Risk Assessment and Event Planning

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Purpose

- This training will provide student leaders and advisors/supervisors with information on identifying risk, mitigating those risks and the processes that can be used to review and approve events with associated risks for student events, on and off campus.

- While the processes focused on student events, the risk management information is pertinent to all event planning.
Introduction

- Risk management = good decision-making

- All events planned by student clubs and organizations, college departments and employees, are under the umbrella of Delaware state University and therefore, the University reserves the right to restrict activities to manage risk.
Good risk management requires...

- *Critical and creative thinking* that identifies the risk and options for mitigating them

- Reasoned and informed judgments about which mitigation strategies to use and whether the benefits as related to the University are worth the risk remaining after mitigation

- The moral dimensions of decision-making

- Affirming the dignity of the individual while pursuing the common good
Throughout the process of assessing and managing risk in event planning...

1. You will be able to identify different risk factors associated with events, including the potential impact of unmitigated risk on the organization and on the community.
2. You will be able to identify and assess risk managements/mitigation strategies.
3. You will be able to apply appropriate risk management strategies to specific events.
4. You will be able to articulate the value of an event, determining whether the value outweighs the risk remaining after mitigation.
Risk management

- It’s not just a no!.....

- It’s a why and how. Why are we doing the event and how can we manage the risk associated with the event?

- It is identifying how the events sports the University and organizations

- It is identifying potential risks, assessing the severity and the likelihood of those risks occurring and weighing the impact of possible mitigation strategies (risk assessment)

- It is the process of handling risk by the reduction, transfer or elimination of risk.
Why manage risk?

- Limit possible injury/harm
  - To people
  - To property
  - To programs
  - To reputation
If risk is managed...

- Potential of injury or death
- Potential of damage to property
- Potential of damage to reputation
- Potential of financial loss
- Potential of irreparable harm

To individuals, clubs/organizations, the University
A good risk management process for clubs/organizations/student leaders

- Identify your proposed event. (type, place, dates, time, activities, attendees)
- Does the event potential he involve any of the following risk factors?
  - Alcohol (served or is there a possibility of participants being under the influence)
  - Minors (participants under the age of 18) or VIPs
  - Transportation off-campus
A good risk management process for clubs/organizations/student leaders

- A contract/signed agreement
- Physical activity by any participants
- Size of the event >50 people
- Rides/inflatable’s/mechanical devices
- Event occurring outdoors
- Sale of any items (food, T-shirts, ETC.)
- Event is advertised/open to the public
- Use of DSU name/logo
- Potential of outside media attention
- Any type of political activity
- Amplified sound
- Animals
- Fire/explosives/combustibles
What are the risks?

- The next several slides describe various categories of risks.

- For each type of risk, questions are included that should be considered in evaluating that particular type of risk as it pertains to an event or activity.
Types of risk

- **Financial** – can you afford it? How is it being paid for? What other potential costs exist? Have you identified and factor them in?
- **Physical** – what possible harm to person and/or property is there?
- **Reputational** – how could both the attendees and the event planners be emotionally effective?
- **Other considerations** – other event risks include location, time of day, food served, types of attendees, ETC.
Financial

- What is the cost to run the event? (include set up/break down costs, food, staffing, supplies, equipment, entertainment) how will the event be paid for?

- Budget for the event can you break even or make money? What will it take to achieve your goal? Do you need money from other sponsors?

- What is the overall financial health of the organization? Can you afford to lose money on the event?

- Poor budgeting lack of accurate information/recordkeeping/controls,(under estimating costs, cash not properly controlled)

- Failure to meet fundraising goals, our members willing to work hard to make the goal?

- Does the event itself expose the organization or institution to financial risk (fines, contract, lawsuits for injury/breach of contract, ETC.?)
Physical

- **To people**
  - Injuries from physical activity, inclement weather, equipment or materials, food related illness, alcohol consumption, dangerous travel conditions, medical emergencies, large number of attendees, type of attendees (miners/elderly/handicapped), time of day for the events (nights versus day), lighting, ETC.

- **To property**
  - Lack of proper setup or cleaning of the event, safety insecurity issues at the location, lack of familiarity with the facilities and location, disruption of the University activities, damage to property from physical activity of the attendees and or the activity associated with the event, inclement weather, materials or missing equipment, large number of attendees, alcohol consumption, ETC.
Reputational

- Applies to and or effects the officers and members of the organization as individuals, the organization, and the University (including supporters and alumni.)

- Some factors that can potentially impact reputation:
  - Poor conduct or behavior at events;
  - A negative representation of the group;
  - Hazing of members;
  - Lack of proper planning, setup and running of the actual events;
  - Activity that is contrary to the mission/goals of the organization/institution
Emotional

- Potential reaction of attendees/participants/observers
- Event accessibility for those with disabilities
- Sensitivity content matter (embarrassment, humiliation “hazing”)
- Discrimination against any participants/attendees
- Controversy/potential disruption of campus
- Strain of planning the event
Additional considerations (location, roots, regulations....)

- Overnight travel (emergency preparation, is the area safe, ETC.)
- Travel to a large city or remote area
- Compliance with regulatory requirements (FERPA/privacy, copyright law, state, federal/local law)
- Are minors involved
- Prior history of the event – as the event occurred here or elsewhere before? How did it go? Were prior problems identified and addressed? (remember – past behavior is the only true picture of future behavior...)