UND Community: Climate and Culture

Summer Programing

Wednesday, June 29 at 10:30 am

zoom

13 Participants

1. **Introductions, and what programming/events do you offer and work on?** 
   1. Swimming and clubs, museum and art events, commencement and other large special events, Feast of Nations and Founders Day, Wake up to UND, Writers Conference, English Department open mics, speaking series and other events for the community, community day, aerospace classic and variety of aerospace events, ND Space Grand Consortium- statewide program, aerospace community day, summer STEM camp and K-12 student engagement, DEIA related program and events for students, VIP guests and visitor events, Graduate student programming 3 minute thesis, graduate research day, all social graduate activities, athletics camps and clinics throughout the year, aerospace summer camp from across the country and at times internationally, sponsored camps in western north Dakota.
2. **What value does your programing bring to UND?** 
   1. History of the Writers Conference, started in 1970 and at its foundation its mission has been free and open access to the humanities and arts. We started off as the only one in the nation doing this. It is for students, community, alumni. We are doing a lot of outreach; UND is the Liberal Arts university in ND- we have a national and international reputation and the caliber of the authors that we bring are on par with New York. Lot of focus these days on STEM- but this cultural tradition has been here and will continue. This is a strength for UND, and we don’t get as much attention as we should for what we bring the community. We don’t have guaranteed funding, we don’t have enough to support even the general operating costs. It is a year by year from the Dean and Provost that helps cover the costs, but the rest is grants. I usually write 4-7 grants a year to help cover parts of this. Costs continue to rise but my budget doesn’t shift. I should add that the UND WC has on average 1500-2000 people attending events over the three day event (may not be unique attendees, we don't require registration except for Zoom)…we're now pulling audience members across the nation/internationally because we're livestreaming
   2. With ceremonies and university events we do many things that recognize accomplishments and celebrate achievements. At graduation we celebrate the achievements of our graduates. We also try to help those from off campus understand what is happening at our university. This could be with the dedication of a building or making the public aware of what is happening. This helps provide part of UND’s experiential brand. We want them to have a good experience while they are here, this is part of the UND brand we want people to remember.
   3. Our sports teams run their own camps, but who we bring depends on the sport. Some are meant to identify students to play at a collegiate level, some are meant to attract students to UND overall, some are youth camps that give children things to do. Our camps have different purposes/goals and all are required to maintain a balance in their camp accounts, so all have to be cash flow positive. We are having to cap our enrollments, so they are popular camps. Registration varies by sport- football camps have around 500 people while volleyball camps host around 30 6-8 graders, so it varies. We bring in around 1000 over the year in terms of campers. Have time-tested way to make sure meeting all the regulations.
   4. I email past campers and Kids Connect- it fills up with this very quickly. We have so much demand that we cannot keep up with it. We don’t need to do a lot of advertising, because it fill up so quickly.
3. **What challenges do you have to make your event/program a success? How could this be improved?**
   1. Parking is a challenge. As far as managing, organizing our camps we have a registration system. We have a department in UND that does registrations, but it takes multiple weeks to get this to happen and to make a change to the registration system adds more time. So, we created our own system that makes it easier for us t make changes. However, all the money has to funnel through a different system, so our campers have to register through two systems. They must register and pay in different areas. Then I need to submit other forms, and I need to oversee all the management of this. This creates a lot of manual work for me, as a faculty member. If the group helping with the registration could handle these other logistical issues that would be a huge help.
   2. Most of our events are geared towards students. People see us as the DEI unit for all of campus, but we are only funded to serve students, this is a challenge when we think about how the rest of the campus is served. How do we help our faculty and staff when they want to engage in DEI initiatives? Also, when we do larger community events, having to navigate the university systems has been a real challenge. We are dealing with vendors, and competition payouts, and minors- there are just so many layers of complexity. How do we continue to put on these events but not having cash on hand to pay out?
   3. For our event we use the Memorial Union, which means that parking is a bit of an issue, especially for lifelong learners in the Community and/or those who need more accessible parking with less walking. And, the conference is in March, snow/ice removal is also an issue…it wasn't in the past when facilities did it
   4. UND has policies, the state has policies and laws, and using grant money has its own restrictions. Getting through purchasing, the paperwork that is needed is crazy, I am a staff of one and I am a full-time faculty member. I need to understand Jagger and put in invoices and make requests and make sure that I am meeting all the rules and regs of these different entities. There are too many levels of bureaucracy. Paperwork and logistics- I spend too much of my time doing this. So many rules and policies- I am not employed or trained to do this but if I am not doing this then the event will not happen.
   5. To add to that, policies and procedures change, and if you are not always up to date on this then we need to relearn it each time.
   6. I have to use my personal credit card to pay for things and then get reimbursed, or at times not get reimbursed because of a policy change.
   7. We have run into problems with hotels- PCard or direct billed. It always gets put on our attendees to be reimbursed. If these are college students many of them don‘t have that money in their account. We need to do better to supporting those we’re inviting to campus.
   8. Challenges that I have found with increase in technology – we want to support both on campus and online student population. More of a demand for online programming. I need to plan in-person, online and hybrid. This can at times double the work. We want to support our online students but puts strain on folks because you run out of bandwidth and capacity to manage these three modalities. Ideal to see if more resources to support more of the online efforts that we are found.
   9. Working with student groups that are planning events, they like to use external vendors and we are running into issues with vendors and campus safety. Easier to work with campus catering, but they can’t always meet the cultural needs of our students in terms of food. How do we help our students feel represented/seen and make sure that we can support them? What are those things that we can give exceptions for? This effects their sense of belonging.
   10. Competition for Zoom licensing and space…I have the UND WC booked out for the Union four years in advance
   11. Venue space and updated tech/sound/lighting is often a concern for Theatre and Music.
   12. Challenges of getting volunteers. For commencement we used to have student marshals and we struggle now to get people to help with commencement. It takes a lot of help to run these events- it is a struggle
   13. The culture, as in the climate on campus, is that people are burnt out and less likely to volunteer or be involved. How do we get people back and engaged? This is faculty as well- people are tired and not willing to help out.
   14. Possibility for larger events giving small stipend because what they are doing is unpaid work?
   15. We advertise for volunteers for our newsletter, and we need 200 volunteers that make Aerospace Community Day possible. Faculty are hard to come by but our student orgs have really stepped up in being wiling to help out. We offer free lunch and a shirt as well.
   16. One more hurdle, is remembering who to contact for help. Lots of turnover with departments throughout the university. I sent out emails last fall for starting the conversation with housing, and I didn’t get a response until January. This lag time is unacceptable. We need faster response times from areas that we need help from.
   17. Agree, not a lot of understanding from other areas that we need this information early to make these events successful. We do lots of programming, but so many different messages going out to students from all our offices. I think the messaging is getting lost. Email seems like it is no longer working for us.
   18. Robotics helps with our Engineering mission. Helps teach younger kids with Engineering and this holds with them- they continue to go with this passion. Also connects them to Math, UAS, Aero, Engineering.
   19. The North Dakota Science and Engineering Fair is amazing for all areas of our academic mission- it feeds into a lot of the academic programming that we offer.
   20. Our First Robotics ran out of space to hold this- we had to stop advertising because we could not fit them all on campus. We held it at the Union, but numbers were lower this year due to the pandemic. Looking back at a growth year this year.
   21. We got a 5-year bid for the Science Fair and the Robotics one we can hold anywhere but we choose UND for that and we are the state partner so it will always be UND hosting this.
   22. We get the call to go out to high schools quite a bit and host programs with them. We will try to make our engineering project relatable to what they are working on so it is enhancing what they are learning. We travel all over for this outreach and bring our students for that.
   23. Science Fair funding: it is a lot of work that falls on the back of just a few people. We do the bulk of the work for the Science Fair, but it is a university benefit so it would be great to get more university support for this. We have a donor that helps and I hire the ambassadors for the outreach.
   24. For First Lego League, we used to ask for sponsorship, but we are down to about 8 sponsors which we will reach out to. We don’t seek new sponsorships because we are covered for what we need and run the tournament off of what we are given.
4. **How do you market your event/programming to the community?** 
   1. Email is good for some audiences, but we need to think about who we are trying to reach. Trying to reach people where they are at. For students we work on social media and Student Life Weekly or digital signage. Our Instagram account seems to be good for younger demographic.
   2. Facebook is good for older demographic.
   3. Use UND calendar, and when we surveyed students, they said that email was best. Our Graduate Students are on Facebook. We need to try to create awareness across campus but are all these efforts necessary when a few key things work for our specific audiences?
   4. Swim lessons: don’t have to do a lot of marketing. All our registration is through online account. Within 5 minutes of opening we are booked. We don’t always have the instructors that we need. We have 30-40 kids every half hour going though the pool. I would have more people if I had more instructors. We have ballpark around 500 registrations a year of students that attend these sessions.
   5. For art related events we have a mailing list that helps with the older, more lifelong learners. They can pull in people within a certain mile radium to send invites to for our events (mailing invites). We can also do email blasts, but we have found that the mailers and postcards are useful. We also run multiple social media platforms.
   6. We use a mailing list, and this is part of our fundraising efforts for the Writers Conference. I have sent out over 3,000 pieces in the mail a year. We use the Highplains, the Herald, NPR, local media platforms and Facebook helps us reach markets across the country. Have not figured out the magical combination of what works best.
   7. One thing that helps is having champions within our college. If we have faculty members that can help advertise and share the information. Also, have the others that are involved in similar events post on their social media pages. Having those champions to help. This is not my full-time job, and I don’t have time to think of these things all the time, so having these champions is such a help. UND does have a good presence but having those champions to help promote is big.
   8. I also used to send posters/brochures to regional colleges/universities, although not the past two years
   9. Faculty and staff time is an issue. Keeping up with all the logistics. Parking and signage is always a problem. This should not be difficult, but I need to keep calling and still don’t get it. Housing was an issue with our overnight camp. All they cared about was getting the contract signed, but they didn’t get any information after that point. We need to figure out what the kids need (blankets, pillow, et.) If you don’t get this information, it makes it difficult. Trying to recruit students, that is the point. But when we arrive, we are put in this horrible facility, and it was dirty. It was not the best UND to put out there to try and get prospective students. We need to show off UND and want people to come here. I don’t recommend Sieke Hall. Even a list of rules would be helpful, but Housing did not supply that. I had to make a curfew rule, but they had nothing that they provided.
   10. For registering campers we need to use the UND system.
5. **Do you feel that this is an area that UND should expand offerings? How would we make this happen? What other types of programs and events should UND focus their efforts?**
   1. In order to do more, we need to have more logistical help. Parking also needs to be fixed. We bring in a lot of VIPs and their first question is always if they are going to get a ticket. If we can smooth these logistical issues out, then we would have more of these community engagement events.
   2. I would agree, parking is the big issue. We have people that want to know if they will get a ticket before they agree to come.
   3. Logistics at Memorial Union are difficult in terms of IT. These logistics need work in order to have confidence we can make these events successful.
   4. I've literally had people say they would NEVER attend the UND WC or any event again because of parking
   5. We have had to bring our college IT people over and lighting was an issue for livestreaming.
   6. Also, making things easier for hotels. The Jagger system makes navigating through these systems hard. Having people pay for own hotel and get reimbursed isn’t ideal.
   7. ADA is still an issue in the Union...the ballroom echo is bad, so for those who are hard of hearing without assistive devices, it's impossible…
   8. The reimbursement is such a pain. If people are paying for themselves then a long backlog of time to get reimbursed is not acceptable. We cannot ask people to wait for long periods of time that are external.
   9. Dollars for DEI work needs to be a priority for the institution. We need to put our money where our mouth is. This is where we have been cut and now just using student fee dollars. We need to put money towards things that we say we value.
   10. The Writers Conference used to get funding from various departments, but not anymore. We should make this a priority; but we don’t have funding. We need logistics and financial support. Help take some of this logistical burden off faculty that are trying to help. The ND Council of the Arts allows for one submission, and we are now pitted against each other, and we have to do a white paper to compete against each other for $3,000. If the Grants and contracts doesn’t support the grants that are smaller and community based, but we need help to keep these going. STEM and Humanities have different financial needs. Support across the board.
   11. Online students are saying they want same experience. We need to build sense of community and belonging, so need tech support that can help with this.
   12. Could STEM and Arts come together? The arts and humanities come together. Make it STEAM.
   13. Support, students that can work, any kind of financial or other financial resource. Partnering with STEM we have had people work with us in humanities. Working on the STEAM initiatives. We don’t want to fight on the grants. Go to our strengths. people on this group are high performers, we take on a lot of the work because we are hard workers, and we are cleaver and competent on how we work with each other and our resources so we can engage our community better.
   14. Would like to see the colleges work together more on these initiatives. We work to invite them to bring them together on these events. Overall, it would be nice to have people from each college involved in these activities. Have a designated outreach/events person that we could all work together to help with this. Keep everyone connected