the news for topics or events that might be creating buzz and conversation in the community.
- Decide on a time and date.
- Secure a location.
- Decide whether you'll serve food, drink.
- If you know of professionals who will want to attend the event, alert them of the time, date, place.
- If you need a consent form that must be approved by the university research committee, prepare it now.

One month out ...

- If you haven't already, come up with a name for your event.
- Create a flier.
- Brainstorm the necessary clubs, students and majors that correlate to your topic and find their contact information for recruiting purposes.
- Begin recruiting small group facilitators – if you'll need additional moderators – by sending out e-mails to graduate students or visiting their classrooms.
- Begin an ongoing "Thank You" list.

Three weeks out ...

- Contact professors and others to see about visiting their class or group.
- Create materials to pass out to students in classroom visits.
- Invite professionals in the area who might be interested in the topic.
- Secure small group facilitators.

Two weeks out ...

- Create a rough outline of discussion points.
- Begin developing handouts, audio-visual materials.
- Begin visiting classrooms and/or club meetings.

- Complete plans for serving food at the event.
- Notify news media
- If you're providing food, contact catering services to review your menu options.
- Do a walk-through of your location; decide room set-up.
- Contact dorm Resident Assistants to invite them and their students to the event.
- Send a reminder e-mail to small group facilitators at the end of the week.

One week out ...

- At the beginning of the week, send an e-mail reminder to those students who said they were coming.
- Finish your outline and talking points for the event's discussion. Run this past several people on your organizing committee.
- Complete any handouts and audio/visual materials.
- Continue visiting classes/clubs to recruit students as needed. Follow up with e-mails to those interested in coming.
- Create a sign-in sheet and consent form if necessary.
- If you are using catering services, alert them of your food choice.
- Train your small group facilitators.

Three days out ...

- If using a catering service, give them your final expected number of participants.
- Send another reminder e-mail to students.
- Gather materials such as name tags, pens/markers, signs to direct students toward the room.
- Continue visiting classes/clubs to recruit, if necessary.
- Arrange for someone to bring a digital camera for documenting the event.

Two days out ...

- Visit the location; check audio/visual/Internet technology.
- Make copies of materials you're using (consent forms, sign-in sheets, handouts).
- If you are recording the session, make sure you have the recording devices and cameras you need.
- The conversation leader should rehearse remarks and revise as needed.

Day before ...

- Send last reminder e-mail at the end of the day. Send out facebook reminders as well.

Day of ...

- If possible, arrive an hour early; set up your audio/visual presentation, food, individual tables and anything else possible – some students *will* arrive early.
- Station greeters at the front of the room and prep them on what to say.
- Blog about the event.

After the event ...

- Send an e-mail survey right after the event, if you didn't use feedback cards already.
- Send a "Thank You" e-mail to all students who signed in at the event. Summarize highlights for them and tell them what's happening next.
- Decide if you want to do a follow-up focus group. Immediately contact those who showed interest through survey or feedback cards.
- Send "Thank You" notes to people who contributed to the event's success.