

Semester Kickoff Checklist

About this resource

This resource is a checklist of tasks that are best practices for campaigns to complete as close to the start of the semester as possible in order to ensure effective recruitment and strategic goal setting. If you have any questions about any of these, leave a comment! Many of these ideas are also located in the [Summer Projects for Campaigns](#) resource.

This resource was made by Alyssa Lee <alyssa@betterfutureproject.org> at Better Future Project/Divest Ed. It was last updated on [2017-09-13](#).

Have you . . .

(Before classes start)

- Made a plan to table at the **Student Activities Fair**?
- Set a weekly meeting time?
- Confirm Registered Student Organization status, if applicable?
- Book a weekly meeting space?
- Individually* followed up with your previous members to confirm who is going to be returning and organizing again?

This is especially important for campuses where students tend to go abroad often or for co-op style campuses.

(After classes start, before General Interest Meeting)

- Set a date/time for your **General Interest Meeting** (for interested/new members)?
- Sent *individual* follow-up emails to sign-ups from the Student Activities Fair to invite them to the General Interest Meeting?
Highly recommended to send individual emails rather than a mass email. People are much more likely to reply to a personalized email. A good practice is to delegate 5-10 emails for each of your various core members to send follow-up emails to.
- Set a date/time of your start-of-semester strategy session (for core members)?
Recommended to have this before your General Interest Meeting so that you can clearly communicate your strategy and overall goals/ways to get involved at the GIM.
- Had a training with your core members on how to do one-to-ones and how to make your campaign pitch?
Ideally, this could be part of a training to prepare people for tabling at the Student Activities Fair, but it can also happen after.

(After classes start, before General Interest Meeting)

- Sent *individual* follow-up emails to people who attended your General Interest Meeting requesting **one-to-one meetings**?

(As soon as possible!)

- ❑ Made an overall **Semester Plan** with overall goals, meeting focuses, and tasks for each week of the semester (sample below)?
 A good practice is to set in advance what each weekly meeting should aim to discuss/accomplish. You should also plan to have a mid-semester “checkpoint” to check in on how your structure and roles are doing. This should be written on a physical piece of large paper (flipchart paper) so you can bring it to every meeting and stay on track.
- ❑ Made an overall **Recruitment & Onboarding Plan** for how you will recruit new members and get them involved in the group (sample below)?
- ❑ Set **goals** for the semester that are specific, measurable, time-bound, and have a designated person/role who is accountable for it?
 A good practice is to write these out on a physical piece of large paper (flipchart paper) and bring it with you to every meeting so that you are always reminded of your goals.
- ❑ Sent out a **newsletter**/email to your membership announcing the start of the semester and your semester goals/strategy?
- ❑ Made a **social media** post announcing the start of the semester?
- ❑ Set at least a few roles to maintain the group, such as ...
 - Social Media content creator
 - Meeting note-taker
 - Meeting point-person (sends emails to remind people of meetings, makes sure space is reserved)
- ❑ Created a **database** of supporters?
 This can be as simple as a Google Spreadsheet. Should include name, email, phone, grad. Year, undergrad/grad, how they’ve been involved, and any other groups they are a part of. Ideally is organized into different “levels” of engagement (e.g. 1°, 2°). This should include petition-signers, action-attendees, current members, volunteers, social media-engagers, etc. This should be updated so that people who have graduated are moved to an Alumni tab.
- ❑ Made a graphic **flier** that you can use all year long?
 Should include concise info about who you are, what you do, where to find more information, and where your meetings are. Best practice is to make a template that can easily be printed for future events. You can leave the meeting time/room blank if your meeting time changes.

Sample Semester Plan:

SAMPLE SEMESTER PLAN

Week	Notes	Mtg Focus	Tasks
1	Student Activities Fair, Strategy Session	Decide activity for tabling, plan GIM	Presentation for GIM
2	General Interest Mtg	Plan GIM, decide on social media	Assign 1-1s w/ GIM attendees
3	Campaign Pitch Training One-to-ones w/new members	Plan social media action, decide group norms, pt 1	
4	Potluck!	Decide group norms, pt 2	
5	Decide on Wk 10 Action	Wk 10 Action Planning	Reach out to coalition partners
6	Midterms! Set logistics for Action Assign WGs for Action		Assign tabling bottom- liners
7	Midterms!	Mid-semester check-in on group structure/culture	Book location for Wk 11 absorption event
8	OUTREACH! Tabling	Narrative Training for Action	Plan Absorption strategy
9	OUTREACH! Media outreach Tabling		
10	ACTION!		
11	CJ Teach-in Follow-up absorption, XXXXXXXXXX →		Set date for social
12	Transition Plan for Spring →		
13	Set Spring goals →		Goals/timeline for S Date for Spring Strat. Sess
14	End-of-semester Social	Semester Evaluation	
15	FINALS! Study Party		

Sample Recruitment Plan:

SAMPLE RECRUITMENT PLAN

Recruitment

(Wk1) Table at Student Activities Fair on 9/4 → B/L: — & —

(Wk2) Send individual follow-up emails inviting to GIM by 9/11 → B/L: —

(Wk2) General Interest Mtg on ~~11/11~~ Thurs 9/14 → B/L: — & —

(Wk3) Potluck on Sun 9/17 → Bottom-liner: —

(Wk4) Schedule 1-1s w/ new members from GIM by 9/21 — ALL → B/L: —

(Wk4) Campaign Pitch Training on 9/22 → B/L: — & —

Tabling every Wed 9AM-1PM — Wks 3-6

↳ Bottom-liners: — & —

Class announcements — Wk 4 → B/L: —

↳ Goal: 20 classes (after Campaign Pitch Training)

Chalking before GIM — on Wed 9/13 morning → B/L: —

Flier outside this big campus event on 9/25

Make 4 club announcements by Wk 6

Do a joint strategy training with labor coalition on 10/4

Have 10 more active members attending mtgs by 11/20

→ Create spreadsheet database w/ interest lvl

→ Make a listserv for regular ~~mtg~~ updates

→ Make a 'New Member' Google Doc/Drive/Handout

Sample Onboarding Plan:

Onboarding

For ppl who sign up at Activities Fair:

- Individually email them to attend GIM
- F/u email + FB msg day-of

For ppl who attend GIM or can't attend but want to:

- Each Active Member assigned to schedule 1-1
- In 1-1, ask for interest & if interested, ask if they want to shadow a ^{specific} task, attend next mtg, or join WG
- Active Member continues to be 'buddy' for that new member
- If they are still attending mtgs in 3+ wks, ask if they'd like to take on a bigger role (have a specific task) eg. bottom-line tabling

For ppl who join later on:

- Thermometer will reach out after mtg and ask if they want to have 1-1 or just ask questions
- If they didn't attend a mtg but just attended event or action, we will ~~individually~~ always assign someone(s) to individually email/FB msg people to invite to mtg or 1-1