Reunion Planning Guide

Each Spring, Brenau University welcomes Women’s College and Academy/Early College alumnae back to campus for Alumnae Reunion Weekend & May Day. This is a special time to reminisce with old friends and celebrate the traditions that unite a diverse group of extraordinary women. In addition to the annual events the majority of alumnae can enjoy each year, the Office of Alumni & Events also facilitates the planning of the 10th, 25th, and 50th class reunions of the Women’s College and an Academy/Early College reunion event.

Every class is unique, and these milestone reunions are particularly successful when class members are actively involved in setting the proper tone for the event.

The Alumni & Events staff is available to assist volunteers interested in planning their own class reunion, and this guide provides much of the information you will need to get started. We want your reunion to be a terrific success and an enjoyable experience for all involved, so please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns.

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What the Alumni Office Provides

Mailings
The Alumni Office will create and send mailings for your class reunion at no charge to you. Reunion correspondence begins in the late summer or early fall when “Save the Dates” are mailed for milestone reunions. These are followed by formal reunion invitations and Alumnae Reunion Weekend registration materials in January. Paper correspondence should be carefully chosen and timed, so please consult with the Alumni Office before planning a mailing outside of this schedule. In the event you need to contact a class member individually, the Office of Alumni & Events can provide you with classmates’ addresses, telephone numbers, and email addresses when available. Email is a fast and extremely effective way to reach your classmates, and we would be happy to send a message on your behalf.

Registration
The Office of Alumni & Events will maintain a list of those who have registered for reunion activities and accept all payments. We will update the “Who’s Coming” page on the alumni portion of the Brenau website, as well as email reunion groups a list of classmates who have already registered.

Financial Support
Each Women’s College milestone reunion and the Academy/Early College reunion will receive a $1,000 budget. Other “5-year” reunions may receive up to $500 from the university's budget. Any additional funds needed to execute your event will need to be collected through ticket prices.

Publicity
Our Office will promote your event through the alumni website, alumni magazine, Brenau Alums facebook page, Twitter, email invitations, printed mailings, and more. We will also create a facebook group for your class which can be used for reunion planning as well as continued communication between classmates for years to come.

Event Space
Your class reunion may use on-campus event space at no charge. Possible on-campus venues include Wilkes Board Room, Walters House, Burd Center Lobby, NEGA History Center, Downtown Center meeting rooms, Amphitheater, and Front Lawn, among others. Your staff liaison can help select the perfect on-campus location for your reunion. Keep in mind that on-campus locations do require using Brenau Catering for food, and some on-campus locations have requirements for alcohol vendors, as well.

Of course, you are also welcome to choose an off-campus and utilize your budget and ticket sales for rental fees.

The following restaurants close to campus have private dining rooms or can be fully rented:

- The Loft at Scott’s
- Recess
- Luna’s
- Two Dog Café
The following special event venues are located minutes from Brenau's campus, as well:

- Gainesville Civic Center
- Martha's Cabin
- Chattahoochee Country Club
- Robson Event Center

**General Support**

For any issue that arises during the planning of your class reunion, the Alumni & Events staff is here to assist you. Simply call or email your the staff liaison for your class with your concerns and we will point you in the right direction.
**Things To Consider**

**Accommodations**
Every year, the Office of Alumni & Events reserves a block of rooms at a discounted rate for this special weekend at the Hampton Inn, Holiday Inn, and Hilton in Gainesville. We can reserve additional rooms if you would like to encourage your class to stay in one place.

As a nice alternative, there are many beautiful lake homes on Lanier available to rent for the weekend that provide both lodging and a possible venue for your event. (Bed space can be limited, so this may not be the best option if you choose to invite significant others and/or children to the reunion.)

**Food & Beverage**
Food is one of the most critical elements of any event. Good or bad, it is one thing your classmates will remember and talk about long after the reunion is over. Class reunions are generally scheduled on the Friday evening of Alumnae Reunion Weekend, in which case your classmates will be expecting a full dinner. Buffet-style dinners tend to be the most successful as they allow guests to serve themselves and mingle easily with their friends. If you plan your reunion earlier in the day, heavy hors d’oeuvres may be appropriate, but make sure to have plenty of options in case your classmates come with an appetite. A beer and wine cash bar is usually a crowd-pleaser and helps to prevent over-indulging. If you are charging admission, consider including one or two drink tickets in the attendee’s package.

**Guest List**
In general, all alumnae from your class who have a valid mailing address on file with Brenau will receive an invitation to your reunion. But there are other considerations for your guest list. Will you invite spouses or dates? Are children welcome? Do you wish to invite the class above and below you? Feel free to talk through these and other options with your classmates and your staff liaison.

**Entertainment**
Depending on the size and location of your reunion, it may be appropriate to plan for entertainment during or after dinner. You may choose an entire band or simply play streaming internet radio over a speaker system. You can easily poll classmates on your reunion Facebook page to get an idea of what they would like.

**Gifts**
If you choose to give class members a gift, our Office can suggest suppliers we have used in the past. Below are suggestions for fairly inexpensive, yet memorable, gifts:

- Tote bags
- Key chains
- T-shirts
- Stadium or fleece blankets
- Picture frames
- Coasters
- Champagne or wine glasses
- Coozies
**Equipment**
You will need to coordinate audio/visual equipment needs at your chosen venue if you would like to show a video or slideshow. If you choose a Brenau space for your reunion, we will work with Brenau’s Multimedia & Theatre Services to equip your space with a laptop, projector, screen, etc.
## Planning Timeline

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEADLINE</th>
<th>TASK</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 31</td>
<td>Mail and email “Save The Dates”</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 31</td>
<td>Hold first planning committee meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 15</td>
<td>Create facebook group and begin talking about your event</td>
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<td>October 15</td>
<td>Secure venue</td>
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<td>October 31</td>
<td>Book catering &amp; beverage</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 31</td>
<td>Establish ticket price (keep in mind costs that have yet to be determined -- entertainment, gifts, decor, equipment, etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 1</td>
<td>Event details for publication due to the Office of Alumni &amp; Events!!!</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 1</td>
<td>Formal reunion invitations mailed</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 1</td>
<td>ARW registration opens online</td>
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<td>January 5</td>
<td>ARW registration materials mailed</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 28</td>
<td>“Who’s Coming” email blast #1</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 1</td>
<td>Book your entertainment (if any) and/or AV equipment</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 15</td>
<td>Graphics for gifts/favors submitted to the Office of Alumni &amp; Events for approval from Brenau Communications</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 28</td>
<td>“Who’s Coming” email blast #2</td>
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<td>March 1</td>
<td>Order gifts</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 15</td>
<td>Finalize menu</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 15</td>
<td>Purchase, make, or rent any necessary decor</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 28</td>
<td>Final “Who’s Coming” email blast</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 1</td>
<td>Deadline to register for Alumnae Reunion Weekend events</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 1</td>
<td>Supply guest count to caterer</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 11</td>
<td>CELEBRATE!!!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 31</td>
<td>Deadline to submit receipts for reimbursement</td>
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