



Look What's Under Our Tent! A Fresh Approach to Library Orientations

Juliet Rumble

Auburn University Libraries

Nancy Noe

Information Oasis

An info place in the shade

During the first two days of class, librarians staff a table on Auburn's main concourse, answering questions and handing out cold, bottled water.



Tailgate @ the Library

Fall open house = fun and discovery

Students learn about library resources & services as they explore the building and interact with librarians in a fun and non-threatening atmosphere.



Today's students often turn to their parents first for help with schoolwork. AU librarians brief parents on the library's role in their student's academic success.

Snacks in the Stacks

AU librarians reach out to students through their parents

Information Oasis

Description of event

- An outdoor information desk, located on a busy pedestrian thoroughfare near the center of the Auburn University campus
- Scheduled for the first two days of class, Fall Semester (10am-2pm)
- Staffed by reference librarians and grad student library assistants
- Librarians, armed with cell phones, answer questions and hand out cold, bottled water

Goals for event

- Help new students to find their way around Auburn's campus
- Encourage students to associate the library with information and friendly, helpful faces

Takeaways for students

- Chilled bottled water
- Campus maps
- Pens, highlighters, bookmarks, and fridge magnets with library contact info
- Tailgate @ the Library invitations
- Library café ads
- AU football game schedules
- Office of Information Technology "Survival Guides"

Event supplies

- Tent, table, folding chairs, large sign(s) or banner(s), bags of ice, bottled water, plastic wading pool to hold ice and water, cell phones, university course bulletin, local and campus phone directories, FAQ manual for staff (e.g. info about class schedules, advising, drop/add, classroom building floor plans, computer labs and support, Blackboard/WebCT, local bookstores, parking, transit, etc.), student giveaways (listed above), paperweights, staff survival kit (sunscreen, spritzers, etc) and a couple of plastic flamingoes for the pool!

Event statistics and logistics

- Stats: 65 cases of bottled water and 960 lbs of ice for the two day event
- Obtain any necessary permits; consider buying water & ice wholesale; arrange for transportation of supplies to location (NB: Water and ice are heavy! We used electric golf cart to transport); schedule extra staff for set-up and take down

AU Libraries Information Oasis on Flickr

- <http://www.flickr.com/photos/aulibraries> (see Information Oasis photo album)

Tailgate @ the Library

Description of event

- Fall open house/orientation
- Target audience: incoming freshmen, transfer students, and incoming graduate students
- Sessions held Friday before first home football game
- 1850 participants Fall 2007
- Students receive a 'ticket' upon entering the building which directs them to service /resource points throughout the library. Tickets are 'stamped' at each location (clearly marked by tailgate tents)
- Giveaways and food at each service/resource point
- One of the service points also functions as a survey station. Student responses are collected on topics ranging from study habits to their use of communication/educational technologies
- All library faculty and staff participate
- Library 'in-house' partners also take part (Office of Information Technology and Study Partners)
- Special guests include Auburn University's marching band, cheerleaders, dance squads, Southeastern Raptor Rehabilitation Center, Baja Racing team, etc.

Goals of event

- Reduce library anxiety by allowing students to explore the building, its resources and services, in a fun and non-threatening atmosphere
- Address ACRL Information Literacy Standard Two: The information literate student accesses needed information effectively and efficiently; Outcome 3: The information literate student retrieves information online or in person using a variety of methods; Performance indicator c: Uses specialized online or in person services available at the institution
- Promote library services and resources

Giveaways

- Information relating to each service/resource point is distributed. (e.g. reference desk offers magnets and highlighters with the library's contact information; circulation distributes a brochure detailing circulation policies and procedures)
- Food is available at each station (e.g. reference desk hands out bags of potato chips; circulation distributes fortune cookies with library contact info inside)
- Students who return their tickets are eligible for door prizes (solicited from area vendors and businesses). Grand Prize: football autographed by Auburn's head football coach

Tailgate @ the Library on Flickr

- <http://www.flickr.com/photos/aulibraries> (see Tailgate @ the Library 2007 photo album)

Snacks in the Stacks

Description of event

- Open house/orientation session for parents of incoming Auburn University freshmen
- Sessions held in conjunction with Camp War Eagle, AU's orientation program for incoming freshmen and their parents
- 1000 parents participated in eight sessions held during May-July 2007
- Beverages and light snacks served
- Short presentation by library dean (or a library unit head) about library resources & services followed by open Q&A session
- Reference, Circulation, and Systems staff on hand to answer questions and give short tours
- Camp War Eagle parent counselors and representatives from the Office of Information Technology and Study Partners (AU's peer tutoring service) also on hand
- Library PowerPoint slideshow (playing in background)

Goals of event

- Influence students' information seeking behavior: In addition to peers, undergraduates frequently turn to their parents for help with their academic work. This event aims to inform parents about resources and services available at the library so that they, in turn, can direct their student to the library for help
- Create a development opportunity for the library: event highlights the contributions of AU Libraries to teaching and learning on campus

Library partners

- Freshman Year Experience (campus unit that oversees Camp War Eagle), Academic Support Services, and Office of Information Technology
- Snacks (candy, cookies, pub mix, etc.) provided by a local vendor

Giveaways for parents:

- Folder containing: informational handouts (e.g. library services for undergraduates, circulation policies guide, community information), letter from the Dean of Libraries, invitation to Tailgate @ the Library, library newsletter, library reference stats bookmark, pen and fridge magnet with library contact info, Books of Honor donor card
- Library newsletter (electronic): Parents fill out a contact card if they wish to receive these

Snacks in the Stacks on Flickr

- <http://www.flickr.com/photos/aulibraries> (see Snacks in the Stacks photo album)

QUESTIONS? Contact Nancy Noe (noenanc@auburn.edu) or Juliet Rumble (rumblijt@auburn.edu)