

Panhellenic Association Vice President Anderson Hicks reads the Panhellenic Creed. She spoke to prospective sorority sisters at the sorority information meeting on Sept. 8. NCSU Photo by Rebecca Arnold.



Publicity Planning Packet

*A guide for student organizations
who need publicity – and who doesn't?*

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Be creative. Start early.

The first step in any project is developing a plan. For some people, that's a four-letter word. But it is the key to success.

BRAINSTORM

Begin by brainstorming. Think outside the box of what you've done before. Define your target audience (sophomores, fraternity members, off-campus students, sci-fi fans, vegetarians, etc.). Then brainstorm ways to reach those groups effectively. For example, if you're trying to reach a group of sci-fi fans for a literary critique, consider advertising on the slides that appear before each movie at your local movie theatre. Find an upcoming sci-fi release, contact the theatre and provide them a slide. It's inexpensive and hits your target audience very efficiently. Don't waste a lot of time thinking of ways to encourage people outside your target group from coming.

NARROW DOWN LIST OF IDEAS

From your infinite list of ideas – if we had all the money and all the time in the world, here's what we'd do – bring reality back into the picture. What resources do you have in terms of money, time and staffing? You can have all the best ideas in the world but without the people to execute those ideas they cannot be effective.

PRIORITIZE

After you have decided which ideas are going to be effective and efficient given your limited resources, prioritize them. Which one will be the most effective? Which one should you do first? Which one will be effective at the last minute? Keep careful track of deadlines. It's pointless to put up posters around campus a month in advance unless you're just trying to increase awareness. They'll just get torn down or ruined thanks to the weather. A timeline will help you keep track of all these decisions without any last-minute panic.

EXECUTE

With a plan in place, execute it. Make sure people know what their specific responsibilities are. And give everyone small deadlines for copy or design or production so they can meet the big deadline while still attending class and working at their jobs.

EVALUATE

At various stages and after the event is complete, evaluate the project and each of the steps. Ask participants to evaluate the project. Your filed comments and participation evaluations will provide positive feedback and prevent the same mistakes from happening in the future.

RANDOM IDEAS

Place **table tents** in local restaurants and cafeterias

Send a **letter** to the RAs in the dorms

Speak to campus groups to personally invite them

Put **door knob hangers** on campus or apartment doors

Hang a **banner** across "the drag"

Create a **Web site** and an e-mail distribution list

Hold a **press conference**

Meet with faculty and staff to get them to announce it to their classes

Set up an **information table** with flyers and cards

Hang **posters**. More posters. More posters.

Reaching the public

There are basically three different ways you can reach the public through the mass media and get publicity for your group or event, arranged in descending order of the control you have.

1. Buy advertising space.
2. Write a guest column or editorial – commentary.
3. Submit a press release to get news/feature coverage.

ADVERTISING

If your group purchases an advertisement, you can pretty much guarantee it'll run and that you'll get some exposure. You may not get the best placement – which is why you should run the ad more than once – but you will get exposure.

Of course, the problem with advertising is that it's expensive. While most campus publications give a discount for campus groups, it's still not free. That means you need to figure out how best to maximize your investment. Some groups have found that merely running a small ad with the name of their group and a URL – but running it every day – can be effective. Other groups take out a full page ad on the day of their big event. Advertising works in conjunction with other forms of publicity, not alone.

Appoint one person to be in charge of print advertising. Develop a design scheme for all of your print media so members of your target audience will begin to identify a certain “look” with your organization and event. Coca-cola and McDonald's have done this very effectively with their logos. Think about including visuals such as photos of your keynote speaker or action photos of your group at work. Visuals attract readers. So do color and creative use of type and white space.

You can't cram everything you need to tell people in a 2-col. x 3-inch hole. That's the size of a business card. But you can put your logo, the name of your event, a date and a URL in that amount of space. Brainstorm with your group to see which is more effective, smaller ads run more often or larger, more informative ads strategically timed.

The publication's advertising department will help you design an ad if you don't have access to the appropriate computer equipment or a designer. Keep it simple.

If you do have the appropriate staff and equipment, work with the advertising department to make sure you can submit the ad in a format they can read. Adobe PDF files have become the standard and most, if not all, publications take ads in PDF format via e-mail now.

BUYING ADS


Advertising is sold by the column inch. Most broadsheet newspapers divide their page into six equal columns for advertising. An ad can be one, two, three, four, five or six columns wide. And it can be any number of inches tall.

For example, a classic size ad would be a 2-column by 8-inch. Since advertising is sold by the column inch, multiply to get 16 column inches.

If advertising in your paper costs \$7/col. inch, the cost for this ad would be ($7 * 16$ col. in =) \$102.

Often papers give volume discounts. For example, if you buy more than 20 column inches, they might give you a 5 percent discount. That discount may apply only to one ad or may apply to a series of ads purchased at one time.

Don't forget to add costs for color, photographs and design work if you're not providing the advertisement ready to run – “camera ready.”



Advertising Rates

Local Rate
Rate, per column inch: \$9.00

Volume discounts are available based on monthly inch totals. The College offers volume discounts to all advertisers who run at least 30 column inches per month and who pay within 30 days of invoice date.

100 to 249 inches	5%
250 to 299 inches	7%
300 to 399 inches	9%
400 inches or more	15%

National Rate
Rate, per column inch: \$19.00

Pick-up Rate
The College offers a pick-up rate for those advertisers who run an ad one day during the week for full price and then wish to run the same ad the following Monday or Tuesday for 30 percent off.

Political
All non-campus (local, county, state or national) ads placed by candidates and/or their supporters, per column inch: \$5.00. All Student, SOA-Approved Organizations ads, per column inch: \$5.00. All political ads must be paid in advance.

Newspapers and radio stations often post their rates online for easy access. This is particularly helpful during budgeting. Use the rate information to plan an advertising budget for individual projects and entire groups.

Sample advertisements

Invite members of the media to meet with your executive officers so they can know about your organization.

Provide regular information to all news outlets. This will give the media an opportunity to cover your events. They can't cover things they don't know about.

Don't assume an adversarial role.

Justine Hollingshead
Coordinator for
Conference Services
University Housing
North Carolina State
University

CHOIR CONCERT
APRIL 5 • PERFORMING ART CENTER

THE MEN'S GLEE CLUB, MADRIGAL SINGERS AND JAZZ ENSEMBLE WILL PRESENT A CONCERT NEXT TUESDAY IN THE PERFORMING ARTS CENTER. THE FEATURED SO-LOIST WILL BE SENIOR CHRIS WRIGHT, SINGING TENOR. MUSIC WILL INCLUDE TRADITIONAL AND CLASSICAL LITERATURE FOR CHOIRS. MORE THAN 300 CHOIR MEMBERS WILL BE SINGING.

DIRECTOR KERRY TAYLOR.

This ad falls under the category of who cares? What's going to make me look at the ad, especially if it's buried on a page with a dozen or more ads. There's no center of visual interest to pull the reader in. And there's too much needless information in an unreadable format – all caps.

**CHOIR
CONCERT**
April 5 • Performing Arts Center

**Singing classical literature
for choirs including a "Salute
to the Big 12" and our
remembrances of past wars.**

FEATURING
The Men's Glee Club
Madrigal Singers
Jazz Ensemble
with
Chris Wright, soloist
Kerry Taylor, director

Better. At least now we have some typographic variety and a center of visual interest. The choice of fonts will help establish an identity when repeated on all publicity.



In Concert
April 5 at 7 p.m.
Performing Arts Center
FREE

FEATURING
The Men's Glee Club, Madrigal Singers
Jazz Ensemble

A picture is worth a thousand words. And it's much more likely to pull reader into ad. Note the addition of more detailed information.

Samples

PRESS RELEASE

First lady to speak at womens' conference

AUSTIN — First Lady Laura Bush will be the keynote speaker at the 15th annual "Women in Careers Conference" sponsored by The University of Texas Student Government.

Bush will be speaking April 2 in the Texas Union Ballroom at 8 p.m. on the importance of literacy in our public schools, according to project coordinator Teresa Weidler.

"I am really looking forward to what she has to say," Weidler said. "She has been a strong advocate of education, educators and literacy in general. While we know literacy rates tend to be higher for women than men, it's important we strive to improve the quality of education for everyone."

The Womens' Resource Center of the Student Government, the second largest student government association in the United States, began working on the project last November and has scheduled more than 25 professional women to speak and to conduct workshops on such topics as university administration, magazine editing and resume writing.

"One of the more interesting workshops should be listening to a workshop on entering politics," Weidler said. "We have a United States senator, a state representative and a city councilwoman coming to speak. It's quite a group."

Student Government President Katie King said, "This conference will be an excellent opportunity for women to learn from other women who have made a difference in this world."

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FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Stacey Middleton, director, Womens' Resource Center, 512/471-3166

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

First lady to speak at womens' conference

First Lady Laura Bush will be the keynote speaker at the 15th annual "Women in Careers Conference" sponsored by The University of Texas Student Government April 2 in the Texas Union Ballroom on the UT campus.

In addition, other speakers will give sessions on everything from being a university administrator to being a magazine editor to writing a resume.

The workshop is free and open to the public. It begins at 10 a.m. with the keynote address. For more information visit www.utwomen.org.

TIPS

On writing press releases and public service announcements

1. *Edit. Edit. Edit.*
2. *Spell check.*
3. *Make them look presentable.*
4. *Include contact information (phone number, e-mail address, etc.)*
5. *Answer the important questions:*
 - *Who is involved?*
 - *Who should come?*
 - *What is the event?*
 - *When is it being held?*
 - *Where is it being held?*
 - *Why should people participate?*
 - *How can they participate?*
6. *Don't write "For Immediate Release" at the top. That's obvious. Do write "For Release On <DATE>" if the material should not be released before a certain time (such as election results).*

Flyers

Flyers can be expensive, four-color jobs full of photographs and special effects. They can cost a lot of money. Or they can be produced on a desktop publishing system, photocopied and distributed in mass quantities for pennies. Still, a few basic principles apply.

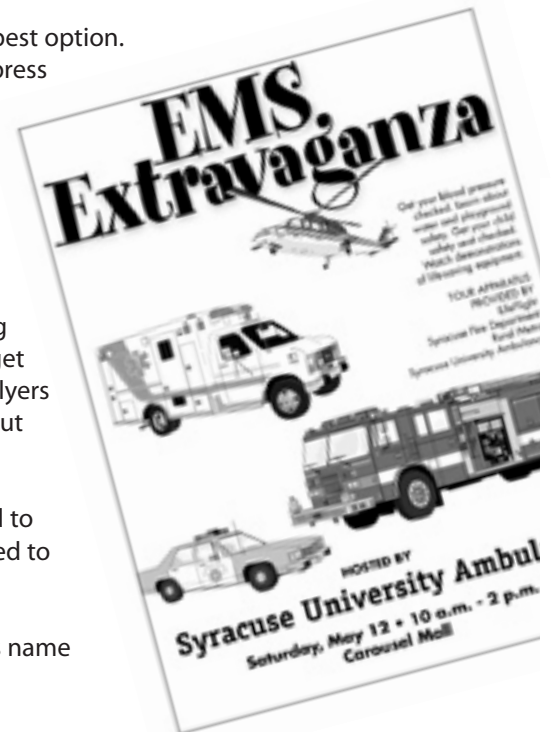
The first kind of flyer is the eye-catching “**quick glance**” flyer designed to be distributed by volunteers to students walking to class or passed out at large meetings. These flyers are generally half of a letter-sized page (5 1/2" x 8 1/2") and contain just the basic information – who, what, when, where and why should I care. The objective of this kind of flyer is to grab the students’ attention. Hook them. Then provide them a place to go for more information.

The second kind of flyer is an in-depth flyer, maybe a letter-size piece of paper folded in thirds or folded in half. Or it may be several sheets of paper stapled together in booklet form. These need not be more expensive, but they do contain a lot more information than the casual observer will want.

As with other projects, spend time writing the content and discussing the potential for visuals. Use the design motif (fonts, graphics, logos) that you developed during the initial brainstorming process to ensure a project identity and consistency.

CONSIDERATIONS:

1. **Color of paper.** Campuses are saturated with flyers. Make your flyer stand out. Develop a color scheme that fits the project.
2. **Color of ink.** Four-color photocopying has come down in price and may be an option. But black-and-white flyers can be just as effective when well designed.
3. **Printing method.** Photocopying is not always the cheapest option. Printing may prove to be cheaper, especially for longer press runs. And the quality is generally better, especially when printed from a disk file and not a laser print.
4. **Distribution.** Leaving flyers on a table for people to pick up sometimes increases awareness, but seldom saturates a market. Standing in high-traffic areas to hand out flyers increases awareness but wastes a lot of resources – time and money. Arrange distribution during peak hours when you can hit a lot of people in your target audience at once. Maybe it’s more effective to pass out flyers to a group of students leaving a class than to just pass out flyers on the mall.
5. **Mail** a copy of the flyer to your local media contacts and to specific people who might be interested or who just need to know what’s going on.
6. Make sure every single flyer includes your organization’s name and **contact** information.



You need a good relationship with the media. If you call them to do things for you, then you need to answer their questions when they call you.

Have one point person that can deal with reporters consistently.

Josh Cox
Student Senate President
North Carolina State
University



TYPICAL GUIDELINES

May be posted only on approved kiosks or bulletin boards.

Must include a date after which time posters will be removed.

Bulletin boards are under the jurisdiction of the college, school, department or administrative office that maintains them. Do not post material on bulletin boards without approval.

Posters may be hung for no more than 14 days and will be removed within 24 hours of the event.

Posters larger than 22"x28" must be approved by a dean's office or the physical plant.

Posters

It's not unreasonable for an institution to have a requirement such as, "Before publicly posting any sign, the student organization must include the name of the student or organization on each sign and place the date of posting or date of event on each sign posted." In fact, if you think about it, including who and when helps achieve the primary goal of a poster.

A poster should be a quick read. Students glance at them on their way to class or down a hallway. Have a visual that can help members of the target audience know this is directed at them – that also continues the development of the project's identity.

CONSIDERATIONS:

1. **Size.** While letter-sized posters are easy to make, they're not the most effective because they're not easy to see from a distance. 11"x17" posters are much more effective and can still be photocopied on card-stock paper.
2. **Color of paper.** Campuses are saturated with posters. Make your poster stand out. Develop a color scheme that fits the project and even matches the flyers.
3. **Color of ink.** Four-color photocopying has come down in price and may be an option. But black-and-white posters can be just as effective when well designed.
4. **Printing method.** Photocopying is not always the cheapest option. Printing may prove to be cheaper, especially for longer press runs. And the quality is generally better, especially when printed from a disk file and not a laser print.
5. **Distribution.** Don't put all your posters up four weeks in advance. Put some in key locations early. Then replace them with new – and maybe updated with current information – posters as the event draws closer.

Financial Support

Most student groups are not lucky enough to get all of their support from student fees. And collecting substantial dues from college students is like getting blood from a turnip, so the saying goes. But there are alternatives for funding – just be creative.



CONSIDERATIONS:

1. **Alumni.** Think back to your target audience. Find alumni who used to be members of that target audience when they were students and see if they'll make donations. Set up a foundation or non-profit organization for them to donate to – tax free.
2. **Co-sponsors.** During the brainstorming stage, think of other organizations that might be willing to co-sponsor a project or event. What will they get out of it? Make them realize how working with you can help their organization or business.
3. **Donations.** When you hold an event, ask for money. Don't beg, but don't be ashamed to admit you need money to operate. Some organizations don't charge admission for their events but take donations. When the events are targeted at non-college students, this can be more "profitable" than charging admission. Donations don't have to be for money. Swap co-sponsorship for a donated meal or hotel arrangements for the guest speaker.
4. **Student fees.** Most student fee committees have a certain amount of discretionary money that they can spend each year that isn't allocated the previous year. Find out how that money is allocated. Often making a pitch to the student government is enough.
5. **Grants.** Look outside the university environment for financial support. Look to parent groups. The University Republicans, for example, might get money for an event from the local Republican party. (Same with the Young Democrats who are actually more likely to give money.) Look for various foundations and corporations with grand money – well in advance of your event.

BE A FRIEND of the Raleigh Concert Band

Your tax-deductible contribution will help us perform the kind of concerts you like to hear. Past contributions have helped us purchase music, purchase equipment and other instruments, publicity, postage, office supplies and performance hall rental.

Any donation is appreciated. Please complete the form below and indicate your gift amount. The Raleigh Concert Band is exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

2001 SEASON FRIENDS

PAISONS • Dr. and Mrs. Charles Tomasco • Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Parker • Ed and Ruth Barker • Roger and Abigail Polge • John Welch • Jack and Maggie Stein • Glenn/Sandra/Gene, Inc./Walt and Jane Sins

DONORS • Joe and Marilyn Lantini • Dr. and Mrs. Wallace B. Hayward • Douglas Armstrong • Elizabeth Kahn • Vincent and Ethel Simons

FRIENDS • Sara Holman • Eliza Parker • Donald S. Rober

Name _____
Company _____ State _____ ZIP _____
Address _____
City _____
Phone _____
E-mail _____

Friend - \$25 - \$49 =
 Other _____

Patron - \$100 or more
 Donor - \$50 - \$99 =

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE
to the Raleigh Concert Band and mail to P.O. Box 20932, Raleigh, NC 27619



Get Online

Even the most technologically backwards universities today rely on technology. Distance education, e-mail assignments from professors and online exams are a reality. Take advantage of the infrastructure the university provides to contact members of your target audience.

CONSIDERATIONS:

1. **E-mail addresses.** At public institutions, e-mail addresses are public information. You can legally obtain them just by asking for them. There may be a minimal charge from the registrar's office, but e-mail is a great way to contact students, faculty and staff. And since most universities have directories online, you can pick and choose people to contact as well.
2. **E-mail distribution lists.** Once you've made initial contact with people who can identify with your cause, ask if they want to join an e-mail distribution list (LISTSERV). It's easy to add and remove people from your list. You can even set up scripts to do it automatically. The list can be open to anyone or closed. It can be moderated or an open discussion.
3. **Web site.** The power of the press belongs to those people who own one. And with the Web, anyone can own access to the public. Once up on the Web, millions of people can learn about your event or follow your cause. Creating a Web site, even with just basic information, is almost not an option any more. They can be updated quickly. And instead of publicizing your phone number, e-mail address and snail-mail address, you can keep it simple with an active URL.

The real key with a Web site is keeping it updated. Change something on the Home page at least every two weeks. Add a new photo. Maybe randomly rotate photos. (It's easy to write scripts that do that automatically.) Put new news, press releases, contact information, historical information and maybe even how people can financially support your organization.

Don't let a Web site stay online with old information. It's better to have nothing.



Think Outside the Box

There are probably few publicity gimmicks that haven't been tried before. But to be successful, they must be unique to the target audience.



No matter that you do – from purchasing advertising to holding a press conference – remember that everything is a reflection of your professionalism and your group's willingness to be successful. Look, act and feel professional in every aspect of your publicity campaign.

CONSIDERATIONS:

- Buttons.** Getting people to wear a button or lapel pin with your logo and slogan on it is a form of free advertising. Find a group with a button maker, buy the supplies and make up a few hundred buttons for those "endorsing" your campaign to wear. Give buttons to student leaders. Lapel pins are more expensive, but longer-lasting. Find a sponsor that will help make your logo into a lapel pin that can be used for several years.
- Table Tents.** Once again, an inexpensive form of advertising. Office supply stores sell pre-cut table tents that you can run through a laser printer or photocopy machine. People eating lunch will sit and stare at those table tents for a few minutes so don't hesitate to put a substantial message on the tent. Get permission before putting them out.
- Newsletters.** Honestly, printed newsletters are practically non-existent anymore. They've been replaced with e-mail distribution lists and Websites. However, for reaching alumni and administrators with little time to surf the Web and an inbox full of hundreds of e-mail messages every day, there's little good substitute for a newsletter that will hang around for a while. They're expensive, relatively, and time-consuming.



Publicity need not be ornate and expensive to be effective. Pre-cut table tents put out around dining halls with a simple message



Press Conferences

A press conference requires a lot of planning. Arrange for power for the television cameras. Assign a public relations person to work with the placement of television cameras and microphones. Provide press releases to all media representatives present. Don't assume that they know what the issues are.

1. **Planning.** Start the conference on time in an appropriate setting. (What's in the background?) Open with a statement summarizing the issues at hand. Then move into details. Restate your position then take a few questions. Limit your time for the entire press conference. Even the president's press briefings are limited. Thirty minutes is more than enough and a 10-minute press conference is even better.

Rallies & Demonstrations

Most universities encourage dialog and discussion on all issues of relevance to the university community. The University has the responsibility to maintain an orderly campus so that students, faculty and staff may engage in study, research and administrative functions. Sometimes those two goals are at odds.

To strike a balance, the university will have a designated area to facilitate the free and open interchange of ideas. These "free speech" zones are open at all times for the presentation of ideas. Often, they may be reserved for larger rallies or when sound equipment is required.

Even those rules have exceptions. While rallies and demonstrations will not be scheduled for areas other than designed free-speech zones, the dean of students or vice chancellor for student affairs or even the university president (or someone with a similar title) may find a compelling reason to approve a demonstration at an exceptional time or place. To get such approval, student groups must show that the typical space is unavailable, inadequate or inappropriate.

Participation in unscheduled rallies or demonstrations that disrupt the other functions of the university may result in disciplinary action.

CONSIDERATIONS:

1. **Timing.** A successful rally or demonstration is all about timing. War protests, anti-apartheid rallies and the like have all been successful not because of a lot of flyers that were distributed in advance but because of an issue that needed to be dealt with publicly.
2. **Publicity.** While often rather spontaneous, successful rallies also get publicized. Use the other techniques to give short-term publicity to the cause.
3. **Follow the rules.** Work with university administrators as much as possible to balance the needs of the students to get their message out with the needs of the faculty and staff to keep the institution running.



*Civil disobedience
Austin resident Stuart
Graham chants with
ralliers Sept. 27 in
protest to the univer-
sity's investments in
South Africa. Photo
by John Moore from
the 1988 Cactus*

**Ideal
Timeline**

COMPLETION
DATE

1 day prior

Last-minute
advertising
Announce in class

1 week prior

Check posters
Listings appear in
newspaper calendars

2 weeks prior

Hang posters
Distribute flyers
Complete program
for conferences

3 weeks prior

Last chance to get
flyers, posters, table
tents, door angles,
etc. to the printer

4 weeks prior

Confirm ad
placement and proof
content
Send printed material
to the printer

5 weeks prior

Design advertising
campaign, color
scheme, logo, font
choices
Distribute "style
guide" to committee
members

6 weeks prior

Complete project
information sheet
using annual budget
as a guideline

8 weeks prior

Meet with committee
members and delegate
responsibilities

Project Checklist

PROJECT TITLE _____

Coordinator _____

Phone _____

E-mail address _____

Project completion date _____

MEDIA ADVERTISING

- budget \$ _____
- space reserved
- ad designed
- ad delivered to newspaper

MEDIA

- press release written
- press release distributed
- items submitted to "calendar"
- PSAs written
- PSAs distributed

FLYERS

- budget \$ _____
- designed
- printed
- distributed

ONLINE

- budget \$ _____
- URL reserved
- designed
- Web site online
- e-mail distribution list created

NOTES

AUTHORIZATION FOR EXPENDITURE

Signature _____

Title and date _____

POSTERS

- budget \$ _____
- designed
- printed
- hung

BANNER

- budget \$ _____
- space reserved
- designed
- printed
- hung

TABLE TENTS

- budget \$ _____
- approved for placement
- designed
- printed
- placed