Events 101:
How to Plan an Event at Mount Holyoke College

This handbook was developed to assist staff and faculty as they organize lectures, readings, panel discussion, symposia, workshops, meetings, film screenings, conferences, and other events on the Mount Holyoke campus. *Students should use the Rules and Tools guide on the Student Programs Web site.*

Event planning does not have to be stressful or overwhelming. This handbook gives a general overview of the time and planning it will take to make your event successful. These are general guidelines and do not necessarily cover all of the required details of a particular event. Conference & Event Services is happy to assist at any point in the event planning process.

**Conference & Event Services**

**Conference Services**  
Summer camps and conferences, and events for external clients  
conference@mtholyoke.edu  
(413) 538-2333

**Event Services**  
Campus department or student organization-sponsored events  
eventservices@mtholyoke.edu  
(413) 538-2153
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Simple Meetings

A simple meeting is a private event of less than 50 people that only requires a location to meet and is only open to invited guests. There is no need for event services of any kind, such as media, catering, or equipment from the Facilities Management stockroom. All simple meetings must be sponsored by a campus department or recognized student organization.

Conference & Event Services requires **2 business days advance notice** for a campus space reservation for simple meetings. Please use the [Campus Space Request Form](#) (discussed in greater detail on page 5) to make your request:

The Blanchard Campus Center has a number of meeting rooms that are in high demand. Some of these rooms are not mediated spaces (no computers, projectors, projection screens, etc.). If you require media of any kind for your meeting, be sure to request a room that is equipped with the media that you need.

Student organizations are not required to complete an Event Registration Form for simple meetings.

**Academic Film Screenings, Review Sessions, Exam Accommodations**

Reservations for film screenings, tutoring sessions, exam reviews, and testing accommodations related to their academic classes are made through Conference & Event Services; there is no need to contact the Registrar’s Office. Please make your request with Conference & Event Services at least **2 business days in advance**, using the [Campus Space Request Form](#)

If you are making a last-minute request, please call Conference & Event Services directly to inquire about availability at 413-538-2153.

If you need assistance with a film screening, please use the film screening assistance form located in Moodle.
Pre-Planning Considerations for Events

Before you begin planning an event, consider the following questions. They will help you to develop a framework that will guide you during the planning process. Identifying the answers to these questions will also reduce planning errors and make your event a success.

Set the Event Goals
• What are you trying to achieve for your organization/department?
• What are you trying to achieve for your audience?

Identify Your Target Audience
• Who are you trying to reach?
• Do you have a defined audience that is established?

Set the Tone for Your Event
• What is the most effective environment in which to convey your message? Consider:
  • Physical location, size of room (not too big or too small)
  • Layout of the room, type of furniture, type of setting
  • Atmosphere—formal or casual?
  • ADA accommodations and accessibility of space

What is the most appropriate date for your event? Consider:
• MHC Calendar of Events—Contact Conference & Events services, because there are often events in various stages of the planning process that will not yet appear as advertised events. Additionally, there are also large private events that do not get advertised, but that will affect the availability of some of the large event spaces.
• National, state, local and religious holidays and/or major campus events
• Academic Calendar
• Calendars of your VIPs/Special Guests

Develop a Budget
• How much can you spend?
• Will this be a ticketed event, and if so, will ticket prices cover costs?
• Decide up front where you are willing/able to economize and where you want to focus the bulk of your financial resources.
• A well planned budget will include the following, where applicable:
  • Any required labor (technical, custodial, security, parking, facility set-up, etc.)
  • Rental of any needed equipment
  • Food and beverage costs
  • Speaker/presenter fees (don’t forget travel, lodging, transportation)
  • Printing costs (invitations, posters, letters, programs, certificates, etc.)
  • Media Advertising
  • Postage Costs
  • Decorations, favors, gifts for presenters/special guests
  • Photographer and photos
Event Services—Event Planning Tools

Request a Campus Space using the Campus Space Request Form (CSRF)
www.mtholyoke.edu/go/space

The Campus Space Request Form is designed to streamline the process for requesting campus space for events. Any Mount Holyoke department or recognized student organization representative who is planning a meeting or event at Mount Holyoke College should use this form to request space. Using this form to make your request will ensure that we respond to you as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Event Services is responsible for reserving most (but not all) spaces for events. If you do not see the location you would like to reserve on the Campus Space Request Form, it means that location is not reserved through our office. See the list below for who to contact, and preferred methods to start a reservation for these spaces.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Contact or Reservation Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abbey Chapel and Eliot House Religious &amp; Spiritual Life</td>
<td>Office of Religious and Spiritual Life x2054 or <a href="https://www.mtholyoke.edu/religiouslife/abbey-memorial-chapel-reservation">https://www.mtholyoke.edu/religiouslife/abbey-memorial-chapel-reservation</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ciruti Language Resource Center Lounge and Computer Lab</td>
<td>Ciruti x2408</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kendall Sports &amp; Dance Complex</td>
<td>Athletics x2849</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Conference Rooms &amp; Labs</td>
<td>LITS x2797</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pratt Hall (McCulloch Aud. Warbeke)</td>
<td>Music Department x2306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residence Hall Common Space</td>
<td><a href="https://www.mtholyoke.edu/reslife/forms/common-space-reservation-form">https://www.mtholyoke.edu/reslife/forms/common-space-reservation-form</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rooke Theatre</td>
<td>Theatre Arts x2834</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willits-Hallowell Center</td>
<td>Willits x2220</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Event Services receives roughly 150-200 requests for space and services every week. For this reason, we ask that you contact us at least three weeks in advance for complicated events, and at least a week in advance for simple meetings and gatherings. Please use the Campus Space Request Form to reserve a space and allow 2 business days after you make your request to receive confirmation of your reservation.

RoomViewer
www.mtholyoke.edu/go/roomviewer

The RoomViewer is a centralized location that houses photos and features for all spaces that can be reserved by Conference & Event Services. The RoomViewer is connected to the Event Management System (EMS) software used by Conference & Event Services and other departments to schedule space and resources for events.

To view pictures of a room, go to the “Search” feature at the bar across the top of the page and choose the option “Space Features/Capacities”. That will bring up the list of locations available through our office. Click on the room name to see the photos, and then click through the tabs to see the room details, set-up types, and features available for that space.
Event Services
Now it is time to start coordinating your event. The Event Services office is here to help! We are the liaison between campus service departments and the greater campus community. We reserve campus spaces and coordinate services for events, such as media and Facilities Management needs, utilizing our Event Management System (EMS), to which all our supporting service departments are connected. Event Services also provides publicity for events by posting to the MHC Calendar of Events.

Room Set-up Needs
If you need to reconfigure the existing furniture in a space, or if you would like to request additional furniture or equipment, make your request with Event Services by sending your request to eventservices@mtholyoke.edu (please do not contact Facilities Management).

Some common equipment requests include:
• Tables
• Folding chairs
• Podium
• Trash Cans

Most campus spaces have fixed configurations. In locations where custom configurations are available, charges may apply for any room set-up and/or equipment requested. For all requests, you must provide a campus account number. All equipment is subject to availability. Please allow a minimum of 14 business days prior to your event to coordinate these services.

Media Needs
If you need a technical assistant to set up or monitor your event, or if you need to make use of the existing media equipment in a room, make your request with the Event Services by sending an email to eventservices@mtholyoke.edu. Event Services will communicate those needs to Media Resources to staff your event as necessary and make sure the equipment is ready for use.

Some possible media needs include:
• Computer projection for a presentation or film screening
• Table microphones for a panel table

If you need to borrow specific equipment that does not already exist in the space you plan to use, such as a video camera or laptop computer, you must arrange to pick it up from the Circulation Desk in LITS. Please make your request directly with Media Services via the Media Equipment Reservation Form at: https://www.mtholyoke.edu/lits/media-equipment-reservation-form

All equipment is subject to availability. Please allow a minimum of 14 business days prior to your event to coordinate these services.

Requests for Videography must be made using the Videography Services Form https://www.mtholyoke.edu/lits/videographyreqform
Custodial Services
Event sponsors are held responsible for basic “community consideration” clean-up, including removing all decorations, returning furniture that you moved without the assistance of Facilities Management to its original configuration, removing any large trash items, and leaving the facility ‘generally picked-up,’ with trash in appropriate barrels.

Additional professional custodial clean-up is mandatory for certain events depending on the nature of the event (attendance, location, time and day, food and beverage, etc.). Facilities Management cleans all campus spaces on a regular custodial schedule. However, if clean-up of your event is beyond the scope of the regular custodial schedule, your campus account number will be charged for additional cleaning hours.

Food and Beverage
If you plan to provide food and/or beverages to your guests, there are different options available to you on campus. Keep in mind when planning your event that some venues are not appropriate for food service.

Catering
If you are planning to cater your event, be sure to contact the caterer as soon as possible to make the necessary arrangements.

Blanchard Café Catering
All catering for events in the Blanchard Campus Center is provided by the Blanchard Café. For more information, please visit the Dining Services web site at:

Willits-Hallowell Catering
www.mtholyoke.edu/go/willits

The Willits-Hallowell Center specializes in providing the highest quality food and beverage service for all events, both at the Center and at other locations on campus. A For more information including catering menus, please visit their website:

Off-campus Caterers
Foods served by a local commercial food caterer are subject to catering and contracting rules and must be approved by the Director of Willits-Hallowell and Dining Services. Willits and Blanchard provide their own catering for private events; outside caterers may not be used at these venues.

For the full policy regarding the use of off-campus caterers, please review the website. https://www.mtholyoke.edu/sites/default/files/conference/docs/Policy%20for%20Off-Campus%20Caterers.pdf
Bake Sale/International Food Fair/Festival Policy

Reason for Policy:
The College is required by MA Sanitation Laws to regulate the service and sale of food on its campus, to be in compliance with the law. Students and student groups do not have any exceptions under these regulations.

Policy applies to:
- Any food sold to the public, including the general student / faculty / staff population. This includes foods provided at events where there is a cover charge at the door.
- The Policy does not apply to private dinners of small groups of friends or colleagues (e.g. dinner prepared and served in a house kitchenette), student club or cultural house activities that are only for that club or group members and their guests (e.g. the Glee Club has an ice cream sundae party) and the foods are not for sale.

Please review the policy and details, please visit the Risk Management web site: https://www.fivecolleges.edu/riskmgmt/studentrisk/food_policies/bakesale

Campus Police
Services requested of Campus Police should be essential to furthering the educational mission of the College, (events that are required to fulfill course requirements, events vital to the intercollegiate athletic program or events that are an intricate part of the College's extracurricular program); or support the College's enterprises.

Services requested of Campus Police that meet the criteria above and can be provided without additional staffing will normally be provided without a fee. Services that require additional overtime staffing, such as event security or parking direction, will typically require a fee. Since it is crucial to the safety of the College Community that Campus Police personnel be available for emergency response, as well as providing continuing patrol presence, any task beyond ten minutes must be requested in advance, (at least 14 business days prior to the event), and will require a fee.

Event Parking
If the event is after 5:00pm or on a weekend, visitors may park in any faculty or staff parking space.
If visitors will require parking on campus between the hours of 7:00 am and 5:00pm Monday - Friday, you must contact the Parking Office at x2514 to make the necessary arrangements. There are a very limited number of 2-hour visitor spaces are available to guests which do not require registering your vehicle.

Lodging at Willits-Hallowell Center
If your guests require lodging, there are a limited number of guest rooms available on campus at the Willits-Hallowell Conference Center. Make a reservation well in advance by calling x2217.
Advertising Your Event
There are many ways that you can advertise your event to the Mount Holyoke Community, the Five College Community and the general public. This section covers options available through Event Services and other campus departments.

MHC Calendar of Events
www.mtholyoke.edu/go/calendar

The MHC Calendar of Events is a web-based view of events taking place on the Mount Holyoke campus and sponsored by Mount Holyoke College departments or student organizations. The recently updated MHC Calendar has both a public facing listing for all events open to the public, as well as having an internal semi-private calendar which lists events that are only open to MHC Students, Faculty, and/or Staff. In order to access the internal calendars, members of the MHC Community must login to the Calendar using their MHC credentials.

To have your event posted on the MHC Calendar of Events, please send the following information to eventservices@mtholyoke.edu (note: If you have reserved your location through Event Services, please include the Reservation Number that you received on your confirmation email)

- Date
- Start Time and End Time
- Title
- Location
- Publicity Description
- URL
- Admission Fee (Free or Cost)
- Sponsor
- Indicate which constituency should view the event: General Public, MHC Students, MHC Faculty/Staff, or any combination of these three groups.

The home page of the Events Calendar shows Upcoming Events, as well as the events of the current day. The Events Calendar is also searchable. You may search for events that contain a particular word or focus the search on certain kinds of events. The web calendar has filters to sort event types, locations and sponsors to further narrow down the events listed.

While the Event Services office is the primary manager of the MHC Events Calendar, other Calendar Managers also have access to post events to the calendar. Typically the other Calendar Managers are those who post events that take place in the spaces that only they have the ability to reserve. For example, the Career Development Center has access to post CDC events that take place in their own conference room.
Five College Calendar of Events
https://www.fivecolleges.edu/calendar

The Five College Calendar lists events that are organized or funded by the Five Colleges, Inc. and its programs. It does not include events that are independently sponsored by individual college departments, unless it is done in collaboration with Five Colleges, Inc, or is a part of one of the Five College Certificate Programs.

Announcements
Announcements must be related to College business and originate from a department or official student organization. Announcements are now posted in MyMountHolyoke.

To submit an item for announcement, use the Communications form:
https://www.mtholyoke.edu/communications/submit-campus-announcement

News & Events

News & Events is a page on the Mount Holyoke College Web site that is maintained by Communications. It is a collection of news stories related to the Mount Holyoke community. For more information, visit the News & Events page at: www.mtholyoke.edu/go/news

If you post details about your upcoming event on your department or student organization web site, or Facebook page, be sure to provide Conference & Event Services with the address. We can link your postings on the MHC Calendar of Events.
Frequently Asked Questions

What is considered an event?
Anything that is not a regularly scheduled academic class, such as a public concert or lecture, is considered an event. This includes film screenings, tutoring sessions, meetings, and any class-affiliated activity.

Should I ever contact the Registrar to reserve a classroom for my event?
The Registrar reserves classroom spaces for regularly scheduled academic classes only. If you need to use a classroom for anything other than a scheduled academic class—such as a film screening, tutoring session, meeting or lecture—you should make your request with Conference & Event Services.

How do I request a campus space for an event?
To request a campus space that is reserved by Conference & Event Services, please use the Campus Space Request www.mtholyoke.edu/go/space

Who can use the Campus Space Request form?
Any Mount Holyoke department or registered student organization representative who is planning a meeting or event at Mount Holyoke College that meet the set deadlines. Those who are not affiliated with a Mount Holyoke department or student organization should contact Conference & Event Services directly at 413-538-2333 or eventservices@mtholyoke.edu.

What is a private event?
An event that is open to invited guests only and will not be publicized in any way, either publicly on the MHC Calendar or on the internal semi-private calendar. Examples include closed department or student org meetings, film screenings related to a class, or a private reception for invited guests.

What is a public event?
Any event that will be publicized in any way (flyer, calendar posting, etc.) is considered a public event. Examples include a public concert, theatrical performance, or lecture open to the Mount Holyoke community and/or the general public.

What is considered a business day?
A business day is any day that Conference & Event Services is open for business—Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Forms submitted after 5:00 p.m. fall on the next business day.

According to the criteria outlined in the instructions, I cannot use the Campus Space Request form. Why?
Conference & Event Services needs enough lead time to process your request along with all of the other requests for space. If your event is less than 2 business days in advance, we may not be able to process your request in time. Please call 413-538-2153 to see if it is still possible to make a reservation.
Frequently Asked Questions (continued)

All events must be sponsored by a campus department or registered student organization. Those not directly affiliated with the college should send an email to conference@mtholyoke.edu or call 413-538-2333 for more information.

How do I request services for my event?
Once you receive the email confirmation, you should begin a dialogue with Conference & Event Services about your service needs. Send an email to eventservices@mtholyoke.edu or call 413-538-2153.

When I submitted my Campus Space Request form, I got a message warning me that event services may not be available. What does that mean?
Conference & Event Services needs enough lead time to process your request and secure the necessary services for your event. These services include heating/air conditioning, building and room access, media services, room set-up/clean-up, equipment delivery, and calendar postings. If your event is less than 14 days from now, we may not be able to provide the services you will need. We will start a dialogue with you about the options when we reply with your reservation confirmation.

I don’t see the location that I want to reserve in the Campus Space Request Form. What should I do?
The form should be used to request any of the spaces that are reserved by Conference & Event Services. If you do not see a location in the drop-down menu, it is not reserved by Conference & Event Services.

Do I have to reserve outdoor spaces?
Yes, outdoor spaces must be reserved just as indoor spaces. When planning an event in an outdoor space, be sure to make a rain plan. You should either set a rain date or a rain location for all outdoor events.

How do I reserve a vendor table in Blanchard?
The vendor tables in the Blanchard Campus Center are reserved by the Office of Student Programs. Contact them to make a reservation at x2478.

I need Media Services and Facilities Management assistance in a space not controled by Event Services—how do I request these needs?
If you are requiring assistance from the one of the support departments in a space not controled by Event Services, we will still handle the request. Email eventservices@mtholyoke.edu or call x 2153 for assistance and guidance.
Event Planning Timeline & Checklist

Major Event Venues (ie: Chapin, Gamble, etc.)  
21 days – 2 years in advance

Events Needing Services (ie: set-up, media, etc.)  
15 days – 1 year in advance

Simple Meetings (no services required)  
2 days – 2 months in advance

- Determine preferred event date, time (including space access time) and location as well as alternate dates, times and locations.
- Submit your request to Conference & Event Services

30 days – 6 weeks in advance of event

- Finalize budget for event and secure funds.
- Make travel arrangements for speaker(s) if necessary.
- Contact Conference & Event Services to discuss event details.
- Confirm speakers.
- Create and/or gather information for handouts.
- Identify target audience, devise advertising plan and create advertising materials.
- Invite attendees and/or guests.

2-4 weeks in advance of event

- Advertise event, including MHC Events Calendar and Five College Calendar, when applicable.
- Determine the room set-up, and send diagram and equipment request to Conference & Event Services.
- Determine Media needs (be sure to ask each speaker what they might need), and submit your request to Conference & Event Services.
- Determine the food service/catering menu with caterer.
- Determine additional services needed, such as parking, security, name tags, signage, transportation needs, etc. Discuss your needs with Conference & Event Services, so they can help if possible.
- Copy and collate all handouts.
- Develop seating chart, if necessary.

3 days in advance of event

- Confirm room set-up, media, and all other equipment needed.
- Finalize registration/attendee list.
- Confirm your own staff schedule.
- Provide caterer your guarantee food number.