



BEST PRACTICES

COLLEGE MINISTRY



*Our best ideas about starting
and leading new ministries*

BEST PRACTICE: COLLEGE MINISTRY

Throughout history, university students have proven themselves capable of changing the world. Church history is no exception. Many of Antioch's lead pastors and church-planters made commitments to Jesus in college that led to the lives of impact they live today. Our college ministries are committed to reaching students in this formative time and launching them into a life of Kingdom-centered impact. This guide will outline Antioch's best practices for starting and leading a world-changing college ministry.

OVERALL OUTCOME

Here's what we use in Waco: *"The Antioch College Ministry exists to connect college students to the person of Jesus and His purposes on the earth."* You can use this or create your own, but having a mission statement will bring clarity to your team to express why you do what you do, as well as what you *won't* do.

Make sure your mission statement sets you apart from other ministries in your city. Every ministry is commissioned and empowered by God and working toward His glory, but you have a unique role to play. Pray and develop a vision that inspires you and attracts students.

SUPPORTING GOALS

Antioch was birthed from a conviction that the local church was created for and is capable of being the hope of the world when focusing on three ministry values: Encountering God, life-on-life discipleship, and missions through the local church. These supporting goals facilitate your college ministry accomplishing this vision:

- Multiply student-led Lifegroups that are focused on passionate worship, discipleship through obedience-based discovery of the Word of God, and prayer
- Develop leaders within multiple ministry environments
- Connect every student to the mission of God through mission trips and local outreach
- Facilitate catalytic experiences that reach both new students and inspire current students for the person of Jesus and His purposes

As long as Antioch has existed, everything we do has been aimed at seeing these purposes fulfilled and reproduced around the world. Structures may change, but these purposes remain. These are what we believe will make our vision a reality, but without getting specific on how you'll see them happen you may not build a ministry that lasts. To do that, you'll need to create ministry strategies.

MINISTRY OVERVIEW

After years of college ministry, we can say with confidence that these are six key methods for seeing our mission accomplished in the lives of college students around the nation. Here's what we mean.

Face-time: Face-time is our personal devotional life incorporating the Word, worship, and prayer into a regular time when we meet face-to-face with God. Teaching college students to make this a regular part of their lives lays a foundation for them to become loving and obedient followers of Jesus.

Lifegroups: Lifegroups are the best vehicles for instilling our values in college students. We do student-led Lifegroups focused on passionate worship, obedience-based discovery of the Word of God, and prayer, modelled after the early church in Acts 2:42-47.

Discipleship in Lifegroups: We desire to see college students disciple each other because it instills the value for loving one another and empowers them to reach out, evangelize, and disciple new believers on their campuses while training them in simple church-planting strategies that can be used all over the world. Our discipleship strategy is based on a “look up, look in, look out” model that focuses our eyes on relationship with Jesus, examining ourselves according to His standards, and sharing Him with others.

Missions: Our goal is to motivate students toward reaching the lost in the context of the local church. This means an emphasis on evangelism and discipleship both locally and internationally in an effort to build lasting and reproducing church planting movements. A short, inexpensive spring break trip for your whole ministry and longer, international trips for smaller teams in the summer or winter break are the most effective rhythms for most college ministries.

Leadership Development: This should be a college leader's highest priority. Leadership development involves identifying, equipping and empowering student leaders to fulfill the three main purposes of your ministry and is the only way to turn your impact into a lasting movement (2 Tim. 2:2).

Catalytic Events: We rely on Lifegroup and discipleship to create deep, lasting transformation in the lives of students, but they lack unifying momentum and visionary leadership when done alone. Catalytic events could be retreats, conferences, spring-break mission trips, or other special events that capitalize on college student's broad social lives and passionate searching for purpose and identity. Done well, these events will attract students otherwise far outside your reach, allowing you to help them encounter God and His purpose for their lives.

Consider writing six audacious, exciting, and measurable goals this year, one for each of the core drivers. Getting clear on your goals will keep your vision high, inspire your prayers and unify your team.

LEADERSHIP

Most U.S. churches choose to appoint a college ministry leader before launching, and it's the lead pastor's responsibility to choose who that is. We'll call this person a *College Director* but you may choose *College Pastor* or *College Leader*, according to the responsibilities they'll carry. If you're a lead pastor, our US Church Planting Manual includes a "Team Building" section you'll want to review as you assign roles and responsibilities. Remember that there's no single description for a college ministry leader, and their competencies and responsibilities will change drastically as your church grows. However, there are a few must-haves a leader should show to be able to effectively lead a college ministry:

1. **Engaging Communicator**
 - a. **Vision Casting:** Is able to model and communicate an inspiring sense of purpose for the college ministry and students.
2. **Pursues the 1's and 2's**
 - a. **Relational:** Relates well with a variety of students and actively and easily builds relationships with them.
 - b. **Enthusiastic:** Is energetic and fun to be around while also earning respect from students.
 - c. **Flexible:** Is willing to rearrange their schedule to spend time with college students during or outside of normal work hours when valuable.
3. **Strategic Builder**
 - a. **Strategic Thinking:** Can anticipate future trends and adjust current ministries strategies to accomplish breakthrough.
 - b. **Leadership:** Effectively assembles and manages individuals as a team; creates a common mind-set; ensures everyone is engaged and participates in shared goals and regularly communicates current, relevant information.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Ideally, a College Director is able to contribute (whether paid, supported or volunteer) at least 20 hrs/week, during which he or she should be able to fulfill the suggested responsibilities below. If they are able to contribute more or less, shift these accordingly.

1. **Carry and cast vision to develop culture**
 - a. Live the values, vision and mission of your church, and cast vision at every opportunity.
 - b. Be aware of strengths and weaknesses in your core and intentionally develop culture.
 - c. Goal: Core students within the college ministry should have a basic sense of the church's vision and values and be able to share it with others.
2. **Grow a core**
 - a. Create and implement plans to grow the number of college students in the church by outreach, prayer, lifegroups, evangelistic events, etc.

- b. Be visible to college students and develop relationships by being on campus and meeting new students regularly. The longer your church exists, the more familiar your student body should become with your church's name and values.
 - c. Plan and execute regular catalytic events like trips to World Mandate, retreat weekends, spring break, etc. to develop culture and add to your numbers.
 - d. Create a strategy for reaching freshman in the fall.
 - e. Goal: Though numbers may vary, the college ministry should be able to attract and retain new members.
- 3. Lead or oversee Lifegroups**
- a. Lead as many Lifegroups as possible and visit frequently the ones you don't. Focus on building a few dynamic groups.
 - b. Provide strategy and training for Lifegroup leaders.
 - c. Goal: At least a few Lifegroups should be healthy, growing and multiplying and living out church vision.
- 4. Oversee discipleship**
- a. Implement a discipleship process ("who" and "how") and provide discipleship resources ("what").
 - b. Handle basic pastoral issues within the college ministry.
 - c. Know and grow the overall health of discipleship.
 - d. Goal: Every hungry person is receiving the discipleship they need to grow steadily in their walk with God.
- 5. Execute planning of all mission trips**
- a. Organize and oversee a spring break mission trip. Goal: This trip should be attractive and affordable to the majority of the students in your ministry and should catalyze both personal and corporate growth.
 - b. Organize and oversee regular international mission trips. Goal: Should grow students' passion for the purposes of God in the earth by providing a missional experience among other people groups.
- 6. Raise up leaders to facilitate healthy growth**
- a. Develop enough leaders to maintain steady numerical growth in the college ministry. We suggest doing this by using small group discipleship or lifegroup leader meetings to reinforce vision and teach and model effective leadership.
 - b. Goal: Leaders should enjoy leading and feel appropriately challenged but not "used" or "burned out."

ANNUAL EVENTS

Every college ministry will develop different systems to accomplish the six strategies for growth. Here is the typical timeline for Waco's college ministry during the school year.

Waco College Ministry Annual Timeline	
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College Staff Offsite • Section Leader Retreat

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lifegroup Leader Retreat • Welcome Week (Baylor's freshman orientation) • Freshman Push (first 6 weeks of school)
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Lifegroup Leader Training • World Mandate
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact Trip Location Reveal (during Lifegroups or a special event)
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanksgiving Parties in Lifegroups • Thanksgiving Break
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SWOTs with Section Leaders (Discuss strength, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats with upper-level leadership teams) • Finals Week for students, no lifegroups • Staff Offsite (2 day)
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awaken Spring Break Mission Trip Prep
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awaken Training Days (Two Saturdays in February)
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awaken Mission Trip (week long mission trip)
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Lifegroup Leader Training (2 days)
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SWOTs with Section Leaders • School for the Nations (Impact Trip Training and Orientation – 2 days)
June-Early August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College Impact Trips

Waco College Ministry Weekly, Bi-Weekly, Bi-Monthly Events and Meetings	
Dwelling Place	Weekly college service on Wednesdays
Lifegroup	Weekly groups Sunday-Thursday nights
Section Leader Meetings	Bi-Weekly meetings before Sunday services (leaders of leaders)
Lifegroup Leader Meetings	Bi-Monthly meetings before Wednesday services
Section Lifegroup	Bi-Monthly Lifegroups for Lifegroup leaders led by Section leaders
Early Morning	Weekly Prayer Meetings. College Staff leads a corporate EMP the first

Prayer (EMP)	Tuesday of every month for all of ACM, but the other weeks in the month, Section Leaders oversee EMP with their own Section.
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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: HOW DO I START A COLLEGE MINISTRY IN A CITY WITH MULTIPLE CAMPUSES?

A: Depending on where you plant, your church may be close enough to reach students on multiple campuses. We suggest you take a Luke 10 approach, looking for people of peace and establishing a ministry on the campus where you're able to find the most favor. It may not be the most "lost" campus in your city, but you will be able to build momentum and a solid core, which are crucial for your ministry reaching the lost in the long-term. Work to establish a multiplying lifegroup and ministry on one campus initially, and then begin ministry on other campuses as you meet students of peace and have the time to invest there.

Q: HOW AND WHEN DO I START A COLLEGE SERVICE?

A: College services are an opportunity to engage new students and cast vision to core students in your ministry. They can provide a powerful outlet for building momentum and unity, but also take a lot of time and effort to produce. If you have more lifegroups than you're reasonably able to visit in a 2-4 week time span, then a college service is a good place to gather and minister to the members of your college ministry. If it would take more time to plan a service (sermon prep, finding a venue, set up and tear down, marketing, etc) than to visit your lifegroups individually, it may not be worthwhile.

Q: WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT LEADING AWAKEN?

A: Awaken is a 25+ year old Antioch tradition of gather students to worship, pray and share the Gospel together during their college spring break, and a vast majority of AMI missionaries can point back to Awaken as a defining moment in their lives. Our goal is to get as many students as possible on the trip, and to give them the most tangible experience of the Kingdom of God they've ever had. We do that by focusing on those three core drivers: Encountering God (emphasizing Facetime and corporate worship), discipleship in community, and missions.

Q: WHAT OTHER RESOURCES DO YOU SUGGEST?

A: Here are our top three:

- *The Fuel and the Flame* by Steve Shadrach: Our absolute favorite book for anything college ministry related.
- *Build* by Drew Steadman: An excellent resource created in 2008 for leaders of leaders to learn how to build and grow multiple lifegroups.
- *Multiply* by Drew Steadman: A must-have book on lifegroup leading available for purchase at <http://www.lulu.com/>.
- www.collegiatecollective.com: A resource-rich website with topical blog-style articles.