



EFFECTIVE LUNCH MINISTRY

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Many college ministries utilize the lunch hour as a strategic time for ministry with students. This can be especially true for ministries who serve in primarily commuter settings. A lunch ministry can open the door to reach students at a time they are available and hungry. When a ministry has a clear objective in mind for a lunch ministry, great things can happen!

A vibrant lunch ministry provides a key entry point to meet a diversity of students. A lunch can also provide a relaxed environment that encourages students to develop friendships and find community. It often allows ministries to begin sharing Christ with unbelievers who attend, as well as providing spiritual growth opportunities for those who know Christ already. A good lunch can serve as a bridge, helping students connect with small groups and other activities.

Below are several keys to developing a strong lunch ministry.

- 1. Identify the purpose for the lunch.** Who do you want to reach? Will the lunch have more of an evangelistic/outreach focus or be geared for Christian students? How can we create an environment that is welcoming? How can we be strategic in planning every facet of lunch to help us accomplish our primary goal(s) for the lunch?
- 2. Where can we host a lunch?** You may not have a BCM center or access to a church near campus. If this is the case, investigate whether doing a lunch on campus is possible. Reserving a room in a high traffic area (like the student center) is preferable. Investigate school policies related to bringing food on campus. A faculty advisor may be a big help in this process.
- 3. Are there area churches we can partner with?** Network to identify churches who have a heart for students and can assist you with the lunch. Churches often provide meals or money to help buy food. Area staff members may help with speaking or simply coming to lunch to meet students. Cast vision for the lunch with church leaders. Always give sincere “thanks” to those who help.
- 4. Recruit student leaders.** Make a list of tasks related to the lunch. This includes set-up, marketing, greeting, food prep and others. Recruit a student leadership team that will help you with strategy, planning and the logistics of doing a quality lunch.
- 5. How will we get students to lunch?** Think through and implement a strategy for getting the word out. Strive to involve new students each week.
- 6. Consistently challenge your core students to approach the lunch as a ministry opportunity, not just a chance to hang out with friends. Develop a strategy for following up with new students who visit the lunch.** A good lunch ministry will open doors for one-one-one meetings and gospel appointments.