

Pre-NSO Retreat Template

The Pre-NSO meeting serves two purposes. First, returning InterVarsity students get to reconnect with one another and establish relationships. Second, through this meeting, God renews our hearts for building witnessing communities together.

SAMPLE SCHEDULE

30 min	Session 1: Fun and Reconnect
60 min	Session 2: Your NSO Vision
30 min	Break
60 min	Session 3: NSO Plans
30 min	Session 4 (Optional): Get Equipped
15 min	Session 5: Missional Growth and Self-Care
15 min	Session 6: Listening Prayer and Close

GATHERINGS ARE LIKE BAKING...

We recommend these four ingredients to make your gathering delicious:



FLOUR

Communal
encounter



SUGAR

Fun and joy



SALT

Vulnerable
storytelling



YEAST

Concrete
Practice

Put these four ingredients together in your own creative way, and your event will help deepen your community, offer practical training, and propel students to live out God's call on campus.

My Plan: Write down the dates, times, and location of your retreat.

Our Pre-Fall will take place on Aug 15 from 6-10 pm and Aug 16 from 10 am-2 pm. I would like to do this at Liv's house or the Biblical Studies Center.



SESSION 1: WELCOME BACK! (30 MINUTES)

Reconnect with Community

First impressions are important. During the meeting, make an effort to help everyone feel welcome. What is a fun way to share about their summers? How might you make this gathering feel special?

My Plan:

Divide people into pairs or triplets and send them out to interview each other. Ask "What were 2-3 highlights or important moments from the summer?" Give each person 5 minutes to pray.

Care for each other in prayer, especially if someone has had a difficult summer. Pray for your retreat and NSO together.



SESSION 2: WHY NSO? (45 MINUTES)

Vision and Scripture (30 minutes)

This is the most important question of your time together. Why is God sending your InterVarsity chapter to the campus to welcome a new class? Create a vision-casting plan using a passage of Scripture that captures the love and urgency of NSO, followed by a personal story to inspire students to partner in NSO.

My Plan:

Engage with Luke 15 for 15-20 min and then share my NSO story and invitation.



Connect to their NSO experience (15 minutes)

Option 1: Have students reflect and share their own NSO story.

Option 2: If few students have experienced NSO, interview a returning student or alumni who experienced a good welcome from the chapter. Show their contact card or name in your follow-up spreadsheet (if available). Remind students, "Every contact card or name on the spreadsheet is someone made in the image of God." Give students a chance to share what they liked about the story.

My Plan:

In small groups, share who the people are that pursued you. Pick one to send a thank you to and then ask them to pray for you during NSO.



BREAK (30 MINUTES)

Remember to take a break. This time could include a snack or a game.



SESSION 3: YOUR NSO PLAN (60 MINUTES)

1. Help students gain ownership of your NSO plans by giving them the opportunity to plan an event and tabling time. Say something like, "On Wednesday, we will host a fun event to connect with people we meet at the Organization Fair and meet new people. This event needs to be public, easy for anyone to join, and something you're excited to invite people to join. Let's brainstorm what we could do and plan it." (Have 2-3 examples if you need to jumpstart their creativity.)
2. Next, back up and have them brainstorm the tabling opportunity before the event. (It could be an organization fair or tabling on the quad.) What should be on the table? What story can they tell about your community? How will they get contact information? How will they invite people?
3. Lastly, identify the tasks to be done and roles to fill for both the tabling event and the fun event. Have students sign up to help.

My Plan:

1. *Plan a Small Group social and create an invite list for who they already know they could gather.*
2. *Give Invite cards and ask them to get ___ contacts and write their name on the back.*
3. *Have students sign up for which events they'll show up to.*



[OPTIONAL] SESSION 4: GET EQUIPPED (30 MINUTES)

Compelling invitations will help you invite both Christians and non-Christians to join in an intriguing way. Proxe training will build your confidence to have relevant and fruitful spiritual conversations on campus.

My Plan:

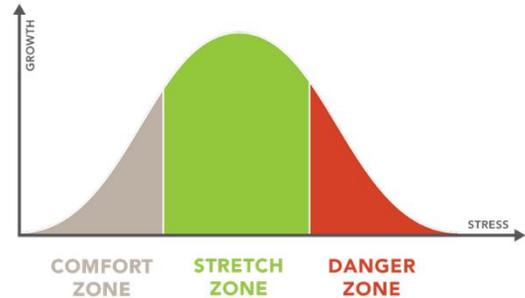
Take the Ministry Playbook course called [Inviting Well](#).



SESSION 5: MISSIONAL RISKS AND SELF-CARE (15 MINUTES)

NSO is a busy season with several missional risks. Using the growth curve (pictured below), have students create a self-care plan using these steps:

1. Rate where you are currently on the curve.
2. Pick another InterVarsity person to be your de-stress buddy. Tell them when you are approaching the danger zone and ask for help.
3. Pick one self-care activity and share it with your buddy.
4. Reflect on your stress level each day during NSO. Engage in listening prayer about how you are feeling.



My Plan:

Go over the Growth curve and have students create their self-care plan.

Begin with: What is your capacity when it comes to engaging with new students? What is a healthy number of engages in the comfort zone? The stretch zone? The danger zone?

This is a tool we'll revisit at leaders' meeting. You might need to modify and adjust as we go. For some, maybe you will realize your "stretch zone" range is actually more of a "comfort zone." I want to be aware of your capacity so we can best serve you and new students.



LISTENING PRAYER (15 MINUTES)

Take some time to listen and ask Jesus for names of students He is bringing to meet you. Write down any names or other words for NSO. Pray over them and bless the incoming class. Remember to have people look back at the end of NSO to see if Jesus connected them with any name they heard in prayer.

*Bonus: Invite students to pray five minutes a day for NSO.

Close with a vision cast

Share your hope for the first month of school. What do you want God to do among you?

My Plan:

Listening Prayer

Take Notes

Pray for New Students