

# Logistics

*The logistics of an event include actions like choosing the number of days or hours for your event and identifying the type of space you are looking for and how to reserve it, but logistics also includes asking important questions such as identifying potential constraints on all parties involved. The type of event you plan may vary depending on choices you make and also how you answer logistical questions. This handout walks you through a number of these actions and questions to help you plan your event.*

## Determining Total Time

Determining the total amount of time your event requires involves an understanding of your objectives. What topics do you want to cover during this event? What format will you use for delivery? Both of these questions can help you decide whether your event should be a single, one-hour session, a multi-hour or all-day event, or a multi-day event. The *Audience* handout helps you identify topics that might be useful for particular audiences, so if you have not yet used that handout, you may want to start there.

<b>Topic</b> <i>This includes material you want to teach, practice time for that material, and time spent writing or consulting with tutors</i>	<b>Format (e.g., lesson, activity, etc.)</b>	<b>Amount of time required</b>
<b>Total time required for this event (days/hours)</b> <i>Use this number as you work through the next two charts about availability and constraints.</i>		

## Identifying Time Constraints

The material above resulted in a total time for your proposed event based on topic and format. Before you schedule that event, however, you'll want to think about administrative constraints (such as staffing and location) and audience constraints (such as jobs or childcare). For instance, if you cannot reserve a room for three full days in a row, then you cannot offer a program that requires that amount of time.

The next two tables offer questions and suggestions for potential audience and administrative constraints. Fill in the empty cells with information about any of the constraints that are relevant to your context. If you don't know answers to some items, consider who you need to contact for further information and factor that contact into the lead time for planning your event.

<b>Audience Constraints</b>	<b>Potential Workarounds</b>	<b>Your plan</b>	<b>Who to collect further information from?</b>
Teaching or taking classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● School breaks</li> <li>● Evenings</li> <li>● Weekends</li> <li>● Half-days</li> <li>● Hour-long</li> </ul>		
Working in a research group or lab	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Hour-long</li> <li>● Half-days</li> <li>● Weekends</li> <li>● Single event</li> </ul>		
Commuter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Virtual event</li> <li>● Later start time/earlier end time</li> <li>● Conduct event elsewhere</li> </ul>		
Childcare Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Coordinate with local school start/end times</li> <li>● Weekends</li> <li>● Evenings</li> </ul>		
Accessibility Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Include a question in the application form collecting this information</li> </ul>		

<b>Administrative constraints</b>	
<b>Administrator's availability</b>	
How much of the event will you need or want to be present for?	
Looking at your normal schedule and assuming the amount of time you listed in the row above, what are the options for you? Which days work best? How many hours at a time are you available? etc.	
<b>Other staff availability</b>	
What staff do you need for handling administrative needs? (e.g., sending emails, printing certificates, etc.)	
How many individual staff members do you need for delivering this event?	
How much of the event will other staff be present for?	
Are the other staff already in paid status for the proposed times, or will you need to compensate them in some other way?	
<b>Space availability</b>	
Does your institution allow rooms to be scheduled for the amount of time you are considering? (e.g., can you schedule a room for a single 8-hour day in the middle of a semester?)	
How far in advance of events do you need to schedule space?	
Who else uses the space or adjacent space and in what ways?	
Are there constraints around food and drink in the space?	

## Choosing Specific Dates

The tables below will help you translate the information from the previous sections into a number of days, a number of hours per day, and specific preferred dates.

	Number of Days	Hours per Day
Copy the amount of time your topic requires from the very first table in this handout.		
Translate audience constraints from the table above into a maximum allowable time.		
Translate administrative constraints from the table above into a maximum allowable time.		

<b>Is each maximum allowable time listed in the table above equal to or less than the amount of time the topic requires?</b>	
<b>NO:</b> Revisit all of the previous tables in this handout and in the <i>Audience</i> handout and identify what can be cut in order to shorten the event. Keep in mind that you might also divide the proposed event into multiple, shorter events.	
<b>YES:</b> Look at a calendar, choose specific, preferred dates and times, and list those in the column to the right.	

## Identifying Potential Date Conflicts

When choosing actual dates, it is important to consider a wide range of potential conflicts. For instance, a dissertation retreat with a focus on revising will be much less helpful if it occurs only a week before the deposit deadline for the semester. Potential date conflicts are not just about time, however. Space issues such as noise, location issues such as parking availability, and event issues such as conflicts of interest all can contribute to an audience not wishing or not being able to attend your event.

Once you have an idea of the semester/dates you might be interested in, use the table below to double check those dates for potential conflicts *before* scheduling your event.

	<b>Dates of potential conflicts for your proposed event</b>
Thesis deposit deadlines for the semester of the event	
Prelim or proposal deadlines for the semester of the event (if your event is aimed at those just getting started)	
Holidays (whether or not officially recognized by the institution)	
Sports home games	
On campus entertainment events (e.g., concerts)	
On campus student events (e.g., summer in-person registration for all freshmen)	
Staff constraints (e.g., who works, which dates, how many hours)	
Other date-related issues for your context	

## Choosing a Location

Check the items below that you consider a priority for your event. You may also want to rank-order your choices in case you are unable to find a location that encompasses all of them.

*Hint: Your institution may provide lists of “amenities” for various rooms. These lists offer additional room aspects to consider.*

### Location

- Proximity to your office
- Proximity to graduate student attendees’ offices/labs
- Space nearby for one-on-one conferences
- Proximity to library, thesis deposit office, writing center, etc.
- Proximity to parking
- Proximity to restrooms
- Proximity to elevator or wheelchair accessibility
- First floor room

### Size/Shape

- Space for the exact number of participants
- Space for more than the number of expected participants (how much more?)
- Square
- Rectangular with podium on a short side
- Rectangular with podium on a long side
- Tiered seating
- Seating all on one level

### Comfort

- Windows for natural light
- Windows that open
- Adjustable thermostat
- Carpet for sound deadening

### Furnishings

- Comfortable table/chair arrangements
- Movable seating
- Free-standing tables for holding lunch, snacks, materials, etc.
- Wall white boards or chalkboards
- Student white boards
- Podium

### Technology

- Computers for attendees
- Printer
- Projector
- Outlets at the tables

### Food/Drink

- Proximity to a coffee shop
- Proximity to restaurants
- Available catering
- Water bottle refill station

### Other

- Childcare available
- Nearby construction

<p>Based on your choices above, list all potential rooms at your institution that fit both your preferred criteria and your preferred dates.</p>	
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## Setting a Daily Schedule

Setting a schedule for your event may be easy if you are proposing a one-hour workshop or difficult if you are proposing a week-long writing camp. The following are a list of items to consider when setting a daily schedule. After you read over them, use the table below to craft your schedule. Every block of time should be accounted for, even if it is just listed as a break.

If your event is more than one day long and if each day has a different schedule, you will want to make one copy of the table for each individual day. Use the *Location* column only if your event involves moving between different locations.

Things to think about:

- Alternate individual and group tasks
- Alternate listening/speaking tasks with hands-on tasks
- Build short breaks into the schedule for various self-care activities
  - Food & beverages
  - Restroom
  - Moving (walking, yoga, stretching, etc.)
  - Mental rest (meditation, etc.)
- Build in social interaction time
  - Opening conversations
  - Casual conversations over lunch or while moving around
  - Wrapping up the session or day
- Take advantage of local conditions--have activities outdoors when weather allows
- Make some things optional (e.g., not everyone will want to participate in meditation or yoga)
- Build in a little bit of wiggle room (e.g., if campus roads are suddenly under construction, attendees may arrive late)

<b>Times</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Location</b>
<i>Ex: 9:00-9:20 AM</i>	<i>Workshop on setting goals</i>	<i>WTHR Room 124</i>

# Serving Food & Beverages

If your event will be longer than an hour, you may want to offer food or beverages. The information below covers some aspects of serving food that you should be aware of. After you read over the explanations for each category, make a note of what you plan to offer.

Categories & Choices	A few notes
<b>Beverages</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Coffee</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Tea</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Water bottles</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Lunch drinks (sodas, etc.)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Nothing offered</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● People are accustomed to bringing their own beverages to things</li> <li>● People are accustomed to carrying around refillable water bottles</li> <li>● Provide advance notice if you provide no drinks</li> <li>● The single biggest request related to beverages: provide coffee</li> </ul>
<b>Your beverage plans</b>	
<b>Snacks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Salty option               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> PB crackers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Cheese crackers</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Sweet option               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Granola bars</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Yogurt raisins</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Craisins</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Healthy option               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Fresh fruit</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Nuts</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Whole grains</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Trail mix</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Individual portions are the most convenient</li> <li>● Dairy &amp; nuts can both be allergens</li> <li>● With food, it's a good idea to ask about dietary restrictions and allergies prior to making food choices</li> <li>● Think as close to healthy as possible given limitations of storing and serving</li> </ul>
<b>Your snack plans</b>	
<b>Meals</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Restaurant catering</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> University catering</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Boxed lunches</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Buffet style</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Select the nicest food your budget allows (skip pizza if at all possible)</li> <li>● Collect allergen/intolerance information prior to choosing</li> <li>● Communicate a backup plan to attendees with dietary/allergen restrictions in case catering makes a mistake.</li> <li>● Have restaurants deliver, unless you have a staff person dedicated to handling food</li> <li>● Avoid pork and beef, especially if you have an international population</li> <li>● Have vegetarian/vegan options that include protein (tofu; chickpeas, etc.)</li> <li>● Ask for all meat and cheese on the side for salads or pasta</li> <li>● For multi-day events, have a different menu each day</li> </ul>
<b>Your meal plans</b>	

# Suggested Materials List

The following list offers some ideas for materials that you might want to have available during a graduate writing retreat-style event. Note that this is just a starting point. Some items you will have no use for; other things you will want to add to your own list.

## Cleaning supplies

- Hand sanitizer
- Disinfectant wipes for tables
- Paper towels in case of spills

## Food/Drink

- Pre-packaged snacks
- Napkins
- Disposable utensils if serving a meal, in case catering forgets to bring them
- Water bottles (unless there is a refill station readily accessible)

## Work Materials

- Whiteboard markers
- Whiteboard eraser
- Handouts for any lessons
- Post-it notes
- Highlighters or colored pencils
- Scratch paper
- Stickers
- Extension cords and power strips if minimal room outlets

## Participant Give-Aways

- Folders for participants
  - Pen
  - Notepad
  - Swag, especially if writing-related
  - Other:
- Special swag/gift for last day
- Certificates for last day

## Administrivia

- Pre-printed name tags
- Attendance list
- Door signs for the room
- Tape for hanging signs
- Extra pens
- Bins to carry snacks and materials
- A cart for lugging stuff across campus

*If you use these handouts to help plan your event, we would love to get feedback from you on how useful they were. You may email any comments to Vicki R Kennell at [vkennell@purdue.edu](mailto:vkennell@purdue.edu).*

5/7/21