

Starting a new School of Biblical Studies

To the campus YWAM leadership that is considering an SBS

We are excited that you are considering beginning a School of Biblical Studies in your ministry location. This is a document to give you an overview of the requirements of the school and what it entails to start an SBS in a new location.

A. Leadership and Staff

1. The SBS leader must have successfully completed the nine months SBS and have been on staff for a minimum of 9 months (all three quarters). The leader should come with a strong recommendation from his/her SBS leader and also from the leader where they staffed. The leader should possess : a vision for the school, a gift in teaching and an ability to lead in logistics and administration know -how.
2. To start a school, you need more than just a leader. You need approximately 1 staff per 4 students. All staff teaching in the SBS need to have completed an SBS. So you need a team to start an SBS. It is ideal if some of the staff have had staff experience in an SBS. It is difficult if you have a leader and all new staff who have not staffed before. So it is best if a team from your location goes to a nearby SBS and attends the SBS and then staffs at that established location for a minimum of one year. Several SBS plants have had leaders that staff more than one year to get additional experience.
3. In some cases logistical , administrative staff have served in SBS. In these cases, they would not need to have attended an SBS as their duties are only logistical.
4. The staff on the SBS do 90% of the teaching in the school. The YWAM location needs to recognize that this requires hours of preparation. The SBS staff are not just organizing guest speakers, they are the speakers. This needs to be considered by the YWAM location leadership when demands are placed on the SBS staff. This school is not like other YWAM schools in that the staff are the lecturers week after week for 9 months.
5. Besides lecturing, the SBS staff attend class with the students, they grade the students' work and coach them through their studies. On top of this there is the normal load of counseling with students and staff and training new staff. The SBS staff person will grade an average of 5,000 written pages during the 9 months

B.Demands on the Student

1. The SBS student spends 9 hours a week in class plus 2 or 3 hours in worship/ intercession. In addition there are work duties and maybe outreach. The student's independent study(outside of the classroom hours) can be about 36 hours. This time is needed for the student to complete each book requirement. The SBS is intensive. We feel the priority is for them to learn the Bible. All this to say that there is not a lot of free time for outside activities and schedule changes.

C.Logistics

1. An SBS needs a place for students to study. The SBS classroom or an alternative work space needs to be available for the students from 5 a.m. to 10 p.m. Students needs tables or desks and good lighting.
2. A Library of basic research materials is essential for the SBS. This should include atlases and Bible background book and Bible dictionaries, concordances and Bible Encyclopedias. Another alternative is several computer with Bible software.
3. Other classroom needs are a large whiteboard and if possible a screen and projector for videos.
4. It is not essential for a student to have a computer. The charts can be drawn by hand and it is not too time consuming and it has benefits.
5. It is our opinion that a one language school works best. Bilingual schools have to have enough staff skilled in both languages. This means that every document, video presentation and lecture must be translated.

6. The school should be registered with the University of the Nations.

D. YWAM location and Leadership Backing

1. A successful SBS requires base support. An ideal situation would be for the YWAM Location staff to oversee the food, housing and finances, etc. This frees the SBS staff to do their job and not get overworked juggling multiple duties.
2. The YWAM Location staff and leadership need to back the school in the area of ongoing encouragement. Often the SBS can get lost in the comings and goings of 3 DTs and other schools. People forget them and what they are doing as they are not often showcased. For a school to be successful the whole ministry must catch the vision for the school. Some bases have asked to have a base and then decided after running one for a time that they no longer want a 9 month school and switch to a shorter Bible program. This is disheartening to those who put in years to make an SBS happen.
3. In SBS, we teach people to think and to voice their thoughts and opinions on the Scriptures however this may spill over into other areas as well. We teach people to think for themselves. This, at times, has been viewed as disrespectful and rebellious. It is neither of those two things. It is simply asking questions.

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