Chapter Three

Deciding What to Program

The decision of what to program is best made by determining which activities and events are relevant to your student body's interests and campus' needs. Assessing your campus' needs is a necessary step in narrowing down your programming choices from the many options available. For instance, almost all campuses need to produce musical programs of some kind; however, the choice of whether your programming board should plan a coffeehouse style singer/musician, a large concert band, a dance band or a performing arts ensemble—or all four—will largely depend on your students' interests, the size of your school, and the size of your budget. Other forms of campus entertainment, or campus event programming, include

- lecturers
- panel discussions or debates
- comedians and comedy troupes
- novelty special events
- campus talent shows
- performing arts plays, musicians, acrobats, and dance companies
- country, jazz, rock, rap, or other musical groups
- magicians, hypnotists, and jugglers
- roving artists
- theme weeks and weekends
- experiential (instructional) entertainment offerings

To begin narrowing down your choices, first look at the quality and relevance of your current or past offerings. How in-depth you make this assessment will depend on the amount of money and volunteer time your board can commit to this process. It is possible to expend a considerable amount of time and effort, and possibly money, if you evaluate all aspects of your campus activities programming. However, there are fairly simple, budget-conscious options available to survey your students' needs, and a good assessment process will make use of at least some of the following tools:

- surveys
- focus groups
- interviews
- comment areas on the programming board's Web site
- written evaluation forms for each program

Through comment areas on the programming board Web site and through written evaluations of each program, your board can assess the strengths and weaknesses of individual programs, along with your campus' support for various types of programs and artists. These two tools offer immediate and concise feedback on the programs and on the programming board processes that produce these programs. Program evaluations and audience surveys are covered in

detail in Chapter 7, and therefore will not be discussed here.

This chapter also discusses the uses and fundamentals of surveys, focus groups, and interviews. Through their use your programming board can maintain current insight into the changing needs of your student body, faculty, and administration, and their interests, issues, and tastes. These assessment tools are designed to be used annually, or possibly semi-annually, since you are seeking somewhat in-depth information. While you are at it, make sure to include the opinions of some of your school's professional staff who have direct involvement with the student body, such as health center nurses and counselors, career counseling and placement personnel, and managers of student-run game rooms and eateries.

Of the many assessment tools available, your programming board will be able to use the more formal process only every three to five years. Often referred to as a self-evaluation for campus activities, it is a significant undertaking and is described in detail later in this chapter. It's greatest value is that it helps your programming board and your advisor determine how the many aspects of your activities program and organizational structure compare to the established standards of the campus activities field. It is a long-range planning tool and is comprehensive in scope.

As a result of using any or all of these assessment tools, your programming board may decide to pursue program co-sponsorship options with relevant campus groups. Through co-sponsorships, some of the programming board's mission, goals, and objectives can be better realized, particularly if your surveys, focus groups, or interviews indicate a need for greater involvement with, or outreach to, one or more special populations on campus. Program co-sponsorships will be discussed in the last section of this chapter.

Web Site Comments

By maintaining your programming board's Web site and keeping its information current, you can encourage student "hits" as they become accustomed to checking it for updated information. Be sure to list its address on all promotional material. Also, consider creating a highly visible "Tell Us What You Think/Tell Us What You Want Us to Program" comment section for your students. This is one method that might appeal to your students. Promote the use of this comment section by drawing attention to the programming board's response to various student concerns and programming wishes. This kind of a bulletin board encourages future comments and feedback and helps involve the whole campus community in your pro-

gramming efforts. In posting comments on your Web site, though, be sure to maintain confidentiality for your respondents, or allow them the opportunity to submit their comments anonymously. If you would like to use comments you receive on your Web site in future publications, be sure to also allow your respondents to either opt in or opt out of having their comments used in this manner.

Surveys

At least once a year, your programming board should consider surveying your student body for opinions on the quality of current campus programming. In addition, your survey should also touch on student programming needs and allow them to evaluate how well these needs are being met. Your student opinion survey will also assist you in selecting programming that serves an outreach function to special populations on campus. This, in turn, helps your programming board better fulfill its educational mission, goals and objectives.

To obtain this kind of detailed information, you should send your survey to all enrolled students on your campus. As an alternative, consider setting up a table outside the entrance to your campus' dining halls or cafeterias. For assistance in designing your questionnaire, consider contacting your campus' research or education department. These departments usually have special expertise in surveying the campus community, and they should be able to assist your programming board. In addition, any survey your programming board undertakes should also involve campus organizations that serve the needs of the various under-represented populations on campus. The feedback from an under-represented campus organization can yield extremely beneficial information since your programming board should be producing

TIP:

Put up a comments bulletin board in the student union with printouts of student submitted comments and then follow these with a response from the appropriate board member or committee chair. Students, along with faculty and staff, respect and support those organizations they feel listen to their concerns and requests.

Campus Activities Survey

1. Sex:
☐ Male
☐ Female

2. Age:
☐ 18-24
☐ 25-34
☐ 35-44
☐ 45-54
☐ 55 or older

3. Race:
☐ Caucasian
☐ African American
☐ Asian/Pacific Islander
☐ Hispanic/Latino
☐ Native American
☐ Other

4. Marital Status:
☐ Single
☐ Married
☐ Divorced
☐ Widowed

5. Dependents in household (other than self):
☐ None
☐ 1-2
☐ 3-4
☐ 5 or more

6. Student Status:
☐ Freshman
☐ Sophomore
☐ Junior
☐ Senior

☐ Graduate
☐ Post Graduate

☐ Full-time
☐ Part-time

7. Employment:
☐ Not employed
☐ Part-time employment (less than 20 hours/week)
☐ Part-time employment (more than 20 hours/week)
☐ Full-time employment
☐ Retired

8. I live:
☐ On campus
☐ Off campus

9. Distance from home to school:
☐ less than 10 miles
☐ 10-20 miles
☐ 21 or more miles

10. I would prefer student activities events be scheduled during the following time periods (check all that apply):
☐ Before Noon
☐ Noon to 1 pm
☐ 1 pm to 3 pm
☐ 3 pm to 5 pm
☐ 5 pm to 7 pm
☐ 7 pm to 11 pm
☐ Saturday mornings
☐ Saturday evenings
☐ Sunday daytime

☐ Sunday evenings

11. I would prefer student activities events be scheduled on the following days (check all that apply):
☐ Monday
☐ Tuesday
☐ Wednesday
☐ Thursday
☐ Friday
☐ Saturday
☐ Sunday

12. I am most interested in the following kinds of programs (please rank in order of preference: 1=most, 9=least)
_____ Children's and Family Programs
_____ Comedy
_____ Films
_____ Lectures
_____ Musical artists/bands
_____ Performing arts
_____ Multicultural programs
_____ Novelty special events
_____ Novelty/variety performers
_____ Other programs (please describe_____)

13. I typically attend _____ campus activities programs per month.

14. My favorite program was _____

15. My least favorite program was _____

16. Comments _____

_____

Optional:
Name: _____   Phone: _____

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this survey.

Example 3.1: Campus Activities Survey

a variety of events for a diverse campus community.

In drafting your survey, there are four basic aspects that will affect the quality and usefulness of any information to be gained from the survey:

- demographic information
- carefully worded questions
- accurate response categories
- appropriate response scales

The demographic information your survey provides should help your programming board identify who is responding to your survey. This information can be helpful as you interpret and tally responses. Typical demographic information can include age, sex, marital status, race or ethnicity, and graduate or undergraduate

Also, be sure to define within the survey itself any words that are ambiguous in meaning. For example, if asking about the frequency of use of the student union building, rank your frequency scale using tangible descriptions. Give respondents the choice of indicating they visit the union "several times a day," "about once a day," "two to three times a week," "about once a week," etc.—not "frequently," "seldom," or "never."

status. As you draft your survey questions, try to give lists of choices for your respondents. A typical survey appears in Example 3.1.

When drafting questions with ratings scales, it is generally best to avoid absolutes, such as "yes" or "no," or "always" or "never." These answers can skew your results by placing respondents who would otherwise agree with a given position in an uncomfortable position. Also, be sure to define within the survey itself any words that are ambiguous in meaning. For example, if asking about the frequency of use of the student union building, rank your frequency scale using tangible descriptions. Give respondents the choice of indicating that they visit the union "several times a day," "about once a day," "two to three times a week," "about once a week," etc.—not "frequently," "seldom," or "never."

Focus Groups and Interviews

These two ways of surveying your students have advantages and disadvantages. Each allows for a more in-depth examination of your student body's needs and their perceptions of your board's performance. They can add a richness to your annual surveying work; however, great care must be taken in both the selection of a diverse and representative pool of individuals and in the actual structure of the focus groups or interview sessions. These types of organizational assessment are time and labor intensive and should be used to gain specific information to assist in the planning of future program choices and programming board goals and objectives.

A focus group will help student programmers arrive at a consensus that ideally will be representative of the general student population, particularly about proposed changes in programming board direction. Focus groups can use many of the questions from the campus activities survey described above, but will result in greater elaboration. During a focus group, controlled discussion and careful questioning by the facilitator can clarify potentially ambiguous responses. It is imperative to have one person facilitate the focus group and a silent partner who

takes notes. The notes are most helpful when you take exact quotes and identify who voiced each opinion. When conducting a focus group, remember to stick to the agenda, and limit the session time from an hour to an hour and a-half, maximum. Ideally, try to recruit approximately eight to 10 people for each group. In addition, at the beginning of the focus group, you should clearly inform the participants about your confidentiality policy and how the results of the focus group will be used.

On the other hand, interviews occur with one person giving feedback. As with focus groups, this feedback can help student programmers gain valuable insight into the tastes, lifestyles, or attitudes of the student body; however, due to the one-on-one nature of an interview, this feedback can provide the greatest reflection of your students' personal programming needs.

The advisor, along with your school's research, education, or marketing department, can help you with the process of setting up focus groups, choosing their topics, or scripting an interview session. As a reward for your interview or focus group participants, consider giving away some kind of incentive, such as a pair of movie tickets.

Organizational Assessment

Completed every three to five years, a thorough organizational assessment process produces a highly detailed appraisal that assists in the formation and evaluation of your programming board's goals and objectives. This review examines all facets of your school's programs and events, student development issues affected by the programs themselves, and the degree to which various campus populations feel included in your events. The organizational assessment process is an invaluable planning tool and is extremely useful in determining how closely your organization is meeting its stated mission, goals, and objectives.

For an evaluation process to have relevance and yield useful information, those doing the evaluation need to have a set of standards on which to base their ratings. In the *NACA Standards and Guide for Self-Evaluation of Campus Activities*, objective standards are presented along with sample evaluation forms. These forms provide examples of areas that are most fre-

quently important on most campuses. These areas typically include:
- campus activities programs
- student/campus activities organizations
- special populations and their programming needs
- lecture/concert programs
- student self-governance/student leadership

In general, each of the programming areas listed above should be evaluated according to how strong each area compares to the six benchmark criteria categories for:
- programming purposes and goals
- financial, human, and physical resources
- programs, services, and activities
- organizational structure
- evaluation and planning
- maintenance of ethical standards

These six benchmark criteria categories are discussed very briefly in this chapter. A complete discussion of these evaluation areas can be found in Appendix C.

Programming Purposes and Goals

In evaluating your programming purposes and goals, you will look at two major evaluation areas: mission and campus and community relations. Your programming board's mission should be a set of essential principles that provide a structure and a set of goals and objectives around which your board will build a comprehensive activities program. Through your efforts to enhance your campus and community relations, your board can play a central role in helping to shape the campus life experience for students.

Mission

As you examine your programming board's mission and goals, some of the questions you should ask yourself include the following:
1. Do your campus activities programs contribute to the overall educational experience of students by offering them meaningful social, cultural, multicultural, intellectual, recreational, community service, and campus self-governance programs?
2. Do these experiences assist students as they develop leadership abilities, healthy interpersonal relationships, and self-understanding through exposure to different cultures, points of view, art forms, and lifestyles?
3. Is your programming primarily entertainment for the predominant campus population, or does your programming board actively seek to include students from all backgrounds and populations?

Campus and Community Relations

Questions to ask when evaluating this aspect of your programming board's effectiveness include the following:

- Does your programming board currently have active partnerships with administrators, faculty, and staff members throughout the campus community who can serve as valuable resources for your activities programs?
- Can you cite examples of programs and activities sponsored by your board that promote a good public image in the local community?
- Can you give examples of your board's role in community issues?

Financial, Human, and Physical Resources

Of all the areas that your programming board will evaluate, the evaluation of these three aspects will be more staff driven than any other; however, student programmers should offer input.

Financial Resources

In evaluating the financial resources available to the programming board, you and your advisor should consider the following:

- Does your programming board adhere to a written budget and maintain proper financial records?
- Are student programmers informed of school policies and regulations governing the accounting and handling of funds?

Human Resources

In evaluating this aspect of student programming, your programming board should examine the following:

- Are tasks such as staff selection, training, and evaluation performed according to established procedures?
- Do professional staff members in the student programming office hold a graduate degree in a field relevant to student life or student personnel?
- Are professional staff members able to interpret student concerns and needs, and are they able to express these needs to the greater campus community and administration?

Facilities, Technology, and Equipment

In evaluating the physical office space and equipment, your programming board and your advisor should consider the following:

- Are the facilities used to host campus activities programs and house the student programming office(s) in compliance with all federal, state, and local code requirements?
- How accessible, healthy, and safe are the student programming offices, restrooms, and function areas?
- Are the student and staff office spaces designed to encourage maximum interaction among students and between staff and students?

Programs, Services, and Activities

The standards for evaluating your campus activities programs—and how well they meet the needs of a diverse student body—are briefly discussed below.

Program

The campus activities program should be based on theories and knowledge of learning and human development and should reflect the demographic realities of the student population. As you evaluate this area, ask yourselves these questions:

- Does your overall campus activities program assist in the development of whole individuals?
- Do your programs encourage intellectual growth, effective communications skills, self-knowledge, enhanced self-esteem, values clarification, leadership skills, physical fitness, emotional wellness, and an appreciation for cultural diversity?
- Does your programming board have an ongoing process for evaluating the success and relevance of the programs it produces?

Diversity

Within the campus community, the existence of multi-dimensional diversity enhances the collegiate experience for all. As student programmers, you should focus special attention on diversity issues. The following issues are important considerations:

- Do your campus activities programs promote appreciation and understanding of cultural diversity?
- Do your campus activities programs promote cultural educational experiences that deepen the understanding of one's own culture and her-

The campus activities program should be based on theories and knowledge of learning and human development and should reflect the demographic realities of the student population.

itage, while at the same time teaching mutual respect for other cultures?

- Does your board provide educational programs that give students of traditionally under-represented groups opportunities to develop an understanding of self-identity and appropriate goal setting and achievement strategies?

Organizational Structure

Your program board's organizational and management structure should afford students adequate and meaningful leadership and skill development opportunities. Criteria for evaluating the framework of your program board are listed below.

Within the campus community, the existence of multi-dimensional diversity enhances the collegiate experience for all. As student programmers, you should focus special attention on diversity issues.

Organization and Management

In evaluating the organizational structure of the programming board, consider the following items:

- Is the campus activities program structured appropriately with current and published policies and procedures, along with written job descriptions/performance expectations for all employees and student program board members?
- Is there an established process that provides for regular review of policies and procedures and for their updating, as needed?

Leadership

In evaluating the level of empowerment and the quality of board leadership, consider the following:

- Are there written job descriptions, or expectations of performance, and ongoing and fair organizational assessment procedures to gauge a leader's performance?
- Are your programming board leaders committed to continual improvement of campus activities programs, as well as to continual improvement of programming board policies and procedures?

Evaluation and Planning

Regular evaluation and planning are essential if the campus activities board is to consistently offer high-quality programs that properly serve the organization's and the school's missions and goals.

Organizational Assessment and Evaluation

Campus activities programs should be evaluated regularly and the results of these findings should be distributed to appropriate campus agencies and constituencies. How does your programming board rate in this area?

- Is there an established and ongoing effort to conduct surveys, or collect other quantitative data, that assesses student success and retention, achievement of stated goals and mission, quality and scope of program offerings, responsiveness to student requests and interests, program attendance and cost effectiveness?
- Are future revisions to programming choices and service offerings made based on the findings from these organizational assessments?

Maintenance of Ethical Standards

To properly maintain ethical standards of conduct for both individual program board members and for the board itself, three areas must be evaluated: legal responsibilities; equal opportunity, access, and affirmative action; and ethics.

Legal Responsibilities

How well does your staff and program board rate in the following areas?

- Do staff members remain informed about new statutory, regulatory, and case law, court orders and decisions that affect the institution and the production of campus activities programs? Is this information passed on to student programmers?
- Do staff members use reasonable caution to limit the liability of the school, its officers, employees, and agents?

Equal Opportunity, Access and Affirmative Action

Campus activities staff members must ensure that services and programs are provided on a fair and equitable basis, and that hours of operation are responsive to the needs of all students. In evaluating your performance in this area, consider the following:

- Is each program and service fully accessible?
- Does your campus activities program adhere to both the spirit and the letter of equal opportunity laws?
- Are any of your programs discriminatory on the basis of age, color, disability, gender, national origin, race, religious creed, sexual orientation, or veteran status?

The development of ethical behavior and attitudes among members of the program board is essential to the development of student leaders. Consider the following when evaluating the ethics practiced by your board:

- Are there written statements spelling out expectations for ethical behavior—specifically as these relate to campus activities programming—and consequences for their violation?
- How well do staff members avoid any real or perceived personal conflict of interest in their interactions with students and others, such as local vendors or campus entertainment firms?
- When handling money or financial transactions, do staff members ensure that student programming funds are managed in accordance with established and responsible accounting procedures, as well as school procedures?

The Organizational Assessment Process, Step-by-Step

As you may be able to see from these detailed descriptions, a thorough organizational assessment is an involved, time- and labor-intensive process, which can also be expensive to carry out. To gain the most from this considerable investment—which your programming board will be able to make only every three to five years—your programming board will need to appoint an organizational assessment coordinator who will then select an evaluation committee. In the middle of the process, your student programmers; students from various campus populations; faculty, staff, and administration members will offer valuable feedback through the completion of evaluation forms, interviews, etc. In the *NACA Standards and Guide for Self-Evaluation of Campus Activities,* Julian lists the various steps of a thorough evaluation, which are paraphrased below:

1) Select an organizational assessment coordinator, who will then appoint an organizational assessment committee.
2) Gather background and historical information.
3) Complete organizational assessment forms.
4) Prepare a report.
5) Have an objective third party review the report, visit the campus, and comment on the strengths and weaknesses of the organizational assessment.
6) Solicit reactions from various stakeholders to the organizational assessment process.

In the following paragraphs, the first four steps are briefly described; Steps 5 and 6 will vary greatly according to how your institution views the necessity of bringing in an outside consultant—for this reason, these are not discussed in this chapter. It should be noted that a consultant will add a valuable objective opinion to your evaluation process and the accompanying report. In addition, a consultant will provide written and verbal feedback, as well as advice.

Step 1: Select an organizational assessment coordinator, who will then appoint an organizational assessment committee

A full-time coordinator is a necessity considering the immensity of a thorough evaluation. This person will coordinate the work of the organizational assessment committee(s), as well as all aspects of the process it-

> *Campus activities staff members must ensure that services and programs are provided on a fair and equitable basis, and that hours of operation are responsive to the needs of all students.*

self. This person will also contact potential consultants, chair meetings, gather needed resources, and see that deadlines are met.

The assessment coordinator will probably be instrumental in the selection process of a highly representative committee. Representatives from the faculty, staff, and student body should all be included in a broadly based committee. Whenever possible, avoid selecting people with deeply vested interests or biased viewpoints in any of the program areas under review. As an added benefit, after the evaluation process is complete, members of the evaluation committee can serve as educated spokespeople on behalf of the campus activities program.

Step 2: Gather background and historical information

The first order of business for the committee and committee coordinator is the gathering of historical documentation and conducting of research to assess the current and historical role of the campus activities program. During this step, the committee will gather paper examples, documentation of evaluations of programs, surveys, and focus group results. The goal of gathering this documentation is to determine the appropriateness and effectiveness, strengths

and weaknesses of the campus activities program. In addition to conducting interviews, the committee will also need to examine the financial history of the program, philosophical direction of the program (i.e. organizational mission) and the degree of planning or randomness in the program's development.

Next, the committee will need to draw an overall, inclusive, and detailed portrait of all aspects of the program's operation. The committee will need to examine the mission statement and evaluate the program's adherence to it, as well as the relevance of the statement itself. Your organization's mission statement and goals should be published and given to all board members as part of their new board member orientation materials. Otherwise, you will need to ask your advisor for a copy of this information. In addition to the mission and goals statements, organizational structure, new leader training, human, physical, and financial resources are also matters that must be documented and examined. To assist your programming board in this portion of Step 2, consider utilizing a set of written criteria such as those listed in NACA's Exemplary Practices and Model Programs application, which appears in Example 3.2.

The final part of this step is mailing out a survey to a representative sampling of the student body. This survey will help the committee evaluate the current level of student satisfaction or dissatisfaction. As a final component of this stage of information gathering, at least part of this research should be done face-to-face or via telephone interviews. The interviews will add a richness to the research that is rarely obtained through a statistical or paper research method.

Step 3: Complete organizational assessment forms

Using the forms found in the *NACA Standards and Guide for Self-Evaluation of Campus Activities*, or those that the committee has customized for its particular campus, the program board (along with any related organizations) should complete evaluations. In completing these evaluations, current campus programs can be compared to the minimum specific standards spelled out in the NACA guide or those established by an organization such as the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS). The *CAS Campus Activities Program Standards and Guidelines Self-Assessment Guide 1998* is an excellent source of national-level standards for the campus activities profession. This detailed guide provides step-by-step instructions for the complete organizational assessment process, along with a detailed explanation of organizational assessment principles, goals, and theory. It is also an excellent source for examples of organizational

assessment forms and other interviewing and research instruments.

Step 4: Prepare a report

After all research has been completed, the committee coordinator, or those individuals he or she appoints, will draft the organizational assessment report. Considering the all-encompassing nature of this report, it is likely your evaluation committee will assign different individuals responsibility for writing the separate sections of the report. As far as format is concerned, a logical ordering of the components appears below:

- historical review
- description of current status
- review of ratings from interviews and surveys conducted in Step 2

NACA's Exemplary Practices and Model Programs Submission Criteria

NACA's Exemplary Practices and Model Programs were created to recognize annually higher education institutions that, in the judgment of their peers and business colleagues, have successfully addressed a contemporary issue in student affairs with exemplary skill, creativity and resourcefulness. NACA Exemplary Practices and Model Programs recognize campus activities programs that incorporate sound research and assessment, preparation, program delivery and evaluation to meet the highest standards of performance in the profession.

Written Documentation
I. Campus Organization/Department Goals
   A. Describe your organization or department's educational goals/mission.
   B. Describe how the submitted program meets those goals.
   C. Explain how this program or practice assists the organization/department in enhancing the institutional mission.

II. Needs Assessment
   A. What originated the idea for this program/practice?
   B. Highlight the length of time over which the assessment was conducted.

III. Planning and Preparation
   A. Elaborate on the intended target audience.
   B. Describe the design of the program.
   C. What were the intended outcomes of this program?
   D. Explain any problems that had to be overcome and your responses to them.
   E. List all campus resources that contributed to the success of the program.
   F. Include the final cost analysis of the program (overall revenue vs. expense).
   G. Highlight any fund-raising or financial sponsorship that occurred.

IV. Publicity and Promotion
   A. Describe the communication plan and the strategies used to reach your target audience.
   B. Describe the methods employed to advertise the program.

V. Evaluation
   A. Was the program successful, and how do you define this success?
   B. Outline the steps taken to measure intended outcomes. Describe the methodology.
   C. Describe the specific measurable outcomes that were achieved.
   D. Explain how this program or practice assists the organization/department in enhancing its mission, and in also enhancing the institutional mission.
   E. Describe how ethics and integrity may be manifested in the program or practice.
   F. Based on the outcome of this program, describe the most significant changes that will be made when the program is offered again.

Example 3.2: NACA's Exemplary Practices and Model Programs Submission Criteria

- review of ratings and notes made on evaluation forms—complete with a description of the present program, its strengths and weaknesses
- committee's recommendations for strengthening the program in the future

Program Co-Sponsorships Can Address Needs Identified in Evaluation Processes

Program co-sponsorship is one of the best outreach tools available for strengthening a sense of community on campus. As a result of the various needs identified in your program board's surveys, focus groups, or organizational assessments, your board may decide to begin pursuing program co-sponsorship options. This is one of the quickest ways to remedy a deficiency in serving the needs of a special campus population, particularly when there is an established campus group, or a local organization, that serves this population.

Through a co-sponsorship in student activities programming, two or more groups or organizations can agree to jointly participate in producing a program. When two organizations with differing but complementary constituencies, strengths, and areas of expertise join forces, the program they produce has the potential to benefit from the resulting symbiosis. For example, a symbiotic relationship would exist if the campus activities program board joined with the student media club to produce an annual arts film festival. The relationship could be further enhanced if the program board enlisted faculty support from the media arts department, whose instructors might decide to give extra credit for student attendance at the festival.

If you plan to go off campus, your program board should work through your school's development office to approach local community organizations. Before leaping into a co-sponsorship agreement, though, your program board should consider the following six factors identified by Kintigh and Beifus (1992):
- Does the intended program mesh with your program board's educational mission?
- Does it support the educational mission of the school and its related service groups?
- Does your program board and the intended co-sponsor(s) have adequate volunteers to commit to this project/event?
- What kind of allowances will be made for the training of volunteers not familiar with campus event programming?
- Does the intended event conflict with any important events on the academic calendar?
- Are there adequate funds available to implement the program? Which group will pay for what? How will payment or reimbursement be made?

If after considering these factors, your programming board feels co-sponsorship is a valid option, you will next need to decide what type of co-sponsorship will best meet your needs and best serve the event. The three most common types of co-sponsorships are financial, personnel, and informational.

The collaboration checklist in Example 3.3 will help guide your programming board as it discusses a potential co-sponsorship arrangement with other organizations. Later, the potential co-sponsors can also utilize this checklist as a worksheet when it is time to write out the terms of the co-sponsorship agreement. (See Appendix D for a full-size version of Example 3.3.)

Financial Co-Sponsorships

This is the most common form of partnership and it involves the pooling of financial resources. This is one way your program board can produce an event that would otherwise be financially infeasible. It is also one way to spread the financial costs of hosting an important event that directly supports your board's mission and goals. When planning a financial co-sponsorship, it's important to keep one particular caution in mind: the money for the artist's fee must be in one or both of the organizations' account(s) prior to the event, because payment of the artist is traditionally made immediately following the event.

Personnel Co-Sponsorships

A program board may join with another student group because program board members have more experience in producing the type of event under consideration. For any organization, asking another to share personnel may save preparation time and prevent the students involved from neglecting classes or work because an event requires involvement from planning to execution.

Information Co-Sponsorships

The third type of co-sponsorship involves one organization sharing information with one or more other campus organizations. Generally speaking, the organization with the specialized knowledge would offer advice to the group organizing an event. This advice could be offered in several different forms:

- as peer counseling from program board members
- by offering to share informational resources—for example, lending periodicals such as *Billboard*, *Pollstar*, *Rolling Stone*, or *Campus Activities Programming* magazine; and

- maintaining a library of resources, which could include copies of sample contracts, contract riders, program planning checklists and budget planning forms, to list a few possibilities.

Additionally, this situation could also be reversed, with the program board relying on another campus organization for information on the latest trends and issues affecting a special population on campus. For example, African American, gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender, political, or professional organizations could provide ideas for guest lecturers.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Co-Sponsorships

Co-sponsorships bring their own set of unique advantages and disadvantages. Weighing the potential benefits against potential pitfalls will help your program board establish a set of co-sponsorship policies, which will provide a set of guidelines for structuring future co-sponsorship relationships.

Advantages of Co-Sponsorship

Enhanced Diversity in Programs

Co-sponsorships can bring diverse segments of the campus community together to produce successful multicultural programming events. By involving organizations that represent special campus populations, a program board with a "mainstream" image can reach out to students who have been under-represented in attendance at other program board functions. For example, the Office of Multicultural Affairs and your programming board could co-sponsor an event, or a series of events, over the course of a semester. Often a co-sponsorship like this can lead to greater program board diversity if student programmers take advantage of the built-in recruitment opportunities these co-sponsorships provide.

Student Development

Co-sponsorships offer numerous student development opportunities to both organizations. Non-program board members acquire knowledge about program planning, budgeting, contract implementation, and event evaluation, while promoting and sponsoring events related to their own interests. Other student development benefits include gaining leadership experience in the areas of goal-setting, delegating responsibilities, teamwork and motivation, and negotiating. In addition, coming into contact with people from different cultures and backgrounds helps prepare students for working in a multicultural society after college.

Sample Collaboration Checklist

Identification of Audience
Students/faculty/staff are a _____ primary or _____ secondary audience for this project.

Program will address issues of interest to
___ Program Board members
___ Faculty/Staff members
___ Potential students
___ Potential faculty/staff members
___ Educational community at large
___ Entertainment community at large
___ Media
___ Other

Does any other association or group offer a program/information on this topic?
_____ yes _____ no
If yes, who: _____
Contact: _____

Identification of Outcomes
Program is designed to produce the following outcomes:
_____
_____
_____
_____

Program will be evaluated in the following manner:
_____
_____
_____

Strategic Tie-in
Does the proposed project fit with the Strategic Plan?
_____ yes _____ no
Where: _____

Does the proposed project fit with the Marketing Plan?
_____ yes _____ no
Where: _____

Anticipated Degree of Program Board Involvement
A. *Program Planning*
___ Program Board has no involvement
___ Program Board has some involvement, but not a primary role
___ Program Board shares primary responsibility
___ Program Board has sole responsibility

B. *Program Logistics*
___ Program Board has no involvement
___ Program Board has some involvement, but not a primary role
___ Program Board shares primary responsibility
___ Program Board has sole responsibility

C. *Program Promotion*
___ Program Board has no involvement
___ Program Board has some involvement, but not a primary role
___ Program Board shares primary responsibility
___ Program Board has sole responsibility

D. *Program Evaluation*
___ Program Board has no involvement
___ Program Board has some involvement, but not a primary role
___ Program Board shares primary responsibility
___ Program Board has sole responsibility

Impact on Resources
A. *Personnel*
1. Volunteer
___ No Program Board volunteers will be involved in this project
___ Low time commitment (less than 20/hrs over life of project)
___ Medium time commitment (20-40/hrs over life of project)
___ High (40-60/hrs over life of project)
___ Intensive (60+/hrs over life of project)

Which volunteer/component group would be assigned oversight of this project?
_____

2. Program Board Staff
___ No Program Board staff will be involved in this project
___ Low time commitment (less than 20/hrs over life of project)
___ Medium time commitment (20-40/hrs over life of project)
___ High (40-60/hrs over life of project)
___ Intensive (60+/hrs over life of project)

Which department(s) would be assigned oversight of this project? _____

B. *Finances*
1. Expenses
___ Program Board has no budgetary commitment
___ Program Board has a small budgetary commitment (less than 10% of total costs)
___ Program Board shares budgetary commitment (10%-25% of total costs)
___ Program Board shares primary budgetary commitment (25%-50% of total costs)
___ Program Board has majority budgetary commitment (50%-99% of total costs)
___ Program Board has sole budgetary commitment (100% of total costs)

Program Board's financial commitment is: $_____
(fill in the actual amount)

2. Revenue
___ Program Board will receive no revenue from this project
___ Program Board should break even on expenses on this project
___ Program Board will break even on both expenses and volunteer/staff time
___ Program Board will make a slight profit on this project (1%-5%)
___ Program Board will make a profit on this project (more than 5%)

Program Board's actual projected revenue is: $_____
(fill in the actual amount)

C. *Other Projects*
___ This project will have no impact on other Program Board projects
___ This project will necessitate some re-scheduling of current Program Board projects

Projects affected include: _____
_____

___ This project will require a major re-scheduling of current Program Board projects

Projects affected include: _____
_____

___ This project will require deletion of at least one current Program Board project

Projects affected include: _____
_____

Program Board Staff recommendation on project:
___ No participation
___ Limited participation, as outlined in attached recommendation
___ Full participation, as outlined in attached recommendation
___ Full participation, as submitted

Collaboration Request Status Log
Received on: _____
Reviewed by staff: _____
Presented to Board: _____
Response to request sent: _____

Example 3.3: Sample Collaboration Checklist

Disadvantages

Choosing the Right Program

Due to the differing goals and objectives each group brings to the co-sponsorship, it may be difficult to reach consensus on the selection of the program. Careful consideration needs to be given on both sides to the intended benefits for each group's individual constituency.

Potential for Conflict

An imbalance of power between two organizations can occur in three main areas: power/money, experience, or politics. Power or money imbalances can lead to one group feeling entitled to dominate another in terms of decision-making and delegating responsibilities. The other organization can respond by fighting with the dominant group over every detail, or it may take a submissive role, causing the uninvolved members to miss out on the opportunity to learn from valuable programming experiences. By arriving at a clear understanding of which decisions are to be made by whom, each group can minimize the likelihood that this type of conflict will compromise the quality of the event.

Differences in levels of experience can also lead to a situation in which the board with more experience in program planning feels resentful at having to train the other group's members. Patience on the part of the more experienced group is imperative if this co-sponsorship arrangement is to produce positive student development experiences.

A political imbalance can result from conflict generated when one group's leaders insist the other yield control over the direction of the program. To avoid this situation, both groups must be willing to negotiate and compromise and remain focused on the primary objective of producing the program.

Co-Sponsorship Policy

To alleviate the possibility that these disadvantages will threaten the production of your co-sponsored program, all parties should establish their own co-sponsorship policies. These policies will guide their decision-making and negotiation process with the other group and should help to minimize the chances of the event becoming "derailed." Cooper and Porter (1991) offer some guidelines.

To begin, each organization will need to understand what stake the event holds in relation to its mission, goals and objectives. Assuming each organization holds an equally strong stake in hosting the event, each should try to enlist the support of your school's administration by explaining the educational and com-munal value of this co-sponsorship. This joint effort may result in greater access to funds, facilities, or other campus resources. When financial resources are being provided by one organization in the co-sponsorship, the organization providing financial support should be recognized in all printed materials and other event promotional items.

To assist other campus groups in forming co-sponsorships with your programming board, consider providing programming seminars, or similar training, to other campus organizations and their advisors. These seminars serve to enhance the programming skills needed for successful co-sponsorships.

When a potential co-sponsoring organization has been approached by, or has approached your group, try to start your co-sponsorship experience by co-hosting a simple event. Consider sponsoring more complex events after your board has gained experience and confidence. In this way, each of your organizations will be able to build on positive experiences with a minimum of frustration.

Finally, following each co-sponsored event, all of your organizations should conduct an evaluation and review process. After each group has internally evaluated the event, representatives from both groups should meet to conduct a joint evaluation. This evaluation and the resulting knowledge can be used to strengthen the bond between your organizations and will enhance future co-sponsored events.

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