



NORTHPOINT BIBLE COLLEGE

Grand Rapids Campus 2022-2023

Life Group Leader Manual

Vision Statement

Mentoring students for growth in personal health, academics, and missional/vocational formation.

How we do it. (3 Pillars)

Personal Health - Walk through the highs and lows of the student's life

1. Model a healthy image of vulnerability and stability
2. Listen for trials with home life, relationships, health, etc.
3. Genuinely develop friendship, remind student of your support, keep staff updated on any major trials

Academics - Act as an academic support system

1. Model academic intentionality
2. Look for struggling, discouraged students; ask what has been difficult
3. Encourage, offer accountability and tools, celebrate wins, get staff involved when necessary

Mission - Foster missional passion and vision

1. Model passion and commitment to the mission of God
2. Learn the past, present, and future plans of students' lives as it pertains to the mission
3. Keep tabs on progress, have regular conversations with students on current and future ministry/vocational endeavors

Your Responsibilities as a Life Group Leader

- Follow the Northpoint Code of Conduct with enthusiasm.
- Keep tabs on major life events of your group members.
- Report any students' breach of code of conduct and other urgent/dangerous situations.
- Attend community nights and worship nights; these are designed to be breakthrough moments for students.
- Facilitate discussion on meeting days.
- Schedule and engage in 1 on 1's.
- Attend weekly life group leader meetings.
- Commit to a robust prayer life.

Communication/Reporting Information

When should I communicate with staff?

When a student shows signs of significant depression or anxiety, indicates breaking code of conduct, major inter-student conflict, family tragedy, or death. This should all be reported immediately via text message. Less urgent communication can be done in monthly LG Leader meetings or via email.

How should I communicate with staff?

Student -> LG Leader -> Direct Staff Report. From this point, more communication will follow. Either the life group leader will be responsible for shepherding the situation, or it will be taken up with staff for more direction. Please lean on the side of over-communicating with staff, and inquire about any situation that may be questionable, we depend on you to make sure nothing goes under the radar.

How should I communicate with the student?

It is important to note that a student should never be caught off guard concerning reporting. If a student tells you something directly against code of conduct or something dangerous with immediate attention required, please use this terminology or language that communicates the same idea.

“As your life group leader, I am required to communicate this with staff. You can expect grace through this process, I am on your team and want to see you get the help you need. Please do not be surprised if someone on staff reaches out to you shortly.”

If the situation is questionable, feel free to contact direct staff report for direction on whether this situation should be handled by staff or handled by the Life Group leader.

Erin Colago – 805.795.1224 – Erinc@northpointgr.org

Open dialogue between life group leaders will be available on Facebook for general discussion, inspiration, creativity, collaboration and connection.

Code of Conduct Restated

- I PLEDGE to live for the Lord Jesus Christ, who is my personal Savior, and to do nothing that would bring dishonor to His name.
- I PLEDGE to apply myself in my academic pursuits and to give my very best for the glory of God.
- I PLEDGE to do as Jesus instructed, to love others, and in so doing seek to build wholesome relationships. I will be truthful, not allowing myself to participate in gossip, destructive conversation, tale-bearing, or the use of profanity.
- I PLEDGE to abstain from immoral or illegal acts whether I am on or off campus. I further agree not to be involved in any way in the use of alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs including the abuse of prescription and nonprescription medication. I will not support or participate in lewd or illicit sexual acts including sexual relations between a man and a woman outside of marriage, lesbian, bisexual, and homosexual behavior as well as transgender and gender identity activity. Gender identity is identifying with the gender other than the way you were born. I will conduct my life in compliance with all rules and regulations set forward by the College.
- I PLEDGE to seek God with diligence in order to grow in my personal relationship with Him, know His will, and attain His fullest potential for my life.
- I PLEDGE to attend class, chapel, the church or ministry to which I am assigned, and special events as required.
- I PLEDGE to be a responsible steward in all my financial matters.

Providing care through a crisis or moral failure

Moral Failure

If it appears that a student is going to tell you something confidential, preface that you may need to report what they tell you. You never want to be in a place where a student feels betrayed because of an unspoken expectation.

It is crucial you first communicate that you are on their team and getting the student help is the best thing you can do. A student should never be blind-sided by a conversation from staff. Please inform the student that you will be reaching out to staff. After reporting the details, it is likely that you will be asked to encourage the student to schedule a meeting with a staff member themselves. The point of the meeting is always to find the right next step for the student and get them the help that they need. Sometimes the best thing for the student is dismissal, this is never our first option as great healing takes place within our community.

When the student tells you the information, listen, be sure to hear the full story. Remind them they are loved and that you will be communicating with staff. With any crisis or moral failure, please report the information asap to direct staff report.

Crisis

Becoming rattled, minimizing their pain and looking on the bright side too soon are all negative responses to a student's crisis. Stability, and sitting in their pain are often the best we can do.

In crisis it is important to remember that there is no one size fits all form of grief care. Ask clearly how they would like to be cared for and follow through with that. Be consistent. Don't feel that you need to do everything, and don't commit to more than you should.

When a student shares a crisis situation with you, please use discernment on what needs to be shared, but don't hesitate to ask staff. We want to be a part of the grieving process for the student. Whether that means flowers on behalf of the school, or a reminder that we are praying for them, we want to be involved.

Goals & Guide for 1 on 1's

Goal Outcomes:

Laughter. This should be fun, enjoyable, and mostly light hearted.

Exchanging of past stories and vision for future.

Learn new and meaningful information about your student. (Ex: They have an ill family member, or they aspire to become a children's pastor)

Guide:

You don't need to eat out, we recommend pre-scheduling time to pack a lunch/dinner and meet at a table in the commons.

Start with your own story, don't assume they already know or wouldn't be interested in hearing. Often times you will be at a stage in life just beyond where they are. Painting a picture for them is a big deal in their growth at Northpoint.

10 conversation starting questions:

1. What is your family like? What's your family story?
2. What is your church like? How are you involved there?
3. Did you grow up in church? When did you begin to identify as a follower of Christ?
4. If you could become an expert at anything overnight, what would it be?
5. Do you have any mentors in your life at the moment? Tell me about them.
6. Who are you mentoring right now? Tell me how that is going.
7. Favorite childhood memory/vacation?
8. Is there a book that has greatly impacted your life?
9. What is something you wish people asked you about more often?
10. Is there a people group that you feel God has burdened your heart for?

Academic Support System:

Northpoint is an academic institution that takes seriously its claim to be a world class education. As life group leaders, it is your responsibility to model academic excellence as well as providing a safe space for students to receive encouragement and support.

This section will help you respond when you have students failing to keep up with their week to week course work as well as struggling to understand and participate with a class subject.

Phase One – Walk alongside the student, listen well, and affirm what they are going through. School is challenging. Remind them that challenging work is often an opportunity for growth. After you have affirmed the student, learn what strategies for time management they are implementing. A time-tested strategy is to always have the next week’s assignments listed out before you leave class Tuesday evening. You may recommend this, or your own personal system.

After talking about time management practices, please recommend they send an email to their professor. This is very important; many times, professors hear no communication from their students on why they are falling behind. Faculty are normally very responsive and willing to help. Professor emails are listed on the course syllabus.

Phase Two – During the week that follows, check in on them and ask how their homework is coming. If things go well, celebrate! If it looks like they are needing more help, please refer the student to his or her Academic Advisor. The Advisor may recommend that the student meet with a tutor. This can be arranged through the Academic Dean’s Office with the help of Jamie Carter (jcarter@northpointgr.org).

Phase Three – Check-in on how advising or tutoring has gone, be encouraging and offer help where you can. Please be sure to keep confidential their academic journey as this can be a sensitive issue. If the student continues to struggle and is losing hope, please refer them to meet with Academic Dean, Dr. Brian Lidbeck brian@northpointgr.org. Further action will be taken by staff, your role is simply to encourage and support beyond this point.

Measurables/Meetings

In monthly meetings LG leaders will be asked to discuss how the LG structure is supporting the three pillars of Northpoint. Topics will include measuring success, troubleshooting structural issues, student engagement within community, academics, missional development, student life, facilities, wins, loses, etc.

LG leaders will also fill out a form that measures success in these fields.

Life Group Leader Meeting Form

Scale

Excelling at this, should teach a class	5
Doing great, room for improvement	4
Acceptable, but not ideal	3
Needs improvement	2
Needs urgent attention	1

How do we measure community?

Signs of a healthy community: Scale of 1-5

Indicator 1 _____ Indicator 2 _____

Indicator 3 _____ Indicator 4 _____

Indicator 5 _____ Indicator 6 _____

How do we measure academic support?

Signs of a strong academic support system: Scale of 1-5

Indicator 1 _____ Indicator 2 _____

Indicator 3 _____ Indicator 4 _____

Indicator 5 _____ Indicator 6 _____

How do we measure missional growth?

Signs of missional passion: Scale of 1-5

Indicator 1 _____ Indicator 2 _____

Indicator 3 _____ Indicator 4 _____

Indicator 5 _____ Indicator 6 _____

Signs of a healthy community:

Indicator 1: All students in the group know each other's names and are familiar with each other's stories.
Indicator 2: Students feel comfortable sharing in conversation and are willing to contribute
Indicator 3: Students are using language that displays the value of Christian community
Indicator 4: Students are participating in organic community. (Going out to eat, studying in groups, etc.)
Indicator 5: Healthy transparency and vulnerability are being displayed by students in the group.
Indicator 6: Students are responsive to each other outside of scheduled meeting time and outside of the classroom.

Signs of a strong academic support system:

Indicator 1: Students can name a class they are enjoying and what they are learning presently in that class.
Indicator 2: Students are aware of the importance of time management and have some form of a time management system. (Calendar, days set aside, etc.)
Indicator 3: Students are aware of and feel comfortable with the academic support system: (Tutors, community, academic alerts, etc..)
Indicator 4: Students are using language that displays the value of Academic transformation.
Indicator 5: Homework is done before Monday morning and classes are being passed.
Indicator 6: Students are communicating how their academics apply to their life and ministry.

Signs of missional growth:

Indicator 1: Students are plugged into a local church body.
Indicator 2: Students are serving in ministry at some capacity.
Indicator 3: Students are using language that displays understanding of the <i>Missio Dei</i> .
Indicator 4: Students are spending regular, meaningful time with lost people.
Indicator 5: Students have a relationship built with someone doing work that is particularly missional in nature. (Global missionary, chi alpha, us missionary, mission's director at church etc.)
Indicator 6: Students can articulate how the mission of God applies to their past, present, and future.