



THE THREE LAWS OF COMMUTER MINISTRY

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Collegiate ministry is full of rewarding successes and frustrating moments, incredible opportunities as well as challenging barriers. If you are seeking to reach students on a primarily commuter campus, you are probably especially familiar with the challenging barriers part. Commuter students often have family responsibilities, work, and even other community involvement in addition to their university studies that can make them a real challenge to reach. Their amount of free-time may be much less than a residential college student plus it can be hard enough to simply catch them while they are on campus.

Though challenging, if God has placed you and your church near a commuter college, there is a great field of ministry where you can be used to ensure that the gospel is brought to the students and disciples are made. As you seek to minister on your commuter campus, here are three laws that you should be sure to keep in mind!

1) Think Through the Perspective of a Student

You've got limited time and resources just like the student does. As you plan out your semester of ministry be sure to put yourself in their shoes and ask the right questions (or better yet, pull together a few key students and let them share their insight).

- What times are students most likely to be on campus?
- Is there a specific day of the week or time of day that has the highest concentration of students?
- Where are the places on campus that students are most likely to go between classes (when they have a little down time to actually talk)?
- What are the biggest needs of commuter students that a church could help meet?

2) Community is a Must!

Commuter students are usually rushing to and from class, often walking to class or back to the parking lot alone. They are like any other college student and long to have meaningful relationships in their life and experience a deep sense of community. The environment of a commuter campus may even make students more aware that it is lacking in their lives than in other settings. It will be challenging, but if you can provide opportunities for students to experience true community, your ministry will be able to have a significant impact on their lives. One idea is to think about ways to add an intentional hang-out time after large group meetings or Bible studies that you plan on campus.

3) Leverage Your Local Students

Now it is time for some good news. One thing you probably have that many beginning ministries to residential campuses do not is local college students already plugged into the life of your church. One principle of college ministry that you have going for you is that students will gravitate to other students. One of the most beneficial things a new college ministry can have is a core of students to



start with (even if it is only two or three). Be sure that you seek to connect with these students who are already in your church and pass along the vision to begin ministering on campus. They will be able to give you invaluable insight into the culture of the campus, introduce you to other students, as well as be an integral part of inviting their friends and classmates to ministry events during the crucial beginning stages.

Are you ready for the exciting journey of ministering on the commuter campus? There will be challenges but far greater than the challenges will be the unbelievable joy you will receive in being a part of God's work to transform the lives of college students.

One final note, I encourage you to avoid comparing your ministry results with those of other ministries on residential campuses. You are looking at two different types of ministry settings and both the approach and results will thus look very different. Serve faithfully where God has placed you and get ready for an amazing and rewarding ministry ride!