

2020 Event Planners Forum: Q&A Response

Question: What about Weeks of Welcome events? Our school was asked to provide information regarding what food would be served and what we would be specifically doing during that time period.

Answer: (Student Affairs) We are having WOW. Dates are Aug. 16-27. The majority of WOW events will be virtual. Anything involving food (if that happens) would be a grab and go scenario.

Answer: (UT Tyler) Welcome week events for students are coordinated by Student Success. As far as Convocation & Staff/Faculty Welcome back events, we have been communicating with our on-campus food vendor regarding providing all pre-wrapped, packaged/boxed foods.

Question: We host a competition team tournament every fall and spring with area universities and alumni judges. Holding this event virtually would be extremely difficult. What could be some alternatives to be able to still hold this event but doing so safely?

Answer: (University Events) I think this would depend on the type of competition. If demonstration based, one option, as UT Tyler suggests above, would be to spread your competition teams across campuses with assigned rooms. Then have judges 'attend' the demonstrations via a live stream. When I think of this, I envision how our Chess teams play in tournaments remotely. Of course, with any plan of action, we will still have to adhere to the current recommendations and guidelines in place for social distancing.

Answer: (UT Tyler) Spreading the event out campus-wide/over the course of a couple days/minimizing number of guests allowed entry.

Question: Would any of these events be outside? We have lots of open fields. Could set up speaker systems.

Answer: (University Events) We are seeking clarification from Administration on this question and will update accordingly. What we have been told thus far: "We do not have a timeline for when in-person events (other than socially-distanced, in-person classes) will be allowed. I expect that large gatherings (i.e. any activity/gathering where social-distancing cannot be maintained or that would encourage the breaking of social distancing guidelines) will be discouraged by public health officials for the foreseeable future, and, at this time, we should not be planning for any university-sponsored, in-person events for the fall semester. The decision on whether or not to hold a university-sponsored, in-person event will reside with the President. He will be advised by members of the cabinet and public health officials."

Answer: (UT Tyler) Yes, a couple of our events have been moved to an outdoor plaza venue on campus, to allow more space between guests. This also maximizes the amount of points of entry/exit, and also allows more control for direction guests will take around the event.

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Question: Does that mean outside employers won't be allowed to come on campus for on campus interviews?

Answer: (eLearning: Return to Campus 2020 training) **Convening in groups increases the risk of virus transmission.** Where feasible, meetings should be held in whole or part using available collaboration tools (e.g., Microsoft Teams, conference call).

In-person meetings are limited to the restrictions of local, state and federal orders. Meetings must not exceed 50% of a room's capacity and must allow for 6 feet of separation between participants to meet social distancing requirements. Departments should remove or rearrange chairs and tables or add other visual cues in meeting rooms to support social distancing practices between attendees. **All attendees must wear masks or face coverings while sharing space in a common room.**

During your time on-site, you are encouraged to communicate with your colleagues and supervisors as needed by email, instant message, telephone or other available technology rather than in person. You can also use a range of available collaboration tools (e.g., Microsoft Teams, WebEx, telephone).

Employees working on-site must follow these social distancing practices:

- Stay at least 6 feet (about two arms' length) from other people at all times.
- Do not gather in groups of more than five.
- Stay out of crowded places, and avoid mass gatherings.

Answer: (UT Tyler) Ours will mostly be done via zoom but there are definitely still opportunities for outside guests to be on campus. There are fewer buildings guests are allowed into, and there could be a questionnaire/waiver to be signed prior to campus entry.

Question: How helpful is it to have contingency plans? How useful do they end up being?

Answer: (University Events) Contingency plans have literally been our life raft keeping us afloat during this pandemic. By doing our due diligence in benchmarking with other Universities in our region, we are able to make recommendations for contingency plans with confidence and move forward with executing them efficiently when the parameters require. Yes, there will always be that *'thing'* that we never expected and failed to plan for, but I would rather deal with the one *'thing'* than trying to come up with a solution to the whole situation at a moment's notice.

Answer: (UT Tyler) Contingency plans are always necessary. Its rare events go exactly as planned so it's best to always plan for a back-up & even a back-up to the back-up plan.

Question: Did Judy say that all in-person events will now be held virtually?

Answer: (University Events) Judy shared the following statement from University Administration: "We do not have a timeline for when in-person events (other than socially-

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distanced, in-person classes) will be allowed. I expect that large gatherings (i.e. any activity/gathering where social-distancing cannot be maintained or that would encourage the breaking of social distancing guidelines) will be discouraged by public health officials for the foreseeable future, and, at this time, we should not be planning for any university-sponsored, in-person events for the fall semester. The decision on whether or not to hold a university-sponsored, in-person event will reside with the President. He will be advised by members of the cabinet and public health officials.”

Question: How many people constitute an "event"? Would I be able to record a speaker for a virtual event and invite a smaller group of guests on campus to see the interview in person?

Answer: (University Events) We have asked Administration for clarification on what defines an ‘event’ and will update accordingly with their response. In the meantime, we would recommend deferring to the eLearning: Return to Campus 2020 training, where it is stated that in-person group gatherings of more than 5 people should be avoided. Using this guidance in your consideration of whether or not the activity/gathering you are planning is one where social-distancing of 5 or less people in a gathering is able to be maintained or if it is one that would encourage the breaking of social distancing guidelines.

Answer: (UT Tyler) This varies but it could be 2-5,000+ guests. Recording speakers is definitely an option.

Question: Has anyone had online event with 200 or more viewers recently. Would you recommend zoom or teams live for that number of attendants?

Answer: (University Events) The President’s Town Halls are attended by more than 1000 participants through Teams without complication. The Event Planners Forum was our first virtual Teams event and was attended by 205 participants. We did not experience any issues in the execution of the event and it served the purpose we needed and intended it to do. However, as we look ahead at our fall events, we are examining them individually to determine the appropriate avenue for each. Remembering, for instance, that Media Services has always successfully streamed our events for us in the past – such as Commencement. Simply put, Teams is a great option for many events but may not be right for all.

Answer: (UT Tyler) We have not yet. Our campus is most familiar with Zoom but Teams is slowly being introduced.

Question: Will we be able to have a lunch with a group of students (60)?

Answer: (University Events) For an event this size, our recommendation would be to run it through the appropriate channels for approval before moving forward – taking it to your Dean/VP to consult with the President for approval.

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Answer: (Chartwells Catering) We can assist with this, as we have measures to handle this properly but we need to ensure we are practicing social distancing. This would include seating and food station/pickup point.

Question: We do one-on-one appointments with prospective students? Would those be off limits as well? Since the President says "no gatherings".

Answer: (eLearning: Return to Campus 2020 training) **Convening in groups increases the risk of virus transmission.** Where feasible, meetings should be held in whole or part using available collaboration tools (e.g., Microsoft Teams, conference call).

In-person meetings are limited to the restrictions of local, state and federal orders. Meetings must not exceed 50% of a room's capacity and must allow for 6 feet of separation between participants to meet social distancing requirements. Departments should remove or rearrange chairs and tables or add other visual cues in meeting rooms to support social distancing practices between attendees. **All attendees must wear masks or face coverings while sharing space in a common room.**

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Question: which works better Zoom vs. Teams when including people from international locations, i.e. India, Netherlands, etc.

Answer: (University Events) Both will require your participant to download an app to participate. It really comes down to which one you, as the meeting/event coordinator, are more comfortable navigating as both are viable options.

Answer: (UT Tyler) Our campus currently only uses Zoom for online gatherings

Question: Do you have a check-list or step-by-step guide for how to organize a virtual event? We have one for on-campus events from everything to reserving rooms, creating a schedule, ordering food. Day before prep and day of needs.

Answer: (University Events) As we begin our steps to planning virtual events regularly, we are developing project plans and checklists. Once we have one that we feel would be a great

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resource to share, we will add to the Events webpage for all to access. We also invite others to share their checklists as they are being developed – this will help us to create a generic list that is applicable to many.

Question: Can alumni participate in a Teams meeting? They have a NetID but it may be inactive, such that they can't log in to e-mail.

Answer: (Student Programs) Good question. We have only worked with new and current students. I recommend asking OIT. We have been working with Bryan Sherwood, and he's been great.

Answer: (University Events) Yes, external participants are able join Teams meetings as a guest if invited. A NetID is not required but the app is.

Question: Is access to Microsoft Teams using the Net ID only for admitted/matriculated students? Or can any student with a Net ID use it? And how can a student gain access?

Answer: (OIT) Teams will require your NetID and Password for the initial log in. Afterwards, you would open the app on your computer just like you would Outlook. The app is available to download for free. Installation instruction can be found [here](#). Incoming students will be emailed information on how to download and use Teams once they are provided a NetID.

Question: When I am producing the event and am sharing my screen I am unable to send the next presenters screen they are sharing to the queue. It will only allow me to interrupt and send it live immediately instead of sending it to the queue. Is there a way around that? Sorry, I hope that's not confusing. If it is, I can just email the question later. Also, if I have a prerecorded video (presentation) that has audio, do I HAVE to be unmuted in order for them to hear it? That seems to be the case, but not sure if maybe I'm doing it wrong.

Answer: (OIT) First, when producing an event, it is best practice to have one slide deck with all the slides. Otherwise, you are correct in that you have to stop sharing, select another presentation, interrupt the live session, and send the second presentation. You can view additional best practices for Teams Live events [here](#). To share audio, you will need to share your screen in the Teams Live event, then select “share system audio”

Question: Is there a way to have more than one presenter on screen in any other platform UTD has available? (example would be to have a panel)

Answer: (OIT) Blackboard offers more than one person on a screen. Also, look into Microsoft Stream, which has been vetted by Information Security.

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Question: Do you have any recommendations for simple video editing software for recorded events?

Answer: (Student Programs) I used iMovie because it was already on my Mac.

Answer: (OIT) Depending on where you want your video hosted, Microsoft Stream allows you to make minor edits to a video, and will auto-transcribe the recording to ensure accessibility. You can also [sort your videos](#) by content, by creating specific channels/ groups.

Question: Would you recommend using Teams Live over WebEx for a community wide event (people outside of the UT system)?

Answer: (OIT) WebEx contract expires on August 31, 2020. With that, we encourage that users become more familiar with Teams Live events for sessions that are sharing content in a lecture-based format. Support for understanding how to set up and run a Live event is available on the [OIT website](#), or you can email assist@utdallas.edu for specific issues/ questions.

Question: If we can't have webex and teams and blackboard require a net id, what is our other option for off campus/nonUTD folk?

Answer: (OIT) Those without a NetId can join a Teams meeting by calling in, or downloading the app and using the link to join. For Teams Live events, attendees can view the session from a web browser, and do not have to have a NetID, if the event was set up for public viewing. You can find additional Teams Live resources [here](#).

Question: Has the change of situation changed the menu offerings of Chartwells?

Answer: (Chartwells Catering) Yes, we are launching 2 menus around the 20th of July due to Covid. One is contactless and a more "casual catering".

Question: Please clarify if UTD will not have any in- person events until next year or is 10 or less people allowed to meet in person? thx

Answer: (University Administration) We do not have a timeline for when in-person events (other than socially-distanced, in-person classes) will be allowed. I expect that large gatherings (i.e. any activity/gathering where social-distancing cannot be maintained or that would encourage the breaking of social distancing guidelines) will be discouraged by public health officials for the foreseeable future, and, at this time, we should not be planning for any university-sponsored, in-person events for the fall semester. The decision on whether or not to hold a university-sponsored, in-person event will reside with the President. He will be advised by members of the cabinet and public health officials.

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Question: Will there be training for doing postings on Localist?

Answer: (Communications-web services) Training can be offered if requested. There is also a link to the help page on the comet calendar: <https://calendar.utdallas.edu/help/about>. And specifically, for how to add an event: <https://utdallas.edu/calendar/addevent.html>

Question: For food delivery service, what forms are required by the university? For actual catering, what forms are required by the university?

Answer: (Procurement) No forms required for Food Delivery. We were working on a form but since there is no campus activity, it is on back burner. We recommend using one of our established vendors (not necessarily one of the 5) and you may use a One Card for Food Delivery.

Question: How frequently will classrooms be sanitized when classes are in session?

Answer: (Facilities Management) As stated in the recently published UTD ‘Students Guide to Classrooms’ (page 2), “classrooms will be fully sanitized daily upon the conclusion of each day’s class scheduling.” The normal cleaner used in the daily cleaning does kill Corona. In addition to this daily cleaning, buckets of disinfecting wipes will be available in the classrooms throughout the day for occupants to use at will.

Question: What specifically will FM be doing or putting in place for the cleaning of pre and post events - especially in locations frequently utilized?

Answer: (Facilities Management) Specifics for any event will be coordinated with the event planner. Appropriate clean/disinfecting for the event will be established with the coordinator as the event is scheduled.

Question: If we do bring visitors on campus, do they have to complete any paperwork?

Answer: (University Events) In referencing the [Comets Return to Campus Workplace Guide](#), it does not appear there are any forms or paperwork required for external guests.

Question: What about off campus Centers like CVL, Callier, etc.? Do we have to use those approved caterers?

Answer: (Procurement) Offsite not covered under catering vendors and remember, only true "catering service" requires use of those 5 or Chartwells.

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Question: Did I understand correctly, that we can only have events with a max of 10 people for now?

Answer: (University Administration) We do not have a timeline for when in-person events (other than socially-distanced, in-person classes) will be allowed. I expect that large gatherings (i.e. any activity/gathering where social-distancing cannot be maintained or that would encourage the breaking of social distancing guidelines) will be discouraged by public health officials for the foreseeable future, and, at this time, we should not be planning for any university-sponsored, in-person events for the fall semester. The decision on whether or not to hold a university-sponsored, in-person event will reside with the President. He will be advised by members of the cabinet and public health officials.

Answer: (University Events) The rule of 10 is not the University guideline. We have asked for Administration to define what constitutes as an event. Our team is using the Governor's recommendation of avoiding social gatherings of more than 10 people to guide our recommendations and proposals for planning events in the fall.