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Developing Best Practices for Successful University Fundraising Events

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Introduction

This research study addresses the crucial role of fundraising in sustaining universities in the United States, particularly public institutions facing funding challenges. For this paper, fundraising refers to the seeking of financial support from individuals to support initiatives at a nonprofit entity, such as a public university. It identifies a gap in research and professionalization within higher education philanthropy, emphasizing the need for standardized training and empirical research. The focus is on studying the effectiveness of fundraising events, especially in public universities like the University of Kentucky, amidst declining government support and rising operational costs. The research problem to be addressed by this study is the lack of clear industry best practices for higher education event fundraising.

The research design involves surveying and comparing three universities: University of Kentucky, University of Louisville, and Western Kentucky University. Findings reveal diverse event approaches, such as donor recognition and gift solicitation. Recommendations include investing in research and training, diversifying event strategies, utilizing data for decision-making, adapting to changing contexts, collaborating internally and externally, and communicating impact. Ultimately, effective utilization of fundraising events and evidence-based strategies is crucial for universities to navigate financial challenges and achieve philanthropic goals.

Literature Review

Fundraising is an essential component of success for universities in the United States. While public universities are funded in part by the government, there is still insufficient funding of higher education. Universities must rely on fundraising tactics to survive (Kundzina et al., 2023). This is a change in recent decades, as demand for higher education soared after World War II and public universities began charging tuition to pay for their operations (Campbell & Siegel, 1967). Due to this changing environment, research on fundraising is important to the field of higher education, as

universities cannot exist without private philanthropy (Kundzina et al., 2023). In fact, there are many universities that are private and depend almost entirely on fundraising for their budgets (Curry et al., 2012).

Currently, there is very limited research on higher education philanthropy (Chan, 2016). Because of this, fundraising as a field has not been fully "professionalized," which is to say, it is not research-based or scholarly (Shaker & Nathan, 2017). Strategic decisions of fundraising teams are often not research-based, as there are few best practice guides that currently exist. The best practice guides that do exist are specific to a subset, such as fundraising for private evangelical Christian universities (Curry et al., 2012).

This is important because there are many challenges faced by philanthropic organizations when it comes to fundraising tactics (Kundzina et al., 2023). Contributions to research on higher education philanthropy are important and needed (Shaker & Nathan, 2017). The ability for fundraising professionals to make research-based decisions would be valuable to individual teams and the field at large.

While there is existing research on overall fundraising challenges and effective strategy (Curry et al., 2012), there is a gap in the literature on fundraising events. Fundraising events have evolved over time, once being the main avenue for fundraising. Fundraising events, such as galas and receptions, are typically in-person events and have been successful fundraising tools for decades. However, when the COVID-19 pandemic began in March 2020, which shut down in-person gatherings for several months, events were reevaluated for their cost-effectiveness, as many institutions were able to fundraise effectively without them.

Because of this gap in the literature, it is useful to create a best practice guide for fundraising event effectiveness for higher education institutions. Best practice guides are the method of choice for contemporary research into effectiveness (Overman & Boyd, 1994). For this capstone project, I am

specifically interested in how the University of Kentucky and similar institutions use fundraising events to develop a best practice guide to clarify the most effective way for fundraising institutions of higher education to use events to meet their fundraising goals. This best practices guide aims to clarify the best way to organize fundraising events for public universities so that they are effective at meeting the university's fundraising goals. This area of study is important for all public universities because government support of universities is dwindling over time, while costs of running universities is increasing, making fundraising more and more paramount to the operation of the universities.

Formulating a best practices guide based on multiple universities is beneficial because, historically, best practices guides are often created inside an organization for that same organization, which can lead them to be favorably biased (Overman & Boyd, 1994). However, best practice guides are still useful in that they help bridge the gap between research and reform. Of course, no best practice guide is perfect. All best practice guides force the analyst to make simplifying assumptions (Bretschneider et al., 2004). Still, the future of philanthropy research will lie upon case study research data as the field of philanthropy and fundraising in higher education evolves (Chan, 2016).

Research Design

Sampling and Survey Strategy

The goal for this case study is to develop industry best practices for fundraising events, which do not currently exist. The surveys were decided to be qualitative in nature because qualitative research is especially effective in obtaining culturally specific information about the social contexts of specific groups (Mack & Woodsong, 2005).

A survey was sent via email to representatives at 15 different higher education institutions: Auburn University, Eastern Kentucky University, Indiana University, Mississippi State University, Northern

Kentucky University, University of Alabama, University of Cincinnati, University of Georgia, University of Kentucky, University of Louisville, University of Mississippi, University of Missouri, University of Tennessee, Vanderbilt University, and Western Kentucky University. The initial sample of 15 universities is not random, but rather an intentional convenient sample, since random representative samples cannot guarantee a "best" outcome (Bretschneider et al., 2004). Additionally, limiting geographic and temporal space to achieve completeness has been found to be a better strategy than random sampling for best practice determinations (Bretschneider et al., 2004). Because I work in the philanthropy department for the University of Kentucky, I was interested in developing a best practices guide that could aid the University of Kentucky specifically. The fourteen other universities chosen are all near to the University of Kentucky geographically and similar in student population size (US News & World Report, 2022).

Using each institution's staff website, I identified someone who appeared to work on fundraising events and sent them this survey via the email provided on the university website. The intent of the survey questions is to gather information on the entire philanthropic event-planning process at each university, including how event effectiveness and return on investment is determined. With this survey, I hoped to collect information that would benefit the University of Kentucky and other similar institutions by filling a gap in the existing research.

The survey questions:

1. Do events contribute to meeting fundraising goals for your organization?

2. Does your organization fund event budgets with a philanthropy fee?

   a. If so, how is that accomplished?

3. Does your organization have a system to determine if an event is necessary for a fundraising goal?

4. Does your organization have designated event-planning team member(s)?

5. How does your organization plan events?

6. Does your organization promote events?

      a.   If so, how?

7.   What are the factors for a successful event?

8.   How does your organization follow up after events to maintain momentum with constituents?

However, only three universities responded and completed the survey: the University of Kentucky, the University of Louisville, and Western Kentucky University. Therefore, the University of Kentucky, University of Louisville, and Western Kentucky University were the resulting sample based on reaching out to 15 universities.

The final sample of three universities, the University of Kentucky, University of Louisville, and Western Kentucky University, are all geographically close to each other and most of their alumni and donor base are Kentuckians. This ensures that all three public higher education institutions are fundraising from similar donors. They are also all similar in size, with a student body of 22,735 for the University of Kentucky, 22,640 for the University of Louisville, and 20,171 for Western Kentucky University (US News & World Report, 2022).

After each survey response was collected by email, I then reached out to a representative from each of the three universities by phone for a more detailed conversation about their responses to make sure I received the same amount of information from each university. This allowed more complete qualitative data collection, which allowed me to provide complex context for the issue of fundraising event effectiveness (Mack & Woodsong, 2005). Following up to the survey responses helped identify intangible factors, such as social norms, team dynamics, and workplace culture, which were not readily apparent from the survey responses alone.

After comparing the University of Kentucky, University of Louisville, and Western Kentucky University event policies in-depth, conclusions could be drawn on standard operating procedures for university event fundraising, which is not currently available. Additionally, best practices were able

to be gleaned from these case studies, which can be applied to other universities of similar size and scope.

Using these three universities and the results of their initial survey responses, I conducted a case study of each related to their fundraising strategies. Within each case study, I conducted a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities for growth, and threats to growth) Analysis for the fundraising event programming at each university. Survey results were confidential and no names were associated with the survey results.

Findings

University of Kentucky

The University of Kentucky's philanthropy and alumni engagement department uses events primarily for donor recognition. Donor recognition means the goal of the events are to celebrate either a gift or a donor, or both. One example of this type of event is the Founder's Day Award Reception, which is when the Founder's Day Award is presented to a long-time supporter of the university. Most campus events are annual or celebrate a milestone reached. Milestone events may be the kickoff of a campaign or a celebration of its ending.

It is difficult to determine the return on investment for donor recognition events since they are not used in a fundraising capacity. A common goal for the event is to grow the network of the University of Kentucky. There are many supporters of the university who may have never donated, so events provide the opportunity to share funding needs with new potential donors who may be passionate about helping the university. Tailgate events are an example of this type of outreach. Alumni may come to the tailgate event for fun but may learn about how the university is stewarding its donations in meaningful ways. Then, when those alumni are solicited by direct mail or email, they may be more inclined to give.

An event may also be organized for publicity. For example, when the College of Engineering received a gift of $33 million, an event was held, and local press were invited. The University of Kentucky renamed the College of Engineering after the donors to thank them and held the event as a thank-you gesture. The event also promoted the University of Kentucky College of Engineering to the public. Receiving a large gift is a testament to a university or college's integrity and authenticity. There is a strong correlation between a university's endowment and its overall academic ranking, with the most prominent example being Harvard University. Harvard University is known as one of the most competitive universities to receive admission to in the world and they also boast the largest university endowment in the world, at nearly $50 billion. Therefore, promoting a large donation to the university also serves in advancing the reputation of the university. Philanthropy events further this and can be valuable public relations tools for promoting the university's positive reputation. At the University of Kentucky, there are about twenty campus-wide philanthropy events per year, and even more for each academic unit. This does not include alumni association events.

However, there are a handful of events that are for direct fundraising, but those are more common for the UK Healthcare enterprise. These events can bring in fundraised dollars by charging admission in some way, such as selling tickets, seats, or tables. These events are only profitable if the costs of the event are donated goods and services as well (such as catering, event space, entertainment, etc.).

The University of Kentucky philanthropy team works to target events to specific people attending the event. Often, they identify their strongest donor among the attendees before the event happens. The strongest donor is the person who has the capacity to give the largest donation and who also is the most likely out of the group to give a large donation. Once this person is identified, philanthropy officers who have worked with this person before can put together notes on what this person is passionate about, what motivates them, and what doesn't. Then, with this information, the program

and focus of the event can be decided. The message of the program can be tailored to who is in the room.

In this way, events can be "soft asks," which are solicitations that are not explicit. This allows events to be used as vehicles for proposals before a direct conversation with the potential donor. This gives the donor time to digest the information from the University of Kentucky before responding. Representatives from the University of Kentucky explained that this strategy is usually taken up by 20% of the program. The remaining 80% of the program is aimed at the larger audience and addresses the larger purpose of the event (such as celebrating Founder's Day, in the earlier example).

Survey respondents from the university hypothesize that fundraising events are more successful for University of Kentucky Healthcare than for University of Kentucky campus because healthcare is a clearly understood cause among the public. It is widely understood and accepted that hospitals need donations to provide adequate care for their patients. However, it is not as clear to donors how money given to the University of Kentucky academic campus would be used, so events can be helpful spaces to explain a fundraising goal. For healthcare fundraisers, an explanation is not always required to fundraise successfully.

A summary of the strengths and weaknesses, as well as opportunities and threats to the University of Kentucky's fundraising event success, is presented in a SWOT Analysis in Figure 1. While the University of Kentucky has a strong history of philanthropic events that generate positive publicity, they struggle with obtaining consistent buy-in due to the lack of designated event-planning staff. There is a clear opportunity for growth into direct fundraising events, although it can be difficult to make these types of events cost-effective.

Strengths	Weaknesses

● Strong tradition of popular events that promote awareness, especially centered around the athletics program. ● Promotion of major gifts as positive publicity.	● The university's campus initiatives struggle to obtain buy-in from the public, especially compared to the healthcare arm of the university. ● There are no designated event-planning staff.
Opportunities ● Expansion into events meant to fundraise new money, rather than thank past donors. ● There is no current system to determine if a philanthropy event should happen; this could be created.	**Threats** ● The return on investment in events is partly determined by local businesses being willing to donate their services, which is largely outside of the institution's control.

Figure 1

<u>University of Louisville</u>

The University of Louisville's philanthropy team, called the Department of University Advancement, organizes their philanthropy events through their Alumni Relations and Annual Giving unit. They utilize events as philanthropic strategies for publicity, awareness, solicitation, and stewardship of past giving.

Common stewardship events are ribbon-cuttings for donations to physical buildings, either for new construction, drastic renovation, or an addition on an existing facility. In those cases, there is often a press conference as well. Other types of events used for the purpose of stewardship are gift announcements. For large gifts, a press conference is held, and the gift is announced.

An example of a past philanthropic event that the University of Louisville had was in celebration of donor Barry Bingham's gift of a collection of photos to the university's library. Barry Bingham's family used to own the city's newspaper, the Courier Journal, and the Binghams owned the historical photos featured in all the past editions. At the event, many photos were featured, so guests were able to view some of the collection, like a museum experience. The public and local press were invited to the event, which also allowed for general positive promotion of the university.

When hosting a philanthropy press conference, the University of Louisville invites local and state-wide media representatives, the mayor of Louisville, the governor of Kentucky, state and local legislators, and university administration, including the university president.

Events can also be used to kick off a campaign. The University of Louisville does not use events to announce the true beginning of a campaign - rather, they use events to announce the first gifts toward a campaign. Fundraising for the campaign begins months or years before an official event is planned, so the initial philanthropy strategy does not rely on events but relies on one-on-one conversations and interactions. Key donors and their gifts are solidified before publicly announcing the project. Then, those donors are part of the announcement itself. The reason this strategy is employed is that it further engages those donors and may make them feel responsible for the event and the overall campaign to go well, which may incentivize them to make more donations. This is often done strategically to encourage more gifts from other donors as well. These "kick-off" gifts are called "lead gifts," and they are used to create momentum for other gifts to the same cause.

Often, the messaging for campaign kickoff events includes language such as "This is just the beginning. Help us keep going. We need your help." In these instances, the goal of the program is to demonstrate that the university is using the already-gifted donations well, and to also demonstrate the need for more donations. Therefore, these events are stewardship and solicitation.

After these events, an email is sent to all attendees that includes a link to give online to the specific fund promoted at the event. The email also thanks the donors and attendees and provides photos from the event, which the recipients may save for their personal storage.

At the end of a campaign, another event takes place. This event is a celebration and is part of stewarding all the donors to that campaign. The event is an avenue for the university to thank these donors and demonstrate integrity by showing how the fundraised dollars will be used. These events are less common and are only used to celebrate campaigns that take several years.

The University of Louisville has a planned giving society, the Conn Legacy Society, for anyone who leaves money to the University of Louisville in their will and estate. This is a separate organization that has two volunteer leaders who coordinate with the University of Louisville philanthropy team. An annual recognition dinner is hosted for this society to thank them for their planned generosity. Around 200 guests are invited to this event. This recognition dinner consists of a nice plated meal and a program featuring the university president.

The University of Louisville also has monthly philanthropy events at the house of the university president. These are usually Thursday evening dinners with 10-20 guests. This is a style of event that allows the university president to regularly engage with important and potentially impactful groups of people. For example, one month, the guests may be University of Louisville donors and alumni who are all part of the executive leadership team of a local corporation. Another group may be the largest donors to one of the University of Louisville's colleges. These seated dinners allow the university president time to personally thank all the members of this group for their generosity to the university. The dinner is catered and plated, so the university president does not have to plan the event. However, they have also organized the monthly dinner with the president to be a more informal reception, instead of a sit-down dinner. In those instances, there may be up to 100 attendees.

These dinners are a great way to achieve multiple philanthropic goals at once: stewardship of past giving, pitching of new philanthropic opportunities to donors, and scoping out new potential donors. Because of the efficient and effective nature of this event, philanthropy officers, who manage most of the fundraising for the university, are eager to suggest donors for this event and attend it themselves. This has provided an effective way for university leadership to partner with university advancement department staff to use events to achieve common goals and objectives.

To summarize the effectiveness of the University of Louisville's event fundraising, Figure 2 displays a SWOT Analysis below. They have a strong designated event planning team that is useful for implementing consistent events, but they do not have a strategic process to determine which events should be implemented to meet university goals. While the University of Louisville has faced several scandals in recent years that have affected fundraising, there are still opportunities for growth, such as direct fundraising events and adopting an advancement fee to help sustain their fundraising event budget.

Strengths	Weaknesses
● They have a designated staff team for event planning and implementation. ● Strong relationship with local and state government officials.	● There is no strategic system to determine if an event should happen. ● Major gift officers do not always directly follow-up with event attendees.
Opportunities	Threats
● Expand events to directly fundraise, rather than thank donors. ● Adopt an advancement fee to fund events.	● The reputation of the university has been affected by several scandals in recent years, which has directly affected fundraising.

Figure 2

Western Kentucky University

Western Kentucky University has many annual philanthropy events, but theirs are focused exclusively on stewardship of gifts, such as showing impact and thanking donors. The event team for WKU is called Donor Engagement & Communications and consists of seven people. They handle all social media, press releases, and magazines for promotion of donor engagement activities. They also regularly strategize on how to best engage donors, with events and other ways as well. This team handles all types of recognition, stewardship, scholarship, and namings.

Western Kentucky University is currently rethinking events. A priority of WKU is to break the pattern of rewarding and recognizing all gifts. Some of the leadership believe that giving to WKU has become quid pro quo, and they want to foster a culture of giving for the purpose of contributing to the common good of the university. Because of this, they are in the process of eliminating several events that have traditionally been hosted by the philanthropy department, but do not contribute to overall philanthropic goals. Additionally, these eliminated events often cost as much money as was donated by the donors who are being thanked, so they eliminate the impact the donors may have made on the university.

One example of an event that may be eliminated is the annual scholarship lunch to thank all donors to scholarships. Student recipients of scholarships are invited to meet their benefactors and thank them in person. In practice, this event can create many issues, especially if some students are not available to attend or feel uncomfortable with their personal information being shared with the donor. Additionally, some donors have stopped funding scholarships when they do not get along with the student who has received them. Therefore, this event has become a liability to the philanthropic goals of the university.

Events that Western Kentucky University are keeping relate to their four giving societies: the Cupola Society, the President's Circle, the Henry Hardin Cherry Society, and the Society of 1906. The Cupola Society includes anyone who has given any amount to the university for at least two years in a row. The President's Circle includes any donor who has given $1,000 or more to the university at least two years in a row. The Henry Hardin Cherry Society includes any donors who have given at least $25,000 to the university. The Society of 1906 includes any donor who has included Western Kentucky University in their will for an estate gift.

A summary of Western Kentucky University's fundraising events strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities and threats to growth can be seen in the SWOT Analysis in Figure 3. Western Kentucky University has a well-defined structure to implement events and determine their strategy,

but they have struggled with budgets and getting student buy-in. While they will have to fight against their own tradition of quid-pro-quo fundraising in the future, they also have an opportunity to incorporate an advancement fee and direct fundraising events.

Strengths	Weaknesses
- There are designated staff for event planning and implementation. - There are established and well-known giving societies that may inspire donations.	- Most past events thanking donors have cost as much as the donors gave. - Events involving students in the past have made students uncomfortable.
Opportunities	**Threats**
- Expand events to include direct fundraising and solicitation. - Incorporate an advancement fee that would help support event costs.	The university has a reputation of rewarding philanthropic gifts with invitations to expensive events.

Figure 3

Comparison

While the University of Kentucky, University of Louisville, and Western Kentucky University have very similar goals for fundraising and alumni engagement, there are key differences in how they use events to meet these goals. The University of Kentucky is the only institution of the three that has implemented an advancement fee, also called a donation processing fee or a philanthropy fee. At the University of Kentucky, the fee is 5% of any gift to a non-endowed fund. 3% of the gift goes toward operational funding for the Philanthropy & Alumni Engagement department, while 2% of the fee goes to the academic college or unit that houses the fund receiving the donation. The University of Kentucky is also the only institution surveyed that does not have designated event-planning staff, although this may be changing in the upcoming year, as their Philanthropy & Alumni Engagement department is currently being restructured. All three universities promote their fundraising events, but none of them have a formal system to determine if an event is necessary or strategic. Figure 4 summarizes these findings.

	University of Kentucky	University of Louisville	Western Kentucky University
Events are funded with an advancement fee.	Yes	No	No
There are designated event-planning staff.	No	Yes	Yes
There is a system to determine if an event is necessary.	No	No	No
The university promotes fundraising events.	Yes	Yes	Yes

Figure 4

<u>Advantages and Limitations</u>

An advantage to collecting data on higher education fundraising in a qualitative way is that it allows the researcher the flexibility to probe participant responses. This means that the information gleaned may be rich and explanatory in nature (Mack & Woodsong, 2005). However, structure and consistency are more difficult to maintain, assess, and demonstrate. Synthesizing and analyzing the data is also time-consuming (Anderson, 2010). Additionally, the survey asked the university contacts to disclose information about their workplace, which may have seemed too risky for job security. However, all survey results were held in confidence, and no one's name was associated with the results of the survey. Still, this perception of risk may have become a barrier to collecting data (Wilkie, 2023).

Recommendations

Based on these case studies, events are a recommended strategy for engaging in philanthropy with stakeholders. Events can provide engaging ways to connect with new donors, which is important for fundraising entities, as fundraising from outside the donor base is now a required priority to grow

fundraising goals (Curry et al., 2012). The University of Kentucky, University of Louisville, and Western Kentucky University utilize diverse approaches such as donor recognition, stewardship, and campaign kick-offs to their events, but there are many similarities between the universities. The findings underscore the strategic significance of events for engaging stakeholders, promoting university initiatives, and fostering donor relationships. Recommendations emphasize the importance of leveraging events as a key strategy in university philanthropy efforts.

1. Invest in Research and Training: Universities should prioritize research in higher education philanthropy and establish standardized training programs for fundraising professionals. This will help professionalize the field and ensure strategic decision-making based on empirical evidence (Shaker & Nathan, 2017).

2. Focus on Donor Engagement: Emphasize donor engagement and stewardship through events. Events should serve as opportunities for recognizing donors, fostering relationships, and demonstrating the impact of philanthropic contributions (Hodge, 2016).

3. Diversify Event Strategies: Explore a variety of event types, including donor recognition events, campaign kick-offs, solicitations, and virtual engagements. Tailor event strategies to align with institutional goals and donor preferences and involve donors in the process (Shaker & Nelson, 2021).

4. Utilize Data for Decision-Making: Collect and analyze data from fundraising events to inform future strategies and initiatives. Implement data-driven approaches to maximize the effectiveness of fundraising efforts (Shaker & Nathan, 2018).

5. Adapt to Changing Contexts: Stay flexible and adaptable in response to changing circumstances, such as the impact of external factors like the COVID-19 pandemic.

Continuously evaluate and adjust event strategies to meet evolving donor needs and preferences (Panuncial, 2023).

6. Collaborate Internally and Externally: Foster collaboration between different departments within the university, such as philanthropy offices and alumni associations, to leverage resources and expertise. Establish partnerships with external stakeholders, including alumni, corporations, and community members, to enhance fundraising efforts and expand outreach (Shaker & Nelson, 2021).

7. Communicate Impact: Clearly communicate the impact of philanthropic contributions to donors and stakeholders. Use storytelling and data visualization techniques to illustrate the tangible outcomes of fundraising initiatives and inspire continued support (Shaker & Nelson, 2021).

By implementing these recommendations, universities can strengthen their fundraising efforts, build sustainable relationships with donors, and support their long-term success and growth.

Conclusion

In conclusion, fundraising plays a vital role in the sustainability and success of universities, particularly amidst declining government support and increasing operational costs. However, there exists a significant gap in research and professionalization within the field of higher education philanthropy, highlighting the need for standardized training and empirical research to inform strategic decision-making. Fundraising events emerge as key tools for donor engagement, stewardship, and promoting university initiatives. By leveraging diverse event strategies, collecting and analyzing data, and fostering collaboration both internally and externally, universities can enhance their fundraising efforts and cultivate lasting relationships with donors. Ultimately, the

effective utilization of fundraising events and evidence-based strategies is crucial for universities to navigate financial challenges and achieve their philanthropic goals.

Appendix

Not Human Research (NHR) Determination Form

Please provide a response to all the statements in the sections that follow.

Note: you may be contacted for clarification purposes.

Name:	Ravyn Ladenburger
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Determination of RESEARCH

The activity is a SYSTEMATIC INVESTIGATION involving recruitment of more than three individuals.	◯ True ⊗ False ([45 CFR 46.102(d)] & [21 CFR 50.3(c)] A systematic investigation is a plan which incorporates collection of data or specimens, either quantitative or qualitative, and analysis to answer a question.)
The activity is a "CLINICAL INVESTIGATION."	◯ True ⊗ False ([Any experiment that involves a test article (e.g., drug, device, biologic) and one or more human subjects and the experiment is subject to FDA or results intended to be submitted later or hold for inspection by FDA as part of an application for research or marketing permit.][21 CFR 50.3(c)])
The activity is being done as a Master's thesis, doctoral dissertation, or Captstone project for a degree earned from UK (i.e., person is a UK student).	⊗ True ◯ False ([Thesis projects, dissertations, and capstone projects at UK are not eligible for an NHR determination and require IRB review because the results are printed (published) and retained in the library and, therefore, considered to be disseminated beyond the University and to contribute to generalizable knowledge.])
The proposed activities are meant to contribute to GENERALIZABLE KNOWLEDGE.	⊗ True ◯ False ([Generalizable knowledge is considered knowledge gained from a study that may be applied to populations beyond the specific study population.])
The knowledge gained from the proposed activities will be disseminated beyond the University of Kentucky.	◯ True ⊗ False ([Proposed activites are, for example, class projects, customer service surveys, teaching evaluations, activities at the University of Kentucky designed to: implement improvements in clinical care and/or patient safety and health care operations; evaluate and improve existing services and programs, or for developing new services or programs.])

Determination of HUMAN SUBJECT

[45 CFR 46.102(e)(1)] , [UK ORI/IRB SOP #1-1] , [21 CFR 50.3(c)]

The activity involves obtaining information about living individuals and/or collection of fetal tissue or blood spots.	○ True ⊗ False
The activity involves INTERVENTION with individuals.	○ True ⊗ False ([Intervention includes both physical procedures by which information or biospecimens are gathered (e.g., venipuncture) and manipulations of the subject or the subject's environment that are performed for research purposes.])
The activity involves INTERACTION with the individuals.	○ True ⊗ False ([Interaction: includes communication or interpersonal contact between investigator and subject.])
The activity involves collection of INDIVIDUALLY IDENTIFIABLE and PRIVATE INFORMATION.	○ True ⊗ False ([Private information: Context in which an individual can reasonably expect that no observation or recording is taking place or information that is provided for specific purposes by an individual and which the individual can reasonably expect will not be made public.])
["Human Subject" (Drugs)] Other than in the course of medical practice, the activity involves use in a healthy human patient of: - FDA approved drug(s), and/or - unapproved use of approved drug(s), and/or - investigational drug(s) or biologic(s), and/or - other compound(s) intended to affect structure of function of the human body, and/or - in some cases dietary supplement(s), botanical(s), probiotic(s), functional food(s), nutraceutical(s), or substance(s) generally recognized as safe (GRAS) when used to diagnose, cure mitigate, treat or prevent disease.	○ True ⊗ False
["Human Subject" (Medical Devices)] The activity involves the collection of safety or efficacy data in a healthy human, patient, or individual's specimen (tissue), of a medical device including: - a component, part, accessory; - assay, reagent, or in-vitro diagnostic device; - software, digital health, or mobile medical app; - other instrument if intended to affect the structure or function of the body, diagnose, cure, mitigate, treat or prevent disease; or - a homemade device developed by an investigator or other non-commercial entity and not approved for marketing by the FDA.	○ True ⊗ False
The activities involve analysis of data.	○ True ⊗ False

The activities involve analysis of specimens.　　　◯ True　⊗ False

Regulatory

The activity is conducted or supported by a federal agency (e.g., HHS, NSF, DoD, DoEd, DoE, DoJ).

○ True   ⊗ False

Project Summary

Briefly describe the project objective(s) and aim(s): research project is	The primary objective of this to identify the best practices for event fundraising for institutions of higher education.
Briefly describe the subject population or type of use a case study data/specimens to be studied: analyze information on	This research project will approach to collect and event fundraising from multiple universities.
Briefly describe how the data and/or specimens will be studies will be obtained obtained: information as well	Information for the case by digesting publicly available as surveys by employees of the universities. These surveys will ask for information about event fundraising at their universities and will not ask any personally identifiable information, such as opinion or experience.

Survey Results

University of Kentucky

1. Do events contribute to meeting fundraising goals for your organization?

   Events contribute to relationship building that can help with fundraising goals, but they play a very small role in achieving fundraising goals. It is somewhat rare that the university hosts an actual fundraising event with sponsorships, auctions, etc. However, we do partner with many external organizations that are fundraising in this way on our behalf.

2. Does your organization fund event budgets with a philanthropy fee?

   a. If so, how is that accomplished?

      Yes, the University of Kentucky does have a 5% one-time advancement fee on non-endowed gifts. This supports many advancement initiatives including stewardship, gift processing expenses and events. Some of this budget is dedicated to the centralized philanthropy office while a portion is shared with the unit where the gift was directed. A large majority of the events are hosted by individual units, not from the central office.

3. Does your organization have a system to determine if an event is necessary for a fundraising goal?

   While individual colleges may have some minor processes for budget approval there is no overarching system to determine the viability of an event.

4. Does your organization have designated event-planning team member(s)?

   Some of our larger colleges, who have larger budgets and more frequent events, do have dedicated event professionals. However, many of our events are highly supported by gift officers and administrative staff.

5. How does your organization plan events?

   There are very few unique events from year to year. Tailgates, scholarship dinners and social events look very similar so many of the processes are merely duplicated. I would say that we are very reactive rather than proactive when it comes to event planning.

6. Does your organization promote events?

   a. If so, how?

If an event is promoted, we highly depend on the social media and digital resources of the Alumni Association. Additionally, our centralized public relations and marketing team supports these efforts on a more global scale.

7. What are the factors for a successful event?

Effective communication with guests early enough and detailed enough to promote good attendance by the right guests.

Accessibility and ease of access to the event location, event amenities, event audio announcements, food, bathrooms, and seating.

Guests should always leave an event having learned something new about your organization.

Meaningful, message driven events that show the impact of philanthropy are what can change a cocktail party to a fundraising connection.

8. How does your organization follow up after events to maintain momentum with constituents?

It is my goal to always have some type of written follow up with the message of the event that goes to both attendees and those who were unable to attend to reiterate the message and goals of the event. Additionally, for larger events I will typically survey our internal staff to see how we can improve and make the event more efficient and effective.

Please provide additional comments or information that may be relevant or helpful to my research goal.

Special events are indeed "special." Nearly every question that is asked could be answered with "it depends." This is especially true when it relates to philanthropy. Every donor is different and may have a different type of event that may inspire or motivate their giving. Additionally, various donors like to be thanked in very different ways. Moreover, the organization of these events can drastically

change from one project to the next because of those unique needs, institutional priorities, politics,

etc.

<u>University of Louisville</u>

1. Do events contribute to meeting fundraising goals for your organization?

    Indirectly, events are typically a form of cultivation and stewardship to keep donors close to the university. It's hard to measure a direct correlation between events and direct giving (apart from the occasional Gala). I do believe however events positively influence donor behavior in many instances.

2. Does your organization fund event budgets with a philanthropy fee?

    a. If so, how is that accomplished?

    We do not have a philanthropy fee. Events are funded either by the university budget or more often budgeted based on direct private support (endowments, cash gifts) and/or investment earnings from the endowment.

3. Does your organization have a system to determine if an event is necessary for a fundraising goal?

    We do not right now. Per the response in Q1 it is hard to draw a line directly from an event to private support. However, events can often be a driver/catalyst. When in campaign, if it's a national effort, holding regional events to rally the constituents and communicate a message if tied to campaign fundraising goals. All this said, our philosophy is there should always be a predetermined objective and goal for an event with intended outcomes. Organizations must be very intentional with participant follow-up after an event… that's when fundraising dots are most often connected. There should be a "so what" factor that is measurable.

4. Does your organization have designated event-planning team member(s)?

Yes, it is a 3-person team and includes alumni events and some presidential.

5. How does your organization plan events?

We try to anticipate and proactively plan at the beginning of the year as part of budget planning. Some years there are annual events such as recognition societies but also one-time such as college or university anniversaries/milestones.

6. Does your organization promote events?

a. If so, how?

Alumni website, direct invitations by mail and digital/electronic, word of mouth, volunteers, etc.

7. What are the factors for a successful event?

- **Sound planning of purpose, objective, and measurable outcome.**

- **Know the audience.**

- **Include various colleagues in the organization in at least the initial meeting to improve wholistically collective perspectives.**

- **Budget. Make it and hold to it.**

- **Attention to detail start to finish.**

- **Follow-up!**

- **Debrief and record notes for future use.**

8. How does your organization follow up after events to maintain momentum with constituents?

[Left blank]

Please provide additional comments or information that may be relevant or helpful to my research goal.

- **Often stage a message to go out by email to attendees the next day thanking them for attending by president or senior university official.**

- **Call on attendees within a week. Made by major gift officers usually (we need to do much better). Ask how they felt about the event and often opens doors for conversations that eventually lead to private support.**

- **Thank volunteers who helped with the event personally.**

- **Make photos from the event available.**

Western Kentucky University

9. Do events contribute to meeting fundraising goals for your organization?

> **Events support the fundraising goals at WKU. The events I coordinate are mostly to steward donors, but during the event we are always thinking of how we are displaying impact of past gifts to invoke thought for future gifts and support.**

10. Does your organization fund event budgets with a philanthropy fee?

a. If so, how is that accomplished?

> **Not directly, but there is a small administrative fee that helps manage and steward gifts held within our College Heights Foundation. We do not receive these funds directly. The College Heights Foundation supports our Divion of Philanthropy & Alumni Engagement in other ways.**

11. Does your organization have a system to determine if an event is necessary for a fundraising goal?

> **Not specifically, but we do record attendees and review if support is made after an event. We talk about ROI of events and make sure the events we plan support the goal in addition to stewardship. We have evolved many events in recent years as our industry changes and the need for in-person events is different from it once was.**

Metrics of an event are something we plan to include in addition to what we are already doing.

12. Does your organization have designated event-planning team member(s)?

    Our division includes me and two assistant directors who manage most all event planning for our division and for the President's office if donors are involved. My team also consists of 4 communications staff who help with press releases, email, and print invitations, event communications and follow-up.

13. How does your organization plan events?

    Our team will initially meet regarding a new event or an annual event with a kickoff and discuss the needs, where we will host the event, the budget, menu, and the goal – meaning what do we want the individuals in the room to take away from being on campus today. We will collaborate with the President's communications team to create his remarks and anything else he may need.

14. Does your organization promote events?

    a. If so, how?

    It depends on whether an event is invite-only or open to the public and decides how we promote an event. We use email marketing, social media, and some print invites, if necessary.

15. What are the factors for a successful event?

    We survey event attendees for every event we host and use the feedback to adjust future events and additional follow-up. We also receive feedback from the President, VP, faculty, and staff, and our PAE team and discuss opportunities missed and where our successes were. We always upload all attendees into our database and then our

prospecting team will look at assignments and those who are not assigned to evaluate if they should be assigned.

16. How does your organization follow up after events to maintain momentum with constituents?

    We send surveys, press releases, post on social media, place in our WKU SPIRIT magazine and any other relevant outlets depending on the event.

Please provide additional comments or information that may be relevant or helpful to my research goal.

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