Campus Minister *Candidate Assessment* Guidebook

RUF

REFORMED UNIVERSITY FELLOWSHIP




RUF
visit ruf.org/apply

WHY ASSESSMENT?

Overview

The purpose of RUF is to reach students for Christ and equip them to serve Jesus, the church, their communities and the world for the rest of their lives. With that in mind, RUF draws on over 50 years of campus ministry experience to assess potential Campus Ministers for a fit to a particular approach to ministry, understood through the lens of our articulated philosophy of ministry.

Assessment uses the collective wisdom of multiple onsite Assessors, applications, exercises, and tools to determine a fit specifically for effective RUF campus ministry and organizational culture. We are not assessing a call to ministry in particular, since the church as a body and court externally determines and calls men to ministry. We are not even assessing a call to college ministry in general since we affirm that there are many ways to do this. We are assessing a particular fit for RUF campus ministry. We require this Assessment as a commitment to the stewardship of varied constituent groups (Candidates, their families, students and student groups), and places (churches, presbyteries, and RUF financial resources). We also consider the time and personnel resources required to make wise transition decisions to hire, onboard, move, and develop ministry field staff.

We see this process as important for the health of campus ministry, which has ramifications long after the Assessment event has ended. We recognize that this process has some qualitative and subjective judgments, yet have found it to be effective through the years.



WHY ASSESSMENT?

What is Assessment?

Assessment is a three-day event that pairs Assessors who have extensive campus ministry experience with potential candidates to evaluate a fit of gifts, character and culture with RUF as ministry and organization. Before applying for RUF Assessment, connect with our recruiting staff to talk about RUF campus ministry, gather needed information, and ask questions that might be helpful. You can set up a call by emailing: recruiting@ruf.org . From there, potential Candidates fill out an application which is reviewed for approval to attend Assessment. Once approved to attend, the actual Assessment takes place over three days of in person interactions for you and your spouse (if applicable) at one of our three events held each year in February, June, and October. Dates and locations for these events are on our website, and will be communicated to applicants. The application process includes information requested in the application (ruf.org/apply) including; marriage assessments, personality tests, potential supporter lists, references, two sermon recordings, and a picture of the Candidate and spouse (if applicable).

The Assessment event includes various exercises intended to communicate the culture of RUF as a ministry and to help assessors evaluate certain soft and hard skills necessary for effective campus ministry. During the entire process, assessors will get to know you, ask questions and provide observations and constructive feedback.

Assessment also provides Candidates with an important look at RUF's approach to ministry and culture. Consequently, it helps Candidates also determine if they see RUF as a fit for their own commitments. Individuals and organizations can share much in the content of theological commitments and yet have very different ways in which they hold their convictions and behave as a ministry culture. We want both RUF and the potential Candidate to have alignment on both what they believe and the way they handle their beliefs. Assessment is a two-way street for both RUF as an organization and the Candidate. With that in mind, it will be helpful for Candidates to be familiar with the core values of RUF, which frame how we "do" RUF ministry and Assessment.

GOSPEL DRIVEN: RUF believes in a fixed theology, rooted in the person and work of Jesus Christ, which is applied through a flexible methodology.

CONNECTED TO THE CHURCH: RUF connects students and the college campus to the local and global Church of Jesus Christ.

PASTORAL: RUF moves in love toward people to nurture mature, Christlike relationships in the context of accountable ministry.

LIVED GRACIOUSNESS: RUF embodies the received grace of Christ in our relationships.

CELEBRATORY: RUF recognizes and delights in the reality that God is at work, restoring relationships in order to establish his community in the world.

WHY ASSESSMENT?

Who is Eligible to Apply?

If you are seeking to become an RUF Campus Minister, then you should consider applying for Assessment. You should first contact RUF at recruiting@ruf.org to begin a conversation about eligibility and timelines. (You are welcome to talk with other staff members you already know in RUF). Second, you should begin an application for Campus Minister Assessment at ruf.org/apply. All Campus Ministers are ordained teaching elders and any Candidate should be moving toward or open to ordination within the denomination. If you are in seminary or have completed a seminary degree (ordinarily a Masters in Divinity), and are available for employment or 12-18 months from availability, then begin applying. You can also consider applying if you have been an RUF Campus Assistant for more than 12 months (and have 12-24 months left of a seminary degree).

Who Are Your Assessors?

Each Candidate is assigned two main Assessors: a man and a woman. Once assigned, your Assessors will provide a consistent team from the beginning of the approval process all the way through the end of the Assessment event.They will be your point of contact for introductions, orientation to Assessment, and any questions you have. Your assigned Assessors will review application materials, set up one to one meetings with you prior to Assessment, provide care and guidance during the event, represent you in Assessor evaluation meetings, and will communicate your final Assessment evaluation along with strengths and areas of growth in the exit interview. Our Assessor teams bring extensive firsthand and ministry experience to the Assessment process. Their collective expertise provides seasoned wisdom and perspective in Assessment evaluation decisions. They love college students, the mission of RUF, and enjoy the opportunity to get to know you as Candidates and take on the good work of trying to assess with humility and confidence. They will enjoy their time with you and work hard to provide you with a good and helpful experience.



WHEN TO APPLY

Assessment is the first step in the hiring process, but it does not guarantee a position with RUF. Passing Assessment means that your name is placed on our Potential Candidate list and that you are actively being considered for RUF positions. RUF recommends Candidates that have passed Assessment to presbytery committees for potential jobs that we think are a good fit for both you and the campus. Typically, a new hire process can take from 3-12 months, and it will often move toward a June 1 hiring date that follows the academic calendar and provides committees appropriate time to consider applicants and the best fit for an open campus.

If you are familiar with RUF, or have already spoken to or met with RUF staff on campus or through recruiting conversations:

- If you are a seminary student we recommend applying 12-18 months in advance of your graduation date.
- If you are a currently ordained minister in a local church or other pastoral position, contact RUF recruiting (recruiting@ruf.org) or an RUF area coordinator to talk about when to apply. At times, you may apply for an assessment with a shorter window between Assessment and hiring, but it is still helpful to think 6-12 months prior to a potential start date.

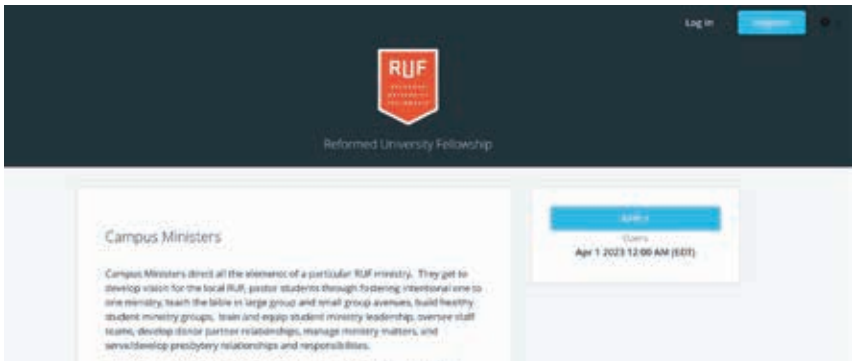
If you are new to RUF or are coming from a non-PCA background:

- Begin by talking with RUF recruiting (recruiting@ruf.org) or fill out the interest form on the RUF website (ruf.org/recruiting). After this meeting, RUF will put you in contact with some of our field staff and help you to consider when to begin the application process.

HOW TO APPLY

Where to Find the Application

The application can be found at ruf.org/apply - Select the Campus Minister application. This will take you to Survey Monkey Apply. You will need to either register as a new user and create an account (which will drop you into the application), or log in and make sure that you switch to "Applicant."



Typical Assessment Dates and Deadlines

ASSESSMENT DATE	APPLICATION DUE
2nd/3rd Week of February	1st Friday of December
1st Week of June	2nd Friday of March
2nd/3rd Week of October	3rd Friday of August

Please check ruf.org/assessment for specific Assessment dates and application deadlines.

Application Instructions and Details

The application is lengthy. Please read the task instructions for each section carefully before you begin and provide enough time to complete before the published deadline.

Campus Minister Questionnaire

This section asks a variety of questions: basic contact information, education, church and presbytery internship info, RUF interest, Christian testimony, ministry instincts, theology, etc. There is also a section for your spouse to complete (if applicable).

References

The application asks for reference emails and will send a request after you input the necessary information. **Please make sure that you do this early in the application process so that references have time to return their responses before the due date.**

We ask for 4 different references:

1. **Peer:** A friend who has known you well. Preferably someone who has insight into your personal relationships and insight into your work and ministry.
2. **Supervisor:** Someone you have worked for (for at least a 1 year length of employment if possible). If you are able to provide your current employer as a reference that is preferred, however; if you have not told your current direct supervisor that you are considering RUF, you do not need to include them as a reference. This reference does not have to be someone in ministry.
3. **Someone whom you have supervised in the last 2-3 years.** If you have not been a direct supervisor, then please provide a co-worker reference.
4. **A female that you have worked with in a professional setting.**

If asking one or more of these may be problematic for you, please reach out to recruiting@ruf.org).

All references must be received before you can submit the application online. (The

website requires that 100% completion of each section be completed before the system will allow the submission to go through).

You do not need to put your current employer if that creates difficulty because they are not aware you are considering RUF.

Marriage Assessment (if applicable)

We ask both you and your spouse to complete a short marriage assessment questionnaire. You will then download the results and attach a pdf copy of both results to the application. This helps Assessors get to know you both and frame helpful questions during the Assessment process.

Sermon Attachment

We ask you to provide links or uploads of audio or video files of two sermon examples that you have recorded in the last 12-18 months. If you do not have samples of audio or video links you can provide sermon manuscripts.

Transcript

Upload a copy of your most recent seminary transcript. If you are in your first semester of seminary, you may submit the transcript from your last completed degree.

If you have a non-traditional seminary degree, have been ordained by the exceptional clause in a presbytery or do not have seminary training, please contact RUF at recruiting@ruf.org for more information on completing this section.

Supporter List

You will be asked to submit a spreadsheet of potential donors, known contact information and estimated level of support. All RUF staff fundraise as part of their work in ministry. Include names of people who you are confident would support your work as well as those you are unsure of. In other words, make the list as broad as possible. We use this information as part of our assessment of fundraising potential/capacity. We will review your potential list and ask follow up questions about fundraising history and approach during the Assessment process. **We will not share or contact anyone on the list you provide.**

Once all of the information has been uploaded for each section of the application, you can then submit the final application online.

***visit* ruf.org/apply**

WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER YOU SUBMIT AN APPLICATION



WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER YOU SUBMIT AN APPLICATION

- You will receive an automated email confirming that RUF has received your application.
- After the application deadline, you will receive an email within one week letting you know when an Assessor will contact you to set up an initial conversation. This conversation will orient you to next steps and allow you to ask any questions you may have.
- Assessors will then have 3-4 weeks to call references, have an initial meeting with you, and complete any other pre-Assessment approval work. (If you are not approved to attend Assessment, someone from RUF will contact you directly).
- You will receive a confirmation email that you have been approved to attend Assessment. This email will also contain a registration link for you to fill out. After completing the registration link, RUF will book your hotel reservations but at this time make sure you finalize your travel arrangements. We strongly encourage you to not book any nonrefundable travel until after you have been approved to attend.

Preparation

Upon approval you can begin to prepare for the first two sessions of Assessment. Your Assessors can answer any questions you have about these two tasks.

- **Introductions**: The first morning of Assessment will be spent giving introductions. We ask that you come prepared to share your story with us (20-25 minutes). It should include family history, upbringing, coming to faith, calling, and any other pertinent information you are willing to share. We also ask that if you are married, your wife shares her story during this allotted time as well.

- **Sermon:** On the first day of Assessment, you will be asked to preach a 15-minute sermon during our morning session. You may choose the passage you plan to preach, but know that the reading of your passage is included in your 15 minutes. We ask that you contextualize your sermon application for Assessors and others who are attending Assessment, not college students. (Please do not repeat a sermon that you submitted as part of this application). In addition to your 15 minutes of preaching, you will be asked 2 questions following your sermon. These questions will simulate questions you might be asked as a Campus Minister following a Large Group on campus. Your Assessor will be asking the questions, but you should answer as though a student has asked the questions. Finally, after you preach and answer a couple of student questions, those listening will be required to give a brief critique of each sermon, as well as complete a brief evaluation form (provided to you at Assessment).

Attendance to Assessment is contingent upon receiving approval to attend from RUF. You will receive an email from RUF after applications have been read, contact has been made by an Assessor, and references have been called. This will be no later than four weeks from the beginning of the start of the Assessment event. We ask that you do not make any nonrefundable

travel arrangements until you have been approved to attend. If approved to attend, please make sure you complete the registration form sent to your email.

Travel

Assessment begins at 7:30 a.m. on the first morning and concludes on the last day in the afternoon around 2 p.m. As you consider your flight arrival and departure information, please plan on arriving the evening before and do not plan a flight to depart before 4 p.m. on the last day in order to provide ample time to get to the airport following Exit Interviews. You will receive a handbook with a detailed schedule closer to Assessment. Please review it and any other communication regarding specific location travel recommendations.

Location

Assessment in the past has been held in Denver, Atlanta, St. Louis, or Charlotte. Please be sure to check the website or confirm with a recruiter the location and dates of the Assessment you are applying for.

Spouses

Spouses are required to attend assessment. Ministry is a unique calling, and part of Assessment is geared toward evaluating fit for marriage and family dynamics as they relate to the specific needs of campus ministry.

We know that this requires planning and time off for spouses who work outside of the home. Please ensure that time is requested off far enough in advance to accommodate the needs of the Assessment schedule.

We plan Assessment and the specific sessions for maximum participation of both Candidates and their spouses. We value the wisdom and ministry experience of both Candidates and their spouses and want to hear from spouses during the entire event. We also want the wives to get an understanding of RUF and our approach to ministry so that you can make good decisions together as a couple.

Children

Nursing infants (normally up to 12 months) may come to Assessment. If you would like to have a parent or childcare present for this, you are welcome to reserve a separate hotel room at your own expense at the same or nearby hotel. You are responsible for making the reservations and for the associated costs. Please have viable child care needs available prior to submitting applications in light of upcoming Assessment dates.

Other children are not allowed to be present for this event.



ATTENDANCE

Costs

You are responsible for all travel costs to and from assessment and your food costs. Please wait to receive approval to attend assessment before purchasing plane tickets or car rentals. If you desire to purchase plane tickets earlier, we recommend that you buy refundable or travel credit class tickets. There is NO other fee associated with attending Assessment for Candidates. RUF will provide and pay for hotel accommodations during Assessment.

Sample Schedule

CAMPUS MINISTER ASSESSMENT SAMPLE SCHEDULE

TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
7:30 -8:00 a.m. | Coffee + Registration	7:30 - 8:15 a.m. | Coffee	8:30 - 11:15 a.m. | Continued Conversations
8:00 - 8:30 a.m. | Intro to Assessment	8:30 - 10:30 a.m. | Case Study	11:15 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. | Free Time, Lunch, Pack Up
8:30 AM - 12:00 p.m. | Candidate Introductions	10:30 - 10:45 a.m. | Break	1:00 - 1:15 p.m. | Assessment Final Session + What to Expect Next
12:00 - 1:00 p.m. | RUF-I Lunch	10:45 a.m. | Focus Group: Fundraising	1:15 - 2:00 p.m. | Exit Interviews
12:00 - 1:30 p.m. | Lunch	12:00 - 1:30 p.m. | Lunch	
1:30 - 4:30 p.m. | Preaching	12:00 - 1:30 p.m. | Spouse Lunch	
6:00 - 7:30 p.m. | Meet + Greet	1:30 p.m. | Focus Groups: Church + College Students + Culture	
	3:15 - 4:30 p.m. | Individual Conversations	
	5:00 p.m. | Free Evening on Your Own	

The days are long and full. Note that the first night you will have scheduled events, but the second evening you are free after 5 p.m. As you look at the schedule you will notice we only asked you to prepare for two sessions. The rest are designed intentionally to assess your ministry instincts in real life ministry situations. We will provide all the information you need to do well for the other sessions at assessment.

Dress

- Dress for assessment is business casual.
- Blazers or sport coats are not required.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?



ASSESSMENT RESULTS & EXIT INTERVIEW

At the conclusion of the three-day event you will have an Exit Interview with your Assessors to get final feedback and our conclusion. In that interview you will receive either a Pass, Pass with Provisions, or Not Pass Assessment Evaluation, along with strengths and growth opportunities observed.

Within the next week, you will receive a confirmation email of the Exit Interview details along with a feedback form requesting your comments on the process.

2-3 weeks after Assessment you will also receive a follow up email, with the summarized strengths and growth opportunities in writing.

Passed

We hope to keep a line of communication open with Candidates that pass Assessment. Passing Assessment now enables RUF to recommend you to presbytery committees for potential jobs that we think are a good fit for both you and the campus. We continuously work to find good matches with assessed Candidates and open campuses. An Area Coordinator will contact you before your name is presented to a committee to confirm your interest in consideration of a specific campus. There may be a lag of weeks, months or even longer from now before a conversation with a committee begins. Although we do our best to anticipate and plan for openings, Campus Minister departure dates are subject to other searches and processes that are outside of RUF's control. Typically, a new hire process can take from 3-12 months, and often it will not take place until the following calendar year after Assessment to give committees appropriate time to consider applicants and the best fit for the open campus. There is a chance that the right fit for a particular campus does not coincide with the timing of your need for employment. You can always reach out to Area Coordinators or your Assessors to ask about opportunities or to update them on your plans.

Passed with Provision

This means that you have passed RUF contingent on meeting some specific goals determined by your Assessors. These goals are usually designed to help you grow ministerially and relationally. These will be discussed with you in your Exit Interview and your Assessor will help determine a schedule for completion and checking in. Upon completion of the provisions, you will be passed and available for placement conversations. (See above paragraph on Passed).

Not Passed

This means that RUF will not recommend you as a potential Candidate to presbytery committees.

AFTER ASSESSMENT

If you pass Assessment, your name and Assessment info will enter RUF placement discussions that are held each month with Area Coordinators. Open, potentially open, and new start up campuses are compared with assessed Candidates and fit. Area Coordinators work with presbytery committees to present Potential Candidates for consideration and potential interviews. This can happen soon after Assessment, or can take months depending on where in the academic year or placement cycle transitions become known to RUF. It is helpful to know that RUF does not simply place people at campuses but works collaboratively with presbyteries to make decisions. Often, multiple names will be considered for a campus like most pastoral positions in churches that use search committees. Although, it may seem to you that communication after Assessment slows down, we constantly keep looking at all assessed Candidates with potential campus placements. (RUF typically hires for June 1 start dates, but January 1 or an alternate start date is negotiated with the Area Coordinator overseeing the specific campus).

Feel free to reach out to your Assessors, other Area Coordinators, or Keith Berger if there are campuses that you would like to be considered for, or if you have other questions.

KEITH BERGER
keith.berger@ruf.org


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