

HOW TO DRAW IN FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS

TEN TAKEAWAYS:

1. Create an engaging display for the Campus Y Open House; this was the second most common way for first-years to become involved.
2. Supply free food, music, flyers, and giveaways in the first few weeks of the semester.
3. Hold interest meetings at well-known locations on campus, or provide clear directions.
4. Hold multiple interest meetings throughout the semester.
5. Encourage first-years to bring a friend to meetings; hearing about a committee from a friend was the most common way for first-years to become involved in the Y.
6. Consider having a first-year position on the executive board of your organization.
7. Consider a mentorship program pairing first-years with older committee members.
8. Continue doing icebreakers throughout the semester to create and continue a welcoming environment.
9. Let first-years know that they can get involved with a committee at any point during the semester. Keeping consistent contact with first-years is key.
10. Read the first-hand accounts from first-years included in the green boxes in thisDevDoc.

Pit Sits

- Have “pit sits” as much as possible during the first few weeks of school
- Make eye-catching signs
- Consider playing music at your table, or anything that will make the table more approachable, fun, and attention-grabbing
- Offer free food or a small giveaway (i.e.: buttons, stickers, pens, sunglasses)
- Have an info paper/small flyer to hand out that includes the interest meeting times
- Consider the following questions: Does the food or item align with the mission/ideals of your committee? How will you afford to offer free food or items?

Open Houses & Fall Fest

- According to a survey of current first-years involved in the Campus Y, attending a Campus Y Open House was the second most common reason why first-years joined a Campus Y committee.

Interest Meetings

- Send emails ASAP after pit sits, so your committee will be fresh in the student’s memory.
- Update social media sites to publicize upcoming interest meetings; create a Facebook event for all interest meetings.
- Publicize meetings in locations that first-years frequent.
 - Hang up flyers in South Campus dorms (see [Publicity Checklist DevDoc](#) for dorm flyering protocol)
 - Set up a table to recruit members on the walkway outside Chase Dining Hall or SASB
 - Put flyers in the Union and the UL

See [Publicity Checklist DevDoc](#) for more advertising strategies

“I met with Mackenzie [the 2012-2013 Campus Y Co-President] and she really made me see all the opportunities to make an impact at the Y.”

"My favorite experience has to be teaching the children at the local elementary school about being healthy through Health Focus' MEDAL program. The kids learn a lot and are really fun to teach. It increased my interest in the committee because it was enjoyable and still helped the community!"

- Hold interest meetings at a well-known location or building on campus
 - First-years are still struggling to navigate campus, may be intimidated to go to a meeting in a location/building they do not know.
 - Provide good directions to the meeting location, if applicable (i.e.: how to get to the Campus Y, and where to go once inside the building).
 - The Union is a great locale for interest meetings - almost every first-year knows where the Union is located.
- Consider holding another interest meeting mid-semester or mid-year.
- Many first-years are overwhelmed at the beginning of the year, but are actively seeking extracurricular opportunities after getting adjusted to life at UNC.
- Mid-semester interest meetings demonstrate to students that it is never too late to get involved.

First-Year Positions

- If your organization has an executive board, consider creating a first-year position on that board - think of the Campus Y's First-Year Member at Large (FMAL) or Nourish's First-Year Executive Officer (FEO) position.
- Create a (short) application, and publicize the application to first-years within the first week of school.
- Involve first-year executive board members in different facets of the organization (draw them in to planning for big events, encourage them to shadow other committee leaders, and place them where extra help is needed) so they can later decide what engages them most.

Retaining First-Year Members

- Establish a regular meeting time and location.
- Go over names, or do a short icebreaker, at the beginning of each meeting to build community with first-year students.
- Encourage first-years to bring friends to meetings and if applicable, affirm that students can join at any point throughout the school year.
 - On a survey of Campus Y first-year members, the majority noted that friends/classmates had the biggest influence on their decision to join a Campus Y committee.
- Provide opportunities for first-year leadership and growth.
- See Membership and Retention DevDoc for more member retention strategies.

"An email from a friend led me to HOPE Gardens and it ended up being just the right place for me."