



Colorado State University
ORIENTATION AND TRANSITION PROGRAMS



First Year Mentoring Program and Transfer Student Programs Partnered Tailgate Event

September 2015

Executive Summary

Approaching the Fall 2015 First Year Mentoring Program (FYMP) plan, it was made clear that changes needed to be made. Colorado State University began construction on the two-year project of building an on-campus stadium. This not only affected the majority of campus with the use of parking lot space, it also required the relocation of university greenhouses, which in turn, meant the tear-down of the CSU Challenge Course (a team-building ropes course). In years past, FYMP has held Field Days for all student participants in order to create a sense of community among first-year students; the best practice for the Field Days was to utilize the Challenge Course for about 60 participants total.



Without the course, the program was faced with a number of questions:

- How essential is the Field Day to the FYMP experience?
- Is there a way to utilize other team-building resources on campus to create a similar program to the ropes course?
- What other routes are available for producing a community event to accomplish the purpose of the original Field Day?

The primary goal of the event is to **create and build a sense of community among 330 total FYMP participants**; it is essential to the way students perceive their experiences within their individual mentoring groups. With this in mind, the best option was to plan and implement a tailgate for the second home game of the Rams Football season on Sept. 12 against the Minnesota Gophers.

Tailgates offer many benefits to those in attendance, it is flexible and casual, giving students the ability to stay as long as they wish. Food, games and spirit essentials will be provided to every student in attendance. It also provides a place to bond with no added pressure as the program does not want to require anything of its students seeking out this non-credit opportunity.

The outline for this tailgate was to take the resources given and run. The resources consisted of about \$150 within FYMP, office owned tables, a canopy tent, and potential for interoffice partnerships. The natural partner of FYMP is Transfer Student Programs, which includes communities and groups offered in a similar format to FYMP.

Transfer programs will provide extra cash flow and much appreciated support in the planning of the tailgate. The next steps in planning will consist of securing a tailgate space, soliciting donations from local restaurants and grocers, creating invitations and planning for excess needs beyond what was donated to the event. Excess needs may include games, face paint and extra pizza to ensure every guest is fed and happy.

The planning process began at the end of June 2015 and ended the day of the event, as the following timeline shows.

Tailgate Planning Timeline

Task	Description	Due Date
Obtain tailgate space for event	Contact Assistant Director of Community Outreach in CSU Athletics, Patrick Krza, to explain the significance of the program event. Work with Krza and other marketing/sales staff to negotiate pricing. (Student price is \$50 per plot on the East Side Tailgate)	June 30
Gather potential sponsor information	Analyze the current business environment in Fort Collins, focusing on restaurants that are generally popular among the Colorado State University student population. *Take note of franchises and locally owned businesses.	July 5
Create donation tracking sheet	Create an Excel document with the businesses you are targeting for donations. Include name, address, phone number, and manager name if possible. Keep track of donations received on the sheet and record those who do not donate as well.	July 9
Draft restaurant donation requests	Explain the significance of the tailgate: the community it builds among OTP programs, but also the benefit for businesses who choose to participate (i.e. brand recognition)	July 10
Draft grocer donation requests	Create a letter similar to the restaurant request, but add OTP's tax-exempt number to the document and explain how grocers will gain recognition.	July 10
Send donation letters to businesses	Obtain mailing slip from Assistant Director of Transition Programs, Keith Lopez. Stuff envelopes with finished letters, but do not seal, as Mail Services' processing machine will do so for you.	July 15
Follow up with businesses in person	Pair up with Office Assistants to approach all of the managers who have been previously contacted. Create a route map to reach as many businesses as possible in the time you are given. This task may need to be split up among three or four days.	August 10 (start)
Create calling script for donation follow ups	The Office Assistants can make phone calls while in person follow up is in progress. Answer all potential questions	August 10
Explain donation process to Office Assistants	They have worked with donations before within the OTP office, you just need to explain to them the	August 10

	purpose of the donations so they can accurately answer the questions of targeted businesses	
Confirm tailgate space(s)	Get in touch with Patrick Krza via email to assure you will have tailgating space on game day.	August 25
Distribute information to student leaders	Craft a summarizing email to be sent to Peer Mentors, Transfer Transition Leaders and Peer Facilitators.	August 26
Create invitations	Make sure they are sized to a quarter sheet (4.25" x 5") when you design them.	August 31
Establish needs based on secured resources	Have a meeting with OTP Graduate Assistant and Allie Fitz, who is in charge of Transfer Student Programming, to discuss what is still needed outside of the donations received.	September 2
Create purchasing plan with available funds	Decide who will be picking up what and how much money is available to spend on each essential item	September 2
Produce "day of" plan	Meet with Grad Assistant and Transfer Programs Coordinator to assign tasks for the day of the tailgate. You will most likely be on-site while others are picking up donations.	September 4
Confirm all donations	Touch base with all the managers you spoke with and confirm donations will be ready for pick up or delivery on the day of the tailgate.	September 8
Execute "day of" plan	Make it happen!	September 12

Event Budget Outline

Tailgate Event Budget	
Total Expected Costs	\$350.00
Actual Expenses	\$302.14
Expense Discount	\$50.00



Expense Breakdown	
Printing Invitations	\$132.38
Food & Supplies	\$169.76
Total	\$302.14



Donation Impact	
Potential Food Expenses (~\$5/person)	\$500.00
Total Donations Received	\$1,133.55



Donation Summary

When tasked with this event, it was made clear that there was little money to spend. There are an estimated 100 student attendees expected. Generally, feeding that many people with burgers, hot dogs and chips can cost between \$3.00 and \$5.00 per person if purchased strategically.

As a part of Colorado State University, Orientation and Transition Programs classifies as a non-profit. Because of this, the office frequently requests donations from local businesses to support events and programming that goes beyond budget.

The process is as follows:

1. Identify businesses you want to approach
2. Create a spreadsheet to track progress
 - a. Include addresses and phone numbers
3. Craft donation letters to be sent by mail to restaurants
4. Craft donation request letters to be hand delivered to grocers
 - a. Must include tax exempt number at the bottom
5. Send letters
6. Create follow up calling script
7. Follow up in person and by phone

The letters must include basic event information, the place and time, the program behind it, its purpose and what type of donations you are looking for. Many of the restaurants in town will donate gift cards by default, you must explicitly say you are planning on feeding attendees and donations in the form of food would be greatly appreciated.

Don't forget to have one or more of the Office Assistants proof read your letters, and work with them to create the follow up calling script to be sure that everything is easily understood and cohesive. Utilize your resources.

Restaurant Donation Letter

[Restaurant]
ATTN: Manager
[Address Line 1]
[Address Line 2]

Greetings!

I am writing you today to ask for your support in a transition programs event this fall. Orientation and Transition Programs of Colorado State University is kicking off a new seminar program alongside the First Year Mentoring Program for the incoming class of 2019, which is complemented by our transfer student communities to aid all transitioning students on campus.

The event will be a tailgate, to take place on September 12, 2015, at Hughes Stadium for the game against the Minnesota Gophers. Kickoff is at 1:30 PM that day so tailgating will begin around 10:30 AM.

This is an amazing opportunity for you and your business because of the quantity of students who participate in our programming. The current estimate for attendance is around 100 students, not including those involved with planning and facilitating said programs.

Having your food present at an event of this scale not only builds brand recognition, but with a group of new CSU students it builds brand loyalty for years to come.

As Orientation and Transition Programs continues to grow its reach with new programs, we are tasked with cutting our budget, which is why your participation is vital to the success of this event for our incoming students. Anything helps, whether it is 15 meals or 50; the goal is to expose students in attendance to the vast variety of food that Fort Collins has to offer to keep from cleaning out our partners.

For more information, please contact me anytime.

Thank you for your time and support.

With Ram Pride,

Chrissi Gillispie

Student Coordinator of First Year Transition Programs

Email: Christine.Gillispie@colostate.edu

Phone: (970) 491 – 6011



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Grocer Donation Letter

[Grocer Name]

To Whom It May Concern:

We are Colorado State University's Orientation and Transition Programs. This year, we are planning a Transition Programs Tailgate. This tailgate is a collaboration of three programs: The First Year Mentoring Program, Transfer Student Communities and the First Year Seminar. Our purpose with these programs is to aid in students' transition to Colorado State, hoping to make it easy and painless by connecting them to mentors, other students and the variety of resources CSU provides.

The tailgate will be a great opportunity for students to see that they are a part of something larger than their individual group or class and really build a sense of community among our program participants.

The tailgate will take place on September 12, 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., at Hughes Stadium.

Donations in the form of individual sodas, chips or other snacks would be greatly helpful as we are operating on an extremely tight budget.

Anything helps – thank you for your time!

Tax Exempt Number: 23-7098397

Contact Information:

Christine Gillispie, Student Coordinator of First Year Transition Programs

Christine.Gillispie@colostate.edu

(970) 491-6011



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Transition Programs Tailgate Donations – Phone Script

Hello, my name is _____, I am with the office of Orientation and Transition Programs at Colorado State University.

Is the manager available?

I am calling to follow-up about a letter we sent your way in the last few weeks regarding donations for a Transition Programs Tailgate. I was wondering if you had any questions about the event or its purpose?

- The tailgate will be September 12th, at the CSU vs. Minnesota football game, at Hughes Stadium
- This event will be a collaboration of three of OTP's programs: the First Year Mentoring Program, the New Student Seminar and our Transfer Student Communities
 - Its purpose is to bring students together in their participation as all of these programs break down into smaller groups of students and they do not have much interaction because of that
- Because it is a collaboration of three programs, we hope that attendance will be high. It could be between 100 and 200 students total.

If they ask what exactly we are looking for: We just need to feed the students in attendance, we are hoping for a buffet style set up, so whatever that may look like for you would work for us. We would be grateful for whatever you can spare.

Why should they do it: This is a great opportunity for your business because the students who attend will become familiar with brand as they transition to life in Fort Collins, do you think you will be able to donate?

- If YES – Awesome! Would it be convenient for you to bring it to Hughes Stadium on the day or the event? (OR) Would it be better for us to send someone to pick it up from your establishment?
 - Also ask about the quantity of food they are planning to donate, if they don't say!
- If NO – No problem! Thank you for your time and enjoy the rest of your day!

Spreadsheet tracking key:

Green – donating, will drop off at Hugh's

Yellow – donation, send someone to pick up

Red – not donating

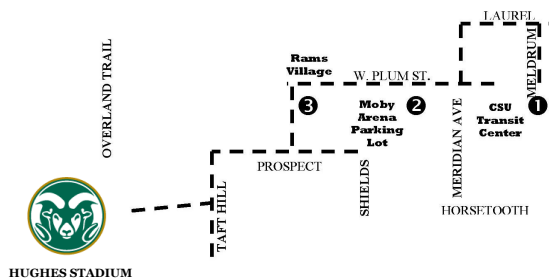
Black – do not contact

Transportation Plan

The event venue, Hughes Stadium, is three miles from the university campus. Due to the target audience of the event consisting of mainly first-year students and new transfer students who generally live on campus, it is necessary to provide information on alternate transportation.

Hop on the Ram Express for a free ride to and from Hughes Stadium on game day!

On September 12th, shuttle services will begin at **10:30 a.m.** and will run for **an hour** after the final play, with stops at the Lory Student Center Transportation Center, Moby Parking Lot and Rams Village every 20 minutes.



Research was conducted and a map was found of a shuttle plan that had been used in years past. The map document is live on the Colorado State University Athletics website, so the program will provide student participants with shuttle information.

Student leaders within the different participating programs (Peer Mentors and Transfer Transition Leaders) will be asked to meet their students at an agreed upon shuttle stop to encourage timid students to join in the festivities. According to past experience, new students tend to shy away from events because they do not want to be alone. The student leaders will stay with their students as long as they need.

The shuttle will begin running three hours prior to kick off and continue for one hour after the game has ended. Stops will be made at the CSU transit center, the Moby Arena parking lot and the Rams Village apartment complex, arriving at each stop every 20 minutes. The image above will appear on the back of every invitation.

Day of Plan

Individual Coordinator Responsibilities:

Chrissi: On-Site Contact

Set Up

Transport large supplies (tables, corn hole, etc.)

Addy: Donation Pick-Up

Allie: Set Up

Transport small supplies (ladder ball, spirit supplies, table cloths, etc.)

Donation Pick-Up Schedule:

- Jason's Deli (30 cookies, 30 waters) – 9:30 a.m.
- DP Dough (200 cookies) – 10:00 a.m.
- Pita Pit (10 pitas, in halves) – 10:15 a.m.
- Silver Mine Subs (100 mini subs) – 10:20 a.m.
- Dominoes (17 ordered pizzas) – 10:25 a.m.

***Arrive on site soon after 10:30 a.m.**

Event Invitation

Distributed to all students, the week of the event

Transition Programs Tailgate

Saturday, September 12

11:00 a.m.—1:30 p.m.



Join the First Year Mentoring
Program, Transfer Student
Communities and the New
Student Seminar: Exploring
Majors Tracks for
**FOOD, FUN AND
RAM READY TIME!**



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*Tickets MUST be obtained prior to the event online or at the McGraw Box Office

Event Debrief

Throughout the planning process, the team and planner had little expectations, as most do when creating a new event or program. It was hard to tell how many students would be engaged in the community OTP tries to create.

When soliciting donations, the number was a range “100-300” students. We reached a little less than 100, about 70, for what felt like an extremely successful event. Students in attendance cleared out the food spread, used all of the green face paint and enjoyed playing football, hula hooping, corn hole and ladder ball.

One could feel the community being built among students as they endured the small letdowns that the day created. The first being the flaw in the transportation plan, CSU Athletics had stopped running their shuttle a few years prior to this football season and still had a live webpage for it. Students, Peer Mentors and Transfer Transition Leaders headed to the CSU Transit Center to ride the city bus the two and a half miles to the stadium and walked the quarter-mile in. At one point, there was a group of about 20 walking in together from their bus ride. This was an unfortunate mishap, and Athletics was contacted about the situation, but the site lead was able to direct the Peer Mentors on campus for the change to be smooth.

The second major issue on the day of the event was the lack of shade the tailgate space provided for those eating the delicious donations. There was one tent that the food was set up under, and students began to sit behind the food table to enjoy the shade and escape the heat. It wasn't ideal for the coordinators, but it was important to keep the students from getting heat stroke. Next year, the coordinators suggest investing in an official Orientation and Transition Programs canopy tent for the sake of the entire office, but also to provide more shade to the students at this event that is sure to become tradition for Transition Programs.

One other need the team saw that could be filled was office field games (like corn hole). The office partakes in multiple training and casual events throughout the year, and a new CSU Ram-themed corn hole would be used repeatedly by all. This investment would make it simpler for all of the department's student programmers who try to create exception experiences for their students.

Overall, the event was a success.

To summarize, here is a list of suggestions for future tailgate planners:

- Create a new transportation plan, whether that's utilizing Transfort again or assigning student leaders to drive
- Don't lock your keys inside the building when you are picking up the tables
- Encourage the OTP Director, Kerry Wenzel, to invest in the canopy tent and corn hole set... for the sake of the office
- Maybe see if there are Peer Mentors who want to be involved in the planning process, this could be a great learning experience for them too
- Enjoy it when it happens. It's easy to get caught up in the negatives of the day, but there are so many functional, positive pieces to be proud of.