

How to Choose and Refine Your Project

To maximize the impact of your Campus Ministry Leadership Institute experience, you will want to choose the right project. Select a project specific enough to allow the team to work right away, yet open-ended enough to allow ample room for dreaming and creativity.

What sort of project should we choose?

You could design a new program or improve an existing one. One approach to project selection identifies what program you most wish you had more time to develop with students. Complicated schedules for work, classes and extracurricular activities can make in depth planning difficult during the school year. But at the Institute you have the opportunity to go deeper in the planning process than the flurry of the academic year permits. You can clarify your vision, set goals, think through timelines and task lists, and assign the right person to each role. What program would most benefit from that kind of focused, collaborative attention?

Good – Better – Best

Now create your project description. Here's an example of a project description that gets better with each refinement:

1. Develop a plan to strengthen Campus Ministry.
This is a laudable goal, but as a project it is very vague; the team could spend the whole institute trying to decide what to do and run out of time to plan.
2. Develop a plan to improve our weekly Newman Nights.
This is moving in a good direction, focusing on a specific program instead of the ministry as a whole.
3. Develop a plan to organize our weekly Newman Nights thematically, focusing one night each month on catechesis, service, spirituality, and fun.
Now this is a project your team can really sink its teeth into! It will also help you choose your team members, based on their interest in the focus areas.

Sample Projects:

- Design a welcome experience for the first few weeks of school
- Plan and develop all aspects of the peer-led Fall Retreat
- Promote Newman Club by connecting with other campus organizations through community service projects
- Develop intentional use of new Newman House to increase participation
- Develop a structured leaders' guide for immersion trips
- Develop a sophomore curriculum for our Catholic Life Community program
- Develop a plan to reach out to students on two nearby campuses that currently do not have a Catholic ministry presence
- Plan this year's Homelessness Awareness Week
- Design methods to improve our Weekly Service Program, especially the social justice education and reflection components
- Develop a first-year retreat program called Dreams & Visions which includes a follow-up small group program

Your Team

Who will help choose the project? Consider: campus ministers, student leaders, active students, faculty, and committee members.

During the Campus Ministry Leadership Institute your team will have a total of twelve hours to work on a project of your choosing, guided by a process designed to use the team's "whole brain" so that your project is ready to go when you return to campus this fall.

How do we choose a team?

Teams approach this in different ways. Some assemble their team first from key student leaders. Others blend existing leaders with emerging leaders. Some campuses select their team then determine a project as a group. Others determine the project first, and then bring the student leaders (current and/or emerging) who are already planning to work in that area. Prayer and discernment on the part of the campus minister and the student leaders lays the foundation.

What exactly will we be doing?

Campus Ministry Leadership Institutes is grounded within prayer experiences including daily Mass, Reconciliation, and a variety of prayer services that reflect the richness of Catholic spirituality. In addition to working on your campus project, you will deepen your understanding of campus ministry through presentations, small group conversations, and team-building activities. Of course, there will be plenty of fun including nightly socials.

Things to Consider for Team Selection

- * Gifts/talents
- * Leadership Qualities
- * Balance of male/female
- * Campus Experience
- * GPA
- * Already a leader
- * Availability
- * Faith life
- * Leadership effectiveness

Get Ready

Team leaders from previous institutes were asked to name **5 essential things** for their team to get ready. Here is what they said...



5 essential things to do before the Campus Ministry Leadership Institute

For all participants:

- Read *Empowered by the Spirit*.
- Hone in on a specific project description so that everyone has a clear understanding of what they will be working on at the institute.
- Spend time together getting to know one another in the context of the team.
- Look at the Institute schedule on Session One or Session Two web page, and then make your travel arrangements. You are welcome to come a day early or stay a day late to explore the area if you like.
- Share with your whole team the preparatory materials that you receive after registering. Gather the materials you are requested to bring.
- Pray for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, during and after the Institute!

For campus ministers/faculty advisors:

- If possible, gather students for the “Pre-Institute Planning Session” that you will receive when you register.
- Be sure that you return the Team Information form and Travel Information Form to the appropriate person
- Arrange for payment of your registration fees. (Scholarship teams – this includes getting the scholarship money from your diocese and forwarding payment to the Institute.)