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.
## Training and Types

### 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 degree is preferable) from an accredited college, Bible institutes can connect with Bible colleges to establish relationships to 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.