



# ALL ABOUT THE FALL RETREAT

## EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW

### THE BIG PICTURE

Conferences serve multiple purposes in the growth of a ministry but if you were to narrow down the reasons for having a Fall Retreat to just one, it would be this: to take the many individuals involved in your ministry and sew them together into a close community of committed believers.

In light of this objective the Fall Retreat is designed to help students grow in their relationship with Christ and grow in their relationship with one another. You want good Bible teaching and lots of time for personal reflection and devotions, and you want lots of time to socialize, hang-out, and have fun. You leave for the Fall Retreat a collection of individuals and you come back to campus—Lord willing— a united body of believers. The Fall Retreat consolidates all of the ministry growth of the first 6-7 weeks on campus.

To put on a Fall Retreat isn't brain surgery but it does require some time, labor, and effort. To that end it's not a bad idea to combine efforts with another campus ministry—share the labor and responsibility. If you are a student led ministry, there's no reason not to join in with an existing Fall Retreat that's taking place near you. If it's already been prepared and planned, why not take advantage of it?

If, however, you need to put on your own Fall Retreat, what follows are some helpful guidelines and suggestions. As you read through the content, realize that depending on the size of your ministry and leadership, you can run a successful retreat at much lower level of structure and organization.

### GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Think through:

- Who is this retreat for?
- What are the specific objectives I plan to accomplish?
- What are the needs I would most like to meet for this group?
- How should I arrange my retreat schedule to meet this objective?
- How many participants are realistically expected to attend this retreat? What would be your faith goal?
- What measurable results do I want to see after this retreat?

### CONTRACTING YOUR RETREAT

#### SELECTING A DATE

Look for potential circumstances that might impact both attendance at the event and contract negotiations with the property. Such as:

- Academic/campus calendar
- Weather
- Community events
- Local church events
- Consideration of flexible dates (to take advantage of retreat site off-season)

#### BOOKING THE FACILITY

Call your desired facility as early as a year in advance. You may have to resort to your second or third location choice if you wait too long to reserve space. The best practice would be to try to book a site right after the current year's retreat is over (a year out). While booking a site find out when you are expected to sign a contract, make a deposit, give a head count, cancel (if applicable), etc. Put these dates on a calendar you will frequently look at so that you can



stay on top of the deadlines.

Everything is negotiable prior to signing the contract.

Things to consider:

- Food and Bev
- AV and equipment charges
- Meeting room charges
- Deposit
- Deadlines for final counts
- Multi-year contracts for better rate
- Other miscellaneous charges (internet, delivery, parking, etc)

Contracts over \$10,000 must be approved by Tom Doster (Tom.Doster@ccci.org). Use a Contract Routing Slip from the FSG website.

### Insurance

Make sure to ask your facility if insurance is needed. If proof of insurance is required for your group call Debbie Townsend with the General Counsel Office at 888-272-4411.

### Equipment

Find out what type of equipment the facility has available for you. Think through what equipment you might want before you call. Such as:

- video projection units
- sound and video equipment
- staging
- video screen
- extension cords
- power strips
- overhead projectors
- sports equipment, etc.

## PROGRAMMING YOUR RETREAT

By starting with your goals and objectives you can balance your retreat to meet the needs of your attendees. Be cautious of over or under scheduling.

Think through past retreats and the elements in the schedule that worked and what didn't. Communicate to your speaker, emcee and band the objectives of the retreat. Check in with them periodically to confirm that they are on the same page.

One consideration in mapping the schedule is to make note of meal times. Some facilities have set meal times.

## SAMPLE SCHEDULE

### Friday

7:00 -	Arrive
7:00 - 8:00	Settle into rooms
8:00-10:00	1st session (Praise & Worship)
10:00	Games or structured activity?

### Saturday

8:30	Breakfast
9:00 - 10:00	Personal Devotional Time
10:00- 11:30	2nd Session (Praise & Worship)
12:00 - 1:00	Lunch
1:00- 5:30	Play time (Games, Football, etc.)
5:30-6:30	Dinner
7:00-8:30	3rd Session (Praise & Worship)
9:00-11:30	Fun activity (e.g. Talent Show)

### Sunday

8:30	Breakfast
9:00-10:00	Personal Devotional Time
10:00-11:30	4th Session (Praise & Worship)
11:30-12:00	Campus Planning Time*
12:00-1:00	Lunch
1:00-	Clean up and depart

\* Campus Time is to plan some practical events, activities, and applications from the weekend.

## PROMOTION OF THE EVENT

Promotional materials should be understandable and attractive. Some basic information to include:

- Dates
- Location of event with brief description of facilities
- Purpose of event (and audience)
- Brief schedule outline
- Cost of the event (including optional costs and transportation as they apply)
- Registration deadline(s) including discounts
- List of what to bring
- Registration form
- Departure/arrival times
- Travel information and map to facility
- Event coordinator's name and contact info for additional questions

## PROMOTIONAL IDEAS

- Posters
- Mailers
- Skits
- Student mail box stuffers



- Bring a friend discounts
- Meeting announcements
- Telephone contacts
- Ad in campus newspaper
- On-line tools (web sites, email, Facebook, etc)

## REGISTRATION

Every event utilizes some sort of database to manage the data of its attendees. The Campus Ministry has created the Conference Registration System (CRS) and the Blue Mango to take the burden of creating a system off your shoulders. The CRS is for pre-registration and Blue Mango is for on-site registration. You can use whatever system works best for your event. The instructions for these tools are on the Campus Ministry website under 'Tools.'

- Collect and keep track of medical release forms (if requested by facility)
- Collect all pre-registration deposits

Information to collect with registration:

- Name
- Address
- Phone #
- Email
- Gender
- Roommate preference
- Special needs
- Food allergies
- Conference specific requirements (breakout choice, transportation, etc)
- Payment options

On-Site Registration

- Have cash bags for every finance check-in station.
- Provide name tag? Registration packets? Schedules? T-shirts?
- Welcome bags?
- Make sure to have clear signage for students to know where meetings, meals, games, etc will be held.
- Have information ready to take care of billing including number of guests in attendance.

## MASTER CHECK LIST

Some of this may be unnecessary for your group...this is just a guideline to help you. Don't forget to include specific deadlines your retreat location may have for your group.

## ACTION STEPS AND TARGET DATES

- |   |              |
|---|--------------|
| 1. Begin planning goals/objectives                    | 12 months    |
| 2. Select Date for event                              | 12 months    |
| 3. Contact site for reservations                      | 12 months    |
| 4. Determine budget limitations                       | 11-12 months |
| 5. Receive lease agreement                            | 9-12 months  |
| 6. Return lease agreement & deposit                   | 9-12 months  |
| 7. Confirm speakers                                   | 9 months     |
| 8. Confirm musician/worship leader                    | 9 months     |
| 9. Recruit promotion coordinator                      | 6 months     |
| 10. Recruit retreat committee?                        | 5 months     |
| 11. Plan all sessions                                 | 5 months     |
| 12. Plan all recreation times                         | 5 months     |
| 13. Complete registration form                        | 5 months     |
| 14. Recruit promotion team                            | 4 months     |
| 15. Calculate per person costs                        | 4 months     |
| 16. Begin promotions strategy                         | 4 months     |
| 17. Order promotional supplies                        | 4 months     |
| 18. Firm event schedule                               | 3 months     |
| 19. Print brochures and flyers                        | 3 months     |
| 20. Begin making contacts                             | 3 months     |
| 21. Open advanced registration                        | 3 months     |
| 22. Confirm requests for AV needs                     | 2 months     |
| 23. Meet weekly with retreat team                     | 2 months     |
| 24. Start Announcing retreat                          | 2 months     |
| 25. Prepare evaluation forms                          | 1 month      |
| 26. Contact facility with final counts                | 1 week       |
| 27. Complete registration packets                     | 1 week       |
| 28. Draw honorarium checks                            | 1 week       |
| 29. Assign housing (if necessary)                     | 1 week       |
| 30. Organize retreat supplies                         | 1 week       |
| 31. Upon Arrival:                                     |              |
| • Meet with facility staff to be oriented to the site |              |
| • Arrange for group orientation if necessary          |              |
| • Make final payment to site before departure         |              |
| • Reserve dates for next year's retreat.              |              |

## FINANCES

Calculating Per Person Rates (As applies:)

Honorarium(s)	\$ _____
Speaker(s) room & board	\$ _____
Musician(s) room & board	\$ _____
Promotion Expenses	\$ _____
Supplies	\$ _____
Transportation expenses	\$ _____
Equipment	\$ _____
Other misc expenses	\$ _____
Food	\$ _____
Buffer (5-10%)	\$ _____
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ _____</b>



Divided by number of guests \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(be conservative, don't use faith attendance goals)

Plus conf center per person rate \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Equals retreat cost/person \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## EVALUATION

Every person attending the retreat should be asked to evaluate their experience. Keep the evaluation form simple.

Sample questions:

What did you enjoy about the retreat?

What would you change?

On a scale of 1 to 5 how did you enjoy the speaker?

On a scale of 1 to 5 how did you enjoy the music?

What would have made this weekend better for you?

## FINAL THOUGHTS

Things to keep in mind as you close your event:

- Update your budget with actual expenses
- Save copies of your promotional materials
- Have retreat team write or edit their job descriptions
- Save results of student evaluations