

Create a calendar (similar to the current professional development calendar) that highlights extra-curricular programs, workshops, performances, etc. that are open to students, faculty, staff and community members.

CURRENT CHALLENGE:

As a faculty member, I have been working hard to produce a number of on-campus events designed to enhance our campus-community learning experience. I find it hard to get the word out. I know there is the Live25 Calendar, but not many people look at that, especially off campus. There is also a Fresno State Bulletin, but that mostly covers Fresno State's press presence.

Oftentimes, faculty are notified about special events, programs, performances, etc. that are happening on campus at the very last minute, which makes it difficult to encourage student attendance, and certainly harder to find time in our schedules for such enrichment. Such events should be an important part of the college experience, but also a benefit of working for a university for faculty and staff.

Ultimately, with the current calendar challenges, it is very hard to get good attendance at events that faculty members plan. The decreases our morale, and also wastes the time of the people we invite to campus. Calendars exist for professional development, sports games, and student deadlines, but nothing so far that I've seen, let's us know what opportunities there are on campus to expand our learning outside of the classroom (asides last minute emails!).

PROPOSED SOLUTION:

The president's office (I think) developed a really great Professional Development Calendar that is easy to read, hyperlinked, and also includes an interactive campus map with walking routes and distances (submitted by Larissa Mercardo Lopez from Women's Studies as a bold idea a few years back).

I am proposing that a similar calendar be made that highlights extra-curricular programs, workshops, performances, etc. that are open to students, faculty, staff, and community members. There needs to be an easily accessible point-person and a central email and/or online form through which to submit the cultural, arts, films, lectures, performances, and other extra-curricular events that faculty and staff work hard to bring to campus, often using hard-sought IRA, departmental or college funds. The calendar could be coded with ^* signs to indicate who the event is open to (students, faculty, community, etc.), and color coded based on themes (arts, culture and festivals, local/global community, science and technology in action, movie night, etc.). Additions to the Calendar can be submitted each week by Friday, and students, faculty, and staff will receive a weekly update in calendar form on Sunday evening with all the activities and goings on at Fresno State for that week (Monday-Sunday). It should also be posted on the Fresno State website, and have a link so that community members can subscribe and get the weekly notices, too.

BENEFITS TO FRESNO STATE:

Other institutions where I have worked have had similar platforms, and it really helped one to feel connected and have a better sense of all the amazing things that happen at the university. It will help boost attendance at events that faculty and staff work hard to plan, often building on their expertise and connections to supplement and enhance student learning and community building on and off campus. It helps students gain access to events that not only enhance their learning, but broaden their horizons by giving them new experiences and exposing them to different kinds of diversity and thinking that cannot happen in the classroom alone. It will help faculty bridge academic and departmental silos by fostering more collaboration and mutual support of one another through co-planning or simply attending one another's events and encouraging our students to do the same. It will also enhance the public profile of Fresno State by encouraging more community members to come to campus to participate in events. When this happens, there are more organic opportunities for students to network and engage with community members. It will give faculty and staff recognition for doing event planning work, and will make that work more satisfying by having an easy way to get the word out far and wide, and thus boosting attendance at the events and increasing the impact of our work.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Some suggested titles for the weekly email campus-community events calendar:

- (1) Off the Leash @ Fresno State
- (2) What's ON @ Fresno State
- (3) Bulldog Weekly