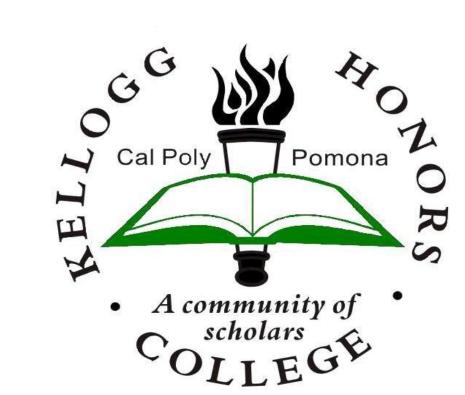


Advice on Planning & Budgeting a

Jazz Band Tour (While Still Having Fun)



Purpose

The Cal Poly Pomona Jazz Band has toured in the past to many places locally. As a challenge to myself, I decided to get the band on a plane to somewhere great. At first the plan was getting the band to Hawaii, but that would have limited who we could bring. Instead, we decided to go to New Orleans because it is the "Birthplace of Jazz." It also became easier to find performances there because New Orleans has a rich performance history. It also made it easier to email and call places focusing on our passion for education and experience in New Orleans.

Teresa Lem, Music Mentor: Dr. Dave Kopplin Kellogg Honors College Capstone Project



Picking a Date

You would think that picking dates for the tour would not be stressful, but it was like triple-checking a math problem. I had to make sure to look at our music events calendar and determine which other ensembles might be performing during our proposed tour dates, as well as other events that might conflict. On top of all 30 different schedules I had to juggle, the perfect weekend trip could not work because our star drummer had very expensive tickets to go to the Billy Joel concert for his wedding anniversary. So I ended up reserving four group flights with Southwest at a time, calling in for each time until something worked. Also requirements by the director for flights was that it had to be non-stop and at decent times in the day. Keep in mind we are also on a tight budget.

Group airfare for 30 people...

Spring Break- \$16,000 cancelled, concert band tour overlapping March 30-April 2- \$21,000 extremely expensive

May 6-10- \$8,178.50 Actual Tour Date

May 11-17- \$11,000 Drummer's Anniversary, another music department group tour

At this point, I gave up on trying to please everyone and put my foot down to call the dates to be May 6-10th, a Saturday-Wednesday tour. This ended up being for the best. Only one person ended up not choosing to come those dates. I have learned that you can try your best to make everyone happy, but if you cannot do so, make yourself happy and make a decision. Also the 30th ticket in group travel is round trip around \$15.



Budget

I have done the number crunching multiple times. Making this out of state tour affordable is a difficult task. The Music Board funds are also very thin, since many ensembles are now expanding, but the money is not. I am president for Music Board, so I did have a say in requesting money for the year, but with concert band tour also planed, we had to be prepared for some cuts. Here is how we made it affordable for all students.

\$8,179 Airfare \$1,332 Car Rentals (vs. \$5,000 bus) \$6,245 Hotel \$955 Instrument rentals \$228 Fundraising Shirts

~\$250 Gas

\$17,439 •\$581 per person

~\$250 Parking

Income \$12,670 Music Board Funds

\$2,649 Fundraised

\$450 Petty Cash Fundraised

\$1,500 Director's Travel Funds

\$17,269 •\$170 left, \$6 per person

The only unknowns before we leave for tour are parking, gas, and tax on rentals. To have a save cushion, we have decided to charge each member \$50 for the trip, giving us around a \$1,300 pillow. A five-day and four-night trip for \$12.50 per night TOTAL travel.

Hotels

So at this point, it was time for booking hotels or condos in New Orleans. I was talking to a professional travel agent, specifically for music tours. He was going to plan a majority of the trip including hotel and performance. I was getting impatient on the airfare, so I told him I would handle that and he the hotel with his great deals. In the end he did not reserve anything or take action at all. One factor might have been because of such a low budget I told him we could afford. I learned that I should have been making the reservations myself, many of which did not require payment till arriving. By the time I got started on calling group sales, around half of vacation rentals were booked due to our dates lining up with the NOLA Jazz Fest. It was time to act quickly.

Astor Crown Plaza New Orleans- \$6,804+ tax In the heart of the French Quarter Troubadour- \$5,820+ tax Never responded back if rooms were single or double Royal St. Charles Hotel- \$6,244 (tax included) They were very responsive



Fundraising

With a extreme amount of help from our graphic design major and talented singer, Laura Pluth, we started to sell shirts, cozies, and stickers to raise money. For our fall concert, I even made chocolate bags to sell as well. We also had a silent auction for games, tote bags, art, and package deals.

The best way to fundraise is to make it personal.

We tried our best to sell merchandise and goodies, most successfully when each member went out and sold to a family or friend. In marketing you want to be as personal as you can with your customer without spending too much to make it so. Having students of the band selling to friends and family is as personal as it gets, and they know who the money is going to.



icture from Cal Poly Pomona Music Facebook Page

Auto & Gear Rentals

Looking around where we are planning to stay, I found a Guitar Center nearby. The rental employee was very accommodating with great prices. He also offered to find a acoustic bass for us to rent out. All rhythm section gear will not fit on the plane. This includes drums, amps, and a microphone system. One thing he did not have... vibraphone. He kept calling and looking, but no luck. He did mention Loyola University New Orleans might rent one out.

I had contacted Loyola in the past and got a answer from the jazz director about a possible master class, but it was too expensive. I decided to reach out to him again and ask about the vibes. He said he could not let them leave the school, but gave me two contacts to try. Neither of those contacts had vibes, but one recommended Bernard Productions. Vibes were now a go! Calling can make a difference. Even if they might not

In regards to rental cars, there are 30 of us, so one 15 passenger van and three mini vans. That leaves six empty seats (one whole mini van) to put all rental gear in. It will be a tight fit. We have five 25+ members who will be able to drive those vans.

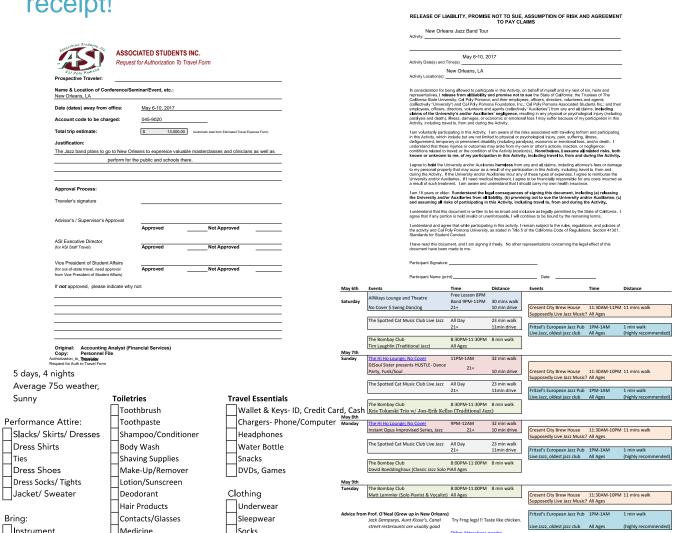


Cal Poly Pomona Jazz Band 2016 at Mammoth

Music Board

Because most of the funds were from the school, to get those funds require more paper work. All travel liability forms are due a month in advanced. These two forms are the first ones that must be turned in. Without these forms, you cannot request money for a tour. I also found that departments or clubs tend to not to book flights through the actual airlines. Southwest wanted a down payment for group travel within 2 weeks. That is about the same amount of time it takes for the school to process your request for money, let alone send it.

Luckily I have had experience with tours in the past with funds and could talk to Jessica, the one directly in charge about my worries. We figured out what the best plan of action would be and went from there. Always keep your



Comfortable Shoes
Swimwear

Time	Saturday May 6th	Sunday May 7	Monday May 8	Tuesday May 9	Wednesday May 10
6:00AM	Be at airpot 5:30AM/ rollcall				Leave for airport at 6AM/ rollcall
7:00AM	7:30AM				
8:00AM	Depart for New Orleans			9:00AM Leave hotel/ rollcall	8:15AM WN2229
9:00AM	4260	Brunch (playing during lunch, be prepared)	Leave hotel/ rollcall	9:30 Drive to Houmas House Plantation	Depart for LAX
10:00AM	10:50AM (12:50PM New Orleans)	Kopplin+ Rhythm sec. pick up rental	Drive to UM	Set Up	10:30AM
11:00AM	Arrive at New Orleans	Leave hotel/ rollcall		Perform 11:30-1PM	Arrive at LAX
12:00PM		Set up+ Perform at the French Market	Lunch	Café Burnside	
1:00PM	Pick up Rental Cars	Washinton Artilery Park	1:30PM	Lunch-pack own (recommended)	
2:00PM	Arrive at Hotel/Lunch	Louis Armstrong Park- Starts at 3	Clinic w/ Larry Panella		
3:00PM	Unload, Unpack.	_ Drum Circle Info	University of S.Mississippi	Drive to New Orleans	
4:00PM					
	Brother's Food Mart				
5:00PM	(recommended)		5:30PM Set Up- Thirsty Hippo	Kopplin+ Rhythm sec. drop off rental	
6:00PM	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Performances
7:00PM	7:30 Walk to George and Joyce Wein Jazz & Heritage Center	Arrive at Hotel	7:30PM Perform		Travel
8:00PM			Thirsty Hippo		Hotel
9:00PM	<u>Info</u>				Driving
10:00PM	Arrive at Hotel		Drive to Hotel/ rollcall		Events required

have what you are looking for, they might know someone who does.

Performances

As mentioned before, I was hoping a professional would know the contacts and book our band there. That fell through, but he did give me a suggestion of the French Market. It is a all acoustic venue, outdoors and in the middle of Washington Artillery Park. A simple form was filled and sent. That was the first gig booked at New Orleans!

My private lesson teacher, Tom Luer, received his Master's from the Southern University of Mississippi. I mentioned my worries of getting more performances, and he put me in contact with the jazz director there. It so happens when we are coming down is their finals week, meaning Lawrence Panella will have that time to give a master class to us on a Monday, middle of the day. To make it more worth while to drive out, we are also performing later at the Thirsty Hippo thanks to his contacts. Our last performance of the tour was booked in a interesting way. One of the tour planners from the hotel contacted me in regards of planning any tourist attractions. I asked her if she had any info on past high school or college bands playing certain places. She sent me a list of places and contacts for those venues. Desperate for a final gig, I emailed the majority on the list. I did not get a response, so I decided to call Houmas House Plantation, seeing it as my top choice because of the elegance in their website. I knew the name of who I wanted to contact, and they forwarded me on. He said he replied to my email. I never received it, but said that we could play on the day I proposed. It will be a high class outdoors lunch performance for around 2 hours. I do not know any of these people. It was all through connections, just asking, and amazing luck!