



MSU[™]
DENVER

Department of Social Work
College of Health and Human Sciences

Student Event Planning Guide





So you want to plan a student –led event...

We love that! This guide is meant to **encourage and empower social work students** to organize and plan their own events. Whether you're building community, raising awareness, or creating space for joy and healing, student-led events are a powerful way to practice the values of social work outside the classroom.

Event planning is an incredibly useful—and often overlooked—skill for future social workers. It helps you grow in core areas like time management, organization, communication, and relationship-building. Whether you're planning a educational event, community building, or an awareness campaign, these skills translate directly into clinical, community, and policy practice. Social workers are often called upon to coordinate services, facilitate groups, and organize outreach—**event planning is all of that, in action.**

This guide exists because not everyone knows how to plan an event, and that's okay! We're here to make the process **transparent and accessible.** Inside, you'll learn how to develop a clear event vision, manage timelines and logistics, request space or funding, and know who to reach out to (and when). We hope this guide gives you the confidence and structure to bring your ideas to life.

Planning an Event 100% Autonomously

Remember, you as students can plan an event 100% on your own **without support from the department**, as long as there's **no costs** associated with it and the **event follows MSU Denver university guidelines**.

If that's the route you want to go, great! Here are some things to consider:

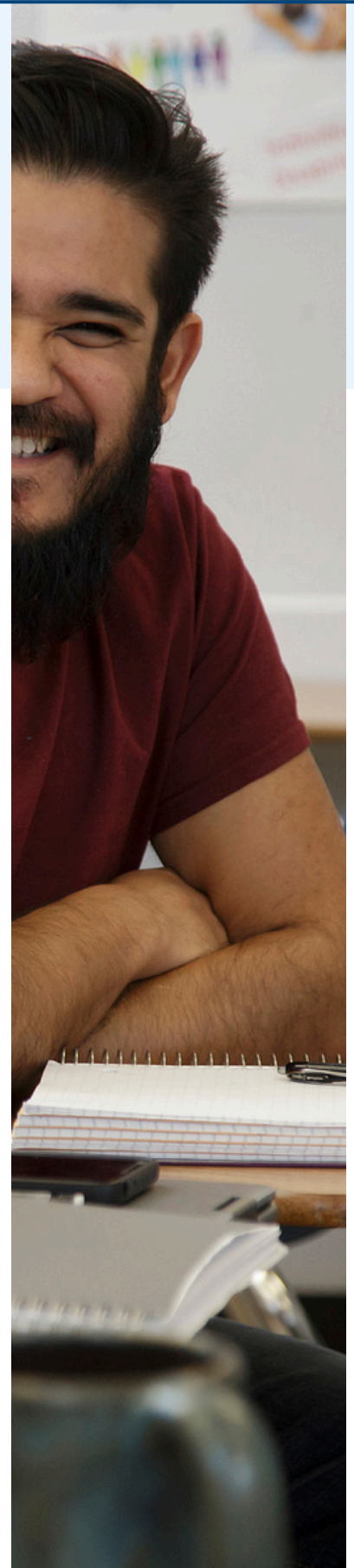
01 EVENT TIMEFRAME

- For small events, start planning **at least 4 - 6 weeks in advance** (more for larger events).
- Consider class schedules, holidays, and peak campus activity times.

02 LOCATION & SPACE RESERVATION

You don't need a budget to find a space! There are several no-cost options available to students:

- **Auraria Library Study Rooms & Event Spaces**
 - Great for small workshops, meetings, or casual gatherings.
 - Reserve online at library.auraria.edu under the "Study Rooms" or "Event Spaces" section.
- **Campus Lounges or Common Areas**
 - Ask about reserving spaces in buildings like the Jordan Student Success Building (JSSB), Tivoli, or the Classroom Center.



Planning an Event 100% Autonomously

02 LOCATION (CONTINUED)

- **MSU Denver Student Org Rooms**
 - If you're part of a recognized student org, you may have access to rooms through Student Activities.
- **Local Community Spaces**
 - Denver Public Library branches and other community centers sometimes offer free meeting space—just check their websites for availability and policies.
 - Some coffeehouses also offer small group spaces for free (with purchase of food/drink).

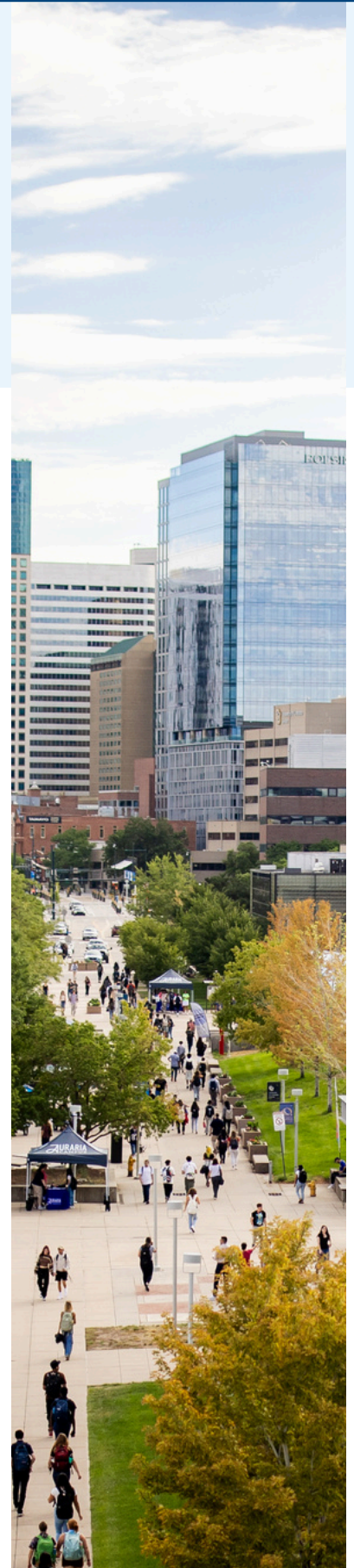
☆ **Tip:** Always book early and confirm any reservation policies. If you're not sure whether a space needs to be reserved, ask a staff member at that location. Consider accessibility: Can people using mobility devices attend comfortably?

03 AUDIENCE

- Who is this for? Students only? Faculty? Broader campus or community? Are children invited (think of students with small children)?
- Be clear about your audience when promoting the event!

04 PROMOTION/MARKETING

- Make sure your event's purpose is clear!
- Use free tools such as flyers, group chats, Discord, and reach out to socialwork@msudenver.edu to have your event posted on the Department of Social Work's socials and weekly student newsletter.



Planning an Event 100% Autonomously

04 PROMOTION (CONTINUED)

- Use the [MSU Denver brand central](#) and the Department of Social Work logo on materials.

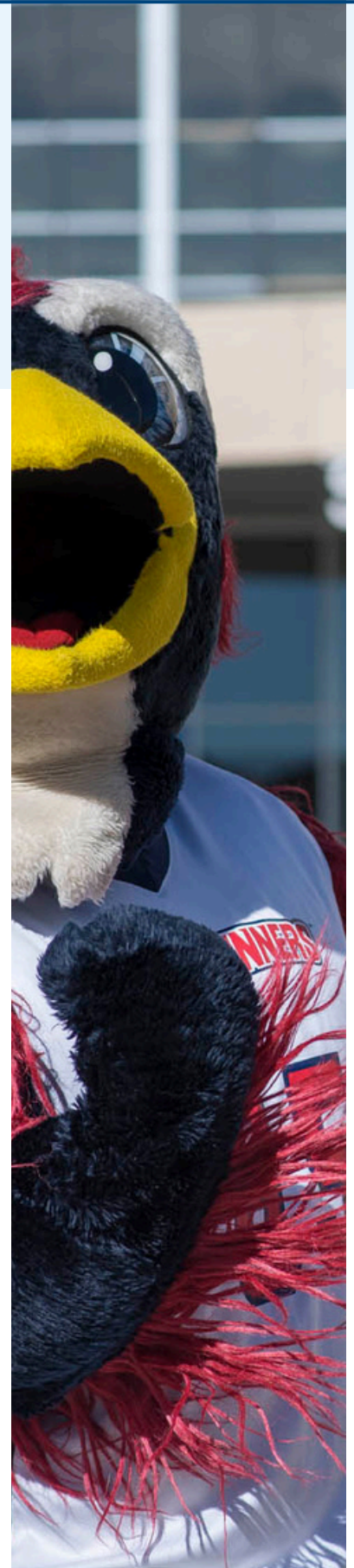
☆ **Tip:** Start marketing your event **at least 2-3 weeks** in advance. People can't go if they don't know it's happening!

05 FOOD & SWAG

- Food is usually the main cost with event planning. If you're planning on your own, be sure to look for free spaces that allow food and consider options such as hosting the event at a location that sells food or organize a pot luck. Whatever you decide, be sure to communicate it when marketing!
- Want some Department of Social Work swag at your event? Please reach out 1-2 weeks in advance so we can have it ready for you!

06 MSU DENVER POLICIES

- Make sure your event follows MSU Denver guidelines on campus use, safety, and inclusivity, especially if it's an on-campus event.
- Remember, no alcohol, hate speech, or exclusionary practices are allowed.



EVENT PLANNING GUIDE

SET EVENT PURPOSE, GOALS & BUDGET

Define the event's purpose and goals—why plan this event? What are you hoping to achieve? Decide if you need things that require a budget.

CHOOSE DATE & LOCATION

Pick a suitable date, secure a venue, and book key vendors like catering, entertainment, and photographers early.

BUILD A TEAM & ASSIGN ROLES

Form your event team of other students and faculty. Assign clear roles and responsibilities for smooth execution.

CREATE A TIMELINE & TASK LIST

Develop a timeline with planning deadlines and day-of tasks to keep everything organized and on track.

MARKETING YOUR EVENT

Create flyers and a marketing plan (social media, Discord, email, etc.) to promote the event and engage your audience.

PLAN DECOR, CONTENT & LOGISTICS

Ensure smooth registration, seating, and guest comfort with attention to food, entertainment, and transportation logistics.

EXECUTE & REVIEW

On event day, monitor the event and handle any issues. Afterward, follow up with attendees and evaluate for future improvements.



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Need Help Getting Started?

If you've never planned or organized a community event before, **we strongly recommend reaching out to Social Work Student Services staff early in the process.** We're here to help you get oriented and set up for success—whether you have a full idea or just a starting point.

WAYS SOCIAL WORK EVENT STAFF CAN SUPPORT

- Brainstorming event ideas, purpose, and goals
- Clarifying MSU Denver policies and university guidelines
- Talking through possible locations (on or off campus)
- Booking on-campus event spaces through AHEC or other systems
- Exploring food and refreshment options (if applicable)
- Placing orders for food with an MSU Denver approved vendor
- Helping with accessibility and inclusion considerations
- Drafting or reviewing promotional flyers or language
- Sharing event announcements in newsletters or social media
- Connecting you with campus or community partners
- Thinking and talking through event flow and agenda
- Assisting with day-of logistics task lists
- Providing feedback during the planning process
- Offering templates, checklists, timelines and/or proposed deadlines to keep you organized
- Helping you write a strong event description for emails, websites, or flyers
- Helping you build an RSVP form or sign-up sheet
- Assisting with room setup requests (tables, chairs, AV equipment, etc.)
- Helping you navigate branding guidelines and approvals if using university logos
- Offering guidance for managing volunteers or assigning roles
- Helping you think through transitions, timing, and contingency plans
- Providing insight on how to make your event hybrid or accessible remotely
- Sharing best practices for student engagement
- Reviewing post-event feedback or debriefing with you
- Celebrating your success and helping you reflect on lessons learned!



DO YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR ARE YOU READY
TO START PLANNING A STUDENT-LED EVENT?

Contact Us!



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