



Planning a Successful Event

This guide is designed to help you plan your next event at Saint Vincent College with ease. There are many details to consider and deadlines to meet, and this guide will help you to not miss a beat.

This guide is brought to you by the Event and Conference Services Department located in the Fred M. Rogers Center.



You have an event idea? Now what?

Planning an event or a meeting can be as simple as reserving a room with a few cookies and sodas or as complicated as coordinating hundreds of details that need to be executed at precisely the right moment.

In order to help you to “think of everything,” we have provided the following sets of questions as a guide to your first steps in the planning process.

- What should the event be called?
- Does the name reflect the content?
- What is the best time of year to hold it?
- What is the best day?
- What is going on around campus already on that day?
- Who is the audience?
- How many attendees do you anticipate?
- What are the most suitable locations for the atmosphere you are trying to create and the audience? What are the alternatives?
- Do you have a budget and will the budget cover what you are attempting to achieve?
- Has your event manager or the necessary contact been consulted regarding availability of space, room layout, and special requests?
- Do you have a publicity plan?
- Does there need to be a scripted program?
- What other departments need to be informed of this event?

Questions to ask yourself

During the planning of your event there will be many questions that you need to answer. Below are questions to get you thinking, as well as some that Event and Conference Services may be asking you during the planning phase of your event. Get the answers now, and be less stressed later.



- Has your space reservation been confirmed?
- Have you requested that your event be posted on Master Calendar?
- Are you prepared for registration or pre-registration?
- How will your publicity materials be distributed?
- Will you need signage?
- What supplies will you need?
- Have you contacted the speakers to make arrangements for their audio-visual needs?
- What other kinds of teaching materials will be necessary?
- How will the meeting space need to be set up?
- Have you filled out all necessary purchase orders?
- Do additional room decorations need to be purchased?
- What will your food service requirements be?
- Do you need any special parking?
- Will you need to provide transportation and/or housing to a guest lecturer?
- Will you be serving alcohol and are you aware of the limitations?
- Will parking be a problem for guests? If so, what is your alternate plan?
- What other amenities must be considered?
- Do tickets need to be printed in advance?
- Will there be a program booklet?
- Do you need mementos or gifts for participants?
- Who will be your on-site contact person?
- Who will be the first to arrive and greet the guests?
- Who will stay until the last guest leaves?

Prepare for the Day of the Event

On the next page you will find a detailed list of when you should plan to complete certain tasks for your event and when the Event and Conference Services Office will need certain items from you to make sure your event is executed perfectly!

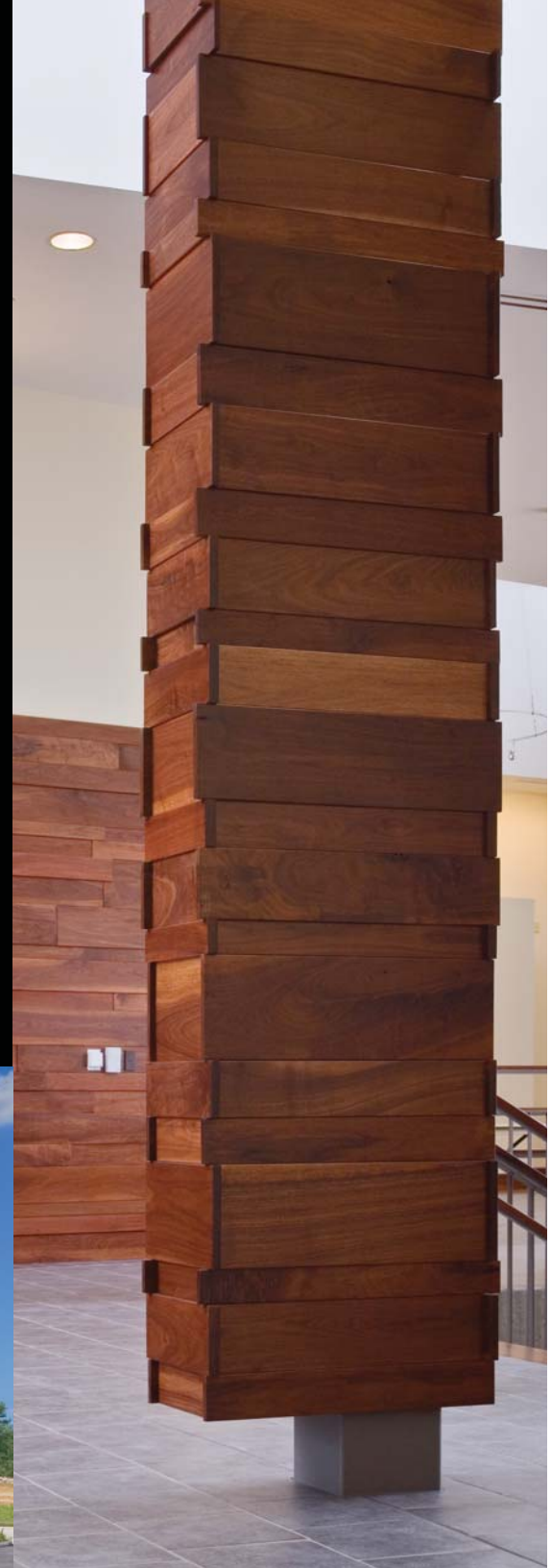
BEFORE THE EVENT

(To check 30-60 minutes prior to the event start)

- ☐ What could be a last-minute, special request?
- ☐ Do you need someone to cover the door?
- ☐ Is the registration table in place?
- ☐ Are provisions made for access for the disabled?
- ☐ Is the room set up properly?
- ☐ Is your signage in place?
- ☐ Is the A/V equipment set up and working properly?

POST-EVENT QUESTIONS

- ☐ Has clean-up been adequately completed?
- ☐ How and when will you remove signage?
- ☐ Is there a place for money to be safely stored?
- ☐ Do you need to send thank-you notes?
- ☐ Have you kept a historical archive for future planners of the event?



A Timetable for Planning Your Event Successfully

Below is a list of regular tasks that are often involved in planning an event. Some may or may not apply to your specific event. Other details may be missing, and blank spaces have been created for you to fill in those items and use this as your planning checklist.

As Soon as You Know You're Having the Event

- ☐ Reserve space
- ☐ List event on Master Calendar once approved

Seven to Eight Months Before Event

- ☐ Set overall objectives of the event
- ☐ Prepare budget
- ☐ Create committees and select chairs and members
- ☐ Decide theme
- ☐ Recruit sponsors
- ☐ Arrange special guests
- ☐ Make sure event is on important guests calendars
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Six Months Before Event

- ☐ Develop promotional plan
- ☐ Work on site arrangements
 - ☐ Refreshments
 - ☐ Decorations
 - ☐ Entertainment
 - ☐ Parking
 - ☐ Insurance (if applicable)
 - ☐ _____
 - ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Five Months Before Event

- ☐ Start developing printed materials
- ☐ Meet with ?? to get printer quotes
- ☐ Develop Guest and Media lists
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Four Months Before Event

- ☐ Hold kick-off events
- ☐ Finalize invitation list
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Three Months Before Event

- ☐ Confirm special guests
- ☐ Make travel and hotel arrangements for special guests
- ☐ Set up registration system to track responses
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Two Months Before Event

- ☐ Mail invitations and/or invite public
- ☐ Finalize plan for refreshments, parking, security, set up, etc.
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

One Month Before Event

- ☐ Contact media, businesses, community leaders, etc with additional promotional information
- ☐ Double check all arrangements
- ☐ Go over assignments with committees
- ☐ Assign a person to troubleshoot during event
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

One to Two Weeks Before Event

- ☐ Hold a management meeting with everyone involved to review preparations
- ☐ Make up seating plan
- ☐ Stage dress rehearsal *(if necessary)*

14 days: _____ (enter date)

- ☐ Confirm menu
- ☐ This date should be your due date for all RSVPs

10 days: _____ (enter date)

- ☐ Provide Event and Conference Services with a guarantee number for catering and set up

3 days: _____ (enter date)

- ☐ Confirm final numbers
- ☐ Approve room diagrams