Parents’ Club of Stanford University
Job Description for Spring Dinner Chair
Updated 5/22/12 by Suzanne Taylor

Overview of Job
Every May the Parents’ Club puts on the Spring Dinner, a social event for members and their spouses. It is held on a weekend evening at the home of a Stanford parent and is catered. The Spring Dinner Chair plans and organizes the event with the help of her committee. Plans should be coordinated with the Club President and the host of the event, who may be one of the Chairs. The dinner is expected to pay for itself except for the budget amount you have been allowed, so determine the price you will charge your attendees accordingly.

Timeline and Description of Duties

February:
Obtain the Spring Dinner binder which contains information about past Spring Dinners and your budget for this year. You cannot incur expenditures in excess of this budget without prior permission from the Board of Directors. Keep your original receipts for any costs you incur and submit them, with the Club reimbursement form, to the Treasurer.

Schedule a kick-off meeting with your committee (perhaps at the home where the event will be held) to determine date, time, amount you will charge, format, food, rentals needed, layout, entertainment, etc. Make sure the dinner is not planned on Mother’s Day or Memorial Day weekend. Delegate tasks to committee members.

Get caterer reserved. Contact various caterers to review their menu selections and prices. Select a menu to propose to the host and club president, bearing in mind limitations on what members are willing to pay to come to this event. The budget must include not only the caterer but also, paper goods, rental furniture, linens and dinnerware, decorations/flowers, musical entertainment, wine, other beverages, ice, etc. See past year’s reports to make sure you haven’t forgotten anything. Since you will not know how many people will attend the dinner, use last year’s attendance figure as a working estimate. Make sure the caterer is flexible in case you have a higher or lower number which will be finalized the week before the event. Once you have approval for your proposal, work with vendors to draw up and finalize contract agreements.

March:
Get entertainer reserved, if you’re having entertainment. Club members may have suggestions on students that could play background music or entertain.

**April:**
Get on the agenda for the April and May General Meeting so you can announce the Spring Dinner and urge people to attend. Put together flyers, both hard copies handed out at the April and May club meetings and an electronic version for emailing out to club members. See previous years’ flyers for ideas. They should include not only time and place but an RSVP form, due date, spot for the attendee to indicate what they’re bringing (if you’re asking for food donations) and your contact information. The invitation announcement should also be posted to the Parents’ Club Facebook page.

It’s also good to describe the party in the invitation to set expectations for the menu and casual dress. Some attendees may have food allergies, another reason to include the menu. Organize RSVPs as they are submitted, and keep a list of attendees in a spreadsheet.

The club president will email the invitation to club members about three times. The email should include the invite copy in the body of the email if possible so recipients don’t have to open attachments. The RSVP deadline should be a week before the party date.

**May:**
Attend May General meeting and announce Spring Dinner. Bring flyers. Organize final details with the vendors, club president, host, and/or co-chair. Make a list of final tasks and assign responsibilities. Put together a volunteer sheet to pass around at the monthly club meetings for help before, during, and after the party.

A week before the party, provide a final count to the caterer and verify plans. The rental vendor should contact the host to determine a day and time to deliver any rentals. Remind the volunteers that they are helping to set up about an hour before the party, clear away used dishes during the party, or clean up after the party. Verify plans with the musical entertainer, club members loaning items, and club members providing flower centerpieces or donating other items.

The day before the party, print out a final RSVP list for check-in at the party. Bring name tags and markers for sign in table. There may be a few last payments to collect. Keep all the payments in an envelope to provide to the Financial Secretary. Take pictures at the party to remember the set-up for future organizers.
After the party, write up a detailed Report for the planning binder. Tally up the final expenses vs. budget. Thank everyone who helped. Report on Spring Dinner at June General Meeting.