



**SAINT LOUIS  
UNIVERSITY™**

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## **Guidelines for Creating Inclusive Programs/Events**

Saint Louis University understands that the exchange of ideas and the opportunity to critically analyze and express different viewpoints is essential to the University's mission, which emphasizes the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of God and for the service of humanity.<sup>1</sup> It is each organization's responsibility to ensure that purposes and activities are to be consistent with the mission. Saint Louis University is committed to fostering an inclusive environment that welcomes and celebrates all expressions of diversity and identity that advance the Jesuit mission of forming women and men for and with others. In that same regard, the university does not tolerate nor approve of programs and actions that would encourage, celebrate or glorify hatred, violence, abusive behavior, religious intolerance, irresponsible or illicit drug and alcohol use, and the objectification of human beings.<sup>2</sup>

### **Use of Guidelines**

The goal of these guidelines is to provide student clubs and organizations with a resource from which to develop programs and events that are inclusive of, and welcoming to, the many individuals that make up SLU's diverse campus community.<sup>3</sup> These guidelines encourage and challenge student leaders to reflect upon their organization's mission and how sponsored programs could impact the larger community. These guidelines are not meant to be an all-inclusive list of instructions for creating the 'most inclusive events.' We recognize that there are multiple points of view in and solutions in responding to the diversity of the campus community. Rather, these were created to support the development of multicultural competency for individual student leaders

and student organizations. Below are some talking points and reflection questions that will assist clubs and organizations in the following categories:

- \* Event Purpose and Objective
- \* Themed Events
- \* Advertising
- \* General guidelines and tips
- \* Case Studies

### **Event Purpose and Objective**

Your organization should consider the intent and the impact of your organization's event. It is always helpful to consider your organization's larger mission and to reflect on how a program or event promotes this mission. Other questions include:

- a. What is the overall purpose and goal of your event? (Intent)
- b. Why is this specific event/method/type of marketing uniquely positioned to address the event's objectives? (Intent)
- c. Is there any opportunity that the event or other associated behaviors tied to the event may be interpreted differently? (Impact)
- d. Does this event have the potential to polarize another group on or off campus? (Impact)

### **Themed Events**

Themed events can often be fun, creative, and trendy. However, it is important to be mindful of themes that could be all in good fun, and themes that may have a negative impact on your organization. In some cases, themed events can unintentionally transfer from a popular trend to the representation of a culture, which can be perceived as insensitive, stereotypical, and dehumanizing. Below are some guiding questions to ask your organization as you are planning:

- \* Does the theme align with the mission of your club or organization?<sup>4</sup>
- \* In what ways could the theme be interpreted and misinterpreted?
- \* Does your theme represent a culture or ethnicity? If so, is that culture or ethnicity directly related to the mission of your organization?
- \* Does this theme have the potential to tokenize or perpetuate stereotypes against a group of people?
- \* Would your organization be embarrassed or ashamed if a staff, faculty member, or family member knew of the event? If it was published in newspapers or other press related media?
- \* Is your organization's theme supposed to be funny? Is the humor based on making fun of real people, a social identity, or culture?<sup>5</sup>
- \* Does the theme include slang or other terms that the general public would find offensive?<sup>6</sup>

In general, your organization should avoid themed events that make reference to both an empowered group and a disempowered group. This power dynamic could trivialize complex historical issues that those groups may have experienced. This is not appropriate as it discourages the cultivation of an inclusive community that recognizes the inherent dignity of each person.

## **Publicity**

Upon the completion of planning for your event, you should thoughtfully consider how to convey the messages to your audience. Publicity for events include methods by which your organization uses to promote an upcoming event. These methods include, but are not limited to print materials such as flyers and posters, email distribution, and social media platforms (e.g. Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube). In determining promotion, your organization must think thoughtfully about the impression your advertising will have on the community. Please be

aware that the Internet can circulate information rapidly. Any form of promotion that intentionally or unintentionally degrades, disgraces, or is an affront to the human dignity of an individual is strictly prohibited and may be subject to violations under the student code of conduct.

- \* Who are you appealing to and what expectations are you creating?
- \* Have you been clear in your advertising about what your event's goals are and why people should want to attend?
- \* How do you advertise your organization and its activities?

If you only advertise in limited areas, it is likely that you are excluding some interested students from your organization. If the event is closed to your members only, are the members aware of the purpose of the theme and are aware of guidelines and expectations?

## **General Guidelines & Tips**

When programming, it is important to be mindful of differences of the people in the community. Individuals striving to create and maintain inclusive communities must ask the following question: "Whose perspectives, viewpoints, and voices are included?" (adapted from the Advisor Manual from the ACPA Commission of Student Involvement)

### **Consider the following:**

- \* Gender bias and gender-neutral language
- \* Religious backgrounds, rituals, and traditions
- \* Racial and/or ethnic populations
- \* Populations outside of the United States
- \* Socio-economic diversity of individuals
- \* Individuals with disabilities

- \* Heterosexual bias and diverse sexual orientations

### **Other items to consider:**

- \* Test your publicity materials with other audiences before it goes public.
- \* Is the date of your event coinciding with any religious holidays important to members of the SLU community? (Consider consulting the interfaith calendar).
- \* Is the event time your organization selected feasible for everyone you hope to attend?
- \* Is your venue accessible to guests in wheelchairs? Is it comfortable for others with special mobility, sight, or hearing concerns?
- \* If food is involved, has your student organization considered possible dietary needs of guests (e.g. Halal or Kosher options, vegetarians or vegan options, common food allergies, etc.)?

<sup>1</sup> Student Organization Policies 3.4 A Policy  
<sup>2</sup> Student Organization Policies 3.4 E.2 Policy  
<sup>3</sup> Adapted from Mount Holyoke College Creating More Inclusive Events  
<sup>4</sup> Adapted from Tri Delta Costumes and Cultural Sensitivity  
<sup>5</sup> Adapted from Hampshire College: Hampshire Halloween Checklist  
<sup>6</sup> Adapted from Tri Delta Costumes and Cultural Sensitivity  
<sup>7</sup> Adapted from Advisor Manual from the ACPA Commission of Student Involvement