

How to Run a CTY Casino Night

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Casino Night at John Hopkins Center for Talented Youth is a beloved weekend activity across most sites. The event is typically held on the second Saturday evening of each session. This guide was compiled thanks to some great CTY RA's from the LOS site: Eric Anderson, Westin Brake, John Battipaglia, Laurel Reisig, and Alex Lee.

Photo Credit: Brandi Hume



Constraints Relative to this Guide

Student Body: 300+ students

RA Staff: 24 – 26 RA's

Physical Constraints: Large outdoor area, enough to hold 10 table games and space for students to walk around.

Games

1. Blackjack – Students **love** blackjack. **Devote five or six tables** to blackjack. Set the minimum bet to \$10. Use a two deck shoe, and arm the dealer with a **large bank for payouts**.



2. No Limit Texas Hold 'Em – **Four tables; add a fifth** if space accommodates.
3. Craps – A popular game. Its proper title is *Alley Craps*; a simplified version of Craps. See [Craps rules](#) below. **One table is good, add a second if space accommodates.** The table must be placed against the wall, and a “wall apparatus” should be constructed and installed prior to the start of Casino Night. **Use a large bank for payouts.**



4. Roulette - **Extremely popular.** A roulette wheel can be purchased at Target for approximately \$50, and is well worth the investment. Keep the game simple and accessible for casual players. Only allow 1:1 bets (red or black) and number bets (payout 35:1.) See [Roulette Rules](#) below. Create a payout sheet for every possible bet from \$10 to \$200. **Use a large bank for payouts.**



5. Horse Racing - **Extremely popular.** At horse racing times, **add two bankers** because payouts from horse racing gained a lot of traffic at the table. Students can only purchase tickets for one horse, two tickets maximum per horse.
Session One payouts were 10:1.
Session Two payouts were 5:1.
At Session One, the Horse Racing game was much more lucrative, therefore more popular. Decide how popular you want the event to be. Tickets were priced at \$50 each. See [Horse Racing Rules](#).

6. Temp Agency – A great activity for students who want to earn money for their halls, but don't enjoy gambling. RA's come up with tasks for the students to perform, e.g. sing a song, perform a dance, carry notes between RA's, annoy another RA, etc. For their efforts, students are awarded money at the discretion of the RA (usually between \$20 - \$100.)

Rules

1. General – These rules apply to most games, and ensure smooth transactions and minimize cheating. Adjust according to your needs.
 - a. All students must place a rock or chip on every bet. Remember to call for final bets and ensure rocks/chips are in place before dealing a card, rolling dice, or spinning the wheel.
 - b. Collect all losses before starting payouts.
2. Craps - To start, choose the first player to roll the dice. The person rolling the dice is called the shooter and must bet for the game to continue. Others will bet on the shooter's play. Establish the point by having the shooter roll the dice. If they roll 2, 3 or 12 they have shot craps and lost. Play goes to the next shooter. If the shooter rolls 7 or 11, called a natural, they win and shoot again. Any other amount is the point. Bet on whether the shooter will pass, (roll the point again before rolling 7) or not pass, (rolling 7 before rolling the point.) Formal games will allow other bets, but the basic bet in craps is the "Pass/Do Not Pass" bet. Roll the dice repeatedly until the shooter either rolls a 7 or the point. If the shooter does not pass then play passes to a new shooter. If the shooter passes, he rolls again for a new point. The Min/Max for Craps is: \$20/\$200
Min/Max amount of people at table: 8
3. Roulette - Have players start by setting some chips on top of the number or numbers that you have selected. These chips will be bought at the roulette table (**chip exchange is explained below**). Call for all bets and then set the ball into motion. To do this, spin the wheel, and then throw the ball in the opposite direction. Any bets placed after the ball has been released will not be honored. (Different types of bets pay different odds. Some of these bets are listed below.) As the number selected becomes visible, call it out. When players decide to leave the table they can then cash in their chips for money. If we run out of colored chips, players can bet cash but only on the 1:1 payouts. Make sure they place rocks on top of their bets.
The Bets
 - a. The straight-up bet, a bet placed on a single number. If you choose the winning number, you will be paid at 35 to 1 odds. **ONE NUMBER** pays 35-1
 - b. There are many bets on a roulette table that pay 1:1 (an amount equal to your bet). To make it easier on yourself, only accept color bets. These are bets on red or black, and they are easy to manage.
 - c. If you want to, feel free to include column bets or other 1:1 bets as well. A column bet is a bet placed at the bottom of a column of 12 numbers. It pays 2 to 1. Odd-number or even-number bets are similar to color bets, and they pay out 1:1. You do not need to include these bets or accept them unless you feel comfortable to doing so.The Min/Max bet for Roulette is: \$10/\$200.
4. Horse Racing - takes place every half hour, and is signaled by the starting horn. Horses will advance to predetermined destinations based upon the number of completed shots made to each corresponding horse. Students will shoot sponges into paint buckets, and if they miss the shot the student will bring the sponge back to the shooting line and try again until they make it. Each shot made will be equivalent to one space, and ten spaces will determine the winner.

Money

1. General
 - a. Create a template for money on an 8½ X 11 sheet of paper.
 - b. Use different colored paper for various denominations.
 - c. A nice touch is to use Administrative Staff faces for the face on the bills.
2. Use \$10, \$20, \$50, and \$100 bills. Do not use a \$5 bill; payouts will be simpler.
3. For **Total Casino Money**, use one ream of paper (500 sheets) per denomination.
4. \$8,000 per hall was the perfect amount. That broke down to 40 (bills) X \$100, 50 X \$50, 50 X \$20, 50 X \$10, per hall.
5. Place the money into envelopes, and give to RA's to distribute evenly amongst their students.
6. The bills that were used the most were \$50 and \$100 because those were used for Horse Racing payouts, so consider making extra of those.

VIP Section

1. General
 - a. Create a separate section for the "High Rollers" of the night.
 - b. You have to pay to get into this section, but benefits include: a higher min/max, a server for the tables, and free food/drink.
 - c. Print VIP passes to get into this "High Roller" section.
2. Set the price for VIP passes to \$200 throughout the night. Consider offering reduced prices during the first 45 minutes and last 30 minutes to motivate people to buy them. Bouncers can take responsibility for fluctuating depending on the popularity of the VIP section.
3. Assign a VIP Bouncer to this post. When students go to the VIP bouncer, the bouncer can make students do a task for them in order to gain access.
4. The VIP Bouncer should know to look for **Fake VIP Passes** sold to students by the **Swindler**, who sells these passes at a reduced rate. If the VIP Bouncer is presented a fake pass, he can ask the student to perform a task (similar to Temp Agency) in order to gain entrance.

Food

1. 15 bottles of soda (five cokes, five sprite, five mountain dew), 7 bags of Doritos, 2 big bags of M&M's, and 10 boxes of Nilla wafers. This is the perfect amount for the above mentioned student body.
2. Two food stations are necessary: one in the VIP, a second on the floor. At the floor, food is \$10 a cup, beverages are free. At the VIP, all food and beverages are complimentary.
3. Don't forget water stations at both VIP and floor.
4. Buy 500 plastic cups to hold both food and drink. Napkins and bowls are unnecessary.
- 5.

The Main Event

A "main event" typically concludes Casino Night, which students are allowed to bet on. It's a great last event, and a chance to bring Halls together before the end of the evening. Outlined below is **The Boxing Match**, a typical main event at CTY-LOS.

Preparations

1. Create a “ring” in a central location.



2. Choose two boxers, two coaches amongst the RA's. Choose RA's who know how to play up the event.



3. Decide either who will win the event (a “rigged” match) or a “Robot Wars” style of competition – the RA's must rip cardboard off one another.



4. Accessories - this may include costumes, head gear, robes, gloves, etc. For gloves, pillows tied around hands work, as well as large sponges saran wrapped around fists. Make sure you remind the boxers to bring their costumes to Casino Night and keep them aside until the match takes place.

Betting

1. Give RA's an envelope to place the money their Hall collected throughout Casino Night. Write on the envelope: TOTAL, BET, ON WHO? RA's must fill out this information before turned into the bank.
2. Halls can bet as much as they've earned on ONE boxer. They can also choose to bet nothing.

Miscellaneous Notes

1. Let the match go three rounds
2. Have someone who could do lively commentary on the bullhorn. Ex. Zeke in 2009, Richard in 2010.
3. Announce The Boxers *before bets are placed*, to build anticipation.

Set-Up

1. **Set-up requires a significant amount of time.** Consider starting set-up at 3 p.m. (cutting out of Saturday's afternoon activity - arrange with the other committee.) This seems like way too much time, it's not. You still need time to set-up, eat, and change. **Start early.**
2. Prepare all table games inside Tupperware containers (bank, cards, dice, rocks, etc.) and labeled them with the games to increase the speed of set-up. When RA's arrive to the event, they can pick up their respective containers at the Bank.
3. Hold a 20-minute instructional meeting to teach RA's how to deal, 1-2 days prior to Casino Night, post-RA morning meeting. For both sessions, some RA's were unfamiliar with their respective games, contrary to what they thought. It will also keep rules consistent across tables. Ex. dealers unfamiliar with doubling down, splitting, and pushes.
4. Cut money the first week - it takes forever.
5. Ask RAs for their prizes during the first week, so supply requests can be completed early.
6. Turn supply requests in early - you will have last minute additions.

General

1. Click [here](#) to download the "Activities and Rules" Master sheet (downloads a Word document) – a list of all the rules for games listed above. Feel free to change as needed and distribute to RA's; please respect the original's author's time by including credit to them.
2. Some students remarked Casino Night had too "serious" of an atmosphere. Ways to alleviate this issue:
 - a. More table games (blackjack, hold 'em games) to include more students
 - b. Communicate to dealers to make an effort to include "fringe students" in the games
 - c. Casino Night Members must be proactive about making sure their dealers are aware of all the game's rules.
2. Post maps and dealer posts at every table prior to the event. Pit Bosses should carry a copy of the map and dealer posts on them as they float.
3. Place butcher paper or tablecloths over the tables. Allows you to write the minimums for the tables write on the table.
4. We initially considered streaming online poker games and projecting it against the spiral stairwell, but the projector was never set-up. This proved to be a blessing in disguise; that area must be clear traffic.

5. Music - we streamed Frank Sinatra on Pandora throughout the night, and it worked perfectly. Definitely do this again, but considering turning down the volume when announcing for Horse Racing. **Don't forget to ask Conferences for an audio cable (3 mm Aux cable) during set-up.**
6. Casino Night requires a lot of dedication and foresight. On the committee, include at least one CTY returner and RA's who **really want to set the bar high.**
7. Security was necessary - **one VIP Bouncer, two jailers - one to secure jail, one to bring students to the jail. The jailers can just be the SRAs who are walking around.**
8. Take into consideration prizes for your budget. Ideas for non-monetary prizes:
 - a. Decorate an RA before a dance
 - b. Duct tape and water balloon an RA
 - c. Shave an RA's beard or head
 - d. Have an RA serve your hall for dinner
 - e. Bedtime story from an RA
9. Resist the temptation to do "money drops," (aka, "Let it Rain!") It's a disaster.
10. Encourage students and RAs to dress up for this event.

How to Build on this Weekend Activity

1. Create a template for the bills (denominations in \$10, \$20, \$50, \$100.) Leave blank circles for the faces, so different staff members can be Photoshopped onto the bill. E-mail the template to the author to be shared along with other Casino Night information.
2. Create new templates – addendums to this guide, so to speak. Necessary templates include:
 - a. Cheating: For Students – an announcement to discourage students from cheating
 - b. Cheating: For RA's – how cheating affects the integrity of Casino Night, and ways to engage students in a discussion about cheating
 - c. Posts – list of various posts, within time blocks
3. Brainstorm other activities and games for students to participate in. The games listed above appear to work the best *for LOS*, but will vary across sites. Included below are some ideas; if marked with an asterisk, the game was tried but unpopular at LOS:
 - a. 5-Card Draw
 - b. Big 2*
 - c. Spoons
 - d. Bingo*
 - e. Rock Paper Scissors
 - f. Kissing Booth
 - g. Wedding Chapel
4. Brainstorm new and creative prizes that won't overdraw the Residence Life budget.

Final Note

This guide outlines many aspects of Casino Night. If properly used, it saves RA's a great deal of headache and time. Please use the time saved to think of new, creative additions to Casino Night. Help build John Hopkins Center for Talented Youth into a program students never forget.