

ILR 70th/Cornell Sesquicentennial Celebration Plan

Working Draft, 1.6.15

Goal

Use the Cornell Sesquicentennial, and ILR's 70th anniversary in 2015, as a platform to promote ILR's growth, accomplishments and major successes; and to enhance positive perception of the school as forward-looking and well-positioned for future success. In addition, this plan is designed to:

- Emphasize the important role ILR plays at Cornell and the impact the school has on enhancing the university's visibility and reputation
- Further build understanding of ILR's evolving, broader mission focused on the world of work with key targets, especially groups that ILR wants to more fully engage
- Promote positive feelings about being part of the ILR community and the new ILR leadership that will be in place in 2015.

Target audiences

- ILR Community: Faculty, Staff, Current Students
- ILR alumni
- Cornell Community
- Prospective Students and Parents
- Practitioners, Policy Community and Research/Outreach Partners

Messaging

Create talking points to be used by the dean and others as part of introductory remarks delivered at the Groat & Alpern Awards and other alumni events, Union Days, major lectures and conferences and other key events. Talking points should include messages that align with university positioning for the Sesquicentennial along with ILR 70th anniversary themes.

Strategies/Tactics

Leverage existing communications channels and events to tie in with the Sesquicentennial and to help celebrate ILR's rich history; and showcase the school's current focus areas, strengths and aspirations for the future.

- ILR Online webcast series. Produce a “past, present and future” series, with each program exploring the evolution of key focus areas (labor relations, HR and compensation, conflict resolution, employment and disability) and examining workplace trends/challenges for the future. Conclude the 2014-15 series in June 2015 with a program on “ILR looking ahead” featuring a panel discussion with ILR’s past deans, moderated by the school’s new dean. Offer this program as a university-wide Reunion program in June 2015 and a live webcast. Expand promotion of all web programs to more fully target the university and other external audiences such as parents and the policy community.
- Advance magazine. Focus the November 2014 issue on “ILR Past and Present” and the May 2015 issue on “ILR Looking Ahead.” The November issue includes an historical feature on the school and its rich history; a feature on “ILR present” that captures the student perspective on the ILR experience today; profiles of two of ILR’s most senior alums, Harriet Oxman and Jerry Alpern, and a feature on Lois Gray, who can talk about ILR outreach over the years.
- ILR social and digital media. Post historical photos on Facebook (tie into Facebook’s “Throwback Thursday” theme) and consider sponsoring a contest asking people to submit their favorite ILR memory or photo. Work with the Kheel Center to sponsor a special photo exhibit, and hold a reception (targeting April 2015) to kick-off the exhibit and 70th celebration. Use the TV screens across campus to highlight historical photos and “Today in ILR history” facts. Develop a video series that engages faculty, staff, students and alums offering ILR reflections and celebrating the school’s past, present and future.
- Events. Connect the Sesquicentennial/70th with high-profile ILR events such as the Groat Alpern Awards and the Worker Institute’s “80th anniversary of the National Labor Relations Act” event in April. Consider establishing a Union Days theme that aligns with the anniversary. Plan anniversary-related activities for ILR Reunion and Homecoming.

Plan unique events that promote internal community building and engage alumni and other key audiences in activities that celebrate ILR's successes.

- Internal celebration. One possibility is to ask the new dean to present his or her vision and goals at an event early next fall (2015). This could be followed by a free lunch for all faculty and staff who attend as well as other activities during the afternoon that would bring members of the community together in “non-work” ways – a guest speaker, ILR trivia competition, etc. An internal committee could be formed to conceptualize this day of activities and handle all the planning. The afternoon of events could be a nice way to say “thank you” to faculty and staff for their hard work over the years and to set a positive tone for the new dean’s tenure.
- Other possible events and celebrations.
 - Plan a program/event to celebrate ILR’s 70th as well as the conclusion of the university-wide fundraising campaign in 2015. This provides an opportunity to trumpet ILR’s success in reaching its goals and say thank-you to alumni and friends who supported the campaign. Alumni Affairs and Development will be consulted to explore the possibilities.
 - Partner with the ILR Alumni Association to coordinate a 70th anniversary celebratory event, possibly in June to be held in concert with its annual meeting and welcome event for new students.
 - Hold some kind of special event/activities in November 2015, to mark the anniversary of the first classes offered by ILR on the Ithaca campus. One possibility is to hold the “ILR day” celebration mentioned above on this date rather than earlier in the fall, along with an ILR 70th anniversary webcast.