

Student Organization Event Planning Resource

**For West Chester University
Recognized Student Organizations**

**Compiled by:
Office of Student Leadership and Involvement**

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Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	3
UNDERSTANDING UNIVERSITY POLICY	4
ACCOUNTABILITY PROCESS	4
EVENT TYPES	4
Special Event Definition	4
Special Event Intake Form	5
PUBLIC SAFTY AND SECURITY	5
LATE NIGHT EVENTS (DANCES/PARTIES).....	6
Scheduling a Dance/Party	7
USING 25LIVE	7
EVENT SET-UPS AND WORK ORDERS	8
A/V Needs and Decorations	9
FINANCIAL POLICIES AND CONTRACTS	10
Financial Policies	10
Contracts	10
Collecting Money	10
Tickets	11
FOOD	11
New Street Catering Waiver Information	11
BBQ's	12
MARKETING AND ADVERTISING	13
SEVER WEATHER	13
ALCOHOL	13
EVENT PLANNING RESOURCES	13

INTRODUCTION

This guide is offered to provide information to recognized student organizations at West Chester University about policies, procedures, and resources. This complement to The Ram's Eye View should help you plan and implement programming for your organization. This guide is designed to assist in your programming needs. If you have additional questions and we encourage you to use your advisor, and additional resources available to you through the offices of Fraternity and Sorority Life, Student Leadership & Involvement, Sykes Student Union, Student Activities, and Campus Recreation at West Chester University.

All student groups must begin their reservation process for any campus space through 25Live.

Submitting a reservation request does not guarantee that request has been confirmed.

Before you submit a request on 25Live, you acknowledge you have read this document in its entirety, and you understand the policies and steps outlined in the document. If you have questions about the document, contact the Office of Student Leadership and Involvement at 610-436-2117 or involvement@wcupa.edu.

UNDERSTANDING UNIVERSITY POLICY

West Chester University has many policies and procedures that cover a wide variety of areas. These policies and procedures are designed to ensure safety, quality of campus life, and the effective operation of the University and its community. Read the [Ram's Eye View](#) and check out the University website and the reservation request for the [University Policies](#).

All reserved buildings/facilities have individual policies/procedures that must be followed. For a complete listing of policies/procedures for a building see the link to the facility administrators on campus, [please click here](#).

ACCOUNTIBILITY PROCESS

If a student organization fails to abide by any of the policies outlined in this document, or any policies of the space venues on campus, the group will be held accountable through the Office of Student Leadership & Involvement. Accountability procedures are outlined in the [Student Organization Policy and Procedures Manual \(SOPPS\) Article V](#).

Accountability sanctions can be the following:

1. Warning
2. Suspension
3. Recommendation of derecognition to the Student Government Association

EVENT TYPES

Event Classifications

Your event typically fits into one of two categories: A Standard Meeting or a Special Event.

STANDARD MEETINGS – Standard meetings are reservations requiring no special setups, food, special hours, no outside speakers or performers, and using basic A/V equipment without training. Reservations for standard meetings may be made up to 24 hours before the program if space is available. Reservations for standard meetings are made on 25Live and can be booked on an individual date or weekly basis. All the below “Event Logistics” policies apply.

SPECIAL EVENT- Special Events are defined as any event held on campus, that includes one or more of the following:

1. Event needs a work order for custodial, moving services, or electrician.
2. Event requires Public safety presence – which is necessary when the following are a part of the event: non WCU students will be present, Admission fee collected in cash, size of crowd is 100-500 attendees, events that end after midnight, events advertised off campus, nature of entertainment (e.g., DJ, band, performer)
3. Event requires a contract with SSI
4. Those that utilize the [SRC Event Rental Request Form](#)

Note - Your faculty/staff advisor needs to be present for the special event.

These are events other than standard meetings possibly requiring a special setup, food, public safety, electrical needs, special hours, and which may necessitate the use of Public Safety coverage to ensure a safe and secure environment for all WCU students and their guests.

All special event requests are made on 25Live **at least three (3) weeks** in advance of the program date.

In accordance with the Student Organization Special Event Advising Policy, all student organizations must complete a [Special Event Intake Form](#) at least three weeks prior to the event and set a meeting with a Leadership Consultant Event Coach.

Most special event types have specific policies that pertain to them. Before planning a special event, please read and consider the requirements for your special event type.

Notes about specific types of Special Events:

- 5Ks or races that start, end, or use campus locations must submit a request for that space on 25Live. 5Ks or races may occur on North or South Campus.
- 5K Runs/Walks: Typically, these are held on pre-approved courses on north campus or south campus. A reservation must be submitted through 25Live. Public Safety is typically present at these events to monitor traffic.
- Concerts are considered any event with live music. When hosting a concert/battle of the bands/live music show, OR having music or amplified sound component to another event, please consider the specific policy in the location you are hosting the event.
- Movies must follow [the policy from Sykes Student Union here](#) that also applies to every space on campus.

PUBLIC SAFETY/SECURITY

You must notify and meet with Public Safety where one or more of the following criteria is met:

- There is a potential for non-WCU students to be present,
- Cash is exchanged,
- The size of the expected crowd is between 100-500 (special events cannot exceed headcount of 500),
- Event ends after midnight,
- The program was advertised off-campus,
- Nature of the entertainment, i.e. DJ, band, live performer, etc.
- and/or where other safety concerns are dictated.

If one or more of the above criteria is met, your organization will be required to have an in-person meeting with Public Safety to discuss your specific event details and determine if public safety is required to be present at your event. Your event will remain “tentative” and will not be confirmed until that meeting occurs. This meeting must take place a minimum of two weeks before your event.

You can email Public Safety Officer Jim Audette (jaudette@wcupa.edu) to set up the meeting with Public Safety. Please include in the email your organization, event description and date, and reasons above indicating a need for Public Safety. Please also include some available times you can meet with them.

Per contract, **Public Safety needs a minimum of two weeks' notice to assign officers** to events. If Public Safety is needed at your event and you have not met the two-week requirement for your request, or special event meeting mentioned above, your event will be denied or canceled, even if the space is available.

If Public Safety is required due to the nature of your event, your **organization will be responsible for the costs**. Public Safety bills are to be paid at the end of the semester. Failure to pay a Public Safety bill within these 30 days of billing will result in loss of all “dance, party, event” reservations until that bill is paid in full.

LATE NIGHT EVENTS (DANCES/PARTIES)

PARTY POLICIES

All parties must end by 1:00 a.m. with full lights on/music off and everyone out by 1:30 am. If your event will be going until 1:00 a.m., your party may start as early as 9:30 pm.

1. Entrance to a dance, party, concert, or event is permitted with the following:
 - Valid WCU ID (may enter at any time)
 - Valid ID from another college or university (may enter the party only until midnight)
 - Valid State issued ID

Only WCU students with ID will be permitted inside after midnight.

2. The number of security personnel assigned to programs is determined by the Department of Public Safety and based on but NOT limited to criteria listed on the previous page (See Public Safety/Security)
 - a. Sponsoring organizations must have at least four students responsible for host duties. For every 100 students one additional host is required.
 - b. It is the responsibility of the students sponsoring the event to remain out front of the event and are required to be responsible for checking ID's and administering wristbands for all guests entering the event. An officer will stand by to assist the student if they run into any disruptive students/visitors.
 - c. It is the organization's responsibility to assist Public Safety when called upon, in particular, to usher guests out at the conclusion of the event.
3. Event Access
 - a. Metal detectors and ID scanning will be used when deemed appropriate by Public Safety.
 - b. Officers are to perform cursory search of all large bags bulging jackets or coats.
 - c. No one is allowed to enter the event with open containers or glass bottle, or anything that can be used as a weapon.
 - d. ***Anyone found with alcohol or drugs will be arrested.***

4. One week prior to the event, student hosts need to coordinate a walk through with Public Safety and SRC Staff.
5. Proper lighting **MUST** be maintained in all facilities during all dances/parties. Programs held in Ehinger Gymnasium **MUST** keep one set of balcony lights on and one floor light circuit during the program. In Sykes Student Union, the Student Director and Public Safety will coordinate safety needs with the group's requests in setting a desired level of lighting. Safety **MUST** always be the first concern.
6. **All advertising must be approved by the Public Safety before posting.** Advertising is NOT PERMITTED on the area radio station, except WCUR and must meet the guidelines detailed in the Ram's Eye View and **state the following on the flyer:**
 - Maximum guests permitted, Ehinger **400** and Sykes 500
 - WCU ID, picture ID from another college or government-issued ID required
 - All IDs will be scanned
 - Metal detectors in use
 - No one under 17 admitted
7. It is the organization's responsibility to issue wristbands for each guest and themselves (provided by the Office of Student Leadership and Involvement). All wristbands need to be accounted for. The maximum number of individuals permitted is 400 and Sykes 500. Once they have all been issued, there will be NO further admission.
8. The practice of paying an artist (DJ, band, etc) with cash or personal checks "under the table" is not permitted. All performers receiving compensation for services must have a contract.
 - a. DJ will be placed in the balcony and area blocked off for access.

SCHEDULING A PARTY

1. Dances and parties ending after midnight may only take place on Thursday, Friday, or Saturday.
2. During Fall Opening Weeks of Welcome programs and Homecoming Weekend and Ramboree (Thursday – Saturday), no individual student organization may sponsor or co-sponsor a "dance, party, event" without direct permission from the Office of New Student Programs, the Homecoming Committee, and/or Student Activities.

USING 25LIVE

Remember, you do not have a program until you have a confirmed space from 25Live. Never submit a contract or move forward with planning for an entertainer, entertainment group, a speaker, etc, until you have a confirmed space for your program.

You can check the campus calendar at <https://25live.collegenet.com/pro/wcupa>. When planning an event, it is important to have alternate dates in mind. Do not forget to take into account the

set-up and take-down time you need when looking at space availability. Time is an inclusive term signifying initial entry and final departure.

All reservation requests must be made online at <https://25live.collegenet.com/pro/wcupa>. You must sign in to request space for your event with your WCUPA email and password.

Confirmation: *Event Confirmations are made via the WCU email. The space requested is not officially confirmed until the requester has received a confirmation form from the appropriate scheduling office. It is ultimately the group's responsibility to be certain their room has been confirmed.*

For assistance with 25Live, you can [consult the user guide found here](#).

Student Recreation Center Space:

- all requests to use a Campus Recreation Center Space must complete their request form 2 weeks prior - [SRC Event Rental Request Form](#)

EVENT SET-UPS AND WORK ORDERS

- Set up needs for all meeting spaces must be received **no later than 3 weeks** before the scheduled event date.
- You received confirmation from the facility administrator through 25Live and your event location, date and time are confirmed.
- If your event is taking place in Sykes, the staff will submit a work order on your behalf after meeting with them about your event and completing their event checklist form, which is attached to your tentative space reservation.

For non-Sykes spaces, **work orders can be submitted through [iServiceDesk](#)**. You must be on the WCU network (on-campus) to submit a work order. After clicking the above link, you will select "Student" and sign-in with your WCUPA email and password.

On the left, you will select "Maintenance Request." You will then select where the event is taking place and then you will fill out the needed details for the event. Be sure to include time of event, time that maintenance request is needed by, title of event, and any other relevant details in the open-ended section of the form. If you do not know the "type of work," Facilities will classify it for you. After submitting, you should receive an email that it was received and an email that it was approved.

Depending on the kind of event you are planning and the place in which you plan to hold your event, certain special arrangements must be made with various support services groups. If you believe any of these services listed below are needed for your event, it is your responsibility to place the work order using the process above. If you need assistance, a Leadership Consultant can help you with this process.

The following support services require a minimum of three weeks' notice* to accommodate.

There will be no exceptions made to the three-week requirement.

- **Electrician** - If your indoor or outdoor event in any confirmed campus space requires audio/visual or sound equipment, a campus electrician may be brought in to draw more power from that facility. If you are unsure about the power requirements of your event, check with the contact in the area you are hosting the event.
- **Grounds** - If your event is outside on one of the fields or picnic areas, the Grounds Crew may be required to prepare the area before or to restore it afterward. They also reserve the right to deny any event that could compromise the outdoor areas' ascetics. Grounds are the only staff approved to stake tents and they also can provide outdoor trashcans and recycling cans.
- **Custodial Services** - Depending on the nature of your event, an extra custodial crew may need to be brought in so that the facility is in clean, working order for any program or class that may be using the facility after you. Custodial Services can make sure that there are extra trash cans inside of buildings.
- **Staging, Chairs, Tables, etc.** - The facility that you are reserving may not have any tables or chairs at all or may not have as many as you need for your event. If you are not utilizing an auditorium that already has a stage, but are using a gymnasium, pieces of staging can be brought in. This is necessary for non-Sykes spaces.
- **Tarp** - If you are planning an event in Hollinger Gym that is not an athletic event, the gymnasium floor must be tarped by the campus Maintenance Department.

A/V Needs:

If your organization is planning an event that requires audio/visual or any kind of technical equipment, you should be aware of what departments on campus can take care of your needs. Check with the contact of your reserved event space to ensure the equipment you need is available and your organization is permitted to use it.

- Student Groups are NOT permitted to use any audio/visual equipment in academic classrooms unless their trained advisor is present during the event.
- For any A/V needs in classroom space, equipment needs to be reserved through Space Management.

Decorations

- Always let the facility administrator know of your plans for decorations, especially latex and latex balloons as severe allergy may occur. Other considerations include glitter, confetti, and taping or hanging items on other surfaces.
- All groups using the facilities are responsible for the proper use of the reserved space, furnishings, and equipment. Any damage or missing items will be billed to the sponsoring organization.
- All groups are required to return the space to its original condition before departing their reserved room. The space should be free of all trash and event materials. Failure to clean up after any event will result in additional charges to the group.

FINANCIAL POLICIES AND CONTRACTS

Financial Policies

All student organizations are required to follow the [Student Government Association Financial Policies and Procedures](#). Organizations with SSI accounts must follow all [SSI Policies and Procedures](#).

Contracts

For any services rendered at your event requiring or not requiring payment, including but not limited to, a performer, DJ, a moon bounce or novelty, or any outside vendor providing any service at your event you must have a contract.

STUDENTS ARE NOT PERMITTED TO SIGN CONTRACTS WITH AN OUTSIDE AGENCY. DOING SO COULD PUT YOU AT GREAT LEGAL RISK.

All forms for spending funds can be found on the SSI website [here](#), including a Sample Contract.

To ensure that agreements for services are legal and appropriate, the following are policies for all officially recognized West Chester University student organizations regarding contracts:

- For SSI/SGA funded student organizations sponsoring both on-and-off-campus events and programs:
 - All contracts and/or agreements with outside agencies must be approved and signed by the executive director of SSI.
 - Under **no** circumstances can a student sign a contract or agreement with an outside agency.
- For student organizations not funded by SSI/SGA sponsoring on-campus events and programs:
 - All contracts and/or agreements with outside agencies must be approved and signed by the executive director of SSI if the amount is over \$300.
 - All contracts and/or agreements with outside agencies must be approved and signed by the student organization's official faculty/staff advisor if the amount is \$300 or under.
 - Under **no** circumstances can a student sign a contract or agreement with an outside agency.
- Verbal Agreements and email correspondence may be viewed as a contract by an agency, legally binding you if your language isn't clear. Be specific when you are researching a performer/entertainer/service that you are simply looking and not committing to anything.

COLLECTING MONEY

Venmo

The Office of Student Leadership and Involvement highly encourages all student organizations to utilize the SSI Venmo system. Students may not use other electronic banking applications since those applications deposit funds into personal savings or checking accounts.

Student Services, Inc. offers the opportunity for student organizations to accept money for events via Venmo. SSI has set up a general account for students to utilize if they would like to have other options of payment besides, cash, check, or Ram Bucks.

If student organizations are accepting Venmo at an event, we ask that all individuals send their funds directly to our Venmo account (@wcu-ssi). When sending money to the account, SSI requests that individuals write in the description box the organization's name and number and the reasoning behind the money being sent. This way when funds are reconciled SSI will know which organizations the funds are to go to and why.

Cash

All cash collected on campus must be immediately deposited into the student organization's Student Services, Inc (SSI) account before leaving the event. This pertains to ALL events, including but not limited to bake sales/vending sales, admission charge for events, canning, donation drives, registration fees, tournament fees, etc.

To deposit cash, please count the money you collected, fill out an SSI Deposit Slip (obtained at the SSI Service Center on the ground floor of Sykes), place in a sealed envelope, and place in the drop safe. The drop safe is underneath the information desk on the first floor of Sykes Union. The drop safe is accessible during the hours the student union is open (See Sykes website for updated hours). Money must be deposited in those hours even if your event has not ended.

Cash boxes, money bags, and change can be obtained at the SSI Service Center for your event. Please note the SSI Service Center Hours are 8:30 am-4:00 pm Monday-Friday. If your event takes place outside of those hours, please arrange to pick up the money box or change before during their business hours. Cash boxes with money inside can be left in the Sykes Union Administrative Office Safe **before** your event only. **After** your event, you must count and deposit the money using the steps above and leave the empty cash box in the Sykes Administration office for pick up by SSI. Please note there are no other cash boxes on campus if you forget to pick up ahead of time. Sykes Administration is not responsible for money not properly deposited after your event.

Please note that collecting cash at an event is a safety concern and will necessitate public safety's presence at your event.

Tickets

It is highly recommended to sell tickets through the SSI ticketing window. You can visit the service center window on the ground floor of Sykes. From there, you will fill out paperwork and your tickets will be available to be purchased on <https://www.wcupatix.com/>. SSI can also give you physical tickets to sell at your event with the cash box or with credit card via the website.

FOOD

Depending on the space you are requesting, food may or may not be permitted.

All events on campus are required to use Aramark/New Street Catering for their programs, meetings, and events. Groups utilizing a disposable food set up are responsible for the clean-up of the materials at the end of their event.

If you would like to use another food service vendor for any reason, you must obtain a signed waiver from New Street Catering granting that permission. You may contact New Street Catering at (610)436-3130 or via newstreetcatering@wcupa.edu

After obtaining that waiver, all catering for public events must gain additional approval through the Chester County Health Department to ensure the safety of your attendees. Public events are considered any event where non-members of your organization/department will be present. The waiver takes two weeks to process, so please plan accordingly.

Student/campus organization programs, meetings, and events that are closed to the public and considered “private” will be permitted to bring food in from an outside vendor with the appropriate approvals from the venue in which the program is being held.

Food prepared in a non-commercial, unlicensed facility/setting will NOT be permitted. Baked goods, soft pretzels, water ice (must use a disposable scooper to dispense) and similar items are exempt from this policy.

General guidelines for all events, either private or public, where food will be served:

- ✓ You must thoroughly wash your hands before handling food or putting on gloves.
- ✓ You may not touch food with your bare hands. Single-use, food-grade gloves (not latex) is the suggested practice. Tongs, deli wrap, or wax paper sheets are permitted for baked goods.
- ✓ Food must remain covered at all times. Covered containers, plastic wrap, or individual serving containers are all acceptable.

Chester County Health Department Bureau of Environmental Health Protection specifies that: “No food prepared in a private home* or which has been processed in a place, other than a commercial food processing establishment regulated by the CCHD or any other appropriate, official, regulatory agency, shall be sold, offered for sale or given away. If food is prepared outside of Chester County, a copy of a facility’s valid license from the appropriate regulatory agency must be submitted to the CCHD.”

*Residence Hall Kitchens are considered private homes in this circumstance.

General guidelines for all events, either private or public, where food will be served:

- You must thoroughly wash your hands before handling food or putting on gloves.
- You may not touch food with your bare hands. Single-use, food-grade gloves (not latex) is the suggested practice. Tongs, deli wrap, or wax paper sheets are permitted for baked goods.
- Food must remain covered at all times. Covered containers, plastic wrap, or individual serving containers are all acceptable.

BARBEQUES

WCU's food guidelines prevent any unlicensed individual from cooking and distributing their own cooked food to the public. Therefore, all barbeques must use Aramark/New Street Catering.

MARKETING AND ADVERTISING

The university has specific policies regarding advertising on campus. Find them in [The Ram's Eye View](#) to make sure your group is in compliance. All flyers must be approved by building managers before being placed in on-campus buildings.

SEVERE WEATHER

If the University is closed due to severe weather, generally all events will be canceled. If the University is closed, information to that effect will be communicated via the web, text messaging, WCU information line, and TV and radio.

If the University is not closed and the event is happening on the weekend, the individual in charge of a specific event occurring on the weekend will determine whether the event will occur, in consultation with the Director of Student Leadership & Involvement. The individual in charge of the event will communicate with the Director of SLI by noon on the Friday prior to the event via 610-436-2117.

ALCOHOL

Use, sale, exchange, possession, or consumption of alcoholic beverages on-campus or off-campus, if such off-campus use violates local, state, or federal law is prohibited. Any violation of the University's alcohol policy, outlined in The Ram's Eye View, shall be construed as a violation of this section. In the absence of extraordinary or mitigating circumstances, a sanction of suspension or expulsion will be imposed on any student found guilty of providing alcohol to minors. Alcohol is not allowed, unless approved by the President's Office, on the West Chester University campus and it is a violation of this policy to possess alcohol. Demonstrating that a student has knowledge of the location of alcohol and the intent to exercise control over the alcohol shall constitute possession.

RESOURCES

Event Planning Checklists:

[Banquet Planning Checklist](#)
[Competition Planning Checklist](#)
[Film or TV Screening Planning Checklist](#)
[Guest Speaker Planning Checklist](#)
[Outdoor Rec Event \(5K, walk, etc.\) Planning Checklist](#)
[Pageant or Fashion Show Planning Checklist](#)
[On-Campus Party Planning Checklist](#)
[Performance or Concert Planning Checklist](#)
[Political Campaign Event Planning Checklist](#)

The Office of Student Leadership/LEAD Leadership Consultants:

Please complete the [Special Event Intake Form](#) to be assigned a Leadership Consultant to help you with planning your event. It is recommended that you submit this form four weeks prior to your proposed event.

Space Managers

[Please refer to the Campus and Classroom Scheduling Contact List](#) for a list of spaces on campus and who manages them. Please reach out to these space managers if you have more specific questions about the space.