

Event Description Guide

The description listed for your event on the Hofstra.edu Web Calendar (<http://www.hofstra.edu/events>) is an key part of whether people decide to attend. A good title is always important, but you can only tell people so much in a few words. The description allows you to share the important details of your big event, and helps people decide to attend.

The Event Request system automatically collects some of the big info, like the name of your event; the time, date and location; and the contact for the event. The "Event Description & Intent box" is where you'll fill in the rest, so make sure you put a bit of thought into it. After all, when someone clicks on your event in the calendar, the biggest area of the screen holds your description, so the viewer's eyes will be on it.

The easiest way to write a solid description is to start by answer the questions everyone asks. In news, they are known as the Five W's: Who, What, When, Why and Where. Fortunately, "When" and "Where" are already covered by the fields in the Event Request form, so you've only got the other three to take care of.

Who? This might be the easiest question to answer. What group is organizing the event? All you need to do is write something like "Sponsored by the Department of Eastern European Economics" or "Presented by the School of Magic." This could be the first line of your description, or the last.

Why? Is there a goal or motivation behind the event? Is the event intended to benefit a charity? This kind of information can help influence people, as it gives them a reason to attend. Ex: "All proceeds will be donated to Amnesty International" or "This concert is being held to increase awareness of domestic violence."

What? This is a bit more involved than the "Who," but if you're throwing this event, you should have a good idea of what goes here. Here are some of the topics you should include:

What's going to happen? Describe the event as clearly as possible, including names of people involved and any activities that will take place. Ex: "Hofstra faculty from a variety of departments will give presentations on their research in MECA studies. Topics from their research will include archeology, women's issues, history and the contemporary Middle Eastern and Central Asian world."

Is the event open to Non-Hofstra Attendees? Ex: "This event is open to Non-Hofstra attendees. [Insert guest policy]" or "This event is only for Hofstra [students/faculty/staff]"

Are there any fees? Clearly explain any fees charged. Ex: "Tickets are \$5 in advance for Hofstra students, \$8 on the day of the show, and can be purchased at the Playhouse Box Office."

Is there a web page for this event? Include the URL/address so people can get more information. Ex: http://www.hofstra.edu/academics/define09/define09_events.html

TIPS FOR GOOD DESCRIPTIONS

Spellcheck. This is huge and easy. Most of the new web browser releases have spellcheck built in (and will underline your misspelled words) but even if yours doesn't, simply copy and paste your description from or into Word (or another word processor.) Taking the short moment to spellcheck will help greatly, as a misspelled word can negatively affect how people look at your event.

Ask Someone To Read It. Another set of eyes can help catch things you might otherwise miss.

Doublecheck Your Info. Make sure your names, times and places are correct.