

Research Findings Report

Team: Nate Kelley, Kendall Slaughter, Linda Nguyen, Nevine Khan, Alyssa Clark

User Group: ASU Event Staff

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study serves to identify the existing processes, tools, and challenges in event planning on the Polytechnic campus while focusing on the ASU Event Staff user group. We collected the data through two methods: conducting semi-structured interviews with campus event planners as well as gathering information on past events through their available online records. We reported the data and analyzed to find common themes within the various events and planning processes. Finally, our analysis helped lead us to conclusions that will aid us in the process of designing an optimal interface for the Garden Commons that meets the needs of event planners.

INTRODUCTION

We aim to design a functional and user-friendly interface for planning events at the Polytechnic Garden Commons. To accomplish our goal, we must understand the existing processes and tools available to event planners on campus. Thus, through our research, we seek to achieve the following objectives:

1. Identify current processes of planning, promoting, and executing events on the ASU Polytechnic campus.
2. Determine challenges in event planning on the ASU Polytechnic campus.
3. Discover prevalent factors and features of events on the ASU Polytechnic campus.

This study utilizes two research methods to gather information on event planning: (i) semi-structured interviews and (ii) historical research. The interviewees fit into the ASU Event Staff user group and meet the predetermined qualifications. This ensures that their insights are related to this research purpose. The historical research method gathers information on past ASU Poly events by examining their online records. This generates quantifiable data that aids in concluding the current patterns in event planning on campus.

The investigation and analysis of existing practices, resources, and challenges regarding event planning on campus will provide valuable insight to the creators that wish to design an interface that addresses the various demands of event planning.

METHODS

Knowing the list of organizations planning events on the Polytechnic is extensive, we decided to focus primarily on larger organizations with a broad reach and influence. Specifically, we investigated the Programming and Activities Board (PAB), Changemaker Central, ASU Housing, Sun Devil Fitness Complex (SDFC), and the Polytechnic Director's Office. The research methods of semi-structured interviews, as well as historical research, will aid us significantly in our study.

I. Semi-Structured Interview

In the semi-structured interviews, leaders of the listed organizations were separately interviewed on their experiences with event planning. These interviews allowed participants to answer specific questions on their event planning perspective and process. The interview questions were designed to encourage participants to explain existing tools, routines, and challenges involved in planning on-campus events. Due to the nature of the semi-structured interview, additional follow up questions were asked to keep conversations free-flowing and efficient. These also provided further insight into their practices. Likewise, the chosen research method assisted the analysis of nonverbal communication during the interview like body language, facial expression, and tone.

Our standard interview questions were as follows:

1. Can you walk me through how you would plan an event (Steps)?
2. Who is involved in the planning process?
3. What tools are used to plan an event?
4. How long does it take to plan an event?
5. Which spaces do you typically use for events? What do you look for in event spaces?
6. How do you go about finding new venues?
7. Describe to me one of your most successful events. What made it successful?
8. What makes an event successful? How do you draw people in?
9. Do you collect any data/metrics about your events, e.g., attendance, demographics, ticket sales, students' degree programs, etc.?
10. How often do you host events outdoors? Do you prefer indoor or outdoor events? Why?
11. What are the challenges of event planning? What are the easiest parts of event planning?
12. What do you enjoy most about planning an event?
13. Can you tell me what resources are best to use to locate information on past events?
14. What else can you tell me?

II. Historical Research

For our second research method, we examined past and upcoming events by viewing web-pages and social media posts managed by various ASU organizations. We identified a

variety of quantitative and qualitative data events to record for each event. We ultimately recorded 41 events, which had taken place over the past 5 months (between October 2019 and February 2020). These events were chosen based on their relation to the garden and use. The metrics include:

- Event name
- Description of event
- Venue
- Day of week
- Time of day
- Duration
- Number of attendees
- Cost of attendance
- Category
- Freebies
- Host (Promoter)
- Vendors
- Advertising methods
- Frequency of events
- Resources used
- Venue size
- Public/Private
- Target audience

Some sources that we used are listed in Table A.

Table A	
Organization	Source URLs
The Garden Commons	https://www.facebook.com/pg/PolyGardens/events
	https://asu.campuslabs.com/engage/events
	https://www.facebook.com/ASUPABPoly/
Programming and Activities Board	https://www.instagram.com/ASUPABPoly/
	https://twitter.com/asupab?lang=en
	https://asuevents.asu.edu/event-search...
Changemaker Central @ ASU	https://www.instagram.com/changemakercentralpoly/?hl=en
	https://twitter.com/ASUchangemaker
	https://wellness.asu.edu/get-involved/wellness-events
Sun Devil Fitness Complex	https://www.facebook.com/sundevilfitness/
	https://www.instagram.com/livewell_asu/
	https://twitter.com/sundevilfitness?lang=en
ASU Housing	https://twitter.com/asuhousing?lang=en
	https://www.facebook.com/HousingASU/
	https://www.instagram.com/asuhousing/?hl=en
All ASU Events	https://asuevents.asu.edu/
Barrett, The Honors College	https://barretthonors.asu.edu/news-events/upcoming-events

RESULTS

The following results were produced using our two research methods.

I. Interview Findings

Interview transcriptions were taken from each interview. The transcripts were inputted into a word cloud generator in order to discover dominant concepts from the interviews as a whole. See Figure 1 for the resulting word cloud.



Figure 1: This is a word cloud generated from combined interview transcripts. The word cloud only includes the participants' responses and omits the interviewer's questions. Prepositions, pronouns, conjunctions, and filler words (e.g., "um," "like," etc.) were also omitted.

Summaries with key points from each interview are as follows (see Appendix A for recorded interviews and transcripts).

A. Programming and Activities Board

PAB works with two significant campus figures when creating, planning, and executing events. The two figures, Ryan Olkes and Heather King, are the primary event planning body for campus and shared their experiences with event planning. The first topic Olkes brought up was the importance of asking, "Why am I doing an event?" Taken straight from the interview, he is quoted saying, "Always step one is to figure out why you're doing the event... Who is your target audience for the event? How are you going to market the event? So, you know, once you have that kind of established, making all your reservations for the event. You got to pick out what space, what time frame, [and] what day" (Ryan Olkes 2:31). Asking "why?" can help answer many other questions, like ones listed above, making the event come off more authentic. While there are certainly times of day, freebies, and venues that are more popular than others, he believes that sticking too strictly to those can actually hinder the popularity of an event.

The interview then went onto the topic of marketing, which Olkes believes is one of the most important parts of creating an event. Without proper marketing, one could be setting an event up

for failure. King brought up some of the most important tools used for marketing, including Adobe Creative Cloud. She also discussed the difficulties surrounding marketing and how important it is to release marketing campaigns at just the right time. If they are released too early, people might forget about the event, but if they are released too late, they may not reach enough people.

After this, the discussion turned to the different kinds of tools used to create events. Some of the tools the interviewees mentioned were Astra Comm (used for classrooms) and Visio (used by the Union staff). Ryan went into a lot of detail on Visio's shortcomings and his desire for a new EMS (Event Management System) that is more up-to-date and functional. During this discussion, Ryan brought up the importance of critical thinking as a mental tool. He is even quoted later in the interview, saying "I mean, event planning should not be that easy. If it's that easy, are you really doing enough for the event? (Ryan Olkes 15:54)". There are so many different factors that could affect an event, especially for one that is outside. Some important factors to consider are the weather, electricity limitations, size of venue, food restrictions, awareness of location, necessary permits, laws, funding, and much more. Even small factors like wind speed and sunsets can affect an event, and it can be very difficult to keep track of all of them. In the end, though, it is worth all the work because there is a back-up plan for everything and anything that could go wrong. While there were other smaller topics discussed in the interview, these were the primary discussions.

See Appendix B for a visual representation of PAB's event planning process, according to this interview.

B. Changemaker Central at Polytechnic

Changemaker Central's events correspond with the Changemaker pillars: entrepreneurship/innovation, sustainability, service, and civic engagement. Their events are most commonly held outdoors. This is partly because the Cooley Ballrooms are in high demand and can be difficult to reserve. Also, many of Changemaker's events are community service related, which can take place at venues such as the Garden Commons, or off-campus non-profit organization sites such as St. Vincent de Paul, Feed My Starving Children, Midwest Food Bank, and Helping Hands. Some cultural, educational, networking, and service events have also taken place at the Cooley Ballrooms, Student Union, Century Lawn, and Backus Mall areas.

For small-scale events, such as community service events, the Changemaker team begins planning them around a month to a month and a half in advance. Larger events such as conferences like Startup Summit and GameCon, require planning to start 4-5 months in advance. Events are frequently advertised via Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, ASU web-pages, and tabling at Tabling Tuesday's events. The Changemaker team currently uses the VolunteerMatch interface to recruit, manage, and contact volunteers for service events. They also use Slack and Trello to facilitate collaboration and communication among team members while completing event-planning tasks. Demographic data about attendees is collected by having

them swipe their ASU IDs as they enter an event. This provides information about their year, college, department, and whether they are graduate or undergraduate students.

In addition to free food, the Changemaker staff finds that providing volunteer and networking opportunities often draw many attendees to their events. According to Jude, the most significant challenge the team faces is getting students to attend the events they plan. The team would greatly appreciate an interface that made it easier to market and promote their events. Their most successful event was Night of Inclusion, an event that featured musical performances and food from around the world. Jude attributed the success of this event to the variety of free food available, the representation of many different cultures, and the participation of many cultural organizations.

See Appendix B for a visual representation of Changemaker's event planning process, according to this interview.

C. ASU Housing

Events for ASU housing are often frequently thrown and have high budgets. Events are typically discussed weekly when student employees (CAs) meet in a committee with full-time employees (CDs). Essentially, CAs are highly encouraged to throw events monthly with small events needing a minimum of a two-week notice. CD's provide insights to CA's and often fill out budgetary, registration, and vendor documents that are submitted to an accounting department. Significant events, such as Beach Bash or Polypalooza, take months to plan and require heavy involvement from CDs. Event venues are determined per event, and they discover new events primarily through word of mouth. ASU Housing events typically take place in or near the dorms.

See Appendix B for a visual representation of ASU housing's event planning process, according to this interview.

D. General Polytechnic Events / Polytechnic Director's Office

The events Anna Wales plans range from small group gatherings to huge, campus-wide events. Although factors like budget and time depend on the size of the event, her workflow typically begins with a collaborative planning session to establish event goals. The biggest asset in her planning process is the use of the web page <https://eventguide.engineering.asu.edu>, which allows her to check the availability of campus venues and eventually register events with the university. The biggest challenges in planning events on the Polytechnic campus are the budget and the availability of space. Another crucial aspect of event planning is accounting for details. Anna often uses the checklists provided on the Event Guide website to keep track of her progress. While outdoor events can be extremely successful, indoor events are typically easier to plan because they do not involve the variability of weather.

See Appendix B for a visual representation of the Polytechnic Director's Office's event planning process, according to this interview.

II. Historical Research Findings

In our historical research, we recorded data for 41 events on the ASU Polytechnic campus that occurred within the past year. In this process, we found that some of the original metrics we planned to collect were not publicly available for many events, e.g., the number of attendees, vendors, venue size, etc. For this reason, we decided that we did not have sufficient data to analyze these factors accurately. Therefore, we narrowed our findings to only include the most valuable metrics, which are presented below (see Appendix A for the full collection of data). Our findings suggest that the average event at the ASU Polytechnic campus:

- is located in one of the Cooley Ballrooms,
- occurs between 10am - 4pm on a Friday,
- is 2.7 hours long,
- targets ASU students,
- relates to health and wellness,
- and is a private event.

A. Venues

We found that the most common venue for events was the Cooley Ballrooms. The second most popular venue was the Barrett Suite; however, this is because the majority of events hosted by Barrett occur there. The third most popular venue was tied between the SDFC (Indoors) and SDFC (Outdoors).

Venues Used

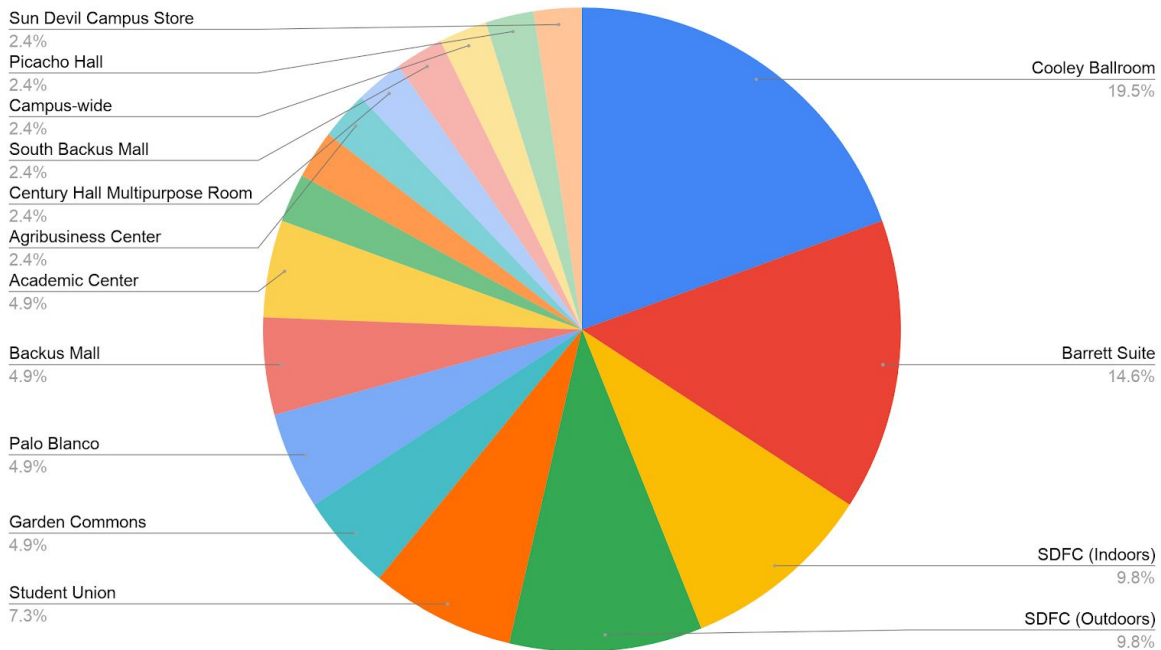


Figure 2: Pie chart of venues used for ASU Polytechnic events

B. Event Days/Times

We found that events at Polytechnic most often occur during the following times:

Daytime Events

- Tuesdays: 11am - 7pm
- Wednesdays: 11am - 1pm
- Fridays: 10am - 4pm

Nighttime Events

- Mondays: 7pm - 9pm
- Wednesdays: 7pm - 9pm
- Thursdays: 5pm - 9pm

Event Days/Times

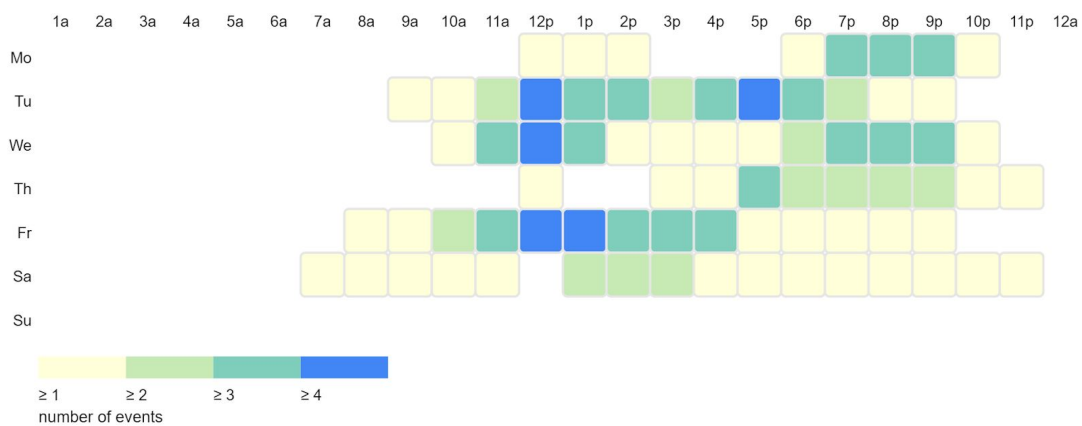


Figure 3: Heat map of ASU Polytechnic event days and times

C. Duration

We found that most events on the Polytechnic campus are approximately 1-4 hours long and that the average event is 2.7 hours long.

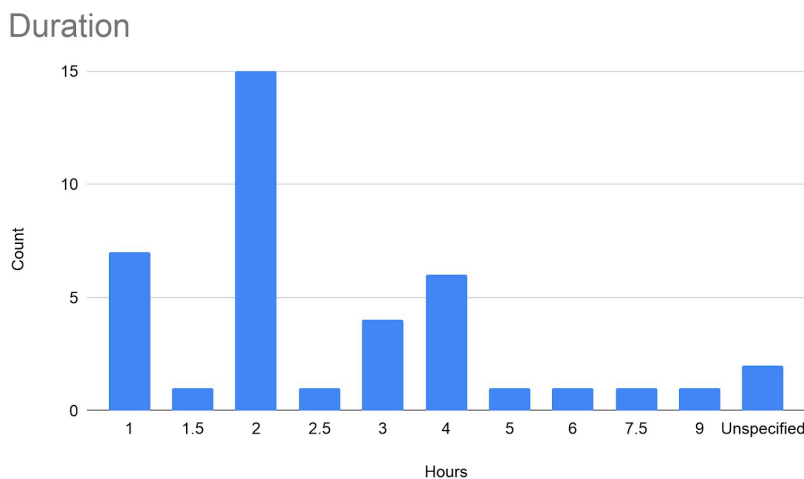


Figure 4: Bar chart of ASU Polytechnic event durations

D. Categories

We organized the events into the following categories:

- **Community Outreach** - events that invite the public to become involved with ASU
- **Community Service** - events with voluntary work intended to benefit a nonprofit organization or community in need
- **Culture** - events for education and/or celebration of heritages and sociohistorical backgrounds
- **Health & Wellness** - events relating to wellbeing, exercise, and nutrition
- **Finance** - events relating to personal finance
- **Holiday** - events for the celebration of holidays, e.g., Halloween, Christmas, and Valentine's Day
- **Music** - events that showcase music, e.g., music festivals and musical performances
- **Professional Development** - events intended to aid students in their professional careers
- **Social** - events for the purpose of socializing, e.g., dances, gatherings, and parties
- **Shopping** - events relating to the purchase of goods
- **Sustainability** - events relating to sustainability, the environment, nature, and conservation

The most popular categories include Health & Wellness, Professional Development, Culture, and Social.

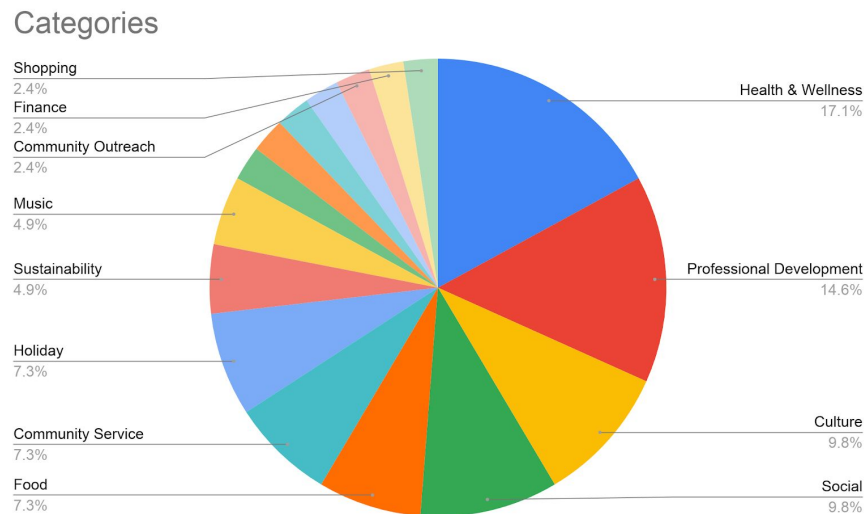


Figure 5: Pie chart of ASU Polytechnic event categories

E. Target Audience

We found the majority (78%) of events targeted ASU students. The rest were split between ASU employees, ASU student housing residents, and the general public.

Target Audiences

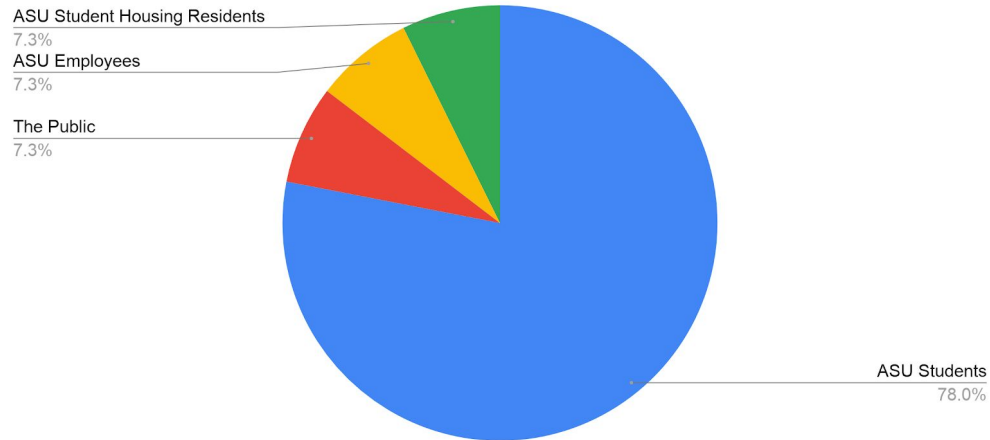


Figure 6: Pie chart of ASU Polytechnic event target audiences

F. Frequency

Most events were one-time occurrences. The second most popular event frequency was annually, followed by weekly.

Frequency

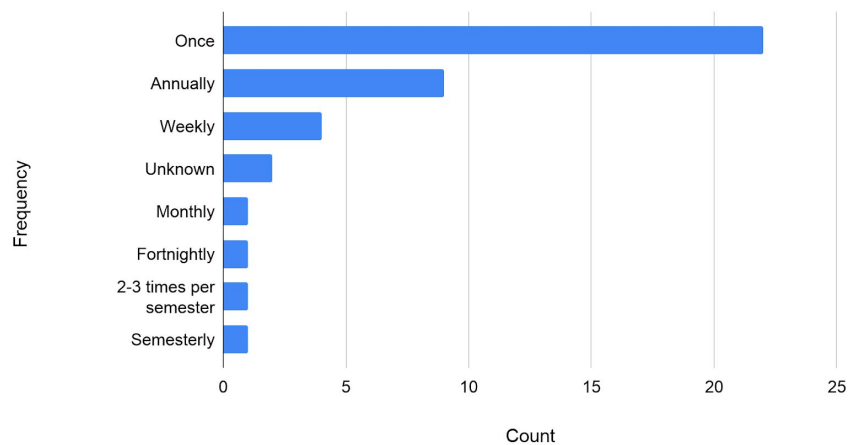


Figure 7: Bar chart of ASU Polytechnic event frequencies

G. Public vs. Private

Public events are open to individuals and groups outside of ASU. Private events are exclusive to ASU students or employees. We found that most (82.5%) events held at ASU Polytechnic are private.

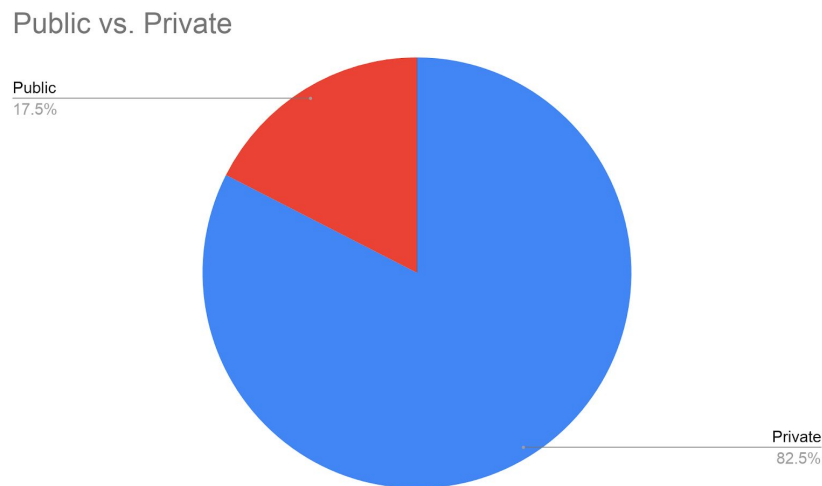


Figure 8: Pie chart comparing number of public and private ASU Polytechnic events

ANALYSIS

The results demonstrate several common trends, challenges, and strategies related to planning ASU events.

I. Interview Analysis

After conducting the interviews, we identified some common themes across all participants.

A. Individuals Involved in Planning

All groups had multiple individuals involved in the initial planning stages of the event, with teams deciding on the activity's purpose, what foods, prizes, or vendors would incentivize people to come. As the event plans began to solidify, individuals in leadership positions will fill out the necessary forms and contact all parties involved to secure the venue, food, and vendors. Most events are formulated democratically. However, it is often up to the group leaders to finalize the event.

B. Activity Purpose

Activities at the Polytechnic campus frequently have a theme or a purpose driving the activity. For example, ASU Housing's Beach Bash was an event that allowed free access to the pool and food to anyone who came. The marketing materials that promoted this event advertised the event as a way to engage the campus as a whole. ASU Housing's leadership later claimed that this activity's purpose was to encourage school spirit and participate in Polytechnic community pride. All events on the Polytechnic should have a purpose that directly correlates to the mission of the organization throwing the event.

C. Venue and Timing Considerations

There was general concern across our interview groups about the complexity of scheduling an event. For example, even small events in small venues required a minimum two-week notice to book a venue. This became increasingly complicated as most venues at Poly do not have availability calendars or easy-to-find reservation systems. Depending on the venue, it can be booked out months in advance and even have reservation constraints. Some of these restraints can include the time of day, number of people in attendance, and permitted vendors.

D. Budgetary Constraints

Most groups addressed concerns about a finite budget or a maximum price per attendee. For example, ASU Housing requires that all of their events must not exceed \$26 per person. To combat this, ASU Housing tries to get as many people to attend their events as possible to drive down the average. Other groups expressed concerns that food, vendors, etc. had to be justified to their group leadership or accountants to actualize their events.

E. Difficulty Finding New Venues

While one group did mention that eventguide.engineering.asu.edu had basic information on venues, all other groups expressed concern that it was difficult to find and use new venues. The primary way of finding new venues was by word of mouth and seeing new venues on campus. However, neither word of mouth or web-page provide detailed information on the venues or it's past or future events.

F. Marketing Concerns

All organizations used social media platforms to market their events. Some social media platforms used include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, SunDevilSync, as well as ASU event websites. In addition, the different interviewed groups also relied on marketing through flyers and word of mouth. Two of the event staff interviewees mentioned that their organization faced difficulty in persuading Polytechnic students to attend their events.

G. Word Frequency Analysis

The word frequency analysis was performed in order to see if certain themes, challenges, or aspects of event planning appeared in the interviewee's responses more frequently than others. The resulting word cloud revealed that the most common words used in the interview responses were Event, Think, People, Going, Planning, Students, Campus, and Happening. After these basic event planning related words, some other words that appeared frequently were Service, Housing, Marketing, Numbers, Space, Challenge, and Attendance.

II. Historical Research Analysis

When organizing an event on the Polytechnic campus, event staff may benefit from considering the following factors while planning events.

A. Venue

The most popular venues include the Cooley Ballrooms and SDFC, which suggests that most events require a significant amount of open space. These venues also are listed on websites such as <https://eventguide.engineering.asu.edu>, meaning that they are often promoted as potential event locations and are more likely to be considered by event planners. The Barrett Suite was also demonstrated to be a very popular venue because the majority of the Barrett, the Honors College events analyzed took place there.

The tie between SDFC (Indoors) and SDFC (Outdoors) indicates that there may be no real preference toward indoor or outdoor events. Nonetheless, most events occurred indoors overall, which could be due to convenience in planning, but not necessarily due to a strong opposition toward outdoor events.

B. Event Days/Times

Most events occurred during the middle of the day. This may be to accommodate students' schedules, as students would already be on campus and may have free time after/before/between classes. Many other events also occurred at night, when students do not have classes.

C. Duration

Most events lasted no more than 4 hours; however, most events leaned toward the shorter side of this. This could be due to the fact that students have busy schedules and it would be easier for them to fit in shorter events. A larger window lasting up to 4 hours may also allow more students to attend if they do not need to stay for the entire duration.

D. Categories

The most common event categories were health & wellness, professional development, culture, and social, which suggests that students are primarily interested in events that facilitate self-improvement and connecting with others who share a common interest.

E. Target Audience

The target demographic for most events is students. This is likely to encourage student engagement in extracurricular activities.

F. Frequency

The majority of events were one-time events. This suggests that organizations often try out new events to keep their audiences engaged. This also shows the desire for event planners to keep trying new things and keep engagement high. However, some events may have only occurred once because they were relevant only at a specific point in time. For example, one of Barrett's events was a launch party for their new Instagram account.

We also found that annual and weekly events were also relatively common. The repetition of these events could be due to previous success of the events. A regular schedule also helps students, their target audience, attend the event more consistently, as students also operate on a regular schedule. Weekly activities, such as a sport or exercise class, may also encourage socialization amongst other event attendees.

G. Public vs. Private

We found that the majority of events were private, meaning the general public was not allowed to attend and they were only intended for students. This makes sense, as most people outside of ASU have little to no reason to be on campus most of the time, as they have little affiliation with the university. This makes it harder to promote events outside of ASU, as external individuals would be less likely to consume related marketing content.

DISCUSSION

Overall, our research provided a significant amount of insight into event staff routines and the work they put into the events they plan. However, one limitation of the study was the fact that we were only able to conduct five interviews with members of four organizations due to time constraints. In addition to the five interviews conducted with event staff at Polytechnic Housing, Changemaker Central, the Polytechnic Director's Office, and the Programming and Activities Board, we had also planned to interview with event staff from Barrett. However, we were unable to arrange and conduct an interview in the timespan provided. Had we been able to interview more staff members from more organizations, it could have provided us with even more valuable insights into commonalities and differences within the various organizations on campus. In addition, we were only able to have a virtual interview with the Changemaker Central event staff member due to scheduling conflicts. As a result, we were not able to physically see the workspace and interface that the Changemaker Central team uses.

Another limitation of our research was that we were unable to get exact event attendance numbers from our interviewees. They either did not have access to exact attendance numbers or did not want to share their numbers with us. We were also unable to extrapolate these numbers through our own past event research. It is possible that having the number of expected attendees and actual attendees would help us better understand issues related to marketing and promoting events. Additionally, having access to these metrics could allow us to see trends in our past event research about how certain event logistics impact attendance. The historical research reveals the most popular characteristics of events, but further research needs to be conducted to investigate whether they are the most effective and why.

The word 'challenge' appeared 22 times in our interviewees' responses, according to the word frequency analysis and word cloud. The fact that this word appeared so often implies that event planning staff are frequently contending with challenges. Likewise, the word 'attendance' appeared 26 times in the interview responses, which reveals the great importance of attendance

numbers to the event planners. Accordingly, the interviewees at Changemaker Central and ASU Housing stated that one of their biggest challenges was getting more students to attend the events they host. All of the organizations market their events on platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, SunDevilSync, and the ASU Events website. According to the historical research we conducted, all of their events have recently provided attractions such as free food, raffles and giveaways, volunteer hours, educational opportunities, networking opportunities, arts and crafts, and therapy animals. However, they still struggle to persuade students to attend their events. The staff interviewee at Changemaker Central stated that he would appreciate having a platform that made it easier to advertise their events and reach out to students. If an interface is developed to help event planning staff attract more event attendees, this could in turn be used by the Garden Commons staff to attract more people to their space.

Furthermore, the results of the interviews seemed to indicate a lack of consistency in interfaces used by event planning staff. We also discovered issues and limitations with these tools. Ryan Olkes, an interviewee from the Programming and Activities Board mentioned using Visio, Event Management Software, Astra Comm, and Social Tables. He expressed frustration with Visio, as well as a desire for a new event planning software, such as Social Tables. None of the other interviewees mentioned any of these tools, and we were unable to view the interfaces they use.

The interviewee Anna Wales, who plans events for the Polytechnic Director's Office, stated that she uses this [Event Planning Guide](#) website to register events. However, none of the other interviewees mentioned using this website. The Event Planning Guide website features helpful resources regarding budget, venues, vendors, and an event checklist. However, we analyzed the website against usability principles and found that it has some design flaws. In order to access the event registration feature, the user must go through three separate steps and navigate three different webpages. The third webpage features a link to the event registry form, but it is difficult to find. The form can only be accessed via one of the small menu items at the top of the page. In accordance with usability principles, an efficient website would have its important features emphasized, easy to find, and accessible in as few steps as possible. The Event Planning Guide website ultimately appears to be a helpful resource, however, its design flaws and incomplete information leave significant room for improvement. We can use this website as a resource upon which we can base our own event planning interface.

A few of the interviewees also mentioned that it is challenging to reserve specific event venues or find new ones. The limitations of the venue reservation services they use could be part of why the Garden Commons is underutilized. Upon analyzing the 41 past events we tracked, it was found that only Changemaker Central and Barrett, the Honors college had used the Garden Commons for an event in the past 5 months, for one event each. This is in spite of the fact that many organizations frequently used outdoor event venues over the last year, such as Backus Mall, the Garden Commons, and the SDFC outdoors facilities. Ryan Olkes of PAB mentioned that they use Astra Comm to reserve event spaces. However the system only contains classroom spaces and cannot be used to reserve the Garden Commons. Also, the aforementioned [Event Planning Guide website](#) provides a list of venues available at the Polytechnic campus, however it is missing the Garden Commons. Since the Garden Commons

are not listed on Astra Comm or the Event Planning Guide website, whoever uses these sites as their primary tool to plan events might not know of the venue.

Our historical event research revealed that the Cooley Ballrooms were the most commonly used venue. This is because of the venue's large size, which allows for seating and dining tables for many students, and the fact that they contain A/V equipment, which can be used for speakers and presentations. As the ballrooms are indoor venues, they are also air-conditioned, making them an optimal venue for the warmer months of the year. The event staff interviewee at Changemaker Central said that it could sometimes be difficult to reserve the Cooley Ballrooms for an event because they are in such high demand by so many organizations on campus.

We inferred that it would be extremely helpful if all of the event planning staff at the Polytechnic campus had access to a complete and comprehensive list of venues, including the Garden Commons. They will be able to discover and use new and alternate venues which they were not previously aware of. This would help the Garden Commons staff attract more organizations who wish to take advantage of the space. Increased usage of the Garden Commons and other venues can also help alleviate some of the competition for reserving the Cooley Ballrooms.

The Garden Commons is a venue which allows for a variety of service and sustainability events involving planting, harvesting, and distributing produce and cleaning up the garden. According to the historical event research and interview, Changemaker Central has previously used the Garden Commons for service events. It was also found in the interview word frequency analysis/word cloud that the word 'service' appeared often (30 times), making it the 16th most frequently appearing word. This demonstrates that service is an important event category and theme for events. In addition, our historical event research found that 7.3% of the events we tracked were under the community service category, and 4.9% of the events were under the sustainability category. Barrett, the Honors College previously hosted a sustainability event in the Garden Commons. This reveals a need for the Garden Commons venue among staff looking to plan more service and sustainability events. However, the Garden Commons is a versatile space and it can also be used for some other categories of events discovered in our historical research, such as health and wellness, food, and social events.

In addition, the majority of events from our historical research took place between 10 am and 9 pm. Many events take place during daytime hours. This would make the Garden Commons an optimal venue due to the popularity of events during times when the garden has natural lighting. Overall, the historical event research suggests a wide variety of potential uses for the Garden Commons based on past event themes and timings.

Ultimately, the information acquired from the interviews and historical research will be very valuable as we move onto the next step of designing our own event planning interface. Following the concerns addressed raised by our interviewees, we would need to ensure that our interface design contains comprehensive information about the Garden Commons, (and that the Garden Commons is added to the venue lists of interfaces they currently use). The interface would also require the ability to easily reserve this venue. Based on our investigation and

evaluation of the Event Planning Guide website, we would need to ensure that our interface is easy to use and is created in accordance with usability principles. This would require simplifying the event registration feature. It would also be beneficial for the interface to have the capability to promote events to students. We would have to ensure that all of the organizations on campus can use the interface and that its features and information are not just tailored to one or a few organizations. Our newly acquired knowledge of different event planning workflows and logistics of past events can help us do this. Finally, we would have to ensure that all organizations are aware of this interface and can use it. This could help alleviate some of the inconsistencies in event planning techniques used by different organizations. Designing an interface that creates one standardized and streamlined process to plan events would increase convenience and efficiency for staff.

Our interface could also have the potential to increase the popularity of the Garden Commons in several ways. The interface would need to feature a comprehensive list of all of the amenities, supplies, facilities, and types of plants that the Garden Commons currently supplies. It would also need a descriptive list of what the garden staff are planning to add in the future. If event staff know exactly what will be provided, it would make it easier for them to brainstorm and plan events in the garden. If the interface featured a calendar of all of the events scheduled to take place in the Garden Commons, it could make it easier for event staff to check the availability and reserve the space. Lastly, it could be extremely beneficial to survey event staff about what they want to see added to the garden. Opening this channel of communication could enable the garden to adapt in accordance with the needs and wants of organizations on campus. All of these measures could greatly increase the garden's popularity and transform it into a full-fledged, successful event venue which would satisfy the requirements of the Garden Commons staff, the event planning staff, and the guests who attend these events.

APPENDIX A: LINKS TO RAW DATA

Interview Recordings, Transcripts, and Diagrams:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1NFJjoMW9-xhgxxzH11rQEzq0inKVoFHn?usp=sharing>

Historical Research Findings:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1DSWVUmRVFSB58f5iOfDX9VbKjmtahQ6vV7L6wnUZ178/edit?usp=sharing>

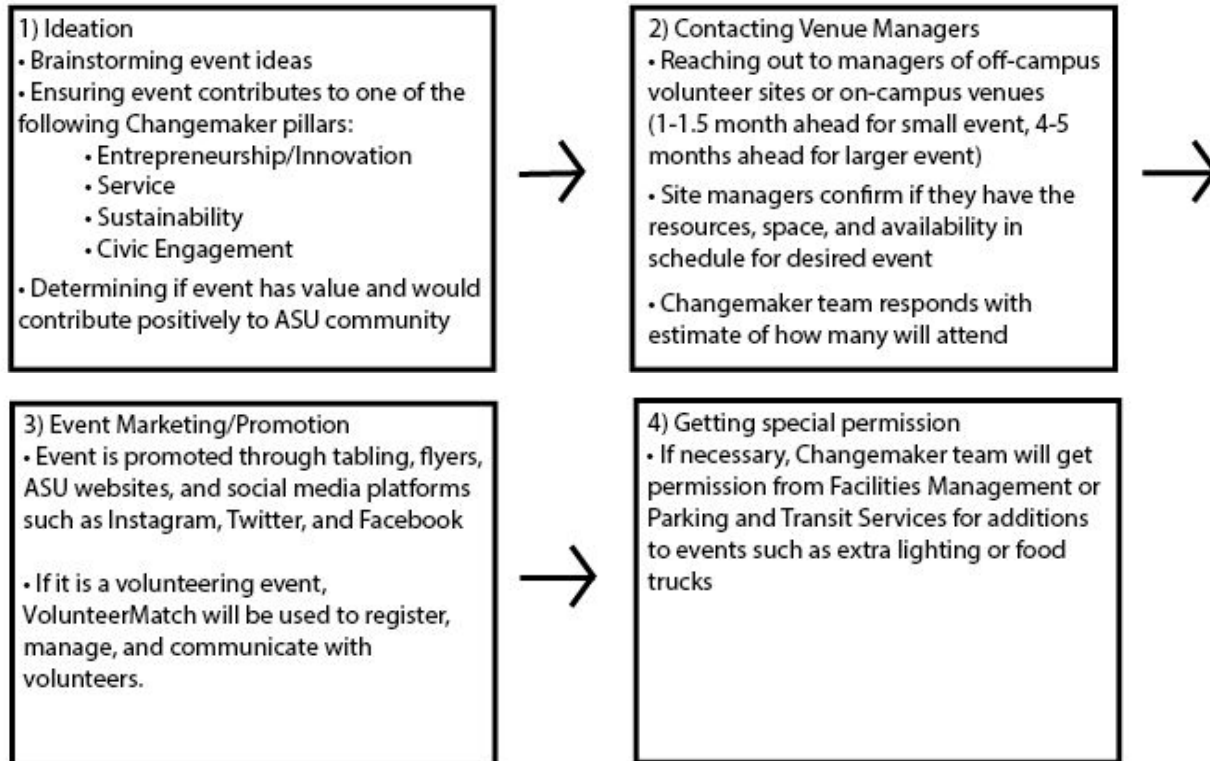
APPENDIX B: EVENT PLANNING WORKFLOWS

After conducting interviews, our research team created flowcharts of the current event planning processes on the ASU Polytechnic campus.

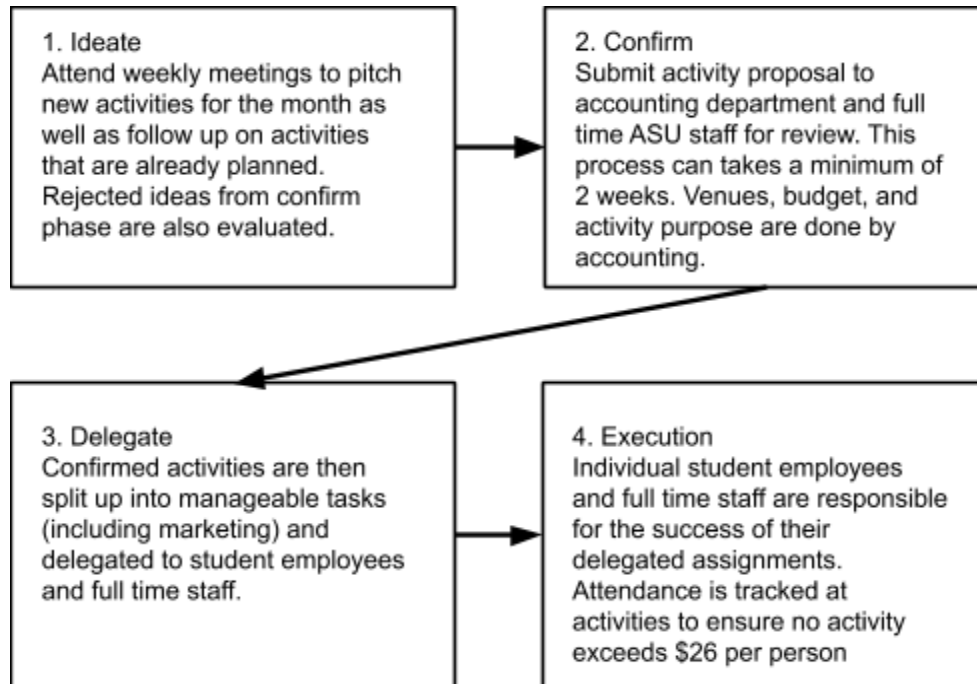
Programming and Activities Board



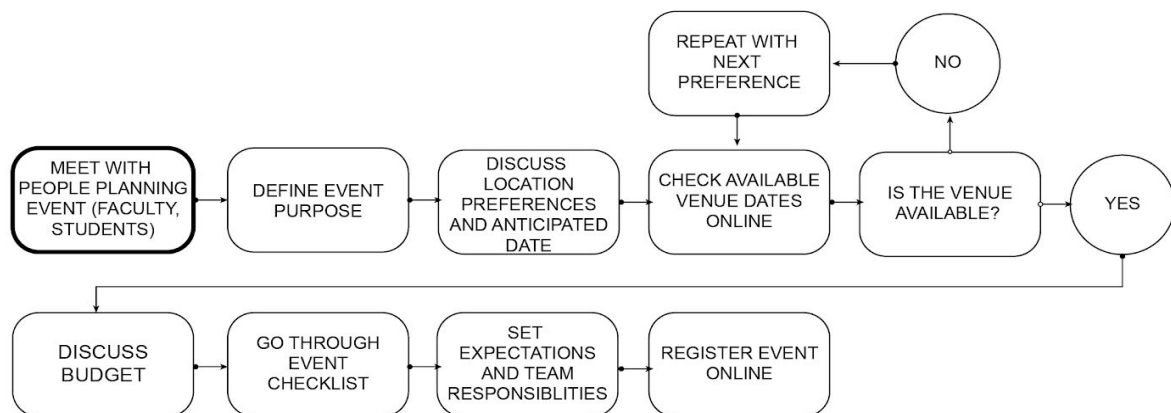
Changemaker Central



ASU Housing



Polytechnic Director's Office



REGISTER EVENT
ONLINE

