



Pathways to Equity Conference Internal Workgroup

April 21, 2020
11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Zoom call

This meeting was for the internal (Chancellor's Office and Foundation) team-members only to check-in and discuss possible online event options.

Events Team Update on In-person Events

- Overall assessment: Governor announced that there should be no large events (those over 100 people) planned until there is a vaccine for Covid-19. (Facebook and Microsoft have both cancelled all events through July 2021.)
 - In light of this, the Foundation Events Team has been focusing at moving all 2020 events online (thru at least December).
 - Michelle also noted that many colleges now have placed a moratorium on staff/faculty travel/events for the foreseeable future (some even through the fall), due to concern about their 2020-21 budgets.
- Events team has been researching various options for hosting small and large events online and are getting familiar with several tools/platforms and their features and functionality.
- If the event is moved online, we will need to be mindful of content (ensuring it is relevant/timely) and the length/time of delivery. Research suggests that most people prefer online meetings occurring between 11am and 5pm. And online meetings that go beyond a couple hours tend to lose attendees' attention.

Online Options Discussed

- One option is to cancel the in-person event completely and *instead* host an online event (or series of presentations).
 - Another option is to *postpone* the in-person event till spring.
 - Or – we could do a hybrid: postponing till spring AND hosting a smaller fall online event/series.
 - If postponed to spring, we may still hit up against colleges watching their budget (limited travel/events for staff/faculty).
 - However, our current contract with event hotel stipulates we must host the event by 4/30/21 or we face a cancellation fee of nearly \$100,000. This cancellation fee would be null and void if the Governor extends the moratorium on large events through next spring. So we will likely need to wait to make our final decision about cancelling the event till we know more.
 - For now the group will continue to explore online options/ideas with a target of hosting some kind of fall event or series.
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Things to Consider

- Some benefits of hosting an online event include:
 - Possibility of seeing higher attendance
 - Ability to create/feature more timely/relevant content (just in time)
 - Better able to utilize the VRC for communication about the event as well as post-event engagement, continued usage of materials – reaching folks who couldn't make the live presentations afterward.
- Possible drawbacks/challenges:
 - Lots of online webinars and events now – how to distinguish this event/stand out?
 - Keeping attendees attention for the full event (whatever it looks like) or coming back for the entire series.
- Moving online will impact content, timing & length, marketing, & engagement with participants.
 - Regional coordinators have recently been doing rapid webinars – short informational sessions recorded and shared/placed on VRC. A format like this might work well.
 - Could shift the structure of the “event” to statewide communities of practice – a big general session and then breakouts by regions/communities.
- More discussion needed regarding holding a 1-2 day single event with multiple sessions/break-outs versus a weeks-long series.
- The VRC will be integrated with Zoom soon – with virtual instructor led trainings – all resources and registration in the VRC. This may be a vehicle for this event.
- The platform that the Conferences and Events team has been researching has full capabilities of hosting online events including: a main stage for general sessions, breakout sessions with customizable session lengths, exhibitor spaces, rooms for networking, etc. The platform charges per attendee.
- The flipped classroom model may work here – like LinkedIn learning with embedded questions – participants come prepared to discuss questions.
- Consider asking colleges how they want to engage and what is needed so that this event is timely and relevant.
 - Equity in distance education should be one of the topics covered.

Summary

- There are many options to consider for how to move forward with the Pathways to Equity Conference. We will bring the ideas and possible options to the greater workgroup (including external stakeholders) to discuss and then make a recommendation to the CO leadership.

Action Items

- Barb will send meeting notes to all.
 - Barb will contact external group members to ensure they can attend next week's meeting.
 - Barb will work on drafting language for an announcement about a fall online event – and need for proposals for online sessions.
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