



OUTREACH PEER MINISTRY FELLOWSHIPS

Recent sociological studies of American Catholics demonstrate that our “millennial generation” is largely un-catechized. In order to help remedy that situation the Newman Catholic Center has organizing a program to reach out to evangelize Catholic students at UMass. Survey research and Newman experience indicates that the best ministers to any group, at least on initial contact, are people of the same age. Therefore, to improve the effectiveness of the Newman Center’s ministry we have developed a “Peer Ministry” that reaches out to UMass students “where they are”, in both a practical (dorm, dining hall, gym, classroom) and a spiritual sense.

Our past relationship with FOCUS ministers has proven the value of this type of ministry but we strongly believe that by recruiting and training our own peer ministers we can more effectively deal with the unique challenges and opportunities involved with “typically New England” students. As fellow students, the ministers chosen will be able to easily identify with their classmates, dorm-mates, or teammates, and therefore more easily integrate their evangelization efforts into the life of the University.

The Outreach Peer Ministry focuses on three key ministries.

- **Ministry of Presence**

Simply by living as witnesses to the Gospel in the midst of this secular Campus and in the wider community and being “available” and “open” to others Peer Ministers serve as “salt of the earth.”



- Ministry of Fellowship
By reaching out to other students and respecting their level of religious commitment and “curiosity” the Peer Ministers develop in-roads that yield closer ties between the student(s) and the Newman Catholic Center. This ministry will have as a long term goal the fostering the student’s fellowship with other believers. This ministry is based on the premise that “before you can preach at, you have to listen to....”

- Ministry of Catechesis
By merging aspects of Social Justice, RCIA, the basic catechism, and scripture study, Peer Ministers invite their fellow students into a deeper relationship with Christ and to a better understanding of the Gospel message and its relevance for them in today’s world.

THE BASICS:

The Director of the Newman Catholic Center appoints or re-appoints up to four Peer Ministers to assist in campus ministry for two consecutive semesters. Preferably, two are men and two are women – usually two incoming juniors and two incoming seniors. Each individual selected will serve at the pleasure of the Director for one academic year. Employment will be compensated at a rate of \$2000 to \$2500 per semester. Each minister will be expected to devote an average of fifteen hours a week to his/her mission during the school year. However, due allowance will be made for the academic and family demands which should have priority in their lives.



In the summer and at the winter break, these ministers will be trained at an extended retreat/conference held at an appropriate retreat center. Members of the Newman staff will serve as instructors.

To be eligible to apply, students must be baptized and confirmed, practicing Catholics in good academic and judicial standing at the University, registered at the Newman Catholic Center, and with a demonstrated interest in reaching out to their fellow students.

Candidates will be selected following an application process which will include interviews with Newman Staff, and members of the Newman Extended Community.

Supervision will be exercised through the Center's Campus Ministers to the Newman Center Director. The Campus Ministers will provide specific assignments to the Peer Ministers and work directly with them. In addition, each peer minister will have a mentor from the Newman staff.