

WCSU Reunion Planner

Class/Organization: _____

Reunion Celebration: _____

Reunion Type: sit-down dinner buffet dinner reception/cocktails luncheon brunch breakfast
 barbecue picnic other: _____

Date: _____

Location (venue): _____ Reserved on: _____

Times: _____ () _____ ()
_____ () _____ ()

Catering:

Color theme: tablecloths: _____ napkins: _____
 table center (optional): _____

Menus:

- Cocktail hour/reception/social hour (hot, cold, platters):

- Main event (entrée selections, sides, dessert)

- Beverage option: complimentary full bar complimentary beer, wine, soft beverages/cash bar for all alcoholic beverages complimentary soft beverages only/cash bar for all alcoholic beverages cash bar for all soft and alcoholic beverages

Budget for entire event: \$ _____ Alumni Association funding \$ _____

Estimated attendance: _____ Admission price: \$ _____

Estimated revenue: \$ _____

Accommodations: _____

Program: _____

Special Guests (complimentary): _____

Invitation save the date mailing: _____

Formal invitation mailing: _____

Reunion phonathon date: _____

Committee members & e-mails: _____ (chair)

Committee Meeting Dates: _____

Special arrangements:

- Campus tour
- Virtual campus tour: video shown during event
- Music: band DJ CDs/ipod string quartet jazz quartet other: _____
- Photography
- Decorations
- Reunion program
- Reunion classmate booklet
- Centerpieces provided by: caterer committee
- Podium with mic
- Coat rack w/hangers
- Registration table
- Will reunion group participation in Commencement
- Other: _____

Advertising:

- Ad in Alumni News: spring _____ fall _____
- Alumni E-news (list issues): spring summer fall winter
- Facebook
- E-mails

Reunion Planning Checklist

The following information is intended to serve as a checklist for your class reunion planning:

- Form a reunion committee
- Elect a reunion chair and treasurer
- Solicit volunteers to work on subcommittees
- Establish regular reunion committee meetings
- Survey classmates for ideas
- Select a date
- Select a theme
- Decide format of events
- Reserve venues
- Create a budget
- Develop an agenda/program for the event
- Request class list: mail/phone/e-mail
- Search lost classmates
- Develop reunion Web site
- Determine and arrange for entertainment and any additional activities
- Arrange for accommodations
- Choose a menu
- Contact photographer
- Select entertainment and other services
- Pay all required deposits
- Develop registration process
- Develop a marketing & communications plan to publicize your reunion including mailers, e-mailings, newspaper advertisements and internet advertising
- Print and mail reunion announcements/invitations
- Print program
- Decide if you want to create a classmate booklet & solicit information
- Decide if you want to distribute special honors/awards
- Create name tags
- Choose decorations/table centerpieces
- Event mementos/favors
- Class gift
- Arrange for event staffing
- Deceased classmates tribute
- Speaker arrangements
- Nostalgia table
- Create old photo slide show
- Campus tours
- Pre & post reunion events

Suggested campus venues:

Midtown:

- Alumni Hall • Main Hall
- Warner Hall: • Lyceum 1 • Lyceum 2 • Lyceum 1/2 (combined) • Conference Room
- Science Building: • Atrium
- Student Center: • 201A • 201B • 201 (combined) • 202A • 202B • 202 (combined) • Theatre
- Fairfield Hall: • Lobby • Lounge • Lobby/Lounge (combined)

Westside:

- Westside Campus Center:
 - Ballroom: • North • South • North/South (combined) • Lobby
 - Meeting Rooms: • 212 • 214 • 212/214 (combined) • 213
 - Loft • Food Court • The Daily Grind • Patio
- Westside Classroom Building: • Fishbowl • 218
- O'Neill Center: • Hall of Fame • Feldman Arena
- Athletic Stadium: • President's Box • Right Patio • Left Patio
- Ives Center: • Pavilion • Park

Here are some items to consider when planning your class reunion:

Work closely with the Office of Alumni Relations: We can help plan your reunion from start to finish and will ensure that everyone has a good time.

- **Class lists:** We can supply you with a complete list of all graduates including those for whom we have out-of-date addresses. We recommend you include the names of these "lost" individuals in your reunion letter. Many grads will know the whereabouts of some of these classmates, and can help update your list.
- **Communication services:** We can help you communicate with your classmates, design invitations and save the date postcards and provide facilities for planning meetings and reunion events. We will collect RSVPs and payments, keep track of attendees and supply you with a list of the responses. We can also advertise your reunion in the *AlumniNews* magazine, in the alumni e-newsletter, on the Alumni Web site and on Facebook. We can help you plan your reunion from creating name tags, table cards, programs, booklets and making all reunion arrangements.
- **Financial services:** We will assist in developing your budget. We collect money and settle accounts for your reunion and provide you with a full accounting of your event's finances once it has taken place.
- **Administrative services:** We can coordinate and manage all aspects of your arrangements including booking campus venues, arranging for photography, catering and accommodations, and coordinating invitation/program design and mailings. We act as the liaison with your suppliers and other campus departments. We can also handle special correspondence with invited guests and help staff the events. All charges incurred as a result of printing and mailing costs and any other incidentals will be recovered through the reunion admission price.

For all inquires on reunions, please contact:

Tammy Hammershoy '97,
Director of Alumni Relations
WCSU Office of Alumni Relations
181 White Street
Danbury, CT 06810
Phone: (203) 837-8290
E-mail: alumni@wcsu.edu

The committee chairperson should:

- Assemble the committee
- Direct all plans and act as a liaison between the committee and the Alumni Office
- Work with the Alumni Office on a timeline, updating classmate contact information and in drafting correspondence to class members

The committee members should:

- Meet regularly and participate in reunion planning
- Participate in the reunion telethon to encourage attendance and build enthusiasm
- Coordinate memorabilia, advertising, promotion and hospitality
- Search lost graduates
- Volunteer on reunion sub committees and on the day of the event

Organizing Your Reunion Committee

- Select a chairperson who is responsible for seeing that others do their assigned tasks and has time to meet regularly with alumni director.
- Determine who should handle specific tasks (such as coordinating reunion events, organizing speakers, greeting classmates, arranging entertainment, etc.)
- Bring a diverse group of classmates onto the committee so you get a range of opinions
- Committee members should be individuals willing to do the tasks required
- Representation from previous reunion committees can be helpful in assessing what went well at previous events and what should be done differently

When To Hold Reunion

- What time of year would most classmates be available to attend? Consider Homecoming weekend since many events are already planned and can be tied into your reunion.

Where To Hold Event

- On which campus should you hold the reunion? Older classes may prefer Midtown since that was the only campus available.
- Do you prefer a more intimate venue or a large space?
- Do you want to hold one event or more? (one formal/one or more informal gatherings)
- Is the location easily accessible with parking close by?
- Can the facility accommodate the expected attendance yet have flexibility if numbers come in larger or smaller than anticipated?

Budgetary Considerations

- What pricing level is most appropriate for classmates? How much can classmates afford to spend to attend the reunion?
- Should you consider a raffle, sell ad space in the reunion program or conduct other fundraisers as an alternative way to raise money for expenses and/or the next reunion's startup money?
- Do you want a formal sit down meal, leisurely buffet or just hors d'oeuvres and cocktails?

Sample Budget

Assumptions

Total Class Membership _____

Estimated Turnout (Alumni & Guests @30%) _____

Estimated Expenses

| Item | Unit Cost | Per Item | Total Number | Estimated Cost |
|------------------------|------------------|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Catering | \$ _____ | Person | _____ | \$ _____ |
| Entertainment | \$ _____ | Group | _____ | \$ _____ |
| Postage | \$ _____ | Envelope | _____ | \$ _____ |
| Printing | \$ _____ | Event | _____ | \$ _____ |
| Table Centerpieces | \$ _____ | Table | _____ | \$ _____ |
| Decorations | \$ _____ | Event | _____ | \$ _____ |
| Door Prizes/Awards | \$ _____ | Prize | _____ | \$ _____ |
| _____ | \$ _____ | _____ | _____ | \$ _____ |
| _____ | \$ _____ | _____ | _____ | \$ _____ |
| _____ | \$ _____ | _____ | _____ | \$ _____ |
| _____ | \$ _____ | _____ | _____ | \$ _____ |
| Total Expenses: | | | | \$ _____ |

Estimated Revenues

| Item | Unit Cost | Per Item | Total Number | Estimated Cost |
|------------------------|------------------|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Ticket Sales | \$ _____ | Person | _____ | \$ _____ |
| Raffles | \$ _____ | Person | _____ | \$ _____ |
| _____ | \$ _____ | _____ | _____ | \$ _____ |
| _____ | \$ _____ | _____ | _____ | \$ _____ |
| _____ | \$ _____ | _____ | _____ | \$ _____ |
| Total Revenues: | | | | \$ _____ |
| BALANCE: | | | | \$ _____ |

Reunion Planning Timeline

Twelve Months Before the Reunion

- Make key contacts
- Contact alumni director for current list of classmates and addresses.
- Hold first committee meeting and recruit committee members (establish meeting schedule)
- Decide whether to do a class gift and consider what it might be.
- Coordinate the search for lost/missing former classmates
- Decide date and book location of the reunion
- Decide whether to do a classmate booklet with classmates completing survey forms describing what they've been doing since graduation or the last reunion.
- Decide if you want to offer a campus tour for returning classmates.
- Reserve accommodations for returning classmates
- Decide if you want to send a "Save the Date" postcard to classmates with information about reunion and ask for volunteers willing to help with the planning. Give contact name.
- Post reunion information in AlumniNews, e-newsletter , Facebook and on reunion Web site.
- Develop your reunion budget (see sample budget below)

Nine Months Before the Reunion

- ___ Mail the "Save the Date" postcard (with classmate booklet survey)
- ___ Select the entertainment
- ___ Plan reunion events

Six Months Before the Reunion

- Update mailing list
- Design formal invitation materials (invitation, reply cad, envelope, return envelope, event inserts, etc.)
- Prepare list of unfound alumni
- Begin compiling list of former teachers and other special guests and university administrators to invite
- Reunion committee chair should be certain specific tasks are assigned to specific committee members
- Work with caterers on selecting a menu

Three-Four Months Before the Reunion

- Finalize mailing list
- Send announcements to local newspapers and radio stations
- Plan table centerpieces and other reunion décor
- Plan nostalgia table
- Order mementos/favors

Two Month Before the Reunion

- Plan mailing meeting and send out formal invitations including former teachers and other special guests
- Begin class reunion Phonathon to call classmates and encourage them to attend
- As reservations come in, organize RSVPs and post names of classmates attending reunion on the reunion
- Prepare signage for reunion including collages and any special displays

One Month Before the Reunion

- Put classmate booklet together
- Send reminder notices via e-mail, e-newsletter, Facebook, university calendar, etc.
- Make name tags
- Create a printed program
- Prepare spoken program
- Prepare announcements
- Select winners of awards
- Buy door prizes and awards
- Finalize plans with caterer, photographer, entertainment, venue set-up, etc.
- Develop a reunion day task list and distribute to committee members

Two Weeks Before the Reunion

- Verify attendance data, print list of paid guests
- Verify attendance of volunteers and workers
- Verify attendance with caterer, photographer, entertainment, venue set-up, etc.
- Print classmate booklet together

One Week Before the Reunion

- Prepare final list of paid attendees
- Prepare registration materials
- Make any other necessary signs, e.g., letters for the registration table
- Provide final meal counts to caterers
- Verify event venue set-up
- Compile all reunion materials/supplies

Day of the Reunion

- Bring all reunion materials/supplies and reunion day task list to venue
- Set up registration table
- Distribute programs, classmate booklets and other materials on tables
- Retrieve supplies at end of reunion

After the Reunion

- Send thank you notes
- Pay bills and account for all final reunion expenses
- Store reunion supplies in easy and safe place
- Post reunion photos on the Web site
- Hold follow-up meeting to analyze reunion strengths and weaknesses (chair(s) for next reunion should be selected)
- If reunion generated surplus, be certain money is properly accounted for
- Sit back and relax, as you pulled it off without a hitch!!!

Frequently asked questions about reunion planning

How do I get started planning a reunion?

Contact the Office of Alumni Relations so we can begin assisting you with the planning process:

Tammy Hammershoy '97,
Director of Alumni Relations
WCSU Office of Alumni Relations
181 White Street
Danbury, CT 06810
Phone: (203) 837-8290
E-mail: alumni@wcsu.edu

How do I obtain a list of classmates?

The Office of Alumni Relations can disclose alumni contact information to those conducting official university business. Reunion committee chairpersons act as the liaison between the Alumni Office and classmates and, therefore, mailing lists can be shared with the committee chairs. The lists provided to reunion committees will be for the exclusive use of making contact with alumni to encourage participation in scheduled reunion activities, which is considered official university business. Once the committee chairperson has signed the Reunion Volunteer Agreement, a list of your reunion group members and their contact information will be given to you for use within your committee.

How should I begin forming my reunion committee?

Recruit classmates/group members who are willing and able to dedicate their time and commitment to coordinate your reunion.

Where should we hold our reunion?

Select a date that is likely to be convenient for the largest number of people and that doesn't conflict with other major events being held on campus. You may want to consider holding your event during Homecoming Week in order to take advantage of other events, programs and entertainment going on at that time.

How do we set a budget?

Take into consideration whether your reunion activities will include classmates/group members in addition to family members and friends. Remember that your overall budget will need to account for all individuals in attendance at your reunion activities/events. Once you have made all the decisions regarding the program, menu, special touches, etc., you can develop your reunion budget and decide on event fee(s) for your reunion. Determine the costs for everything you would like to accomplish and set the event fee to ensure that all costs are covered. Reunions are designed to work on a break-even basis. The Office of Alumni Relations can offer assistance on developing the budget and can advise you on any items you may have accidentally overlooked. Please remember, if you wish to offer special guests complimentary tickets to your event, this must be included in your reunion budget. See the sample budget in this packet to get started on developing your budget.

What type of event should we have and where should we have it?

The type of activities/event(s) you plan will depend on the length of the reunion, your budget, facilities available and how much effort is dedicated to planning. Get creative and have fun! When deciding on a venue at which to hold your reunion event(s), please keep in mind the following concerns: campus, venue, handicap accessibility, parking, etc.

What catering options are available?

If holding your event on campus, WestConn has a catering company that can provide many options from a reception to a formal dinner. Several bar options are also available. The Office of Alumni Relations will set up a meeting with committee members to help you select the best catering options for your event. For ideas, visit our catering Web site at: <http://www.wcsucampusdining.com/westwind/index.html>

How do we plan the activities for the reunion? What other concerns should be considered?

Planning for the main reunion event may involve organizing an agenda for the evening. This may include a welcome address, keynote address and even a special recognition/award segment. Many reunion groups arrange for speakers (i.e. faculty members, reunion class/group president, university president, etc.) to speak during the main event. If there is a fee for the keynote speaker, please remember to include this expense in your budget. You may wish to include some form of entertainment at your reunion (band, DJ or other entertainment). If you would like to use any audio/visual equipment (i.e. microphones, speakers, podium, projector, etc.) please make these requests known to the Office of Alumni Relations.

How do we promote the reunion through Alumni Relations?

The Office of Alumni Relations can advertise your reunion in the *AlumniNews* magazine, in the alumni e-newsletter, on the Alumni Web site and on Facebook.

Will the Alumni Office provide alumni favors or giveaways?

In you wish to provide reunion attendees with favors or giveaways, the Office of Alumni Relations will work with our promotional product vendors on pricing. You may also wish to decorate your venue and/or bring memorabilia to display. Please discuss these and other considerations well in advance with the Alumni Office.

Should we have a photographer or videographer?

The Office of Alumni Relations will arrange for a university photographer to take group and candid photos at your event. Following the event, we will post reunion photos on the university's Web site. Where attendees can download any photos they want free of charge. If you wish to distribute photos to reunion members, a nominal fee covering developing and mailing costs may be charged. If you want videographer services, please work with the Alumni Office.

How do I plan for hotel blocks?

The university has special arrangements with select hotels in the area that offer special WestConn rates. The Alumni Office of Alumni Relations will help arrange a room block at the reduced rate for your reunion members.

How do we handle invitations and registration information?

The Office of Alumni Relations can assist you in locating lost classmates and gathering information to update alumni records. Save the date letters and/or postcards and invitation materials will be produced in-house and mailed through the university's mail services. Printing and postage costs will be billed back to the reunion account. If lost classmates are located after a reunion mailing is sent out, please contact the Alumni Office as soon as possible to insure we send them the mailing. All committee members should be involved in helping to locate lost classmates so everyone has an opportunity to attend their reunion.

Reunion Volunteer Agreement

Class Reunion Committee Chairperson & Committee Member Responsibilities:

As a chairperson for your reunion, please review the following guidelines established by the Alumni Association for reunion planners. Sign and date the agreement and return to:

WCSU Office of Alumni Relations
181 White Street
Danbury, CT 06810
Phone: (203) 837-8290
E-mail: alumni@wcsu.edu

Western Connecticut State University Alumni Association Reunion Committee Guidelines:

- Each reunion event must be self supporting and include all expenses.
- The reunion committee is responsible for all fees associated with the reunion including but not limited to catering, printing and mailing costs; entertainment, decorations, and favors/giveaways.
- Each reunion committee should designate one person who is responsible for working with the Office of Alumni Relations on reviewing the budget on a regular basis.
- If the reunion venue is on campus, the university’s guidelines regarding appropriate use of alcohol and behavior must be followed.
- Any damage to the facility will be the responsibility of the reunion committee.
- Any and all lists containing alumni contact information, RSVPs and/or payment information will be kept confidential and will be used for the sole purpose of planning the reunion. The mailing lists provided to reunion committees will be for the exclusive use of making contact with alumni to encourage participation in scheduled reunion activities.

Please sign and date below indicating that you agree to these reunion committee guidelines.

I, _____, reunion committee chairperson for the _____ Reunion, have read and agree to all of the reunion committee guidelines as described above.

Signature _____ Date _____

Print Name _____