



THE FRESHMAN EVANGELISM STRATEGY

God has called Campus Crusade for Christ to be involved in reaching every student on every campus. The most strategic way we can accomplish this on a regular basis is by concentrating on reaching the Freshman class. They should be the focus of our efforts every year.

REASONS FOR REACHING FRESHMEN

1. Historically Freshmen are the most open to the gospel. Statistically, 85% of those who receive Christ do so before the age of 19.
2. By reaching every Freshman every year we will automatically be reaching every other influence group, since all of them must pass through the Freshman class. It is the only “target audience” that every other target audience has been a part of. All Greeks, athletes, and students leaders, etc. pass through the Freshman class. It is much easier to reach them while they are Freshmen and send them into an affinity group than to try to break into an affinity group.
3. Reaching the Freshman class means we will also be reaching the entire University after 3-4 years. In other words, if you reached every student this year with the gospel, who would you have to target next year to continue reaching the campus? Logically, just the Freshman and transfer students. Another example: If you reached everyone on your city block with the gospel, then two new families move in. Who would you have to reach in order to continue “reaching your block?” Just the new families.
4. There is a normal growth curve of one to three years before new Christians begin to have their own groups, assume leadership and have an impact. Although there are some exceptions, we cannot build movements around the exceptions. This means that if we are targeting Juniors or Seniors, just about the time they begin to make an impact, they graduate. A movement happens when what an individual is doing is multiplied several times in the lives of those she is working with. This creates momentum.
5. Students will hopefully graduate with a greater depth of maturity and greater breadth of ministry skill and experience after 4-5 years of involvement. They will be prepared laborers for the harvest.
6. The Freshman class is a measurable, definable, reachable, target audience. In many cases, the Freshmen are required to live on campus and hence are more accessible through dorm strategies, etc. On virtually every campus, you can obtain a phone or address list of all the Freshmen. We can continually be giving other segments of the campus opportunities to hear and respond to the gospel through various strategies. But let’s aim to personally contact every Freshman.
7. As we concentrate on reaching Freshmen as our “market niche,” we will reach far more students overall. Freshmen who are won to Christ will have more years to be involved in evangelism than a senior. There is a greater possibility of impact. Other classes will automatically be influenced as the Freshman progresses through college. If we are going to be involved in reaching the campus for the long-haul we can afford to be methodical and purposeful in our strategy.
8. Freshmen are probably the most accessible and easy to share with. It is probably less of a “faith barrier” for a sophomore to share her faith with a Freshman than



a Senior.

9. As we reach every Freshman every year and are faithful in giving everyone the opportunity for building, training, and sending as they pass through the ranks, we are, from the human side of things, insuring all that could be involved are in fact involved.

10. We tend to be more motivated when we can say with integrity that we are giving every student the opportunity to respond to the gospel. It gives focus and clarity to what we are trying to accomplish. We need to be crystal clear with our objectives and promote creativity in the strategy of fulfilling the objective.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PLANNING

We need to build our campus plans around reaching the Freshman class. Reaching Freshmen needs to move from one of many optional strategies to a distinctive on our campuses. It's not whether we reach them, but how we will reach them.

Of course we will be reaching others in the process, but let's make sure that we contact every Freshman. We will measure our evangelism by this question: "Did we reach the Freshman class?"

HOW DO WE DO IT?

You, the local leader, decide what strategies are the most effective to reach your campus. But here are a few ideas:

- Be present during Freshman Orientation Week. Take your "6 Easy Questions" survey in front of Freshman Dorms or in the dinner lines.
- Offer programs about relevant topics in predominately Freshman classes or dorms, or Greek pledge classes and athletic teams.
- Target your strategy toward Freshman.
- Send a letter to Freshman every week telling them that someone from Campus Crusade will be calling them the next week to take the "6 Easy Questions" survey. Use other creative surveys that you change every month or so in order to really know your target audience.
- Mail a copy of *Jesus Without Religion* to every Freshman. This puts something in their hands that the Holy Spirit can continue to use.
- Distribute Freshman Survival Kits if you have them. Ask your staff or LINC consultant about availability.

Choose as your "target audiences" the different segments of the Freshman class. Each leader can be in charge of reaching one of these "target audiences."