

Orientation Risk Management Guiding Principles

Overview

The Orientation Risk Management (ORM) Committee strives to strike a balance between providing space for meaningful, fun, engaging Orientation Week activities and ensuring that the potential for harm to students is low. These guidelines are intended to outline transparent principles and criteria utilized by ORM when making decisions to approve or reject Orientation Week events.

The overarching principles guiding decision making of the Risk Management Committee are:

- i. Safety of students
- ii. Inclusion of students
- iii. Dignity of students
- iv. Preserving the right of students to choose to participate
- v. Protecting the reputation of the university

As such, the following statements are intended to guide Event Planners, Orientation Risk Management Committee Members and the Student Transition Office in managing the risks associated with Orientation Week.

- a. Coercion to participate in any Orientation Week event, either explicitly or implicitly, is not permissible.
- b. Event Planners will create an environment where students feel comfortable with choosing to opt-out of an event at any time. Where there is a risk of participants embarrassing themselves, it is the responsibility of the student to choose whether or not s/he will participate.
- c. When there is a significant risk of harm or injury to event participants that cannot be adequately mitigated, the Orientation Team will work with Event Planners to identify alternatives, where possible, that are known to be less risky and that still create fun/novel opportunities for students.
- d. Student Event Planners implementing an event that involves physical activities, water or other liquids, travel off campus, electricity, large crowds, and/or other areas of risk articulated in this document, must complete training provided by STO that focuses on strategies to mitigate risk.

1. Physical activities

Slips, falls, trips, aggressive behavior, overly competitive behavior causing injury, and the surface upon which the physical activity is taking place are primary areas of risk to be mitigated.

- a. Commonly required action for Event Planners to manage risk prior to offering an event with physical activities, include:
 - I. Instructing participants to wear reasonable and appropriate footwear, attire and sunscreen;
 - II. Committing to ensure the playing surface is free of obstacles and dangers such as sharp objects, rocks, etc.;

- III. Committing to ensure that all participants sign a liability waiver;
 - IV. Committing to intervene when a participant exhibits excessively aggressive and/or competitive behaviour.
- b. Forms of activity that will be regarded as high risk in this category are:
- I. Sporting activities where the participants intentionally engage in physical contact that has the potential to result in injury, except those administered by the Department of Athletics as a part of their normal business (e.g. football).
 - II. Events involving running around obstacles may be approved provided that it is reasonable to expect students to participate in the activity without falling and injuring themselves.
 - III. Physical competitions where participants could not reasonably be expected to know how to safely participate before Orientation Week or events with reputations for causing injury. For example, under normal circumstances, Ultimate Frisbee is likely to be approved but running through an obstacle course is not.

2. Water or Other Liquids

Slips and falls are avoidable and, yet, are some of the most common incidents on campus, often resulting in twisted ankles and concussions. Therefore, events that involve water or other liquids are of particular concern from a risk management perspective.

Principles for reviewing events in this category include:

- i. Activities involving water or other liquids where the ground is likely to become saturated, particularly those that result in muddy conditions, slick grassy areas or wet floors are not usually approved due to the risk of falling and injury.
- ii. The normal use of a swimming pool or dunk tank in an event will typically be approved; however, use of a kiddie pool or other container likely to create slipping risks is unlikely to be approved.
- iii. Activities where participants are expected to slip/slide around are known to frequently result in injuries and are not normally permitted.
- iv. Activities where participants are likely to get wet to the point that they are embarrassed by clingy clothing will not typically be approved (see principle iii under "Overview").
- v. Activities that involve water filled projectiles will not typically be approved. Water balloon tosses or water fights of any kind are examples of events that will not be approved.

3. Off Campus Events

In addition to the usual considerations around choice of venue, bus waivers, and bus monitors, it is imperative that Event Planners are aware of the names of all participants taking part in their event; maintain open lines of communication with participants; and ensure that the safety and security of participants is addressed at all times. As such, the following issues must be taken into account:

- a. Informed consent requires that students know the destination and the nature of the activity in which they will participate before they begin engaging in the event.
- b. Event Planners must make available to participants a means by which they can leave the event at any time, and participants must be made aware of this.
- c. Event Planners must make a reasonable effort to ensure participants are not unwittingly left behind at an off-site venue.
- d. Individuals who wish to find their own way home are expected to inform the Event Planners of this fact, and documentation must be kept to this effect to ensure that the name, contact information, and form of transport used to depart the venue is on record.
- e. All bus trips require two bus monitors per bus, who must attend bus monitor training with the Orientation Team as part of in-person September Event Planner training.

4. Electricity at Outdoor Venues

The most common types of equipment requiring electricity at outdoor events include: sound systems, cotton candy machines, popcorn machines, bouncy castles, and additional lighting. Under many circumstances, generators are available from the Student Transition Office. It is the responsibility of the Event Planner to check whether they may use a generator provided by STO.

Principles for reviewing events in this category include:

- a. Extension cords may not be run from inside any University buildings to an outdoor venue. To do so would often compromise building safety and security, creates tripping hazards, and risks placing unacceptable load on the building's electrical infrastructure.
- b. With prior approval, Event Planners may use outdoor power outlets located in Branion Plaza or on Johnston Green.
- c. With due caution, Event Planners may be permitted to make use of a generator to power outdoors events. Only individuals who have been instructed on the correct operation of a generator are permitted to make use of the equipment.
- d. It is imperative that all necessary precautions be taken to secure cables as articulated during Event Planner training. Electrical cables must be kept clear from pedestrian through fares and/or locations where they will present a tripping hazard.

5. Large Crowds

Most events with a student Sponsoring Organization require a ratio of **1 Orientation Volunteer to 10 expected participants**. Activities where large groups are expected to participate (**typically more than 500 individuals**) will be reviewed to assess whether dedicated Police Officers are required to be present. Smaller groups may require such review, depending upon the proposed activity. Events with controversial or high profile speakers may require police presence regardless of event size.

- a. The most common issues considered when assessing these activities include:
 - i. Some venues inherently provide greater security, due in large part to their design, thereby reducing the need for a formal police presence.

- ii. Academic events rarely require additional security.
 - iii. Daytime events frequently present fewer concerns than those events that occur at night.
 - iv. Events that have a history of attracting unruly crowds or illegal activities will receive greater scrutiny, such as celebrating Four Twenty or instructing students on forms of protest, including “black block” resistance may require police presence or may not be approved.
- b. If police are required to be present in order to provide additional security for an event, it is the responsibility of the Event Planner to:
- i. Make arrangements directly with Campus Community Police for duty officers to be present.
 - ii. Prior to the day of the event, review the role of the officers with Campus Community Police, and check in with the officers during the event set-up and at the conclusion of the event.
 - iii. Pay for the cost of duty officers.
- c. Portable bathrooms may be required at a ratio of one bathroom per 100 participants, at the expense of the Event Planner, dependent on the size and location of the event.

6. Other University Policies

All University policies must be abided by during Orientation Week. Several of them are particularly relevant in the context of the Orientation event approval process, as follows:

a. Events with Food

Any event serving any type of food presents a risk for spreading disease. The Guelph/Wellington Food Inspector will inspect every event with food and approve the food preparation and service aspect of the event. For a full description of food handling, storage and serving requirements, please refer to the Notes from the Health Inspector.

- i. Principles for reviewing events in this category include:
 1. Hazardous food must be stored in an inspected fridge or freezer. Hazardous foods must be maintained at the required temperature as outlined in Ontario Food Premise Regulation 562.
 2. Hand sanitizer must be available at all events where food is eaten.
 3. A hand wash station must be present, easy accessible, and used at all events where food is being prepared or handled.
 4. Any person preparing food on a BBQ must attend BBQ training.
 5. Any food preparation demonstration must be performed by a chef in a teaching or inspected kitchen.
 6. At the event, all food must be kept off the ground, and served at temperatures outlined by the Health Inspector.
 7. All food purchasing must abide by the **University of Guelph Sales and Solicitation Policy**.

- a. All 'prepared' food must be purchased through Hospitality Services or any company that is accessible through the University meal plan.
 - b. For the full sales and solicitation policy, please see: <http://www.uoguelph.ca/finance/sites/uoguelph.ca/finance/files/On%20Campus%20Advertising.pdf>
- ii. Please see the "Health Inspector Guidelines" available at <http://studentlife.uoguelph.ca/STO/navigate/orientation-week/event-planners> for a full list of required risk management actions for food events.
- b. Purchasing Items or Giving Away Items**
 - i. Any item that your group wishes to purchase and or give away to students (eg. Lanyards, magnets, t-shirts, etc.) must abide by the University's **Ethical Purchasing Policy**: <http://www.uoguelph.ca/ethicalbuying/>
- c. Events with Animals**
 - i. Any event or activity that features/involves any live creature (e.g. Fish sales, donkey sanctuary, petting zoo, etc.) must abide by the rules set out by the University's Animal Care Committee: http://www.uoguelph.ca/research/forms_policies_procedures/animal.shtml
 - 1. An animal utilization protocol document must be completed, naming a faculty principle investigator as the person responsible for the event.
- d. Alcohol**
 - i. No proposal for an event including alcohol or at a venue which serves alcohol will be approved. This includes venues operating under a split-license.
- e. Fire**
 - i. No events with fire will be approved unless they are run in collaboration with Fire Prevention Services. Events that involve operating charcoal barbeques are an exception to this guideline.
- f. Student Housing Services**
 - i. Any event occurring within a University Residence must follow all policies of Student Housing Services, such as the guest policy, alcohol rules, use of paint, and food policies.