



Reunion Planning Guide



**ILLINOIS STATE
UNIVERSITY.**
Alumni Association

Illinois State University Reunion Planning Guide

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Dear Illinois State Alumni,

So, it's time for your reunion?! The Illinois State University Alumni Relations staff has developed this reunion planning guide to help you in the process of coordinating your reunion. We ask that you read through this planning guide as it was prepared especially for you to become more aware of the many services that your Alumni Relations office provides. Most importantly, it provides you with the essential tools to create a fun and successful event!

Reunions provide an excellent opportunity to come together with old classmates and friends, expand your professional network and get updated news on how the University is advancing. When you come back to Illinois State you can revisit your favorite places and learn how the University and local community are expanding. Reunion planning is a gratifying experience that involves plenty of work--preparing a guest list, choosing a venue, recruiting volunteers, and promoting your event, etc. One key factor in the success of your reunion is dependable upon the commitment of you reunion planning committee. A well-organized and dedicated team will definitely speak volumes to the success of your event.

Your class or group will remember the University in its own distinctive way. Your event(s) should be fun and enjoyable, and even educational for all reunion participants. You may plan for many exciting opportunities to engage all age groups, interests, and abilities. The University and Bloomington-Normal community offer various entertaining and family-oriented venues to hold your reunion events and activities.

We encourage you to use this resourceful reunion guide developed to help you coordinate a fun and successful event. We'll work with you to make your event(s) a wonderful experience for all that attend your reunion. Remember, in your event planning to keep your Illinois State traditions alive and to keep *Spreading the Red*!

With Redbird Pride,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephanie A. Epp". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Stephanie Epp
Executive Director, Alumni Relations

What are your reunion committee responsibilities?

A dedicated, well organized committee is an essential part of a reunion, and including a good mix of committed and skillful former classmates or group members in the planning process can build enthusiasm and a successful event. Start with your former classmates or group members that would be dedicated to serving in a leadership position on your committee. Plan to have a list of 8-10 individuals that would make a great planning team and make sure you have their updated contact information to notify them of your interest to hold a reunion. If you need assistance in locating your potential reunion committee members, please contact the Alumni Relations Office toll free at (800) 366-4478 to speak with reunion coordinator, Shanay Huerta.

Your committee should include a chair and/or co-chairs and several committee members with designated responsibilities. The key to a successful reunion is keeping your committee members organized and informed of all reunion plans. Schedule your meeting times in consideration of your committee's daily routines and if necessary, hold a conference call or conduct email updates to keep all members in the know of the progress of the reunion planning. To better utilize your committee members, identify their strengths and assign their committee roles appropriately. You may want to provide them with an organized task list that states each members responsibility and a deadline to keep your reunion plans progressing.

What are the responsibilities of the reunion committee chair?

- Assembling the committee; recruiting other classmates/group members to help in the planning of your reunion.
- Preparing and directing all plans and acting as link between the committee and the Alumni Relations office.
- Coordinating all sub- or working committees.
- Working with the Alumni Relations office reunion coordinator to update alumni contact information and communication to reunion group members.

What are the responsibilities of the reunion committee members?

- Working closely with the Alumni Relations office in coordinating the reunion event(s).
- Participating on the sub or working committees to promote attendance.
- Planning and staffing the event(s) or other reunion activities.
- Coordinating registration at any off-campus events.

How can the Alumni Relations Office help with reunion planning?

The Illinois State University Alumni Relations Office is your connection to the campus community. As alumni, your role is vital to the succession of the University and keeping Illinois State traditions and pride alive. Your Alumni Relations Office can provide you assistance in your reunion planning process from beginning to end. The following resources from the Alumni Relations reunion coordinators can be helpful to you during your reunion planning:

- Communicate with classmates affinity group members on your behalf to inform of reunion events/activities.
- Assist in mailing reunion notices to your class or affinity group members.
- Manage on campus venue bookings, mailings, photography, audio-visual needs, and catering.
- Handle communication with University VIPs.
- Promote your reunion in the Illinois state University alumni magazine (full event details must be shared by the publication date deadline) and on the Alumni Association web site.
- Review all contracts and agreements with all vendors. Alumni Relations must review each document to assure that all arrangements are in compliance with Illinois State University policies and procedures. Alumni Relations must sign off on all legal documents regarding reunion activities.
- Collect money and cover full accounting of event's finances.

Please note: The Alumni Relations office will collect all money for both your on and off-campus events for ease of registration purposes. Funds for reunion purchases can be handled any of the following options:

1. Direct billing to Alumni Relations.
2. Reunion committee members may pay for reunion expenses prior to the reunion and then provide proof of purchase(s) (i.e. original receipts and invoices only) for reimbursement.
3. Vendors/venues may provide invoices to Alumni Relations following the reunion to complete payment.

- Provide Alumni Association or reunion banners, giveaways for your event(s)
- Create name tags, place cards, programs and any other special notices.
- Supply campus maps and other important campus brochures, fact sheets.
- Provide an Alumni Relations staff member to attend main event and provide an Alumni Association welcome.

For all inquires on reunions, please contact:

Shanay Huerta '03, M.S. '05, Assistant Director
Campus Box 3100
Normal, IL 61790- 3100

Phone: (309) 438-2586
Fax: (309) 438-8057
E-mail: smhuert@ilstu.edu

To contact the Alumni Relations office toll free, contact (800) 366-4478 or visit our Web site at www.IllinoisState.edu/alumni

Frequently asked questions about reunion planning

How do I get started planning a reunion?

Please advise the reunion coordinator that you are interested in planning a reunion in order for the Alumni Relations staff to begin assisting you throughout the planning process.

How do I obtain a list of class or group members?

The Illinois State University Alumni Relations office will not disclose alumni contact information to anyone unless for official University business (i.e. reunions, alumni gatherings and tailgates, etc.). The lists provided to you will be for the exclusive use of making contact with alumni to encourage them to participate in reunion activities, which is considered official University business. Once you have signed this form, a list of your reunion group members and their contact information will be given to you for use within your committee.

How should I begin forming my reunion committee?

Recruit classmates/group members who are willing and able to dedicate their time and commitment to coordinate your reunion.

Where should we hold our reunion?

Select a date that is likely to be convenient for the largest number of people and that doesn't conflict with other major events being held on campus or in town. Visit the University's Calendar (<http://www.calendar.ilstu.edu/>) for a list of major University events, as you may want to consider holding your event during another major Homecoming event to take advantage of programming and/or entertainment going on at the time.

How do we set a budget?

Take into consideration whether your reunion activities will include classmates/group members in addition to family members and friends. Remember that your overall budget will need to account for all individuals in attendance at your reunion activities/events.

Once you have made all the decisions regarding the program, menu, special touches, etc., you can develop the budget and decide on a event fee(s) for your reunion. Determine the costs for everything you would like to accomplish and set the event fee to ensure that all costs are covered. Reunions are designed to work on a break-even basis. The Alumni Relations office reunion coordinator can offer assistance on developing the budget and can advise you on any items you may have accidentally overlooked. Please remember, if you wish to offer special guests complimentary tickets to your event, this must be included in your reunion budget.

What type of event should we have and where should we have it?

The type of activities/event(s) you plan will depend on the length of the reunion, your budget, facilities available (on and off-campus), and how much effort is dedicated to planning. Get creative, have fun! *Check out our supplemental information on reunion events ideas at the end of the reunion guide.*

When deciding on a venue to hold your reunion event(s), please keep in mind the following concerns that your reunion attendees may have: location, family-oriented atmosphere, handicap accessibility, etc. *Check out our supplemental information on for on and off-campus venue ideas at the end of the reunion guide.*

What catering options are available?

Please speak with the Alumni Relations office reunion coordinator for details about catering options on campus. Multiple catering options are available for any events from a reception to a formal dinner. Cash bar service is also available. Please note that if your event will be held in the Bone Student Center, it is University policy that you use Campus Catering. Any other University or community venue will be held at the responsibility of your committee to make this contact. To view the campus catering menu, please visit http://www.dining.ilstu.edu/downloads/Catering_Brochure.pdf

How do we plan the activities for the reunion? What other concerns should be considered?

Planning for the main reunion event, may involve organizing an agenda for the evening. This may include a welcome statement, key note address, a special recognition/award segment. Many reunion groups arrange for a keynote speaker (i.e. faculty member, past class/group president, etc.) to speak during the main event. If there is a fee for the keynote speaker, please remember to include this expense in your budget. The Alumni Relations office reunion coordinator is available to assist in finding speakers for your event.

You may wish to include some form of entertainment for your reunion (a band, DJ, or speaker, etc.). If you would like to use any audio/visual equipment (i.e. microphones, speakers, podium, projector, etc.) please make these requests known to the Alumni Relations office reunion coordinator. A nominal fee to use this equipment should be included in your reunion budget.

How do we promote the reunion through Alumni Relations?

Your reunion committee may send your event(s) details to the Alumni Relations reunion coordinator. The Alumni Relations reunion coordinator will work with our Web site manager to have your event(s) details posted online on the Alumni Association reunion page and online registration page, and the University Calendar.

Will the Alumni Relations office provide alumni merchandise or giveaways?

The Alumni Relations office will be able to provide your class or group with special commemorative alumni merchandise at your reunion. You may also wish to decorate your venue and/or bring memorabilia to display. Please discuss these and other considerations well in advance with the Alumni Relations reunion coordinator.

Should we have a photographer or videographer?

The Alumni Relations office reunion coordinator can assist in arranging for an University photographer to take group photos and other candid photos at your event. Following the event, the Alumni Relations office can assist you in distributing photos to your reunion group members. A nominal fee may be charged for this service (developing and mailing costs).

How do I plan for hotel blocks?

If your reunion committee is arranging a group rate at a local hotel, be sure to arrange well in advance. You may contact the Alumni Relations reunion coordinator to inquire about assistance with arranging a special hotel rate for your group.

How do we handle invitations and registration information?

This letter will outline your planned reunion activities and will inform your reunion class/ group members about your upcoming event. Be sure to share your enthusiasm with them. Personalize the letter! The Alumni Relations reunion coordinator can assist you in locating “lost” class or group members and to gather information to update their alumni records.

Your letter, along with a registration form and any other pertinent reunion information, will be mailed through the University’s Mail Services to all class/group members for whom we have current addresses. If “lost” class or group members are located after the reunion mailing is sent out, please contact the Alumni Relations reunion coordinator to insure your reunion information can be sent to this individual(s).

Reunion planning checklist

Twelve months before the reunion

- Make key contacts
 - Contact the Alumni Relations Office to assist your with your reunion planning:

Shanay Huerta, '03, M.S. '05
Assistant Director
Group Reunions Coordinator
Campus Box 3100
Normal, IL 61790-3100

Phone: (309) 438-2586
Fax: (309) 438-8057
E-mail: smhuert@ilstu.edu
- Develop your reunion committee and arrange your first meeting.
 - Coordinate the search for former classmates/group members (if you need assistance, please contact the Alumni Relations reunion coordinator).
- Sign alumni confidentiality form and obtain list of reunion class or group members.
- Develop your reunion budget.
 - Estimate reunion attendance.
 - Estimate expenses (i.e. venue, catering, entertainment, etc.).
 - Estimate reunion event(s) prices.

Nine months before the reunion

- Make files for organizing all committee paperwork.
 - Plan the reunion’s main event.
 - Work with Alumni Relations reunion coordinator to locate possible venues (on and off-campus).
 - Once the committee has decided, book the venue and arrange meeting with Alumni Relations reunion coordinator to discuss proper University policies/procedures on signing contracts/agreements.
 - Prepare the first announcement of your reunion. Keep in mind that the alumni reunion coordinator will send all emails regarding your reunion to your class or

affinity group members. If you need assistance, work with Alumni Relations reunion coordinator to arrange mass email or letter to reunion class or group.

- ❑ Develop your main event menu. Contact the Alumni Relations reunion coordinator to arrange a meeting with campus catering staff for on-campus events.
- ❑ Identify and contact your keynote speaker (optional).
- ❑ Select the entertainment (please provide the Alumni Relations reunion coordinator a copy of this contract/agreement).
- ❑ Re-visit reunion budget to make sure all expenses are documented and accounted for.

Six months before the reunion

- ❑ Make updates to alumni class or group list.
- ❑ Contact special guests, University administrators, key community figures, etc.
- ❑ Begin preparing memory album (optional, for assistance, contact the Alumni Relations reunion coordinator).
- ❑ Work with the Alumni Relations to coordinate schedule with University photographer(s).
- ❑ Work with Alumni Relations to prepare announcement for Alumni magazine, *Illinois State*, alumni e-newsletter, Alumni Association reunion webpage, and University Calendar.
- ❑ Re-visit reunion budget to make sure all expenses are documented and accounted for.

Three months before the reunion

- ❑ Make updates to alumni class or group list.
- ❑ Work with Alumni Relations to prepare reunion online registration web page.
- ❑ Prepare announcement for local news papers and radio stations (optional).
- ❑ Plan décor, special touches for reunion (table centerpieces, flowers, giveaways, etc.).
- ❑ Arrange for all reunion volunteer responsibilities and set meeting with volunteers.
- ❑ Make sure all reunion committee members are registered to attend the reunion.

One month before the reunion

- ❑ Send reunion reminder notices to all reunion class or group members.
- ❑ Create a printed program.
- ❑ Prepare the “program” for the main event (include all spoken program notes).
- ❑ Prepare all reunion signage, collages, and special displays.
- ❑ Prepare a form to indicate the photo lineup for each photograph taken (for University photographer).
- ❑ Edit alumni information for memory album (optional).

- ❑ Develop a reunion day task list (provide each committee member and volunteer a list and inform everyone to bring with them the day your reunion begins).

Two-three weeks before the reunion

- ❑ Work with Alumni Relations to verify attendance, obtain a list of paid reunion guests.
- ❑ Verify attendance of special guests and make arrangements for special guests.
- ❑ Confirm attendance of entertainer(s), photographer, videographer.
- ❑ Proof and finalize memory album to prepare for printing (optional).
- ❑ Work with Alumni Relations to mail all reunion confirmation letters, tickets, special notices.

One week before the reunion

- ❑ Work with Alumni Relations reunion coordinator to obtain final list of paid reunion guests.
- ❑ Work with Alumni Relations reunion coordinator to prepare all reunion guest registration packets.
- ❑ Provide catering staff (on and off campus) final counts.
- ❑ Verify with banquet manager that all requested items will be present at event (i.e. registration table, easels, microphone(s), podium, etc.). If your event is on campus, work with the Alumni Relations reunion coordinator to make these contacts for you.

Reunion day

- ❑ Bring all Reunion day task list.
- ❑ Have all volunteers accounted for and in designated roles/areas.
- ❑ Distribute memory albums to those who purchased and in attendance.
- ❑ Retrieve all supplies at the end of the reunion.

After the Reunion

- ❑ Send all photo cards with alumni names and information to the Alumni Relations reunion coordinator to be forwarded to the University's photographer(s).
- ❑ Send thank you notes to all reunion class or group members who attended.
- ❑ Send out memory albums to those who didn't attend the reunion.
- ❑ Account for all final reunion expenses. Send in final budget form and account for any *original* receipts for any reimbursements from the Alumni Relations office.

Reunion budget

Total reunion class or reunion group members _____
 Estimated turnout _____

Estimated Reunion Expenses

<u>Item</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Total #</u>	<u>Estimated cost</u>
Dinner (including tax and tip)	\$ _____	_____	\$ _____
Entertainment	\$ _____	_____	\$ _____
Postage	\$ _____	_____	\$ _____
Printing	\$ _____	_____	\$ _____
Memory Album (optional)	\$ _____	_____	\$ _____
Decorations	\$ _____	_____	\$ _____
Misc. _____	\$ _____	_____	\$ _____
Misc. _____	\$ _____	_____	\$ _____
Misc. _____	\$ _____	_____	\$ _____
Total expenses:			\$ _____

Estimated Reunion Revenue

<u>Item</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Total #</u>	<u>Estimated cost</u>
Ticket sales	\$ _____	_____	\$ _____
Memory album (optional)	\$ _____	_____	\$ _____
Misc. _____	\$ _____	_____	\$ _____
Misc. _____	\$ _____	_____	\$ _____
Total revenues:			\$ _____
Balance:			\$ _____

As committee chair of the _____, I hereby agree to the terms and policies of the reunion planning guide. All reunion event details and budget have been discussed and agreed upon by the Illinois State University Alumni Relations staff.

It is the understanding of the reunion committee that any reunion event details and/or non-budgeted expenses not shared with the Alumni Relations staff will be of subject to the full responsibility of the reunion committee.

Reunion committee chair

Alumni Relations reunion coordinator

Reunion Volunteer Agreement Form

Class Reunion Committee Chairperson & Committee Member Responsibilities:

As a chairperson for a class reunion, please review the following guidelines established by the Alumni Association for reunion planners. Sign and date the document and return to:

Alumni Relations
Illinois State University
Campus Box 3100
Normal, IL 61790-3100
ATTN: Reunion Coordinator

Illinois State University Alumni Association Reunion Committee Guidelines

- ✓ Each reunion event must be self supporting and include all expenses.
- ✓ If your reunion venue is on campus, the reunion committee is responsible for all fees associated with that venue including but not limited to A/V, room set-up, tables, chairs, microphones. Catering is a separate expense.
- ✓ If your reunion is on campus, the reunion committee is responsible for the catering expense.
- ✓ Each reunion committee should designate one person who is responsible for collecting tickets and making sure everyone has paid.
- ✓ Persons hosting receptions in their home may choose to make their own arrangements and determine what, if any, the per person cost will be.
- ✓ The Alumni Relations Office can provide an assortment of giveaways for attendees. Someone from the reunion committee should work with Alumni to determine the exact numbers.
- ✓ If the reunion venue is on campus, the University guidelines regarding appropriate use, alcohol and behavior must be followed.
- ✓ Any damage to the facility will be the responsibility of the reunion committee.

Please sign and date below indicating you agree to these reunion committee guidelines.

I, _____, Reunion Committee Chairperson for the
_____, have read and agree to all of the Reunion Committee
Guidelines as described in this document. This is the _____
Day of _____, in year _____.

Supplemental reunion information

Possible reunion event ideas:

- Off-campus excursions
- Receptions
- Brunches, lunches, or dinners
- Cocktail/Social hour
- Dances/talent show
- Boat cruise
- Picnic
- Sporting events
- City tour, concerts, key note speakers, and MORE!!

For campus venue options, ask your Alumni Relations reunion coordinator about:

- Bone Student Center: visit http://www.bscilstu.edu/room_reservation/
 - Bowling & Billiards Center Activity Room
 - Braden Auditorium
 - Brown Ballroom
 - Circus Room
 - Founder's Suite
 - Old Main Room
 - Prairie Room
- College of Business, visit <http://www.cobilstu.edu/facilities/>
- Ewing Cultural Center, visit <http://www.ewingmanorilstu.edu/>
- Horton Field house, University Golf Course or other Athletic facilities, visit <http://goredbirds.cstv.com/facilities/ilsu-facilities.html>
- University Galleries, visit <http://www.cfailstu.edu/galleries/>

For off-campus venues, area hotel options check out the following:

- Bloomington-Normal Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, visit <http://www.bloomingtonnormalcvb.org/>

Contact Information

Stephanie Epp, Executive Director
Alumni Relations
Campus Box 3100
Normal, IL 61790-3100

Telephone: (309) 438-2586 or toll free 800) 366-4478
Fax: (309) 438-8057
Email: saepp@ilstu.edu

Shanay Huerta, '03, M.S. '05, Assistant Director
Alumni Relations
Campus Box 3100
Normal, IL 61790-3100

Telephone: (309) 438-2586 or toll free (800) 366-4478
Fax: (309) 438-8057
Email: smhuert@ilstu.edu

Juliana Duncan, Staff Clerk
Alumni Relations
Campus Box 3100
Normal, IL 61790-3100

Telephone: (309) 438-2586 or toll free (800) 366-4478
Fax: (309) 438-8057
Email: naneisl@ilstu.edu

Notes