

Women's Leadership Conference Committee End of Year Report

Submitted by Women's Leadership Conference 2018-2019 Committee Chair: Shania Montúfar

Members:

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The Year in Review and Some General Notes

Women's Leadership Conference

Date: 2/16/2019

Location: Baldwin Hall

Description: The committee hosted the second annual Women's Leadership Conference.

Notes and Suggestions for Future Committee Chairs

Here is a rough outline of the steps to take to organize the conference:

1. Meet with your committee in order to discuss the successes and shortcomings of past conferences. Your first step should be to create a cohesive vision and objective for your conference. Ideas could include: education, advocacy, community, self-expression, etc. Remember, if you don't understand the vision of your conference, then no one else will either!
2. Determine the composition of your conference. We chose four main types of events: presentations, round-table discussions, panels, and activities/workshops. Feel free to be creative here, multimedia conferences attract the most attendees.
3. Room reservations: Now that you have an idea of the types of events you will be hosting, you can reserve rooms to match them. We reserved each of our rooms for the duration of the conference. Here's the breakdown we chose:

BH 101: Check-In Room

BH 114: Panels

BH 231: Workshops and Roundtable Discussions

BH 303: Presentations

**Note: We would suggest choosing rooms primarily on the first and second floors.. People don't like taking the stairs.

4. Start brainstorming panel themes and reach out to community members to give presentations! This will be the most time consuming portion of planning the conference. **You should start this process as soon as possible** in order to confirm a schedule before the month of the conference. It is most effective to reach out to speakers with a time and presentation topic already in mind.
 5. Reach out to different organizations to attend the conference. We only reached out to the Bad Acids Printmaking Club and SDS. **Future chairs should try to incorporate more organizations.** Ideas would be the Women's Resource Center, The Center for Diversity and Inclusion (CDI), Prism, etc. You can ask these organizations to host an activity, workshop, or just volunteer to help run the conference!
 6. Create your schedule. Try to schedule only two events at a time. Additionally, be sure to leave a 10 minute gap between events to allow attendees to arrive on time.
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7. Share your finalized schedule with all participants and begin advertising. We shared information about the conference with Truman Today, the Index, the CDI, various professors, and the student Listserv. You can also work with the Publicity Chair to create posters and social media graphics. **We would highly suggest creating posters and a Facebook page.**

Here are some of our graphics from the 2019 conference:

8. Be sure to order food from Sodexo for the Check-In Room. Depending on your budget, this could range from cookies and lemonade to lunch. Refreshments worked well for the 2019 conference.
9. Order any last minute materials you may need. This includes name-tags, markers, materials for any activities, pamphlets, folders, and decorations.
10. Send out a thorough email with your finalized schedule, room locations, and any other pertinent information to all participants *at least two weeks* before the conference. We printed out sheets with important information for volunteers and speakers and provided them at the conference.

Suggestions:

- Collaborate! The Women's Leadership Conference is a community event. Be sure to incorporate as many organizations, departments, and offices as you can. Not only will this help you with attendance, but it will also help you attract a diverse set of attendees!
- We chose to run the 2019 conference in conjunction with the annual WGST Research Conference. Our collaboration was ultimately successful, but scheduling became a bit confusing! Future committees should work closely with the WGST Research Conference Committee to create a schedule that benefits both sides.
- Try cutting down the conference to around 2 hours. Most people did not stay the entire 3 hours this year.
- Attendees really value interactive activities. Workshops, round-table discussions, and panels received the best reviews. I would consider moving toward mostly interactive events in the future.
- Better incentivizing conference attendance has the potential to *really* expand the reach of the WLC. Work with professors to incentivize conference attendance through extra credit, and speak to organizations about offering different incentives. For example, service sororities have specific volunteering requirements they must meet each semester, and they were able to fill more than half of our volunteering slots. Ultimately, try to find as many ways to encourage students to attend the conference through extra credit, points, etc.

Respectfully Submitted,
Shania Montúfar