

INTERVARSITY



INTERVARSITY STAFF & CHRISTIAN FACULTY

Partners  
IN THE Gospel



This guide is produced by the InterVarsity Faculty Ministry Leadership Team for educational and training uses with InterVarsity campus staff members and others interested in joining with InterVarsity in ministry with and to Christian faculty.

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## The Impact One Person Can Have

*A True Story about an InterVarsity Staff Member and a College Professor*

Jim Nyquist was a Midwest InterVarsity staff member serving several campuses. He traveled around encouraging the InterVarsity fellowships and training their student leaders. Dr. John Alexander was the chair of the Geography Department at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. Each time Jim visited the InterVarsity students in Madison, he met with Dr. Alexander and over time their relationship deepened.

Since Jim was limited by time and perhaps by his gifting, he saw the need to invest in qualified local people to advance the ministry among students. One of the people he began to work with was Dr. Alexander, encouraging him to invest in his faculty colleagues on campus. Dr. Alexander started a simple weekly gathering for reading scripture and prayer and in a handful of years had invited some two-hundred professors to join him.

When InterVarsity held a faculty conference, Jim invited Dr. Alexander. The next step was obvious. Dr. Alexander was asked to help plan the next conference. All the while, his involvement with students continued to grow as he met with them to pray and to plan. Soon InterVarsity's Board of Directors asked him to join them. And a few years after that, Dr. Alexander was asked to become InterVarsity's president. He accepted.

Jim Nyquist didn't have a graduate degree nor had he been a faculty member. However, he did have a genuine interest in Dr. Alexander's life and ministry. Both men benefited from their interactions. And the Wisconsin campus as well as campuses all over the country benefited as the Kingdom of God grew.

## InterVarsity Shares the Calling of Christian Faculty

- To follow Jesus in the midst of the university world.
- To be Jesus' agents, ambassadors, and servants in the campus community.
- To use the gifts, talents, and resources God gave us for the peace and prosperity of our campus.
- To live out the gospel incarnationally in our thoughts, words, and deeds so that others will know that Jesus is Lord.
- This pamphlet explores a variety of ways InterVarsity staff can minister *to* and *with* Christian faculty on campus.
- Working together, InterVarsity staff and Christian professors can form an effective partnership to:
  - Identify, encourage, and equip Christian faculty to join together to be a redeeming influence within higher education.
  - Raise a witness for the Lord Jesus among faculty as well as students.
  - Mentor and disciple students.
  - Plant new groups and serve existing groups of students, graduate students, and faculty.
  - Organize all-campus events.
  - Pray together for God's name and character to be esteemed on campus.

## Why Work with Faculty?

### **Faculty have a long-term presence on a campus.**

Their life and witness among students and colleagues can be decades in length! (As a point of comparison, most InterVarsity staff serve five-to-seven years.) It takes this longer obedience in the same direction to have a real and systemic effect on the ideas and structures of our universities and culture. In their tenure as professors, these men and women can literally shape the future.

### **Students need models of mature Christians integrating their beliefs into their actions and life.**

Plus, students need role models other than InterVarsity staff (and other campus ministers and pastors) who daily wrestle with faith and life issues and decisions. Some professors are living thoughtful lives, but need encouragement to do so publicly before students and colleagues. Sometimes, all it takes is a question or invitation from an InterVarsity staff to spur them on.

### **Faculty need peer fellowship for support and encouragement.**

As odd as this may seem, potential groups of Christian faculty often need an outside catalyst to help them form. Sometimes, all that's needed for them to begin meeting is someone to plant the idea of a faculty group in the minds of half a dozen professors. Other times, you, the staff, have to pray and pray — and ask your supporters to pray — for months before you are able to gather three professors for a lunch where they relate to each other as fellow Christians. As InterVarsity staff, we are called to the whole campus, including faculty. And some are called to plant Christian faculty groups on their campuses.

### **You need faculty as co-laborers to expand and deepen the ministry of God and InterVarsity on your campus.**

Invite Christian faculty to speak at a student large group meeting or to assist you in bringing other speakers to your campus to engage a hot topic from a Christian perspective. Encourage them to steer Christian students to the InterVarsity chapter, or ask them to introduce you to other Christian faculty on campus. However your relationship with Christian faculty on your campus develops, there is much to be gained for the Kingdom of God by having faculty as co-laborers.

### **You will be encouraged, and your joy in your work will increase.**

Faculty can befriend you at a level that students cannot. These are women and men who can stimulate your Christian life and your intellectual growth and who can be partners with you in everything from jogging, to afternoon coffee, to times of agonizing prayer over your burdens. In short, Christian faculty can help you love God with all your mind, heart, soul, and strength.

## **But . . . The Intimidation Factor!**

You are younger, faculty are older. They have more degrees, status, and power than you. They've read more books — some have even written books! You might think they are too busy.

These and other thoughts may pop into your mind and keep you from taking the initiative. You may even remember the fear and distance you felt during your undergrad days and allow this to keep you from knowing these men and women in new ways, particularly spiritually as fellow believers.

But consider this: You, as an InterVarsity staff, have things to offer faculty because the Lord has given you powerful spiritual means to advance his Kingdom. Your partnership in prayer for the Kingdom of God on campus is of inestimable value. Taking an interest in the work faculty do in teaching and research can encourage these brothers and sisters to fulfill their vocation under the Lordship of Christ. Christian fellowship and encouragement are always of great importance, and your help in networking with other Christians on campus serves professors in very significant ways. Because the Kingdom of God advances not primarily because of our expertise and certainly not as our proud achievement, but by the grace of God, we can overcome the "Intimidation Factor" and serve faculty with trust in the Lord. So ask God for boldness and then begin to get to know the Christian faculty on your campus as potential co-laborers, mentors, and friends.

## [A Personal Testimony from Dr. Terry Morrison](#)



I've been on both sides of the faculty/InterVarsity staff fence. I taught chemistry at Butler College in Indiana and later joined InterVarsity staff.

“My own experience as a faculty member with a beginning and developing InterVarsity student chapter was that it was a time of great enjoyment and growth for myself and my family. I met regularly with the student president to pray and think through the leadership challenges of the chapter, and I occasionally spoke at their weekly meetings. My wife and I entertained students in our home and had discipling relationships with several students each year. I championed their cause to certain administration offices on campus as their faculty advisor and annually spent a week at their chapter planning camp in Michigan with the new year's leaders. From both sides of my ministry with students, I can tell you that having professors ministering alongside of you can double or triple InterVarsity's total ministry efforts on a campus if you recruit and deploy the gifts and energies of Christian professors appropriately.”



## Possible Ways to Get Started in Ministry *with and to* Faculty

- Develop a list of Christian faculty on campus and pray for them regularly.
- Visit the Faculty Advisor each semester. (And if your chapter doesn't have one, get one.)
- Make an appointment (or two) each semester with a professor, and ask questions to better understand the university and your students from the professor's perspective. (See Appendix C for help in getting started with these appointments.)
- Invite Christian faculty you get to know to speak to your chapter's Large Group meeting, if they are qualified to do so.
- Invite Christian faculty to join the Emerging Scholars Network ([emergingscholars.org](http://emergingscholars.org)) to serve as mentors to students considering graduate school.
- Stop by the office of faculty you know each semester to invite them to a relevant event (e.g. the local Faculty Symposium) and visit briefly if there is time. As you leave, offer the faculty a written document that might be helpful to them (e.g. the *Faculty Newsletter*). Ask one professor each year to open his/her home for student leaders.
- Invite one professor each year to lead a book discussion or Bible study or prayer group.
- Bring to campus each year one speaker that Christian faculty would enjoy and benefit from hearing, and invite faculty to the event. Better still, plan the event *with* the Christian faculty you know.

## [Moving Ahead in Ministry \*with and to\* Faculty](#)

### *Faculty Ministry Catalysts*

**Here's the most amazing thing!** People who don't have professorial credentials like a Ph.D. and tenure can do effective ministry with university faculty. What is required is a conviction about the value of the calling of a professor, a love for faculty and the campus, and a ministry of invitation and hospitality. If you desire a joyful and fruitful ministry with and to faculty, or have developed such a ministry, we invite you to become a *Faculty Ministry Catalyst*.

#### *A Faculty Ministry Catalyst:*

- Exhibits Christian character, reliance on the Lord, and vision for being used by God in the lives of faculty.
- Believes faculty play a central role in the redemption of the people, ideas, and structures of the academy.
- Seeks to engage faculty and the university in culturally relevant ways that respect and affirm academic vocations under the Lordship of Christ.
- Has some experience being "salt and light" in their own university.
- Has demonstrated the capacity for taking initiative in personal relationships.
- Affirms the InterVarsity Basis of Faith and the Faculty Ministry Mission Statement and will work to fulfill this mission with others involved in InterVarsity Faculty Ministry (staff and other Faculty Ministry Catalysts).
- Is able to commit to agreed-upon activities to establish and advance ministry among faculty on campus.

Interested? Contact InterVarsity Faculty Ministry at [info@facultyministry.org](mailto:info@facultyministry.org) to connect with Catalysts in your part of the world and explore our web-based resources at [facultyministry.org](http://facultyministry.org).

## [Some Basic Resources for Faculty Ministry](#)

*Information Available at [Facultyministry.org](http://Facultyministry.org)*

Visit the Faculty Ministry website to find these resources:

**The Lamp Post:** This valuable resource, published quarterly via email, features articles, news, and resources from Faculty Ministry. The Lamp Post is primarily written for faculty, Faculty Ministry catalysts, and those interested in the redemptive role of faculty in the university. To subscribe, simply visit [facultyministry.org/go/lamppost](http://facultyministry.org/go/lamppost) or email [info@facultyministry.org](mailto:info@facultyministry.org). (Archives of the original Faculty Newsletter, published from 1992 to 2008, are available at [facultyministry.org/go/newsletters](http://facultyministry.org/go/newsletters).)

**One-Day Faculty Symposia:** Visit [facultyministry.org/events.php](http://facultyministry.org/events.php) to find a conference sponsored by InterVarsity Faculty Ministry near you. Or start planning your own with our Symposium Planning Guide, available online at [facultyministry.org/go/symposiumguide](http://facultyministry.org/go/symposiumguide).

**InterVarsity Faculty Chapters:** To find a chapter on your campus (or one nearby), visit [facultyministry.org/faculty-chapters.php](http://facultyministry.org/faculty-chapters.php).

**Faculty Ministry Catalyst Resource Site:** This site gives catalysts access to resources that will help them lay the foundation for and build up a new faculty fellowship: [facultyministry.org/go/catalysts](http://facultyministry.org/go/catalysts).

**Taking Time Apart:** This guide to spiritual disciplines and the academic life includes readings, Bible studies, and prayer resources to help faculty establish a regular rhythm of seeking and finding God. It can be downloaded at [facultyministry.org/go/timeapart](http://facultyministry.org/go/timeapart).

**Articles of Interest:** Find all sorts of useful articles at the Faculty Ministry homepage: [facultyministry.org](http://facultyministry.org).

In addition, you'll want to explore resources available through the Emerging Scholars Network at **[emergingscholars.org](http://emergingscholars.org)**.

## Appendix A: Identifying Christian Faculty on Your Campus

Let's say that two-to-five percent of the faculty on your campus are followers of Jesus. (Actually, the best current research suggests that more than twenty percent of faculty identify themselves as Christians. Ask a Faculty Ministry staff for details so you can read for yourself.) Even on a smaller campus, that's a fair number of individuals. But surprisingly, they often don't know each other, engage one another as Christian academics, or form any kind of community. InterVarsity staff can be effective catalysts for creating a network of Christian professors on a campus. The first step is to identify these individuals. Here are seven ways to identify Christian faculty.

**Look in your local church.** In any campus town, you are likely to find a good number of professors at the church you attend. Also, try asking another campus minister who goes to a different church to help identify faculty there.

**Ask the networker's question.** Ask every Christian professor you have a conversation with this question: "Do you know of any other professor interested in these spiritual concerns?" Write down the names you get, and follow up with a call, email, or visit. If possible, ask the professor to send a brief email to introduce you before your visit.

**Ask your students about Christian professors they know.** Between their professors and advisors and the churches they attend, they will know quite a few Christian faculty. The leads they give you will provide more faculty to visit.

### **Go to InterVarsity's Emerging Scholars Network website**

([emergingscholars.org/go/networking](http://emergingscholars.org/go/networking)), and request that a query be done for you to identify all the ESN members on your campus. You'll likely find several faculty on that list. InterVarsity's ESN network is rapidly growing, so as time goes by you should be able to discover more and more faculty this way.

**Read the campus newspaper.** There are often stories about the research professors are conducting on your campus. The values faculty hold often come out in the research they are doing. Watch for values that are common to Christians, such as environmental stewardship, economic justice, advancement for poor and underserved populations, and appropriate use of technology.

**Read the university's alumni magazine.** Colleges are proud of their new faculty and often highlight new hires once a year with a featured story. Read these articles with care and look for details that point to Christian convictions. Did they get their B.A. from a Christian liberal arts university? Did they grow up in Kenya? If so, perhaps their parents are missionaries.

**Go to the official Martin Luther King celebration** on your campus and see who is on the program. The gospel is regularly preached with great boldness at these

university-sanctioned events. Look for professors who are singing hymns from memory or deeply from the heart.

**Whenever professors catch your interest, visit their website** and look at their resume (often called a C.V. for Curriculum Vitae) for additional hints in their background, publications, or research interests. Some even have a link on their official campus webpage to a personal page that elaborates on their non-campus interests. You may also consider looking them up on Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, or other social networking sites.

## Appendix B: Tips for Visiting Faculty

*For Smaller Colleges and Universities*

By Jeff Yockey

Charles Hummel, InterVarsity's first director of Faculty Ministry, gave me these pointers when I was a campus intern in the mid-1980s. At that time, I staffed several InterVarsity chapters on smaller, non-research campuses. While this advice was given before cell phones and email, it is still highly relevant for any visit or appointment you have with a professor.

"Go visit faculty," he told me, "especially the ones you don't know yet. Make this a part of every campus visit. And when you drop by a professor's office on campus to introduce yourself, right off the bat, ask if he or she has a minute to visit; or, if they are busy, offer to come back at a better time."

Here are some other tips he gave me:

If faculty say they are busy, leave them to their work, but promise to come back.

If they say they just have a minute, just stand in the doorway for a short conversation. They will be honored by your concern for their workload.

If they offer you a chair, don't presume too much. They still have lots of work, so leave your coat on and sit on the edge of your seat.

Dr. Hummel, himself once a college president, encouraged me to do the following three things, telling me that I might be the only person all day that didn't come to this professor's office to ask something of them.

Tell them a story of God's work on campus that they don't know about. Share good news about the freshman who became a Christian, a second Bible study starting in a sorority house, or a professor who gave a great talk at the large group meeting last week.

Ask them how they are doing and if you can do anything for them.

Pray a short prayer for the Lord to bless and care for this professor in his/her work and calling on campus.

"The next thing you do," Dr. Hummel said, looking deep into my eyes and pausing for emphasis, "is to get out of their office!" Then he smiled and said; "If you aren't a burden, don't take up their time, and bring good news, you'll always be welcomed back. Keep them in your prayers, visit them often, and never stay long. Soon you'll have their trust and friendship."

## *For Larger Universities*

By Tom Trevethan

My work with faculty has largely occurred on the University of Michigan's campus in Ann Arbor. Michigan is a world-leading research university, and the professors here have a heavy load of research on their plates, as well as university-related committee work and, of course, teaching. Many seem more like hard-driving, multitasking businessmen and women than the typical stereotype of a professor surrounded alternately with students or books. I can't imagine being able to just "drop by" on most of them. Even my close faculty friends sometimes require scheduling a visit two-to-three weeks in advance. So here are my thoughts on getting time with professors.

Call and ask for a time to meet, and don't be put off if they give you a date several weeks off. That's more likely a reflection of their reality than of your importance to them. Email is your friend for communication with faculty. Keep your emails short and rare. Don't overwhelm their inbox by copying them on everything you are doing on campus. If you want to inform them of or recruit them to an event, give them as much advanced notice as possible. Their schedules fill up quickly. Remember, they have more demands on their time than students do, so be gracious to them.

Ask if you can pray for them before you leave. You are a religious professional, even if you are younger than they are, and most professors will receive the offer kindly. This is one gift you can offer them that is not knowledge or expertise-based, but rather is based on the grace of God.

## Appendix C:

### A Conversational Map for a Christian Faculty Visit

*Consider a Chiasm*

**P L (1)**

**A (2)**

**W W (3)**

**A (2')**

**P L (1')**

**Pray** as you arrive for God to bless the time, and then clarify the **length** of your visit.

Share your **agenda** with them.

Ask about their **world** and **well-being**.

2'. Re-engage the **agenda**.

1'. Offer to **pray** with and for them and **leave** on time.



## Appendix D:

### More about InterVarsity Faculty Ministry

InterVarsity Faculty Ministry is called to identify, encourage, and equip Christian faculty to be a redeeming influence within higher education.

Our Vision is that Christian faculty will be a redeeming influence as they:

Establish witnessing communities of Christian academics that reflect the diversity of the body of Christ.

Follow God's call in spiritual formation and vocational discipleship.

Balance excellence in life, research, teaching, mentoring, and service, for the glory of God.

Practice their disciplines from a profoundly Christian viewpoint.

Please contact us for more information about:

Starting a faculty chapter.

Receiving the *Lamp Post* (formerly the Faculty Newsletter).

Contacting InterVarsity staff on your campus or a nearby campus.

Joining the *Emerging Scholars Network* ([emergingscholars.org](http://emergingscholars.org)).

Becoming a Faculty Catalyst.