

Student NAMA Chapter Career Development

College/University (DO NOT abbreviate. Spell it out so credit is given to the correct chapter.):

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

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Explain the changes your chapter wanted to make to enhance career development opportunities. (25 points):

When it has come to interaction with industry professionals, the previous two years for NAMA at UIUC have been disappointing. This last year, we only had one company in attendance at our sponsorship dinner and did not host any other events to allow our members to interact with professionals. Two years ago, we did not have a sponsorship dinner and did not have any events to interact with industry professionals. As a result, our leadership team knew that if we wanted to improve that aspect of our organization, we would have to switch things up, and that is exactly what we did. Coming into this fall semester of 2018, we wanted to boost interaction with industry professionals. Based on the two events that we have hosted to interact with professionals this year, our efforts proved to be very successful.

Outline the plan you developed to improve opportunities and how it would be measured against previous years. (25 points):

When our leadership team met for the first time this last fall, we identified a time of year in which multiple industry professionals would be on campus, increasing the possibility of interaction with professionals from multiple companies. In addition to that, we also identified faculty and professionals that our members had prior relationships with that we thought would be interested in spending time with us. That said, we chose two events, a social event in October and our fall presentations that typically take place in November or December to provide opportunities for interaction with those professionals. Ultimately, we believed that these would be two events in which attendance by professionals would be maximized, and that proved to be the case.

In terms of measuring improvement against previous years, we compared participation by professionals by industry

attendance at this year's events compared to what it had been in year's past.

Outline the execution of the plan, including any challenges that arose during implementation and how they were solved. (25 points):

For the social event at Rigg's Brewery, we decided to target the day of the career fair for the College of Agriculture. Some of the vendors that attend this event are sponsors for our chapter and have interacted with our chapter in years past so this looked like the perfect opportunity for us to maximize attendance for the event that we planned to host. After identifying a date, we chose to hold the event in the evening at a local brewery in west Champaign, a place where conversation and professional interaction could happen between our members and industry professionals. In order to spread the word about the event, we reached out to the College of Agriculture's Head of Career Services, Jean Drasgow, about sharing an online flyer with the vendors about the event. In addition to that, we also reached out to the College of Agriculture's Associate Director of Corporate Engagement and sent out invitations with personal messages to professionals via email that our members had connections with to help our efforts in maximizing attendance by professionals. The emails proved to be extremely successful in bringing professionals to the event.

One other event that we host each fall that allows for our members to interact with professionals is our fall presentations where we present our projects to each other and industry professionals that decide to join us to help provide input into what product we choose to take to competition. For this event, it was much easier to get the word out. After having great success with the personal invitations via email about the social event the night of the career fair, we sent upwards of 20 invitations out to representatives of companies, faculty, and alumni to come join us for night of professional interaction.

Provide measurable results. (25 points):

As I noted earlier, we had never had a social event like the one we had the night of the career fair until this year, but for our first social we had 10 professionals and 10 NAMA members present at the event. Obviously, we would have liked to have more professionals and members at the event but considering that some members and professionals had interviews the next day to prepare for, may have warranted a good reason to not attend the event. That said, we have already been considering ways to improve this event next year and are excited about what it could be! Overall, our leadership team and advisors were very pleased with how the event went.

The fall presentations on the other hand, were a great success.

There were 13 industry professionals, alumni, and faculty present at the event. Last year, there were no professionals, alumni, or faculty (other than advisors) present at our fall presentations and the year prior, there were only 2 faculty members (aside from our advisors) present at the event. Our members received great feedback from these 13 individuals, and we hope they can join us again in the spring for our pre-competition dinner!