



Advancement

Guidelines and Procedures for Alumni Affinity Communication, Solicitation and Engagement

Alumni affinity engagement keeps our alumni connected to those areas on campus in which they were most involved as students. Many times, alumni have a stronger bond with their affinity than with the alumni office, annual giving or development directors. Alumni affinity groups include athletic teams, professional societies, colleges or departments, student organizations, fraternities and sororities.

The Office of University Advancement strongly encourages faculty, staff and coaches to connect and continue to foster relationships with ONU alumni. The following guidelines and procedures should help facilitate communication, solicitation and engagement between ONU affinity groups and alumni, as well as reduce embarrassing mistakes that can damage relationships.

Alumni Group Communication/Solicitation

- The Office of Communications & Marketing has a project request form for faculty and staff to complete and submit for any projects, such as sending group alumni email messages, letters or other information to alumni. The project request form and lead time information is available at the following link:
http://www.onu.edu/communications_and_marketing/project_request_and_lead_times
- For questions about the project request form and lead times please refer to your C&M account executive.
- Note that the process may require approval from other offices in order to proceed with a project. (Example: the alumni office will approve messages to alumni, and the annual giving office will approve solicitations.) This approval process is to ensure that all offices/staff members are aware of the alumni communication, solicitation and engagement schedule as well as ensure the engagement is documented.
- If a project needs budget assistance from another office (alumni office or other), a request for estimated project expenses needs to be requested from the office that is assisting.
- All solicitations should be discussed with the director of development in your area and then approved by the director of **Annual Giving**.
- Please work with the alumni relations and/or annual giving offices to determine the most effective and cost-saving measures for communication to affinity groups for event invitations or solicitations.
- The Office of Alumni Relations will coordinate ALL communication requests between student groups and C&M. To request alumni communication please contact, Rebecca Hibbard, Associate Director of Alumni Relations.

Alumni Affinity Events/Mailings

- Requests for budget assistance for alumni events or paper mailings may be sent to the director of alumni relations. Please send the request early and before all plans for your event/project are confirmed so that you know what kind of assistance is available. Budget assistance is not guaranteed, and the amount will depend on the number of alumni expected, plans for the events and available budget.
- The alumni office requests that organizers of alumni engagement events keep our office updated on lists of alumni attendees and if staff attendance/assistance is requested. Tracking the attendance for alumni events is very important so that alumni engagement is documented in Banner. Alumni engagement scores are assigned, which helps to inform future communication efforts.

Special Affinity Anniversary/Celebration

- Long-term planning is needed for this type of event. The alumni office will scale budgetary support for an affinity anniversary or major celebration appropriately and only if budget is available.
- For milestone anniversaries (25th, 50th, 75th, 100th etc.), budget requests are required before budget requests are due for next fiscal year (by Nov. 30 for an event in the following fiscal year). Lead time of up to a year is requested.
- C&M will assist with print or electronic invitations for milestone anniversary events along with appropriate recognition through various communication mediums.
- Other anniversaries (10th, 20th, 30th, 35th etc.) will be considered for budgetary assistance on a lower scale and if budget is available. The alumni office needs to be notified between three and four months in advance. C&M should be consulted on available services for these types of anniversaries.

Alumni Affinity Event Basic Guidelines/Timeline

- Eight to 10 weeks before alumni events, request budgetary assistance from the alumni office by filling out the online form at http://www.onu.edu/files/affintiy_event_request_form.pdf (Three-month notice or longer is needed for anniversary/special celebrations.)
 - Date, time and location of event
 - Description of event (for example, athletic alumni game with T-shirts for alumni, reception after with Subway trays of food, college/department alumni event etc.)
 - Number of alumni expected
 - Request budget amount from the alumni office
 - Request alumni staff attendance/assistance
- See project lead times for all communications and marketing needs (invites, emails, letters, programs, postcards, etc.).

- Four to six weeks before the event, email invites should be sent out and then a reminder email before the RSVP deadline.
- If the president or first lady's attendance is requested, please use the online form (http://www.onu.edu/president/event_participation_form) to request their participation or make arrangements with the president's office.
- Weekly before the event, if possible, send an RSVP list to the alumni office as an FYI as to which alumni will be back on campus.
- One week after the alumni event, please send a list of attendees to the alumni office for documentation. Please send pictures that could potentially be used for social media, *The Alumni Journal*, etc.