

# WEDDING AND SPECIAL EVENTS GUIDE

Lifetime Wisconsin Union members are eligible to reserve rooms through the Wisconsin Union. Once you have been through the lottery system or have booked your wedding or special event, signed your contract to secure your reservation, please refer to this guidebook to assist in planning your event. Every wedding guest will be provided private planning sessions with representatives of the Union Wedding staff.

To become a Lifetime Wisconsin Union Member please see this link:

<https://union.wisc.edu/getinvolved/become-a-member/>

## Deposit/Minimums/Service Fees

A non-refundable deposit of \$1,000 is due at the time of the booking of your event. The deposit funds can go toward food, beverage, audio visual charges and catering service fees.

A second non-refundable deposit of \$3,000 will be required to continue to hold the reservation. If the second deposit is not received 6 months in advance, the reservation could be canceled.

No refunds will be made for unused deposits.

For events booked on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays on holiday weekends the minimum expenditures are as follows:

|               |         |
|---------------|---------|
| Tripp Commons | \$6,000 |
| Great Hall    | \$7,000 |
| Varsity Hall  | \$9,000 |

If booking multiple rooms for the same event the minimum expenditures will be combined.

If the minimum is not met, members will be charged the difference.

All catered events will be subject to a 5.5% sales tax where applicable.

The Wisconsin Union will charge a \$1,000 special service fee for events in Great Hall, Tripp Commons, Main Lounge and Varsity Hall. Included in the service fee are event setup and teardown of Union provided equipment. If you are reserving multiple event spaces for the same event, you will be charged a \$1,000 special service fee for each event space.

Our services are limited to Union provided equipment and staffing. The Union will not provide service for customer decorations, rental equipment, non-Union audio/visual equipment including DJ load-in/out, or dessert items from outside bakeries.

The General Manager of Weddings and Specialized Events will be your point of contact for venue, food, and service logistics. Once you have booked your event, they will reach out to you via email with further information.

The Union does not provide full-service wedding coordination or coordinate with outside vendors on the behalf of the wedding party. We require all weddings to have a day of coordinator for vendor, setup, decoration, and other day of needs. Day of coordinator is not limited to professional services, can be family, friends, wedding party etc.

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## Banquet Room Capacities:

### Great Hall:

Maximum seating is 270\* (27 oval tables seating 10 each) this does NOT include a head table. If the ceremony is held in the room, the maximum capacity is 180 (with a max of 160 ceremony chairs). The ceremony chairs will be removed and replaced with a head table, and then removed and replaced with a dance floor. We will not move dining tables for ceremony needs.

### Tripp Commons:

Maximum seating is 170\* (17 oval tables seating 10 each) this does NOT include a head table. Ceremonies in Tripp Commons are held on the Deck.

### Varsity Hall:

Maximum seating for Varsity Hall using all three sections is 600\* (60 oval tables seating 10 at each) this does NOT include a head table. Varsity Hall is divisible into three separate sections and can be partitioned down to best fit the size and style of your wedding.

\*Sizing based on oval tables with 10 people per table. Additional seating may be found using a banquet table setup.

## Banquet Room Information:

Depending on final guest counts, tables may be removed after the meal to make room for a dance floor.

Day of event access to the banquet room begins at 10 AM, after the setup staff have the tables set for service.

### Auxiliary Rooms:

One auxiliary room (get ready room) is included in your event reservation. Two auxiliary rooms will be provided for weddings that include a ceremony fee.

Additional auxiliary rooms and overnight storage may be available for an additional fee based on availability.

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## Ceremonies:

- The ceremony must be held in conjunction with a wedding reception.
- Ceremony requests must be made a minimum of three months prior to the reception.
- The Wisconsin Union is a large public facility and has numerous events taking place throughout the day (i.e. other large events, bands, parking lots, boats with motors, etc.). Noise may be generated from these external activities that may affect the success of your ceremony. The Wisconsin Union reserves the right to deny ceremony requests that conflict with Union activities.
- The Wisconsin Union staff or licensed vendors must set up and remove all tables and chairs. Guests may not set up or break down tables or chairs.
- The Wisconsin Union does not take responsibility for any left items. At the end of the event, organizers must remove all equipment.
- The Wisconsin Union will guarantee an additional small auxiliary room for miscellaneous needs at no additional charge.
- The Wisconsin Union does not guarantee space for wedding ceremony rehearsals; however, Wisconsin Union wedding couples may call Campus Event Services two weeks prior to their ceremony to reserve rehearsal space. Reservations are for two hours or less and the room will be available “as is” with no special set-up arrangements provided. The specific rehearsal room cannot be guaranteed, although we will make every effort to reserve the room in which your ceremony will take place.
- A ceremony can be held a maximum of one hour before the reception start time.

## Ceremony Fee: \$1000 (April 2026)

Ceremony chairs can be set up either in the middle or to one side of the room. Dining tables will be pre-set in the room and cannot be moved after the rows of chairs are removed. Guests may also be seated at their dining tables to view the ceremony taking place at the front of the room.



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## Tripp Deck and Pavilion Ceremonies

1. *Ceremony times must be reviewed and approved by the Wisconsin Union in advance.*
2. Ceremonies are limited to no more than approximately 30 minutes in length. Ceremonies for Tripp Deck must happen between 2:30-4pm.
3. White folding chairs, up to 180, are included with the ceremony fee. White folding chairs used for purposes other than outside wedding ceremonies are \$3 per chair.
4. Due to possible inclement weather, the event organizer has the option to have their ceremony inside with guests seated at dining tables. Theater style seating cannot be set-up to accommodate the rain location. The change in location must be decided at least (2) hours before the ceremony's beginning time. The group will still be subject to the \$500.00 ceremony fee.
5. Tripp Deck is not equipped with speakers. Speakers can be rented through our A/V department for \$80/pair. One cordless mic is provided complimentary with the rental of the deck speakers. The Wisconsin Union reserves the right to make the rain call on the A/V equipment rented from the Union.
6. Minimal sound amplification is permitted on the deck for ceremonies. However, the volume must be kept under 80 decibels. Amplified sound is not permitted outside of the 30-minute ceremony window on the deck if there is music on the Terrace stage.

## Selecting from the Menu:

Our menus are available [here](#). We offer a wide variety of entrées for plated meals, buffets, and hors d'oeuvres for cocktail receptions. We would love to help you select the right food for your reception. If there is a special meal that is not on our menu, you can discuss customizations with your Union wedding representative.

For plated meals, you can choose two entrée and one children's meal option at the stated prices. If you are interested in having more than two entrée choices, an additional entrée fee of \$2 per person of your guaranteed guest count (GGC) will be assessed. Addition meals for special dietary needs will not be assessed the additional fee.

## Buffet Service

We can offer custom buffet service based on our plated meal selections. In most cases, the prices for buffet service is more than that of plated meals.

*\* Prices listed in the catering menu are per serving unless otherwise noted. Catering prices are subject to change without notice. We will not guarantee prices prior to 30 days before your scheduled function.*



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## Tastings:

Wisconsin Union Catering offers group tastings from our “[Plated Entrée](#)” selection twice per year and a selection of items from our “[Appetizer Menu](#)” once per year. Those dates can be found on our [website](#). The Wisconsin Union reserves the right to cancel any tasting due to a lack of participants. Each wedding party is allowed two spots at no cost. Additional seats can be reserved for \$25/each. Reservations are due two weeks before the tasting and can be made through the Campus Events Services Office (CESO).

## Bar Information:

There are several [bar service options](#) through Wisconsin Union Catering. Union bars have a limited selection of products and services, you can see those selections on our “[Bar Service Page](#)”

1. Platinum Bar: Full hosted bar including cocktails, beer, wine, and soda\* complimentary to the guests.
2. Red Bar: Cash bar for cocktails with hosted beer, wine and soda.\*
3. Gold Bar: Hosted beer, wine and soda\*, no liquor or mixers available
4. White Bar: Cash bar with complimentary beer and soda.\*
5. Blue Bar: Cash bar with complimentary soda.

\*Wisconsin Union regulations stipulate that when serving alcoholic beverages, non-alcoholic options must be available to all guests. For weddings, we charge \$3.00 per person of the GGC for soft drinks to be compliant with this requirement. No additional charges for mixers or sodas will be assessed for wedding bars

Bars are limited to one location and cannot be moved during the event. The size and staffing of the bar will be determined by the Union Bar Manager and is based on staffing and bar availability at the Union.

Outside alcohol is not allowed under any circumstances, this includes your get ready rooms. Alcoholic products not provided by the Wisconsin Union will be confiscated without warning, repeat offenders may be asked to leave the premises and additional fees and charges can be assessed for violation of this law.

Last call for the bar will be no later than 10:30 PM and bar service closes no later than 11:00 PM



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## Cake Information:

Wisconsin Union Catering does not provide wedding cakes. We welcome wedding desserts from licensed bakers. Your baker should have the cake delivered to the reception site no later than two hours before your guests arrive. Cooler space is limited, please coordinate dropping off desserts with your Union wedding representative.

Cake cutting/dessert service for buffets is \$1 per person of your GGC. Table service dessert fee is \$3 per person and is limited to one variety of dessert.

The wedding party is responsible for the display, decoration, and saving of the wedding cake. Wedding guests should assign a coordinator or family member to rebox any cake that is intended to be saved, watch after cake toppers and service utensils. The Union will not provide reboxing of any dry goods. Please ensure that your baker provides proper items for saving your cake.

## Decorations, Floral & Linens:

Taping, stapling, or attaching items to walls or woodwork is NOT permitted under any circumstance. Any decorations that you wish to keep must be removed from your reception site on the day of your event.

Place cards, menu cards, table decorations, and gift card boxes are the responsibility of the wedding party to provide. If you will be having multiple meal options, please provide place cards that indicate the entrée choice for each guest.

You are welcome to bring your own candles and lamps. Candles are permissible if the flame is enclosed in a nonflammable container. The flame must be below the top of the container. Suitable examples would be glass votive holders or hurricanes.

Any set up and cleanup of floral decorations is the responsibility of the wedding party. Uncollected decorations will be disposed of at the end of the night.

Table linens and napkins can be provided at no additional charge by the Union. The wedding party may provide their own or rental linens and napkins but must coordinate the drop off and specific instructions for the placement of those items the week before the wedding.

Any decorations, floral arrangements, rental items (including chairs, chair covers/cushions, outside vendor equipment) must be removed at the end of the evening. The Wisconsin Union is not responsible for any lost, damaged, or forgotten rental items.



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## AV Equipment:

Please review our AV pricing listed [here](#) for lighting and audio-visual equipment available through the Wisconsin Union.

## Bands or DJs:

The band or DJ should have all their equipment set up at least one hour before the guests are scheduled to arrive. They may load equipment in through the loading dock. (See Parking & Deliveries below)

All bands or DJs must provide their own sound equipment and extension cords. There are outlets in all banquet rooms. The music must end at least 11 PM and with enough time for the band or DJ to be vacated from the premises before midnight.

The DJ or band is responsible for pack-in/pack-out. The Union will not provide staffing for this purpose.

## Parking & Deliveries:

### Parking by Memorial Union:

The Memorial Union cannot provide general reserved parking. Use this [link](#) for detailed information on parking at the Union

### Parking by Union South:

Union South has a 180-spot parking garage located under the building. It is a ticketed lot managed by UW Transportation Services. The Union cannot provide general reserved parking for this lot. Please contact [UW Transportation Services](#) with inquiries regarding permits.

### Deliveries to Memorial Union:

Deliveries made to the Memorial Union can be brought in through the loading dock. The loading dock is located on the east side of the building between the Memorial Union and Red Gym. It is advised that someone stay with the vehicle while the drop off is being made, as vehicles left unattended in the loading dock could be ticketed and towed. Please inform your Union wedding representative when your party will need access to the dock, and they will make sure someone is available to assist you. Loading dock access may be limited in high usage times. Wedding guests are permitted only one vehicle at a time in the loading docks.

### Deliveries to Union South:

Union South loading dock is located off North Randall Ave. Please inform your Union Wedding Manager when deliveries are to be made, and access is needed to the loading dock at Union South. They will provide you with the necessary information to ensure a speedy and efficient delivery.



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## Contact Campus Event Services:

We have two locations!

**Memorial Union**

2nd floor

**Union South**

3rd floor, administration suite

p. 608-262-2511

e. [events@union.wisc.edu](mailto:events@union.wisc.edu)

Mon – Fri, 8:00am – 5:00pm

## Additional Contact Information:

Sign up for a group dinner menu tasting:

Campus Event Services

(608) 262-2511, [events@union.wisc.edu](mailto:events@union.wisc.edu)

Union South and Memorial Union hotel rooms:

(608) 263-2600, [hotel@union.wisc.edu](mailto:hotel@union.wisc.edu)

Reserved parking:

Transportation Services, Special Events Parking (608)

263-6666 or (608) 262-8683

Wisconsin Union Catering menus:

<http://union.wisc.edu/catering>

