Fall 2020 Event Planning Recommendations

This document outlines recommendations compiled by New Student & Family Services (NSFS) for planning welcome events for Fall 2020, including Gold Rush. Campus partners and student organizations should consider the following information when planning their events. Recommendations are included for in-person, hybrid, and virtual event formats. Information specific to Gold Rush events is included at the end of the document.

Considerations for Choosing a Format

- **Ability to Host In-Person:** If possible, please try to host some or all of your event in-person. We know that for many larger events, this is not a possibility under social distancing. When possible, NSFS wants to ensure that we have in-person events for our new students to attend on campus this fall.
- **Staffing:** What staff do you have available to support your event? Do you have enough staff in your office to manage new demands of an in-person event?
- **Social Distancing Guidelines:** In addition to abiding by any guidelines required by the state of North Carolina, UNC Charlotte may put forth additional guidelines. Currently, these are the guidelines.
- **Space Needs:** What space do you need for your event if it takes place in-person? Will space be available? Do you have an online platform that would work for a virtual event?
- **Safety Procedures:** Think about what safety procedures you will have in place for your staff and event attendees.
- **Adaptability of Event:** Is your event able to be held virtually with minimal changes or would this new format require drastic changes? What are the goals of the program and how can they be achieved via non-traditional formats?

In-Person Event Recommendations

What to consider when planning an in-person event:
- Where will the event take place?
  - Will it be outside or inside?
  - What capacity restrictions will be placed on that event space?
- Will the event need to take place over multiple days or at different times to allow more students to attend safely?
- How will you manage the staffing of your event?
- What procedures will you have in place to ensure that your event is within capacity limits and that social distancing guidelines are being followed?
- How will you ensure the safety of your staff and students at the event?
- **Marketing:** How will you market this event to students?
- **Follow-Up:** What assessment practices will you have in place to determine how enjoyable or successful the event was?

Recommendations for and examples of in-person events (under social distancing guidelines):
- Something **outside** when possible. Risk is much lower in an outdoor space.
- **Drop-in or walk-through** events. Invite students to stop by an event or an office space over a long period of time. **Tabling** would also fall into this option.
- **Self-guided tours** of a space, such as the Student Union or the UREC.
1:1 or small group appointments with an office. Students can sign-up for a time in advance, and meet other new students at their scheduled time!

Hybrid Event Recommendations

What to consider when planning a hybrid event:
- What aspects of the event will be in person, and what aspects will be virtual?
- What technology would your event need to be successful?
- Will the event take place over multiple days or at different times?
- How will you encourage students to take place in all portions of your events?
- Where will the in-person portion of your event take place, and how will you implement safety procedures?

Marketing: How will you market this event to students?

Follow-Up: What assessment practices will you have in place to determine how enjoyable or successful the event was?

Recommendations for and examples of hybrid events (under social distancing guidelines):
- **Live stream** your event, but include an additional in-person option on a first-come, first-serve basis based on space capacity. Encourage students to watch the live stream with roommates or friends.
- Create "**Take-and-Make**" kits that students can use with roommates or friends. This could be a craft of some sort, for example. Students could stop by in-person to pick up materials, and complete this on their own.
- **Use QR codes** on flyers that link students to fill out a form online. This could be used for campus organization or campus resources information sessions. Send out the link to students who expressed interest via QR code form.

Virtual Event Recommendations

What to consider when planning a virtual event:
- How will you engage students online?
- What technology would your event need to be successful?
- What incentives might you provide for student participation in your events?
- How long will the event be, and will it be multiple parts?

Marketing: How will you market this event to students?

Follow-Up: What assessment practices will you have in place to determine how enjoyable or successful the event was?

Examples of Successful Virtual Events
Our team has researched successful ways that other institutions have made their events virtual. Here are some ideas we found for what your next virtual event could include:
- **Kahoot Trivia** about the institution, which included prizes as incentives
- Online competitions
  - “Funniest Home Videos”
  - “MTV Cribs” (showcasing students’ residence halls)
  - Using [Jackbox.TV](https://jackbox.tv)
  - Live bingo with [Bingo Maker](https://bingo-maker.com)
  - Verzuz Battle (artists compete against each other on live platform)
● Informational session, then individual chat rooms for specific questions/accommodations
● Watch parties for movies, using Netflix Party, CoogTV (University of Houston), and Kanopy as applications for this
● Involvement opportunities
  ○ Hosting webinars for students groups by type of organization
  ○ Online quizzes that recommend organizations to students
  ○ 1:1 appointments with student leaders
● Virtual concerts

Gold Rush Information

Gold Rush will be held from Friday, September 4 - Sunday, September 13, 2020. The success of Gold Rush is the result of the efforts and collaborations of campus partners and student organizations, and we will continue to implement this structure this fall. NSFS Staff is available to consult with departments looking for ideas or support deciding what the best platform is for their event. Additionally, NSFS will promote events through the Niner Destination mobile application, NSFS social media pages, and on the NSFS website.

New Student & Family Services (NSFS) plans to host the following events as a part of Fall Gold Rush 2020:
● Niner Pride Guide and T-Shirt Distribution: Specific details of location and date are still being determined.
● Norm’s Quest: This annual campus scavenger hunt will be hosted with additional social distancing procedures in place. Teams will sign up for a more narrow time-slot, and the event will span over a longer period of time.
● Class Tours: With SOAR being in an online format, NSFS plans to host “class tours” to help students find their classes before the first day of school. Orientation Counselors and Gold Rush Leaders (volunteers) will lead these. Students can reserve their time slot in advance, or stop by the NSFS tent (location TBD) to join an hour-long tour that includes major academic buildings.

Modified Timeline for Gold Rush Event Submissions

NSFS will be extending the deadline for both Campus Partners and Student Organizations to submit events for Fall Gold Rush. Both categories for event submission will be due on Friday, July 17 at 5:00 p.m. The new submission forms are available on nsfs.uncc.edu and on Niner Engage. Additional questions have been added to ensure that everyone is taking steps to follow guidelines put in place by the state of North Carolina and UNC Charlotte. If you are holding an in-person event, please attach your space reservation to your form, or send it to gold-rush@uncc.edu when confirmed.

If you have already submitted an event and this event will drastically change due to the new fall start date and social distancing guidelines in place, please submit a new event proposal. If your event will only change slightly, please email gold-rush@uncc.edu to let NSFS staff know, and we can pull information from your original submission.

NSFS holds the expectation that if you are requesting Gold Rush Leaders or Orientation Counselors for your event, you have a plan in place to observe social distancing while assisting with the event. NSFS will provide our student leaders with masks to wear, but will not be able to provide for all event attendees.
NSFS Staff will review all submissions on a rolling basis. At the latest, NSFS will let you know about the status of your event submission by the end of July.

**Additional Fall Event Planning Questions?**

More information regarding campus operations for the fall semester can be found [here](#). New updates will be posted here as information changes throughout the summer and early fall. If you have additional questions specific to Fall Gold Rush, please email Gold Rush at [gold-rush@uncc.edu](mailto:gold-rush@uncc.edu).