

Outreach Activities to Deepen Friendship

There's something special about doing things together as a community. Jesus said our love for one another would be the true sign of His presence. Here are some activities that some campus ministries have tried which have been successful.

1. *Get-Acquainted Potluck Dinner or Fall Reception*
Right after school begins, have a potluck at the student center or in a large home, to which each student brings a dish from his or her country. Print up invitations that include a map, if necessary. Play a "get acquainted" game that won't embarrass anyone.
2. *Friday Night Basketball/Volleyball (or afternoon soccer)*
Invite students to whom group members are committed (as well as any other internationals who may be interested, of course!). Afterward invite everyone to the student center or a home for snacks or dinner. As always, be sensitive to dietary restrictions.
3. *Christmas Progressive Dinner*
Right after finals, have a dinner where students (Americans and internationals) open their homes and each serves one course of a dinner. Teach Christmas carols and read about or explain the history of Christmas.
4. *January Cross-Country Ski Trip*
Near the end of the fall term, plan a trip with internationals and Americans. Or go between terms. Invite Christians from the same language groups if there are any known in your region. Find extra warm snow gear for the internationals.
5. *Saturday Morning Breakfasts*
Here is a more relaxed opportunity to gather international friends in your home or at the cafeteria.
6. *Forum for Internationals*
Many have wondered what Christianity is about. Hold the forum on two consecutive afternoons on campus, so there is time for it to attract others. Post flyers in many languages inviting internationals. The major objective is to break down common misconceptions that internationals have about who Christ is and what a Christian is or does. You can also do this during a monthly potluck discussion night.
7. *Graduation Party*
Find and reserve a spot outdoors early. Plan and prepare all food. If parties are already planned by international groups, join them! Be where the internationals are.
8. *Camping Trip*
Plan it for right after graduation. Reserve a group camping area. Ask internationals to cook their national foods. Be sure and obtain recreational equipment.
9. *Christmas Parties*
Each must bring at least one international friend to the party. Play during the day; have small group Bible studies about Christmas in the evening, along with Christmas caroling, tree decorating and presents.
10. *Foreign Dinner*
You buy the food. Students from one or two countries work together and teach group members how to prepare the food.
11. *Going Away Parties*
When students are ready to return to their homeland, throw a party. Cake and ice cream, or something even more elaborate is appropriate.
12. *Hike in the Woods*
Find a woodsy, natural area nearby and make a day of it in the outdoors. Talk about flowers and trees, split wood, smell the pine, and do a meal of hot dogs or burgers over a grill or open fire.

13. *Summer Picnics*
Invite American and international students to Friday afternoon picnics during the summer months. Play volleyball or engage in some new games for good interaction.
14. *Retreats*
Include international students on your retreats and include them in the planning and preparation also. Gear-down the retreats from heavy and deep theological issues to more practical and basic ones.
15. *Culture Events*
Bring in speakers for international students. Examples include the local mayor, fire or police department officials, sanitation workers, school district employees, Lions and Rotary Clubs, etc.
16. *International Gourmet Club*
Have a monthly dinner open to all internationals and Americans. Meet in your campus center if possible. Feature food, slides/videos, and entertainment of a different nation each time.
17. *American Culture Class*
A guest speaker is invited from the community to speak for 45 minutes on some aspect of American life. Topics vary greatly. Volunteers also come and listen to the speaker and then the group divides into small groups to discuss the topic for 45 minutes. It is helpful if the speaker brings a vocabulary list. Topics might include: How to Use the Telephone Book, American Education, Insurance, Dating, Using Coupons.
18. *Progressive Dinner*
Homes are opened and each home serves one course of a dinner.
19. *Cooking Class — American Style*
Suggestion: Have an international student share a favorite recipe once every few months.
20. *Square Dance*
All of our feet seem to be equally illiterate!
21. *Goof-off Day*
In an American home. No work! Coffee and doughnuts and conversation. Cook lunch together. Relax and talk. A small group works best.
22. *Weddings*
Invite internationals to the church for weddings—American style.
23. *Soup Lunch*
Bring your own brown bag; we will provide the soup and all share in the conversation.
24. *Local Tours*
McDonalds, a farm, a factory, the jail, the courthouse, etc.
25. *Weekend on the Farm*
Arrange for farm families to share their homes and farms with a student/family for one weekend.