

Voyaging Through Recruitment and Retention: A Study of How the Navigators Campus Ministry Communicates to New and Existing Members.

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Initial Research Question: How do the communication practices of the Navigators impact the process of becoming a member?

Methods: I utilized interviews along with observations as I am a member of the discourse community. My status as a member enabled me to have conversations with staff and other students and gain their perspective on the matter as well.

Major Findings: Starting out, I knew there was no point that a potential member gains membership status, however I was still looking for an unofficial point. What I found was that rather than two areas (member and non-member), there are actually different stages of becoming a member. One could attend only weekly meetings and call themselves a member or they could go through training and be with the Navigators seven days a week. These two claims of membership would be equally strong, yet their idea of membership would be completely different.

My Presentation: For my presentation, I chose to model it after a ship's log. Because the Navigators symbol is a ship, I thought this method would be both interesting and appropriate. This mode also allowed me to break the path to membership down into a step by step journey. Because there is not one point where a student becomes a member, this genre allows me to demonstrate the differences at each stage.



