

CONSIDER A SILENT RETREAT

Feeling Overwhelmed by the Demands of School?

Lost Your Sense of Purpose and Well-Being?

Craving a Mid-Semester Escape?

Join other GT students for a silent retreat @ Ignatius House Retreat Center!

Retreats paid for by a generous gift from GT Alumni

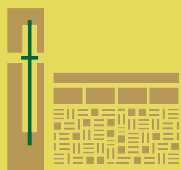
Discover Your Spiritual Well-Being

- Find Purpose
- Seek Harmony
- Show Compassion
- Practice Gratitude
- Nurture Self-Reflection



Ignatius House
JESUIT RETREAT CENTER

Encounter God





SPIRITUAL: Includes searching for and/or having a sense of purposeful existence and meaning in life, as well as seeking harmony with the universe, extending compassion towards others, practicing gratitude, and engaging in self-reflection.

Join Fellow GT Students for a Silent Retreat @ Ignatius House Retreat Center

- Welcoming All Religious and Secular Traditions
- 50 Private Rooms with Private Baths
- Gourmet Meals
- 20 Acres of Pristine Woodlands on the Chattahoochee River

what to expect

1. Silence
2. Forest bathing
3. Self-reflection
4. Spiritual growth
5. Discernment
6. Tools for well-being
7. Peace



example retreat offerings

- Art Retreat - led by Patti Hunter, Aug. 9-11, 2024
- Spirituality of Nature - led by Dr. Rob McDowell, Oct. 18-20, 2024
- Mindfulness - Aug. 9-11 & Nov. 22-24, 2024, Jan. 24-26, 2025
- Yoga Retreats - Dec. 13-15, 2024, May 30-June 1, 2025
- Personal Silent Retreat - April 25-27, May 30-June 1, 2025
- Science and Spirituality - led by Dr. John Cressler, May 2-4, 2025



Scan for more retreat offerings

where

Just 25 Minutes from Campus
6700 Riverside Drive, NW, Sandy Springs

when

Spring, Summer & Fall
Fridays 6:00pm - Sundays noon

recharge your spirit
reclaim your purpose

GT Program Coordinator:

Professor John D. Cressler, Regents Professor, School of ECE, GT

Interested? More Questions? E-mail Cressler: cressler@ece.gatech.edu

Frequently Asked Questions About Silent Retreats

- **Where Are These Retreats Held?**

Ignatius House Retreat Center: **6700 Riverside Drive NW, Sandy Springs, GA 30328** (about 25 minutes from campus, just north of the city, on 20 lovely acres overlooking the Chattahoochee River).

- **How Long Do Retreats Last?**

They begin at 6:00pm Friday and end by noon on Sunday.

- **How Much Do Retreats Cost?**

They are **free** to GT students, courtesy of some generous GT alumni benefactors that care. Post-retreat, I will ask you to fill out a short evaluation on whether the experience was helpful to your well-being.

- **How Many People Can Come on Retreat?**

A total of 50 people per retreat. Expect a mixture of students and others (retreats are open to the public).

- **Do I Get My Own Room?**

Yes, Ignatius House at 50 private rooms, each with its own bathroom.

- **Is Transportation Provided?**

Best to carpool with other GT students coming. Contact the coordinator for information if you need a ride.

- **Are Meals Included? Are There Vegetarian and Vegan Options at Meals?**

Yes, all meals, snacks, and beverages. The food is excellent! Yes, plenty of veggie/vegan options.

- **What Topics Are Covered on a Retreat?**

Depends on the retreat. Choose one that best suits you (e.g., there are mindfulness retreats, science and spirituality retreats, and spirituality of nature retreats, and many others).

- **How Do I Find a List of Available Retreats?**

Visit: <https://ignatiushouse.org/>

- **Are Retreats Religious?**

Some are, some aren't. Your choice. Note that Ignatius House is a Jesuit (Catholic Christian) retreat center, but welcomes all faith and secular traditions and worldviews. Some retreats are more spiritually focused (e.g., Mindfulness Practices, Science and Spirituality, etc.).

- **What Happens If I Sign Up and Then Don't Show Up?**

Bad things! Once you register, you lock a slot, excluding others, and the \$ sponsoring your slot are obligated. So please honor your commitment to come once you sign up, get it on your calendar, and plan for it w.r.t. school work.

- **Can I Sign Up For More Than One Retreat?**

Yes. But to accommodate other students, please make your first retreat before booking a second.

- **What Can I Expect on a Retreat?**

- The Welcoming Embrace of Silence and Deep Rest; Unplugging from Life's Distractions (a.k.a. GT).
- Themed Presentations Will Be Offered for Reflection, But Expect Lots of Free Time. And Silence.
- Healing from the Rigors of School, Recharging; Encountering Nature in All Her Glory.
- Great Food, Much Sleep, Lounging Without Guilt; Introspection, Mulling Over Life's BIG Questions.
- Discernment; Always the Invitation to Deepen Your Spirituality.
- Optional fully-trained "Spiritual Directors" are available for private conversation should that be helpful.

[Net Result: Improved Well-being To Help You Endure the Rigors of GT and Life!](#)

- **How Do I Sign Up?**

E-mail Professor John D. Cressler, the program coordinator (cressler@ece.gatech.edu)

2024 UPDATED RETREAT SCHEDULE



New offerings are frequently added to our calendar. For the latest schedule or to register, please scan the QR code or visit [IgnatiusHouse.org/calendar](https://www.ignatiushouse.org/calendar)

DIRECTED RETREATS

Break away for 3, 5, or 8 nights on an individually directed, silent retreat. Meet daily with a spiritual director and spend time in solitude with daily prayer suggestions for you. This is your time away to rest and pray.

Sept. 29 - Oct. 4 Nov. 3 - 11

GUIDED RETREATS

DATE	RETREAT	DIRECTOR
May 3-5	Weekend Retreat: Science & Spirituality	John Cressler, PhD
May 17-19	Pentecost & Ignatian Spirituality	Rev. Jim Fleming, SJ & Kay Satterfield, MA
May 25-26	1-Night Retreat for Black Women: Being My Sister's Keeper	Lauren Morton
June 7-9	Ignatian Yoga Retreat: Rediscovering God's Will	Kimberly Nettuno, MTS, RYT
June 14-16	Weekend Recovery Retreat for Those in 12-Step Program	Brad Hamrlik
June 14-16	Weekend Journaling Retreat: Befriending Hope	Alison Umminger & Jackie Sullivan
June 21-23	Men's Weekend Ignatian Retreat	Rev. Jim Fleming, SJ
July 5-7	Weekend Retreat: Two Paths to Contemplative Prayer	Carl McColman
July 19-21	Mary Magdalene: The Apostle to the Apostles	Maria Cressler, MA & Sarah Otto, M.Div.
Aug. 9-11	Art Retreat: Foresting Our Faith	Patti Hunter, MACM
Aug. 16-18	Semi-Silent Weekend Retreat: Healing Life's Hurts	Rev. Matt Linn, SJ
Aug. 23-25	Women's Weekend Retreat: A Promise Not Broken	Sr. Susan Arcaro, r.c.
Sept. 6-8	Women's Intergenerational Retreat: A Safe Place to Land	Lauren Morton & Maria Cressler, MA
Sept. 6-8	Women's Personal Silent Weekend Retreat	Ignatius House Pastoral Team
Sept. 13-15	Rhythms of Grace: Ignatian Spirituality & a Rule of Life	Rev. Bill Noe, SJ & Sarah Otto, M.Div.
Sept. 27-29	Ignatian Weekend Retreat	Kay Satterfield, MA
Oct. 18-20	Caring for Our Common Home	Dr. Rob McDowell, PG
Oct. 31-Nov. 3	3-Night Ignatian Retreat	Rev. Jim Fleming, SJ
Nov. 15-17	Spanish Language Retreat/Retiro en Espanol	Rev. Bill Noe, SJ & Sindy Collazo, MA
Nov. 30-Dec. 1	1-Night Retreat for Black Women: A Place of Belonging	Lauren Morton
Dec. 6-8	Advent Retreat: Journey to the Manger	Sr. Susan Arcaro. r.c.
Dec. 13-15	Weekend Recovery Retreat for Those in 12-Step Program	Brad Hamrlik
Dec. 13-15	Ignatian Yoga Retreat: Moving with Awareness	Kimberly Nettuno, MTS, RYT

MINDFULNESS

DATE	RETREAT	DIRECTOR
July 7-12	5-Night Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Retreat	Mark Dannenfelser, MA, LPC
Aug. 9-11	Weekend Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction	Mark Dannenfelser, MA, LPC
Nov. 22-24	Weekend Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction	Mark Dannenfelser, MA, LPC

DAYS OF REFLECTION

DATE	TITLE	DIRECTOR
July 27	DOR for Those Affected by the Addictions of Others	Murphy Sullivan, MPA, CFRE
Aug. 1	Care of Body, Care of Soul	Marian Monahan, BA
Nov. 12	Care of Body, Care of Soul	Marian Monahan, BA
Dec. 2	Advent Day of Reflection	Fr. Bill Noe, SJ & Sarah Otto, M.Div.
Dec. 4	Advent Day of Reflection	Andy Otto, MA

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

Are you interested in finding a spiritual director?

Join us on **October 23 @ 12:00 pm** for a **Virtual Spiritual Direction Inquiry Session**. You'll get a chance to learn more about the ministry of spiritual direction and meet several of our Ignatian-trained spiritual directors. This is a great opportunity to get connected with a companion for your spiritual journey!

There is no charge, but advance registrations are requested so that the Zoom call login details can be sent to all registrants ahead of time.



TURN-IN TOURS

Ever wondered what happens at Ignatius House as you drive by? Curious about silent retreats but unsure if it's the right fit for you? Join us for a one-hour, no-cost, behind-the-scenes exploration. Take a guided tour, discover Ignatian spirituality, and learn about the life-giving power of silent retreats. Hear how our mission positively impacts thousands each year. We're excited to welcome you!

2024 Turn-In Tours Dates:
Aug. 4, Sept. 8, Oct. 6, Nov. 3



Who Should Come to a Retreat?

People embrace spiritual retreats for focus, deep contemplation and healing to redirect or re-energize their lives. Come to Ignatius House if you're seeking a healthy balance, making a life transition, grieving, discerning a new vocation or seeking a closer relationship with God and the people in your life.

Why Silent Retreats?

A silent retreat is more than a period of time without speaking. A silent retreat replaces distractions with intentional space for the Divine to permeate.

Financial Assistance

Through the generosity of our donors, financial assistance is possible for those in hardship. Please contact retreats@ignatiushouse.org for more information and/or a private conversation.

Annual Progress Report

Georgia Tech Student Well-Being Program

John D. Cressler

Regents Professor and Schlumberger Chair Professor in Electronics
Ken Byers Teaching Fellow in Science and Religion
School of Electrical and Computer Engineering
Georgia Tech

May 31, 2024

Background:

Without question, young people, writ large, and GT students, in particular, are under intense stress these days, due to a variety of factors. As many intuit, their anxiety levels are rising rapidly, together with a profound loss of a sense of well-being. Bad things result. National statistics of current college students overwhelmingly support this contention and are quite appalling (Cressler gives a talk on this topic, if interested). The GT Student Well-being Program invites students to step away (i.e., retreat) from campus for a weekend to decompress, remove the distractions of technology (phones and computers), discover the power of silence, rest, discern their path in life, encounter nature, and generally recover their sense of well-being. Students do this at Ignatius House Retreat Center, which offers silent retreats open of all people (young or old, religious or secular).

Cressler leads such a silent retreat on science and spirituality, which is open to the public and is something that augments his IAC 2002 Science and Religion Course (now in its 8th cohort). In 2023, alumnus Bill Todd made that retreat, and was moved to suggest that ALL GT students would benefit from a profound encounter with silence and rest offered by retreats; and further, that they should be offered at no cost to students (a retreat is \$350/person for 2 nights (mindfulness retreats are \$550/person, since a trained expert leads those), with private room and bath, all meals, and retreat materials). Thus, the GT Student Well-Being Fund was formed.

Mechanics of the GT Student Well-Being Program:

- Silent retreats occur at Ignatius House Retreat Center, 20 minutes from campus, located in Sandy Springs on 20 lush acres overlooking the Chattahoochee River. Ignatius House welcomes all faith and secular traditions. They run silent retreats every week of the year, and Cressler has made his own retreat each spring and fall for the past 25 years to support his own well-being. Students are free to choose any retreat that best suits their needs. Retreats begin on Friday evening with dinner and end with Sunday brunch (2 nights). Ignatius House has been conducting such silent retreats since 1961, and the Ignatian tradition of silent retreats stretches back over 500 years. Typically, a retreat “guide” gives several thematic talks during the weekend, as food for reflection during silence, but attendees enjoy copious free time. More details on retreats are included in the addendums.
- Cressler serves as the volunteer program coordinator for the GT Student Well-Being Program. Flyers on the retreat opportunity are sent around campus.

- If a student is interested in making a retreat, they email Cressler, who sends them the FAQ and retreat schedule. The student then emails Cressler again with the retreat they wish to attend, and the registration path is opened directly to Ignatius House (they use a separate registration path to track students by name).
- Payment process: Ignatius House sends a quote for the # of students attending a given retreat a week prior to the retreat (mandated by GT AP), and then an invoice to GT the week afterward. Names of students attending are listed and tracked. This invoice is passed to Cressler's admin and sent to AP for processing and payment from the foundation account.

Statistics:

- The program was launched 9/1/23 (with emails to scholarship students (Stamps, Gold, Promise, Deans, Honors, etc.) as well as ECE, BME, CoC, and CoB – i.e., only part of GT, to test the water for student interest).
- As of 5/31/24, 151 students have contacted Cressler with interest in making a retreat.
- **As of 5/31/24, 90 students made a retreat since the program inception** (in 9 months). These 90 students are attending retreats during the semester, and is a remarkable number, which clearly speaks to the student need.
- A mix of both UG and G students attend (at present, more G than UG students)
- Students are free to make more than one retreat, as needed for their well-being, and over a dozen have done that already.
- Popular retreats include: Science and Spirituality (Cressler leads this), Mindfulness Practices (offered 4 times year), Spirituality of Nature, Enneagram personality typing, etc., but students are free to choose any retreat that best suits their needs.

Impact on Students:

Without question, impact on students has been exceptionally positive. GT, and by extension, the world, is a better place for this well-being program. After the retreat, Cressler sends students a short evaluation, which have been universally positive. Some snippets from those evaluations of a recent retreat are included below as examples of student feedback (un-edited).

- **Would you say that this retreat experience was valuable for your sense of well-being?**

“Yes, I found the retreat experience to be incredibly valuable for my overall sense of well-being. During the retreat, I was able to calm my mind and truly focus on taking care of myself. The silence and separation from work-related activities and social media allowed me to deeply relax and attain a sense of inner calmness. This dedicated time for self-reflection and mindfulness significantly contributed to my well-being and provided a refreshing sense of tranquility.”

“Yes! I had another amazing retreat. This one came with more experiences, insights, and revelations. The theme of this retreat was science and spirituality. What I came to appreciate – especially through Dr. Cressler’s engaging lectures – is that there are healthy ways for more science and technologically-minded folk to be spiritual, think spiritually, and to connect with the natural world.”

“Yes. I signed up because I needed a break. Beyond that, I had no expectations and wasn’t even certain I could last three days in silence and solitude. In that aspect, I was equally motivated by curiosity. What I ultimately discovered was a calm and tranquility beyond what I thought was possible for me. This was a unique

environment that attenuated all external stimuli and enhanced the internal. I remembered why I wanted to become a PhD and now pursue it with renewed commitment.”

“Yes! I really enjoyed the opportunity to relax and disconnect from the business of day-to-day life. Especially after finals, I was in need of some time to recharge and recover. The retreat was not only beneficial to my mental and emotional well-being, but I was also able to deepen and nurture my spiritual well-being through contemplating the big questions in life and how our current technology and scientific knowledge creates opportunities to find more meaning in life.”

“Yes. I had a deep spiritual experience and came to terms with something that I had been avoiding for some time, which were both facilitated by the retreat and the provided guided meditations.”

• **Would you recommend a retreat experience for other GT students? Why or why not?**

“I would give my highest recommendation. Everyone needs a chance to take a break from the systems they are in – and to reconnect and recenter with the spiritual, the natural, and the simple. Then to think about how this can help provide direction and insight – a spark of love, mystery, curiosity – which they can bring with them back into shaping our world in a more aware, compassionate, and conscientious direction.”

“Yes, I would definitely recommend a retreat experience for other GT students. I have already recommended it to some of my friends, and they are planning to join the upcoming retreat program. I found the retreat to be incredibly helpful for my well-being. Taking time away from everyday stressors, disconnecting from technology, and focusing on self-care and mindfulness can be immensely beneficial for anyone, especially students managing busy academic and personal lives. I believe the retreat experience offers a valuable opportunity for personal growth, relaxation, and rejuvenation.”

“Yes, in fact I already have. It was a unique experience that is seldom afforded to Atlanta residents, and critically needed for GT students.”

“I would absolutely recommend a retreat experience for other GT students, because it really reminded me that there is so much more to life than school and grades. I think that having that reminder is extremely important for all students, but especially for students at a university as rigorous and intensive as GT.”

“Yes. Georgia Tech is a stressful experience for most if not all students, and retreats provide an excellent opportunity to refresh and become more whole outside of traditional educational settings.”

Addendums:

- Photos of the Cressler’s May 2024 Retreat (everyone + GT students, young and old)
- Initial flyer sent by Cressler to GT students, FAQ, and 2024 retreat schedule.

