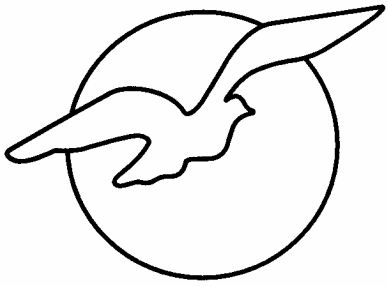
Getting Started In Campus Ministry



A Resource Manual Prepared By:
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Religion, Morality and Knowledge,
Being Necessary to Good Government and the Happiness of [Hu-]mankind,
Schools and the Means of Education Shall Forever Be Encouraged
Engraved over the front entrance to Angell Hall at The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
from Article 3 of The Northwest Ordinance, July 1787, United States Congress

Introduction

This "How To" manual is written to inspire and assist Unity ministers, spiritual leaders, and licensed Unity teachers to create a global outreach for Unity campus ministries at colleges/universities. The contents are based on four years of pioneering experience by Reverend Ernestine Griffin, Founder and Minister of Unity On Campus Ministry, Inc., at The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor (U of M). The manual was written in conjunction with Nancy Muzbeck Spence, a member of the Board of Trustees of Unity On Campus, and an Instructor at the University of Michigan - Dearborn Campus.

It is our hope that this document will provide a framework for starting campus ministries in addition to inspiring Unity leaders to offer spiritual support services to students on college and university campuses. This manual should be used in conjunction with the "Study Group Guidebook" published by The Association of Unity Churches (The Association).

The Unity Movement provides exceptional spiritual educational resources for children, youth and adults in our Unity churches and centers. Too often though, when our youth graduate from high school and leave the spiritually nurturing environments of our centers and churches to attend college there are no Unity/New Thought centers easily accessible and convenient to them. Thus, students are often left in a vulnerable position, lacking continuing support to mature spiritually while they develop intellectually. For many years other Faiths and Christian organizations have been accessible on campuses to their young congregants. These traditional organizations are very successful. We can and will do the same and better for our young Unity adults.

With the support of campus ministries, students practice their faith with greater confidence. Research studies continue to show that students who are supported spiritually to practice their faith while in college have greater academic success. Our goal is to provide the necessary spiritual services conveniently for young adult truth students, as well as other students seeking the Jesus Christ message, as interpreted by Unity, on campuses near their residences and class locations. Unity churches and centers will benefit from this constituency of students as they matriculate from college and become integrated into the mainstream of society--world of work and family. Spiritually supported graduates will seek out Unity churches and centers in order to continue on their spiritual paths in more mature environments. These students will often consider leadership positions in the Unity Movement. These benefits are limitless. Campus ministries are often referred to as the "bridge" between the Youth of Unity (Y.O.U.) and what they refer to fondly as "big church". Campus ministries can help to prevent the frequent delays in a student's spiritual growth. College years in a student's life are developmentally important both intellectually and spiritually. Campus ministry allows students a place and environment in which to develop leadership skills and discover greater meanings in life.

There are other benefits in having a Unity presence in academic settings. Unity campus spiritual leaders are available to the entire university community. They provide a powerful, positive spiritual message which society is seeking, especially, since the tragic events of September 11, 2001. Unity spiritual leaders have the opportunity to work with university faculty and administrative leadership in shaping the climate for religious activities on campuses.

This goal to establish Unity campus ministries may be accomplished by the following steps:

- Step One: Pioneering a Spiritual Leader
- Step Two: Sharing a Vision
- Step Three: Navigating Through College/University Administrations
- Step Four: Discovering Resources

- Step Five: Establishing Programs
- Step Six: Recruiting Students
- Step Seven: Creating the Sacred Space and Environment

Step One Identifying The Pioneering Spiritual Leader

The pioneering leader may be a church ministry, a minister, Licensed Unity Teacher or qualified lay leader sponsored by a local church or region. The key person in a campus ministry is the person who will work directly with the students. This person, besides being well-grounded in truth principles, must have personal qualities that enable him/her to work successfully with young adults. The pioneer's core value must be to support the development and well-being of young adults – spiritually, mentally and emotionally. However, the primary focus of support is always spiritual.

The pioneering leader must have a passion for this type of ministry and a determination to meet the needs of students. The needs vary from listening, to providing a "safe" space/place when personal situations appear overwhelming, to feeding their body and spirit, or assisting in a medical emergency. The leader must be "real" – authentic and flexible. The leader must provide a non-judgmental environment where confidentiality is protected. The leader must remain open to Spirit for guidance and direction, as well as possessing a personal commitment and perseverance to see the ministry succeed. If the pioneer is personally grounded in truth principles and is a practicing truth student, the other necessary qualities and skills will develop as the leader opens to the many possibilities campus ministries can achieve.

Crucial to the success of a campus ministry is the total willingness on the part of the pioneering leader to serve and be a channel for Holy Spirit to work. The statement, "God does not call the prepared but prepares the called", is what needs to be remembered as one steps into a campus ministry. To date the Unity Movement does not offer formal training for campus ministers. However, Unity ordination and licensing offers valuable training, which can be appropriately applied in various ministerial settings. The response and call are as simple as "Here I Am Lord. I will go Lord, I have heard Your STUDENTS calling in the night."

The minister/spiritual leader must be active in The Association's activities in order to promote a campus ministry on an ongoing basis. Attendance at local, regional and international continuing educational professional events will contribute to the overall spiritual and skill development of the leader.

Step Two Sharing A Vision

The vision of a campus ministry, in a specific geographical area, manifests expediently when the local Unity community shares, embraces and supports it. The success of Unity On Campus Ministry, Inc. at U of M is evident because the local church, Unity Church of Ann Arbor – the minister, board and congregants - shares the vision and supports it. The Association and the Great Lakes Unity Regional Conference also share and support the vision of this campus ministry.

As a starting point the pioneering leader shares the vision with others in the community to generate support to assure success. Unity On Campus Ministry, Inc. at U of M started by recruiting a Resource Team of people who understood the need for the Unity message on campus and embraced the

vision. Success is assured when the vision is articulated and shared with others. Encouraged by this vision, students help shape future growth.

Step Three Navigating Through College/University Administration

In launching a campus ministry the pioneering leader needs to understand that each campus is unique and has its own rules, regulations, and procedures. Generally, someone who is familiar with the campus hierarchy and can mentor the ministry from a position of influence and familiarity should assist the first contact with campus administration. Be aware that colleges/universities can be bureaucratic; be prepared to be patient yet persistent in achieving the desired results. There is usually an application process to qualify the pioneering spiritual leader and the religious organization in order to gain access to students on campus for the purpose of a ministry. The leader would provide documentation that he/she is credentialed with the Association of Unity Churches and is recognized as a religious leader. This confirmation status is required in order to gain access to students through the office of Student Affairs or the administrative department for the particular campus to which the leader is applying.

A core student group applies for student organization status to be recognized. After this, the core group will be given access to campus facilities for meeting purposes. This core group needs a staff/faculty sponsor and is required to abide by campus rules and procedures governing student organizations. Generally, the campus ministry would then be able to have a space or meeting place on campus, for example a student union building or student center.

When approval is received to establish a campus ministry, there may be a recommendation/requirement that the minister/religious leader belong to a governing group associated within the campus. For example, at U of M this group is called The Association of Religious Counselors, and consists of 105 ministers serving the campus community. Effective navigation through the college/university system requires familiarity with the religious history and culture of the campus. To do this:

1. Get acquainted with other religious leaders who have been serving on the campus for a longer period of time.
2. Find out which religious denominations/faiths currently serve the campus.
3. Learn the demographics of the campus and students, as well as faculty and staff.
4. Determine whether the college/university is private or public. (If the college/university is private it may have religious affiliation, i.e. Methodist, Lutheran, Catholic, etc.)
5. Check the campus's procedures and guidelines to learn how to recruit students.

Step Four Discovering Resources

Any new venture in ministry requires spiritual, individual, community, and financial resources. A campus ministry also requires university support as well. The minister/pioneer leader needs to be well connected to potential funding. The campus ministry needs support from local Unity churches, for it is their young adults that may be serviced by this ministry. Local Unity churches can provide names of congregants who work on the campus and/or are familiar with the campus. Local Unity churches can also encourage the vision, offer prayer and financial support. Find out whether the Region and/or the larger Unity church community can provide assistance. Certainly they can provide assistance in promoting the ministry within the Unity community. Individual support is also needed. People who share the vision

will support this campus ministry by volunteering their time and talents. In order to begin a campus ministry, the leader needs a vision and people who share the vision. Going it alone is not an option. In the initial stages of the ministry a resource team is needed to help with structure, finances, logistics, strategic planning, and personal support. The resource team may be friends, family or others who are known by the minister/pioneering leader from the community, business associates, personal acquaintances, church leaders, and parents.

The ministry needs to be incorporated if it is organized as an alternative ministry separate from the local church or as required by The Association. Incorporation requires a Board of Trustees. (See the "Study Group Guidebook" published by The Association.) Individuals on the resource team may move to the Board of Trustees as the vision unfolds.

The community, the city or town, and the college/university community may also provide support. There are procedures to be followed as designated by the college or university; therefore a resource person who is familiar with the school is very helpful. The business community can be of assistance finding meeting space, office supplies, furnishings and other essentials.

Campus ministry is new and unique to the Unity Movement. It will require financial support. Students are usually not yet financially viable to establish and sustain a ministry. The contributions received from students do not meet operational expenses. **The ministry is a service provided to the students.** The services provided are investments that will return financial and spiritual dividends in the future. Although love offerings are part of worship in Unity churches, in student situations it is not always an ideal practice. Students may not be able to participate if a love offering appears to be expected. An embarrassing situation may be created if students feel they cannot contribute. However, love offerings are a valuable prosperity teaching to share with students.

Thus, a campus ministry's major support will come from contributions and tithes from individuals, Unity churches, regions and The Association. Again, the ministry must comply with the policies of the specific campuses regarding the collection of love offerings. The ministry will need to be marketed to the community at large. Grants from faith-based funding sources may be available. Inviting churches and the community at large to an open house or a meeting where students are in attendance helps promote the spiritual work. The minister or board members may speak at various church services to acquaint people with the ministry. (Consult The Association for information regarding any funding that is available to pioneering ministries, especially campus ministries.)

Step Five — Establishing Programs

First, the mission, goals and objectives need to be established by the pioneering minister/leader in cooperation with the board and the core student group. The study and practice of Basic Truth Principles should be the primary focus of the ministry. From this point, the needs and desires of the student constituency should be considered. Once a core group of students are identified choose a specific day and time for holding sessions. Acquire a meeting space, possibly utilizing a room in the Student Union available to organized student groups on campus.

Each student completes a registration form. (See attached exhibit A.) Form completion is optional if the student is reluctant to give out information before feeling comfortable and safe with the group. Email addresses are helpful to communicate and remind students of sessions and other pertinent

information. Use of name tags help students to know one another and remember names. Additionally, information on registration forms provide data for use in case of emergencies, and as a crucial record-keeping requirement.

Fellowship time is essential either before or after sessions. Food should be available depending on the type of facility and accommodations for food/refreshments.

A format for sessions includes; brief check-in, prayer/meditation, written prayer requests placed in a prayer box, Truth lesson, music as available, and a closing. The Small Group Ministry format developed by the Education Services Ministry Team of the Association is an excellent tool to assist in conducting Truth sessions.

The following are suggestions of books for Truth sessions:

- "Developing your Twelve Spiritual Gifts", by William Warch
- "What are You?", by Ameldia Shanklin
- "The Handbook of Positive Prayer", by Hypatia Hasbrouck
- "The Quest for Meaning", by Jim Rosemergy
- "Setting a Trap for God", by Rocco Errico
- "The Simple Truth: Making Sense of God, Life and Other Stuff", by Mary-Alice and Richard Jafolla
- "Wisdom for a Life Time – Getting the Bible off the Shelf and into Your Hands", by Alden Studebaker
- "The Game of Life and How to Play It", by Florence Scovel Shinn

The *Daily Word* and all other Unity pamphlets/booklets are helpful to disseminate the Unity message to students in a brief but direct manner. All books and literature are distributed and given without cost to students. This practice is optional and depends on the culture and practices of specific campuses and the consciousness of the spiritual leader.

Students respond well to workshops offered on topics that are of particular interest to them. Such topics include:

- "Academic Success Without the Stress"
- "Falling in and out of Love" (co-ed)
- "Spirituality and Sexuality" (offered for men and women separately)
- "Flying Dance Meditation"
- "Prayer and Meditation"

Celebrations of accomplishments and birthdays are keys to bonding and encouraging regular attendance. Graduation dinners for graduating seniors may be held. At this time graduating seniors receive certificates and book gifts from the ministry. Recommended books are: "Inside Job", by Richard Reiger, "Ten Things I Needed to Know", by Maria Shriver and "Even Mystics Have Bills to Pay", by Jim Rosemergy.

Metaphysical discussions of movies serve as an excellent introduction to Old Testament Bible studies. Use "Reel Spirit", by Raymond Teague as a resource. Movie suggestions include: "Matrix", "The Green Mile", "The Joy Luck Club" and "AI".

Treasure Mapping and Image Mapping sessions are helpful teaching the students visualization and "prayer" with pictures. These activities motivate student enthusiasm towards co-creating their desires.

Today's advances in electronic media add another medium for ministry via email. Periodic spiritual email messages provide inspiration to students when they cannot attend sessions. Email also allows messages to be sent to students on campuses that do not have a campus ministry. Students often forward these messages to their peers on other campuses giving broader exposure to the Unity message. An email ministry to adults who support a campus ministry is a way of serving those who support the ministry. This ministry at U of M is called, "Inspiration for Those on the Sacred Path". Such technology generates additional awareness of basic truth principles and the campus ministry. It also helps student recruitment and retention.

Be creative with programs and allow the students' imagination and interest to soar. College students are ambitious and capable of developing program ideas that best meet their needs. Student involvement reduces the spiritual leader's planning work. Be flexible and ready to move to the next program whenever the group is ready.

Step Six Recruiting Students

A Student Affairs Department, or its equivalent, can provide guidelines and procedures for campus student recruitment. Generally, a college/university will have certain days set aside throughout the calendar year, for student organizations to promote themselves and to recruit members. It may be a welcome day for incoming students before the start of the fall term, or a student organizational fair during each semester. These occasions will vary depending on the college/university and its traditions. It is important to make participation at these events a priority in order to establish name recognition and visibility for the campus ministry. At U of M, incoming first year students are given a religious preference survey to complete indicating which faith/religious organization they want to affiliate with while at the university. (See attached exhibit B.) An aggregate list is distributed to the ministers/spiritual leaders listing the students who selected their particular group. Unity On Campus, Inc. at U of M prepares packets for new students, which are distributed during Student Affairs Welcome Week. Unity on campus offers a workshop to introduce the ministry to new students. Upper class students staff the booths, prepare posters and materials, which promote Unity on Campus ministry. Promotional brochures are printed and distributed throughout the school year for events on and off campus.

Recruitment of students through campus activities is an important step at the beginning and for the continuation of the ministry. However, "word-of-mouth" promotion by students is an added advantage. Students contact friends personally and/or by email. They share participation in activities, thoughts, and messages in whatever ways are possible. This networking extends the ministry beyond the boundaries of campus and connects the ministry with community college students and students on other campuses. Recruitment of students might include the minister visiting local churches, making contact with Y.O.U. regional consultants, parents, the local church Y.O.U. sponsors, and Unity regional leaders.

At times college/university staff -- counselors and student advisors, refer students to campus ministry organizations. These might be students who have come to their attention because of a need for academic support or because they are having difficulty adjusting to campus life etc. Therefore it is important to become acquainted with college/university student advisors.

As mentioned before, food is an essential tool for recruiting and retention. College students are often hungry or just want to eat for comfort and nurturing purposes. Feeding their bodies as well as their

souls encourages student participation. The mention of "free food" in promotional materials is a great incentive for students to attend sessions. Emailed messages by students to their friends about these sessions helps to draw more students to the ministry.

Always make sure that the ministry is listed on the college/university's website along with other campus ministries. Parents and students often go to a college/university website to locate religious groups with which they are affiliated. Include the title, "New Thought" in recruitment materials in order to attract truth students from other New Thought centers, which may not be represented on campus. Take advantage of whatever marketing services the college/university offers for promoting a ministry.

Step Seven Creating A Sacred Space and Environment

An informal, welcoming environment that helps students feel comfortable coming to sessions is important. Naturally, at the beginning, any space to meet in is well received. Usually the college/university will provide classrooms or conference rooms as meeting space for organized student groups. These rooms may not be available as permanent meeting spaces, so the logistics of carrying materials can be daunting. When the time arrives that the campus ministry is able to rent its own space, the minister/leader then needs to create a comfortable environment for the students. The environment should be informal, relaxed and include:

1. Soft armchairs, sofas, blankets, pillows, stuffed animals
2. Lamps, appropriately placed to provide soft lighting around the seating area
3. Windows or bright lights for studying
4. TV, VCR, cable, if possible
5. Tables for studying
6. A computer with Internet access to be used by students for homework searches, resumes, connection to Unity Singles.com and other Unity websites
7. A separate sacred space with meditation music
8. Kitchenette facilities
9. Office space for administrative purposes
10. Metaphysical resource lending library and New Thought reference materials

When the meeting space is furnished and ready for use, host an open house for the university and community at-large. This is an appropriate time to share the ministry's vision and offer a "giving opportunity" for visitors. Visitors are usually waiting for an opportunity to give monetary as well as spiritual support.

See attached resource bibliography for "Helpful Hints" from the National Campus Ministry Association.

Concluding Thoughts

Taking Unity to college/university campuses is long over due for the Unity Movement. There is no better time to start than now. International current events have served to heighten the awareness for more positive lifestyles and the need for spiritual enlightenment. The brilliant minds, enthusiasm, eagerness for Truth on the part of young adults needs to be nurtured and given spiritual guidance to assure spiritual progress and growth for planet earth.

Campus ministry is spiritually rewarding and contributes to the growth of the Unity Movement. Spiritual leaders and congregations in the movement are encouraged to accept this opportunity without hesitation. If not now, when? All that is required initially are WILLING channels (people). God provides the resources. Success of campus ministry can be contributed to the statement, "God does not call the prepared, but prepares the called [willing]". If you receive the "call" for this work, be assured God will supply the means for this great good to be accomplished. Respond with passion and watch success unfold.

Check List

The following check list may be helpful as pioneering tasks are being implemented:

_____Assess personal motivation, purpose, and goals related to pioneering campus ministry.
_____Articulate your vision.
_____Make courtesy calls to Unity leaders in local area regarding pioneering intentions.
_____Identify and contact any former Y.O.U.'ers who may be attending the campus where you expect to pioneer a ministry.
_____Identify and contact any local Unity congregants who may be staff or faculty on the campus.
_____Identify and recruit a Resource Team.
_____Identify and make courtesy calls to campus ministry leaders of other religious organizations established on campus.
_____Identify and contact campus administration for campus ministry guidelines and identification of the campus ministry/ministers organization(s).
_____Obtain and follow very carefully campus administration guidelines/procedures.
_____Follow very carefully campus guidelines/procedures for student religious groups.
_____Contact The Association of Unity Churches' Ministry Employment and Global Expansion Services regarding pioneering campus ministry.
_____Follow carefully The Association's instructions for ministry expansion.
_____Share the vision continuously with everyone.
_____Determine financial, facility, and human resources.
_____Recruit Resource Team and share the vision. Include local Unity leaders, where possible, to assist with resources.
_____Hold initial organizational meeting with recruited Resource Team (identified students and faculty/staff should, ideally, be included on Resource Team).
_____Recruit and organize students per campus guidelines. Student recruitment may take place off campus through personal contacts, local and regional Unity Groups.
_____Share the vision to recruit students and Resource Team Members (parents may be included where possible).
_____Join campus ministers/ministry organizations – local and national.
_____With student input, establish ministry/basic truth programs – include service projects, social events, field trips, workshops, seminars, guest speakers, church attendance, fun-fundraising events; fellowship/FOOD is necessary.
_____Determine meeting dates for ministry.
_____Provide an informal, relaxed meeting space.
_____Establish attendance and student record-keeping procedures for ministry.
_____Provide adequate Unity books and literature such as *Daily Words*, booklets from the "Exploring Spirituality for the 21st Century" series and basic Unity books.
_____Meet you students with excitement, enthusiasm and expectancy.
_____Remain spiritually centered and focused on your vision at all times.
_____Accept you blessings daily – they are assured.
_____Enjoy the work.

Resources

Useful Websites

Higher Education Ministries Arena
http://www.higheredmin.org

National Association of College and University Chaplains
http://www.nacuc.net/

National Campus Ministry Association
http://www.campusministry.net/

Student Registration Form Sample

Name _____ Today's Date ___/___/___ Date of Birth ___/___/___

School Address _____
City State Zip Phone #

Home Address _____
City State Zip Phone #

E-Mail Address _____

Close Friend/Emergency Contact _____ Relationship _____ Phone # _____

School Status Undergraduate (Year ____) Graduate/Professional Staff Faculty Other _____

How may our ministry be of service to you? _____

_____

What spiritual topics would you like addressed? _____

_____

How did you hear about our ministry? _____

Other comments _____

_____

Suggested Reading

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