



# FRATERNITY & SORORITY LIFE

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UC MERCED OFFICE OF STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

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## Tips and Tricks to Tabling: A Guide for Student Organizations



» 2021

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# INTRODUCTION

Tabling is an effective way to educate and engage your campus community about your organization and your philanthropy. To help you, here are tips and tricks to having a successful tabling event.

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## MESSAGE FROM THE FSL TEAM

Tabling is about forming bonds and building genuine connections. Don't be afraid to be yourself and have fun!

If you need help, reach out to your community resources for any support!

# THREE KEY TABLING ELEMENTS

There are three key elements that factor into tabling: Preparation, Set up, and Practice.

## 01

### Preparation

A tabling event can fail before it begins if you do not prepare for it. Make sure all details of your events have been planned and discussed with the *entire* organization. These details and expectations should be communicated to all members.

- schedule tabling dates, times, and locations weeks in advance
  - there are several steps involved in reserving space
  - arrange special needs such as electrical outlets or additional tables
  - choose locations that will have the maximum number of people walking by
- OSI recommends submitting tabling request *at least 5 to 7 days* prior
- OSI has a limited number of tables
  - access to OSI tables is first come first serve
  - **if possible, bring your own table(s)**
- coordinate attire that communicates your organization's brand
  - consider wearing letters, philanthropy shirts, or professional attire
- arrive at least 20 minutes early
  - give yourself time to set up your table *before* people arrive
- assign tabling lead(s) that will keep those signed up to table accountable
- advertising in advance will help draw people in

## 02

### Set up

An attractive-looking table always draws more people to it. Think about how you want to display your tabling items.

What you present is the impression that the campus and students will have of you.

- assign a set up and clean up team
  - these people will be in charge of tabling items and organizing those items
  - the set up team will arrive at least 20 minutes early

- bring key tabling items
  - this can include: canopy tent, table cloth, photos/scrapbooks/photo albums, flags, member sign in sheet, etc...
  - too many items can become disorganized
- bring items to show off your organization's personality
  - photos, videos, and awards that showcase you are great talking points
- organize your set up
  - have an area each for members' personal items, tabling paraphernalia, game/activity equipment, etc...
- create QR codes for all of your organization's social media accounts
- stay in touch
  - consider having a computer with a Google Form, a spreadsheet, or a sign-up sheet with pens to record the names and email addresses of interested students
- have a schedule of upcoming events that your organization will be involved in

## 03

### Practice

This is the most important "Key Element of Tabling". If you are tabling, you must know the balance of good communication, especially with strangers who are interested in your organization.

Take the time as a group *and* as individuals to practice talking before your events.

Things to consider:

- know your pitch
  - this can include: your name, your major, your organization (do not use acronyms as not everyone is familiar with those), the purpose of your organization, the event you are hosting and its goal
- rehearse organization FAQs and facts
- know how you want to use marketing pieces
  - marketing pieces can include tabling items and/or your tabling event that is occurring
- know why/what you are tabling for
  - goals could include recruitment, raising funds for your philanthropy, spreading awareness on a social cause
- decide how you want people's experience to be at your tabling event

# TABLING TIPS

How to amplify your tabling event

post these on  
your social media  
to draw interest

Assign a member  
to take photos and  
videos of your  
members tabling  
and of your tabling  
event


add them to your  
future tabling  
photos/scrapbooks/  
photo albums

Take a picture of  
the table and  
everyone working  
the table for  
reference next  
time

Wear  
appropriate  
clothing

remember to keep  
smiling, stay positive,  
and always say "Thank  
You" to everybody that  
stopped by your table

Not everyone is  
going to want to talk,  
sign-up, participate  
or even have the  
same passion as we  
do



Stand in front  
of your table  
and engage  
with passersby

discrete place  
under the table to  
keep supplies,  
look professional  
and inviting

Use a clean  
table cloth  
over the table

people are more  
likely to stop by if  
they see everyone  
active and enjoying  
their time

Be  
enthusiastic  
and friendly

remember to smile

Stay standing  
and engaged

Try pushing  
your table to  
the back of  
your space

Make it fun

have fun games, silly  
questions, group activities,  
and other icebreakers to  
draw interest, stand out,  
and engage people who  
otherwise may have  
ignored your table

Give them specific roles at the table

Staff the table with a minimum of 2-4 members

their primary role is to introduce themselves to passersby, introduce that person to a member with you, invite them to a follow-up activity at your table, and capture contact information

Other members should be walking around the table area meeting people and making connections too

people are less likely to engage and approach if you seem intimidating or in a conversation

At least two members should generally be in front of the table and apart, facing away from each other

Give out your organization contact

create a shift schedule

Collect contact information from interested students

create competitions for the team of members that connected with the most people and/or brought them to the table

Rotate the member teams regularly to keep the people who are working the table fresh

# TABLING MISTAKES

Forgetting tabling items

Staying stuck behind the table; move around

Sit down the whole time

Avoid eye contact with students

Dressing sloppy, overdressing, and/or inappropriate jokes/language/gossip

Be discouraged if a student isn't interested

Seem displeased or being rude

Be afraid to approach students and go out of your way to talk to them

# TABLING MISTAKES

Just talk at the students, make sure to engage them by asking them questions about themselves

Harassing people to talk to you

Using your phone prolifically

Using last-minute display materials that look hastily done

Complaining or gossiping loudly while tabling

Cluttering the table with trophies, composites, blankets, t-shirts, and trash

Arriving late and/or leaving early

No social media engagement

# TABLING MISTAKES

Failing to practice the script of what you'll say when people ask about the organization

Sitting/slouching behind the table, waiting for people to come to talk to you

Thinking that a fancy, impressive-looking table will do all the work.

Failing to build a list of names with contact information for follow-up

Poor conversations at the table due to a lack of interpersonal skills and/or practice

De-valuing your brand by using cheap gimmicks to sell your organization (sex, alcohol, etc.)

# TABLING MISTAKES

Depending on the school/council/event host or someone else to do all the work for your group

Members “hanging out” and talking to each other, but failing to meet others

Not following up, send emails or texts to see if those who seemed interested still are

Creating a scene and/or drawing attention through antics

Not engaging or acknowledging other organizations who are also tabling

Crowding the table with too many members

# TABLING LOCATIONS: OUTDOOR SPACES

When you are preparing to table, consider the type of event you are planning and which location works best for it. Also, consider the pros and cons for each location. Refer here for all UC Merced locations and descriptions:  
<https://events.ucmerced.edu/search/places>

Location	Capacity	Pros	Cons
Academic Walk	292	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• great foot traffic</li> <li>• close to Bellevue lot</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• noise limitations due to housing</li> </ul>
Academic Walk Tabling Spot #1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• great foot traffic</li> <li>• close to Bellevue lot</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• noise limitations due to housing</li> </ul>
Academic Walk Tabling Spot #2	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• great foot traffic</li> <li>• close to Bellevue lot</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• noise limitations due to housing</li> </ul>
Academic Walk Tabling Spot #3	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• great foot traffic</li> <li>• close to Bellevue lot</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• noise limitations due to housing</li> </ul>
ACS Lawn	150	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• close to the parking lot</li> <li>• close to Bellevue lot</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• small space</li> <li>• hidden</li> </ul>
Carol Tomlinson- Keasey Quadrangle	960	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ideal for large tabling events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• far from Bellevue lot</li> </ul>
COBI Breezeway	54	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• close to Library Lot 1</li> <li>• close to the library</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• minimal foot traffic</li> </ul>

Location	Capacity	Pros	Cons
Engineering Walk	121	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Path/area outside along SE buildings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• far from Bellevue Lot</li> </ul>
Joel & Elizabeth Wallace Terrace	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• great for private event but not for tabling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• small capacity</li> </ul>
Little Lake Boardwalk	101	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• great view</li> <li>• close to parking lot</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• not visible from foot traffic on Academic Walk</li> </ul>
Pavilion Lawn	100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in between Scholars Lane and Academic Walk</li> <li>• large capacity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• not close to Bellevue Lot</li> </ul>
Scholars Lane	200	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• great foot traffic</li> <li>• close to Library Lot 1</li> <li>• close to the majority of classroom spaces</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• far from Bellevue Lot</li> </ul>
Scholars Lane Tabling Spot #1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• great foot traffic</li> <li>• close to Library Lot 1</li> <li>• close to the majority of classroom spaces</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• far from Bellevue Lot</li> </ul>
Scholars Lane Tabling Spot #2	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• great foot traffic</li> <li>• close to Library Lot 1</li> <li>• close to the majority of classroom spaces</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• far from Bellevue Lot</li> </ul>
Scholars Lane Tabling Spot #3	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• great foot traffic</li> <li>• close to Library Lot 1</li> <li>• close to the majority of classroom spaces</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• far from Bellevue Lot</li> </ul>
Scholars Lane Tabling Spot #4	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• great foot traffic</li> <li>• close to Library Lot 1</li> <li>• close to the majority of classroom spaces</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• far from Bellevue Lot</li> </ul>

Location	Capacity	Pros	Cons
Scholars Lane Tabling Spot #5	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• great foot traffic</li> <li>• close to Library Lot 1</li> <li>• close to the majority of classroom spaces</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• far from Bellevue Lot</li> </ul>
Scholars Plaza	100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• area along Library, COB1, and CTK Quad</li> <li>• close to Library Lot 1</li> <li>• great foot traffic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• far from Bellevue Lot</li> </ul>
SE2 Solar Breezeway	38	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ideal for professional tabling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• far from Bellevue Lot</li> </ul>
Social Justice Plaza	211	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• large capacity</li> <li>• close to Library Lot 1 for unloading</li> <li>• close to the library</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• hidden from Scholars Lane and the rest of campus</li> <li>• minimal foot traffic</li> </ul>
SSB Triangle	62	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ideal for intimate tabling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• far from Bellevue Lot</li> </ul>
SSM Courtyard	83	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• targeting major/minor specific students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• far from Bellevue Lot</li> <li>• minimal foot traffic</li> </ul>
Vista Way	48	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in-between SE1 and SE2</li> <li>• ideal for professional tabling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• far from Bellevue Lot</li> <li>• minimal foot traffic</li> </ul>
Wallace Dutra Amphitheater	332	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• great for performances</li> <li>• close to the parking lot</li> <li>• large capacity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• hidden from Scholars Lane <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ need signs/music</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

# OFFICE OF STUDENT INVOLVEMENT TABLING POLICIES

Registered Campus Organizations (RCO) Student groups and campus affiliates wishing to table on the UC Merced campus are required to follow the tabling procedures.

- No more than **three people** may staff tabling on or under the overhang of any structure. If an overhang has *no* sprinkler, tabling under the overhang is *not permitted*.
- All members must be behind or next to their designated tables. When handing out flyers or asking for sign-ups this must be done from behind or within 2 feet of the table(s). Due to traffic flow and safety concerns, people tabling may not walk up or walk around passing out flyers. Music or amplified sound is not permitted without prior Office of Student Involvement (OSI) permission.
- Larger groups may host tabling on Scholars Lane or Academic Walk. These groups are restricted to the tabling space. The areas between the planters and the fire lane are on average 10 x 10 feet and provide space for canopies and table(s). Tabling participants are required to stay behind or next to their tables. Groups or individuals are not permitted to walk up to people and hand out flyers or use clipboards for sign-ups while walking around. The Fire lane area is designated traffic flow and restricted by fire code to those wishing to go to and from classes or while conducting business.
- Tabling outside of the designated areas in front of OSI or Scholars Lane is not permitted without permission from OSI and will be reviewed on an event-by-event basis.
- The practice of barking, soliciting, or actively passing out flyers by approaching those seeking access to and from classes is not permitted at UC Merced.
- Music and amplified sound may not be used for tabling or campus events unless previously approved by OSI.

Special exemptions such as ASUCM election and events requesting a daily event or programming requests must be approved by OSI.

# STATE OF CALIFORNIA FIRE MARSHAL RULES AND REGULATIONS SPECIAL EVENTS & FAIRS

## **Booth Construction/Location:**

- Minimum of 20 feet from any permanent structure
- All fabric of pliable canopy covers, side/back drops, and decorative material must be inherently fire resistive or treated
- Exit openings shall be a minimum of 3 feet wide and 6 feet 8 inches in height

## **Electrical:**

- Electrical extension cords shall be of the heavy-duty three-wire (grounded), hard-usage type.
- Electrical equipment and installation shall be inspected and approved by a qualified person.

## **Livestock/farm areas:**

- No space heaters, electric skillets, toasters, coffee makers, hot plates and any other appliances.
- No storage of flammable or combustible liquids or machines.
- Fire hoses, fire extinguishers or other fire equipment shall not be blocked or obstructed at any time.
- The roads around the barns shall be kept clear so that fire apparatus may be able to pass through at any time. Minimum width of these roads shall be 20 feet.
- No parking of any vehicles in any barn or livestock areas.

## **Food Service Areas:**

- No use or storage of portable containers of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) inside buildings or tents.
- All cylinders must be secured to prevent tipping or falling over. Cooking booths must be separated from non-cooking booths by 10 feet.
- All Automatic Fire Extinguishing Systems (Hood System) have been serviced within the last six months.
- Fire Extinguishers:
  - Each booth shall be provided with a minimum 2A10BC rated portable fire extinguisher.
  - Each booth with deep fat fryer shall have a Class K portable fire extinguisher.
  - All portable fire extinguishers have been serviced by a SFM licensed company annually with a service tag attached.
- The fire extinguisher must be mounted or secured so that it will not fall over.
- All fire extinguishers must be visible and accessible.

# STATE OF CALIFORNIA FIRE MARSHAL RULES AND REGULATIONS SPECIAL EVENTS & FAIRS

## Food Service Areas Continued:

- Deep Fat Fry/flambé Cooking:
  - Deep fat Frying or flambé cooking operations shall be located in a separate enclosure where only cooking operations are performed.
- Wood Barbecue Cooking:
  - No wood barbecue cooking inside of booths.
  - Only wood barbecue cooking shall be performed in areas away from public access.
  - No fuel wood shall be stored inside of booths.
  - Metal containers shall be provided for hot coal and ashes.
- Charcoal Barbecue Cooking:
  - No charcoal barbecue cooking inside of booths or tents.
  - Only commercially sold charcoal fuel may be used.
  - Charcoal cooking shall be performed only in areas away from public access
  - Charcoal cooking shall be located a minimum of 15 feet from any booth
  - Charcoal cooking is at least 20 feet from any permanent structure.

## Exhibit Halls

- No open flame
- Exiting
  - Illuminated exit sign.
  - No blocking or obstruction of exit.
  - Doors shall not be locked or chained.
  - Aisle width shall be maintained according to approved site plan.
- Fire equipment
  - No blocking of fire hydrants
  - No blocking of fire extinguishers.
  - No blocking of standpipe and fire hose cabinets.
  - No blocking of fire sprinkler systems.
  - No blocking of manual fire alarm pull stations.
  - No blocking of fire alarm audible/visual devices such as horns or strobes.
  - No blocking of first aide equipment.
- Vehicle Static Display
  - Battery terminals disconnected.
  - Fuel tank shall be no more than 1/4 filled.
  - Locked or taped gas cap.
- Decorative Materials
  - Shall be inherently flame resistive or treated.

# OFFICE OF STUDENT INVOLVEMENT CONTACT

The Office of Student Involvement team is here to assist you with your tabling needs, concerns, and questions.

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