

Food Events

Successful Planning for Food Events

LAST UPDATED

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1. Appoint a **Production Manager, Serving Supervisor and Clean up Director**.
2. Have all three **meet with Special Events Coordinator** at start of planning.
3. Be familiar with the **MU East Kitchen**.
4. **Develop a menu** that will be culturally representative, meets your guests' expectations and can be produced with-in facility constraints and demands. Consider these factors when developing the menu;
 - a) **Financial limitations** - The budget plays a major role in planning menu items. The amount of money you have available in your budget must be considered when you choose your menu. As well as food supplies, don't forget to include paper supplies, etc.
 - b) **Production capabilities** - Available equipment, the type, size and amount of food preparation, holding and transporting equipment are all important factors in planning menus that can be produced. The Special Event Coordinator will explain the various equipment available in the MU East Kitchen and how it can impact your menu. Some things to consider include: oven capacity, number of fryers, refrigerator and freezer facilities, availability and capacity of mixers, food processors and choppers. Certain combinations of menu items often must be avoided because of lack of production equipment, serving pans or hot /cold holding equipment.
 - c) **The number and experience of staff** (organizational members and /or volunteers) need to be considered when deciding on the variety and complexity of the menu. Understanding the relationship between menu and personnel will help the production manager develop a menu that can be prepared by the available staff.
5. **Distribution of Work** - Production should be scheduled to distribute work load evenly, often two days of production eliminates stress and promotes enjoyment of the event. Care should be given to avoid an excessive work load for staff one day followed by underutilization the next. To introduce variety in the menu a limited number of foods requiring time consuming processes may be included if combined with the other food items that require minimum preparation. Some foods require last minute cooking to ensure high quality. To avoid confusion and delayed meal service, the menu should be planned to balance items that may be prepared early and those that must be cooked just prior to serving.
6. **Recipes** - Use only menu items that have recipes available for them. Recipes must include the number of servings it makes or the amount of food it creates. All recipes must be submitted in English and U.S. Measurement, i.e.; teaspoons ,tablespoons, cups, pints, quarts, gallons, ounces, pounds. Conversion tables and temperature charts are available from the Special Event Coordinator. All recipes must be quantified to the number of service for the event, i.e.; original recipe yield 4 servings, event recipe yield 400 servings. **Recipes should include: yield, ingredients, weights and measures, instructions, and cooking time and temperature.**
7. **Grocery lists** - after quantifying recipes, prepare the shopping list. Keep in mind that if the recipe calls for three cups of onions you will need to determine the weight of those three cups. Groceries do not sell onions by the cup but by the pound. Also take into consideration the loss of weight in converting the as purchased product (the peel, the end, etc.) to the edible (usable) product.

Important: Rice as purchased

1 pound = 2 1/3 cups uncooked ,

1 pound uncooked after cooking = 3 1/2# or 2 Qt

3 pounds , 8 oz raw rice cooks in to 50 - 4 oz portions

When creating shopping list **pre-shop** to determine availability, distributor and price. We recommend using **Rice-n-Spice, Cub Foods** and **Quail Crest Foods**. Large quantity perishable items, i.e.; meats, produce, eggs and dairy, can be purchased from **Sysco Foods** through the Special Event Coordinator. The Special Event Coordinator will inquire as to availability and price, place the order and accept delivery. You must have a purchase request for Sysco Foods to the Special Events Coordinator one week before

Scheduling -

8. To schedule **production** start by reviewing recipes. Determine what production can be done one day in advance, such as cleaning and prepping produce, marinating meats, preparing baked goods, cleaning rice, etc. Determine approximate time needed to complete each item. Determine the production schedule for the day of the event. All items should be completed as close to service time as possible. Events held in the MU Ballroom require 1.5 hours for transport and set up. So all items must be completed by 3:30 for a 5:00 event. Determine the number of people needed to do production. The MU East International Kitchen can accommodate up to 20 participants at any given time. Prepare work schedules. A detailed work schedule includes preparation, cooking, serving and clean up assignments. If workers are inexperienced, the schedule should include time for each task, detailed procedures and other special instructions. Each item should have a person involved in the production that has made the item previously and has knowledge of preparation, cooking, taste and visual appearance. Scheduling use of equipment may be important if the menu consists of numerous items that must be baked or cooked in steam kettles or steamers. For example, on the first night of production we may complete all of the baking of the dessert, so that on the day of the event we can batch cook the main entree(s).

MU East Kitchen use is supervised at all times by the Special Event Coordinator and/or a student assistant supervisor.

9. The **Serving Line** is also in need of thorough thought and attention. The serving line is the first place of contact for the event's guests, therefore it is very important to have organized, consistent and quick service. This can be accomplished by assigning a Serving Line Director. Communication between the production coordinator and the serving line director is paramount to the success of the event. Delivery time, plate presentation and portioning are some of the examples of the cross-over responsibilities. If the production person fails to communicate the correct portion, the serving person will be responsible for overseeing the inevitable shortage of food items. A serving line director should take charge of delivery of food upon arrival, checking to be certain that no item is missing, directing the set of the line and the additional storage and handling of food items. A schedule for serving line volunteers should also be developed. One serving line per 100 people is suggested. Every food item and beverage must have a server. The event's guests are not allowed to serve themselves to prevent over portioning as well as cross contamination. If the menu consists of 7 food items and a beverage and is being served to 400 people there should be 4 lines, 32 servers. In addition each line should have a runner (restocker), making the total number of servers needed for this event 36. All servers should be available 30 minutes prior to serving to help in set of line, menu orientation, hand sanitizing and line assignment. All servers should remain until the serving line has been cleaned up, usually 30 minutes after the end of serving. All menu items should be labeled on the serving lines and all vegetarian items should be marked as such. It is also important that the servers are aware of the item that they are serving, i.e.; the correct pronunciation of the item, the ingredients, the region of origin, the correct portion, etc.
10. A schedule for **clean up** is also important. A representative of the Student Organization must be in charge of clean up, however you can use non-members for clean up. The person in charge should know who and how many people to expect for clean up. The clean up staff should be scheduled 15 minutes before the projected end of serving. Complete serving line, pantry and kitchen clean up takes, on average, 4 hours. A minimum of 6 people are needed for clean up. Remember that clean up includes dealing with all left-over food items, transporting of all equipment, etc. back to the kitchen, washing and storing pans, utensils, etc., cleaning of all large equipment, emptying trash and recycling, and sweeping and mopping of the kitchen.
11. **Evaluation** is as important as any other step in the process. Keeping accurate data as the event progresses is a must. The budget, the menu, the production, serving and clean up schedules, ticket sales, attendance, time lines and the event overview are but a few of the items that should be documented for future use. An evaluation meeting with the Special Events Coordinator will allow everyone involved to have an understanding of what happened, how it happened and what was learned in the happening.