

### Leadership and Personnel

#### 16. What qualifications should institute teachers have?

It is important that all faculty members hold a minimum of an earned bachelor's degree, and preferably a master's degree, acquired from an accredited school. These degrees should be in the field they are teaching or in a field closely related to the courses they are teaching, such as an applied field rather than the pure discipline. (For instance: lawyers can teach leadership or ethics or community transformation; an MSW or a psychologist or psychiatric nurse practitioner can teach psychology or pastoral care; an MD can teach science and faith; MBAs and CPAs can teach administration, especially if they have experience with non-profit tax law and church record-keeping, etc.)

Non-degreed individuals may assist in certain areas if they carry extensive experience in a certain area of study and are generally recognized as an authority on the subject matter at hand. This is particularly true in skill-related areas of instruction.

#### 17. What does the institute director do? What qualifications should a director have?

The director is responsible for the oversight of the institute, serving in areas of personnel, record keeping and faculty/student contact. It is recommended that directors have (or be working toward) a ministry-related degree from an accredited institution.

#### 18. What is an administrative committee and how does it serve an institute?

This important committee oversees the operation of the institute, meeting regularly to provide support and accountability to the students, faculty, staff, and programs of the institute. This committee involves leadership from the sponsoring church to foster health and encouragement between the church and the institute.

#### 19. What is the role of the sponsoring church's pastor?

The sponsoring church's pastor should serve on the administrative committee and be in communication with the director of the institute. Thriving institutes have strong support from the pastor, resulting in buy-in from the congregation. Ideally, the pastor, if qualified, should serve on the teaching staff of the institute whenever possible.

### Annual Symposium

#### 20. What is the annual symposium and why is it important?

The Foursquare Ministry Training Symposium is an annual three-day gathering of representatives from all certified institutes, along with prospective institute leaders, denominational education leaders and resource personnel. All certified Foursquare ministry training institutes, schools of ministry or church-based Bible colleges are required to send at least one representative to the symposium each year. The symposium provides valuable training and networking opportunities for institute directors and leaders, and is a main avenue for publicizing new developments in Foursquare ministry training.

### Closing an Institute

#### 21. What happens if an institute discontinues operation?

By law, schools are required to keep student records on file for 50 years after a student's last enrollment or graduation. However, it is best to keep all student records permanently.

Most states also require that a trustee of school records be appointed if a school closes, usually an area Bible college or a Foursquare Bible college. Sometimes the state post-secondary board of education will serve as trustee of all school records in that state. If a school closes, all records are entrusted for permanent storage and access at the designated trustee institution. In the event of school closure, the state post-secondary board of education and all former students and alumni should be notified in writing by the school regarding the identity of the trustee.

Schools have a contractual obligation to provide for the completion of all remaining program coursework for all currently enrolled students at the time of the school decides to close. Either the program may continue until all current students have graduated, or arrangements may be made for current students to transfer to another school. It is unethical to close a program abruptly without providing a means for current students to finish their programs.



# 21 Questions and Answers for Prospective Institute Leaders



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### Start-up

#### 1. Why would a church want to start a ministry training institute?

A ministry training institute provides a church with the opportunity to invest in leadership the way Christ did, engaging the local community with careful instruction and intentional application. The institute model equips rising leaders by fusing sound doctrine and practical application to develop the whole person as a servant for Christ.

#### 2. Where can I find important information and guidelines about institutes?

An excellent resource that will help in every area of institute development and operation is the Handbook for the Operation of Foursquare Ministry Training Institutes, Schools of Ministry, and Church-Based Bible Colleges. The Handbook supplies you with practical explanations, troubleshooting, example documents, and printable resources useful for all areas of the institute: records, student life, faculty instruction and encouragement, staff involvement, and administration.

#### 3. Are there resources available through Life Pacific College for institutes?

Life Pacific College provides everything from "example" documents to ready-to-use courses and instructional resources, including resources for institutes in the startup mode and already-established schools alike. They are available in the institutes course bank at [www.lifepacific.edu/institute](http://www.lifepacific.edu/institute).

#### 4. Where can I find information on the institute start-up process?

In the third section of the Handbook you will find step-by-step instructions and practical guidelines on the start-up process for a new institute from how to communicate with your church and pastor to informing your community and establishing a successful budget.

#### 5. How do I develop institute curriculum?

Section 2.21-30 of the Handbook gives detailed guidelines and recommendations on how to develop a curriculum for your new institute. Though there are certain standard elements that will be found in every institute's curriculum, such as Foursquare doctrine, an institute should focus its curriculum to meet the unique needs of the local geographic area that it is serving.

#### 6. What responsibility do I have to government agencies in operating an institute?

Each state has different requirements for colleges to award recognized degrees. Generally speaking, a school must be established as a higher educational non-profit corporation in its home state in order to have legal authority to award degrees, though some states allow a church to operate a school under a religious training exemption. Churches can contact the state department of (higher or post-secondary) education or another relevant state agency such as the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs for specific information. The Foursquare properties department may be able to provide some of the necessary documents as well.

## Training and Types

### Keep In Mind:

- ◆ Long-term commitment (5-10-year vision)
- ◆ Willingness to release trained workers to minister elsewhere
- ◆ Partnership with other churches
- ◆ Adequate facilities (classroom and library)
- ◆ Finances for start-up

### Did You Know?

Schools of ministry with an immersive format geared specifically to 18-24-year-olds may consider affiliation with the Foursquare Emerging Leader Network.

[www.emergingleadernetwork.com](http://www.emergingleadernetwork.com)

### 7. What is the difference between the training provided by Bible colleges and that provided by training institutes?

Because they are based in a church setting, institutes often provide close personal mentoring along with more accessible opportunities for hands-on practical application of ministry skills than do Bible colleges.

All certified Foursquare Bible institutes, schools of ministry, and church-based Bible colleges have the same foundational elements of Foursquare doctrine and balanced curriculum. Certified Bible institutes maintain an established number of hours so students may transfer credit to a two-year or four-year Bible college toward an associate's or bachelor's degree; additionally, students can qualify for the international ministry license from Foursquare upon institute graduation and appointment to a ministry position. The primary difference between Bible colleges (either traditional or church-based) and formal Bible institutes is that Bible colleges are legally constituted as educational non-profit corporations separate from the parent church and have been authorized by their state to award degrees. Both formal institutes and Bible colleges have academically qualified faculty and teach at a collegiate level.

Bible college and formal institute training is predominately formal (classroom/institution based), whereas non-formal institutes balance classroom training with hands-on training approximately 50/50. Schools of ministry vary in courses and hours offered, and they provide both informal (relationship/activity based) and formal (classroom/institution based) training.

### 8. What is the difference between a school of ministry and a formal institute?

A school of ministry maintains a foundation of Foursquare doctrine and a balanced approach to curriculum, differing from a formal institute because of its liberty in the number of training hours and type of instruction offered. Faculty must show competence in their areas of instruction and have related ministry experience as the minimum standard, though a bachelor's degree is recommended. Schools of ministry are not normally able to establish credits that transfer or work toward degrees.

A formal institute also maintains a foundation of Foursquare doctrine and balanced curriculum. Institutes require a greater number of contact hours involving more formal and non-formal instruction than a school of ministry, and require the faculty to not only have related experience but a degree (bachelor's degree in the field of instruction is the minimum, though a master's is preferable) from an accredited college. Bible institutes can connect with Bible colleges to establish relationships called articulation agreements that provide transfer of institute credits toward college degrees.

### 9. How many contact hours are required for different types of institute programs?

Both formal and non-formal Bible institutes and two-year church based Bible colleges must provide a minimum of 750 contact hours (60 semester hours), requiring two years of full-time coursework. Schools of ministry must provide 350 contact hours of instruction (30 semester hours), equivalent to one year of full-time instruction. Church-based Bible colleges must provide at least 1500 hours (120 semester hours), which takes four years of full-time instruction. To fulfill academic requirements for the Foursquare international ministry license, a program must be at least two years or 750 contact hours.

### 10. Must institute students have a high school diploma?

A high school diploma (or GED) is necessary if the student attending the institute wants to take the courses for credit, since institute courses are to be taught at college-level instructional standards. Students who are enrolled purely for personal enrichment do not need to meet the high school graduation requirement.

## Certification, Accreditation and Reports

### 11. How does an institute gain certification?

The Application for Certification form is available for download from the Foursquare website. A \$100 application fee must accompany the application.

### 12. What is the difference between certification and accreditation?

Certification is a form of formal recognition by Foursquare that states that an institute is operating according to the appropriate standards prescribed in the Handbook for the Operation of Foursquare Ministry Training Institutes, Schools of Ministry and Church-Based Bible Colleges. Certification signifies that the two-year institute program provides the appropriate academic foundation that qualifies institute graduates to apply for the international ministry license from The Foursquare Church upon appointment to a Foursquare ministry position, and also opens the door for transferability of credits to Life Pacific College for those institute graduates who desire to continue toward a four-year bachelor's degree. Certification is a relatively simple process that can usually be accomplished during the first year of institute operation or even before an institute begins offering classes.

Accreditation is a very lengthy process of approval by a federally recognized accreditation association, often taking 8-10 years to accomplish. There are only two accreditation agencies that have been approved by the U.S. Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) to accredit Bible colleges: the Association for Biblical Higher Education (ABHE) and the Trans-National Association of Christian Colleges and Schools (TRACS). Schools of ministry and institutes are not eligible for accreditation, since a school must incorporate separately as an educational non-profit corporation and be licensed by its state to award degrees in order to pursue the accreditation process. Church-based Bible colleges, both two and four-year, may begin the process of accreditation with the ABHE or TRACS after five years of operation. This may include years the school operated as an institute before incorporating as a college. Detailed guidance on making the transition from institute to Bible college to ABHE accreditation is found at the end of section 2 of the Handbook.

Though formal Bible institutes are not eligible for accreditation, they are eligible for affiliate membership with ABHE. ABHE membership has meaningful benefits that greatly enhance the quality of operations at an institute. See page 4.123-127 for details on applying for affiliate status with ABHE.

### 13. What fees and expenses are required for Foursquare institute certification?

- ◆ \$100 for initial application for certification.
- ◆ \$100 annual certification renewal submitted with the annual institutes report.
- ◆ \$100 registration fee for the annual symposium, plus travel expenses.

### 14. How can students obtain college credit for institute courses they complete?

If a student desires to transfer institute work toward a Bible college degree, the institute can enter into a relationship with an area Bible college or a Foursquare Bible college to arrange for transfer of credit from the institute to the Bible college. This formal arrangement is called an articulation agreement. The Handbook provides detailed instructions on facilitating an articulation agreement. If no articulation agreement exists, the student can still request for his or her institute work to be evaluated by the college for transfer credit. Many Bible colleges are willing to evaluate institute credit for this purpose.

### 15. Must institutes submit annual reports?

In order to renew their certification, all institutes are required to submit an annual report to the institutes office by July 15 each year. See the Handbook pages 4.89-4.92 for further details and examples.

## Start-Up Checklist

- Request and receive approval from your district supervisor.
- Obtain a copy of the Handbook for the Operation of Foursquare Ministry Training Institutes, Schools of Ministry and Church-Based Bible Colleges (available online or from the National Church Office).
- Complete the Application for Certification form and submit it with the \$100 application fee to the National Church Office.
- Application and materials will be reviewed by the Institutes director and an onsite appraisal may be scheduled.
- Upon the director's approval, the application is submitted to the Foursquare Board of Directors for approval.
- When approval from the Board of Directors is received, the institute is certified for the current year.