

*BIBLE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION:
PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION*

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INTRODUCTION

Every person on earth is valuable to God. He provided for mankind the blessings of Eden which man rejected in exchange for the result of disobedience...death. In His Divine Mission, God provided each soul on earth the chance to repent and be saved in His Son Jesus. Since the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth in Christ, believers had the opportunity and the privilege to learn from the Master Teacher the way of the Lord.

Christians were given the mandate to teach others the same principles of the Kingdom (Matthew 28:20). It is imperative to notice that in this verse, Jesus promised to be forever with His Church, even during its teaching activities. The *Tanach* was the text book for the Jewish religion. Together with the New Testament Scriptures the Holy Writings became the source of teaching for the Church throughout the ages.

The Holy Spirit gives gifts to the Church, such as the gift of teaching, to specific people. Teachers bear this responsibility of how their students understand and apply the Scriptures in their lives. Through the years, as early as the second century, Bible Schools were established. Even the heretical Gnostics founded their schools. These historical facts show how important Bible Schools are for Christendom. They exist for the benefits of students attending the classes. As most classes deal with the morals and ethics, these character-shaping institutions must be noted for their excellence in integrity. The Bible School stands on three pillars which are God, planning and organization, and communication of the message.

The students are the most valuable resource Bible schools have. The president has the ultimate responsibility to see that all those working with him, understand the ultimate goal of the School; which is, “teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:20, NIV). Warren Wiersbe comments that this includes the whole of Scripture. Man lives by every Word of God. Therefore, believers are to be taught the whole counsel of God (Acts

20:27) (2004). All Scripture is useful and advantageous and helpful (ὠφέλιμος) to all Christians. This is especially true to Bible School students. It trains them for their calling of shaping others into Christlikeness. The Bible School which fails to reach this goal is not in line with the *Missio Dei*.

PART ONE

THE VITALITY OF GOOD BIBLE SCHOOL PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION

The Vitality of Planning

Practicality of Planning

Good planning is a vital aspect of any successful organization. It will characterize the institution and judge its seriousness of existence. Short and long-range preparation will provide clearly understood boundaries, which identify the Bible School's objectives and goals (McCorkie and Archibald 1982, 48—49). Planning charts and a written mission statement are very important. However, unless they find themselves in practical ministry, it will have only what Kenneth Gangel calls, "aesthetic value" (1997, 110). One of the first questions needed to be asked is, "Why do we need a Bible School?"

Need Prompting Planning

Malta needs a Bible school for several reasons. These include the following: (1) Until recently¹ there was no other accredited Bible School meeting the needs of all Evangelical and Pentecostal communities; (2) most leaders have no seminary training in ministry, including Biblical and theological studies; (3) after forty years of existence, the Maltese Church must become indigenous and not dependent of foreign missionaries to do the local work *aeternus*; (4) new Maltese leadership need and must have the opportunity to train for ministry; (5) for

¹ GIT signed a protocol with the MQC on March 22, 2011, and received a provisional license on December 12, 2013. GIT could only operate as a distance learning school, however, with the provision of a MEPA licensed building, it can legally operate as a normal school.

scholarship and ethical reasons, Malta needs an accredited Bible School which offers recognized accredited study programs; (6) since there is lack of manpower, a Bible school administered by different local churches from different denominations will provide “maximal participation” of gifted teachers; and (7) maximal participation will involve teachers from various churches, thus providing opportunities to promote more unity between the churches and stability of doctrines.

Planning for Student Participation and Creativity

The greatest asset of the Bible School is the students. These students, in the Bible School’s vision, are today’s and tomorrow’s leaders. Therefore, their participation in the School academic and day to day participation should be part of good planning. The student’s participation and his or her feeling of being part of the school (Gangel, 111) will allow them to experiment with their creativity. “Often, able young people can learn new skills and continue to serve the college in a variety of ways” (Simmons 198, 63). Student participation is also an internal quality assurance requirement by the NCFHE.

The Vitality of Good Administration

Good Administration is Responsible

Both large and small Bible schools, although one is more complex than the other, have the same basic principles. The administrative roles’ principles will reveal the vitality and responsibility of the collegial effectiveness. This will be a testimony which goes beyond the school’s environment; it will be a witness to the Maltese people. It is a fact that even distance education universities, such as Global University, need a sound collegial team. The national director administrating the national office could not administer to the students’ needs efficiently if he had decided to do all the work by himself. At some point the work would have become too big for him to handle on his own. This is one area of responsibility why a good administration team must be developed as early as possible.

Good Administration is Both People and Task Oriented

Rita J. Wolotkiewicz points out that organizational development is a concept applied to bringing about planned goals and objectives (1980, 204), some of which were mentioned above. The students and their needs will remain the focus point of attention. Therefore, the administration must be flexible in its managing of day to day tasks of the Bible School. Rules are *not* to be broken but to guide. Jesus was the personification of keeping God's commandments; however, He used guiding principles such as grace and mercy in His applications.

Good Administrators Need to Recognize Human Resources and Delegate

Administration involves strategy and innovation. Therefore, initiating and making space for change where needed is important. However, in a small Bible School, such as the writer is helping to establish, will need all the help it can get. God's gifts, given both to the collegial and the students, can be harnessed to work together. The writer is in a continuous learning curve to delegate routine administrative functions such as financial and office administration. This provided the space for officials to help with organization of the administration and carry the necessary responsibility to ensure quality of service and efficiency.

The brief hypothesis mentioned, to be valid, must be measured with its effectiveness. This is the degree to which the objectives have been achieved (Wolotkiewicz, 18). Consequently, a good administration provides "clearly understood boundaries to focus the thinking of those who plan at all levels on desired accomplishments in the future" (McCorkle and Archibald). All that has been mentioned above has to be energized from a servanthood style of leadership, promoting a Christlike attitude and responsible behavior to the students.

*PART TWO**ORGANIZATIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN
FOR BIBLE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION*

The Planning and Establishment of a Bible School

Global Institute of Theology-Malta (GIT) is the official name for Global University (GU) in Malta. Since the writer was entrusted with the responsibility to direct the national office, GIT has made positive progress and is an educative influence to the Maltese Evangelical and Pentecostal communities. The first step the new Director took was establishing a Board of Trustees which will support his efforts to promote Christian education in Malta. The Director had been indirectly involved with GU for a number of years, teaching GU courses in different churches. Therefore, he asked pastors and other mature Christians, who are also GU students, to form the first GU Board in Malta.

The Board wrote a constitution to guide them with policies, objectives and goals, both near and future. In order to maximize participation and create interest, the constitution was signed at a breakfast meeting where all pastors and leaders were invited to attend². Most of those present gave their support for GU to be the leading educational institute to the Evangelical (charismatic and non-charismatic) and Pentecostal Churches. The structure and responsibilities of the Board is seen in chart 1 below.

Named Positions and Relationships Between Positions

Jesus called GU to be one of His educational tools on earth. The Holy Spirit anointed people to establish it through a series of events. He chose its administrators and officials to oversee it for Him. GU's influence also reached the small Island of Malta. Passing over the important GU's bureaucracy, the Maltese National Director is directly responsible to the GU Vice President of Global Operations and works directly under GU Student Services, and

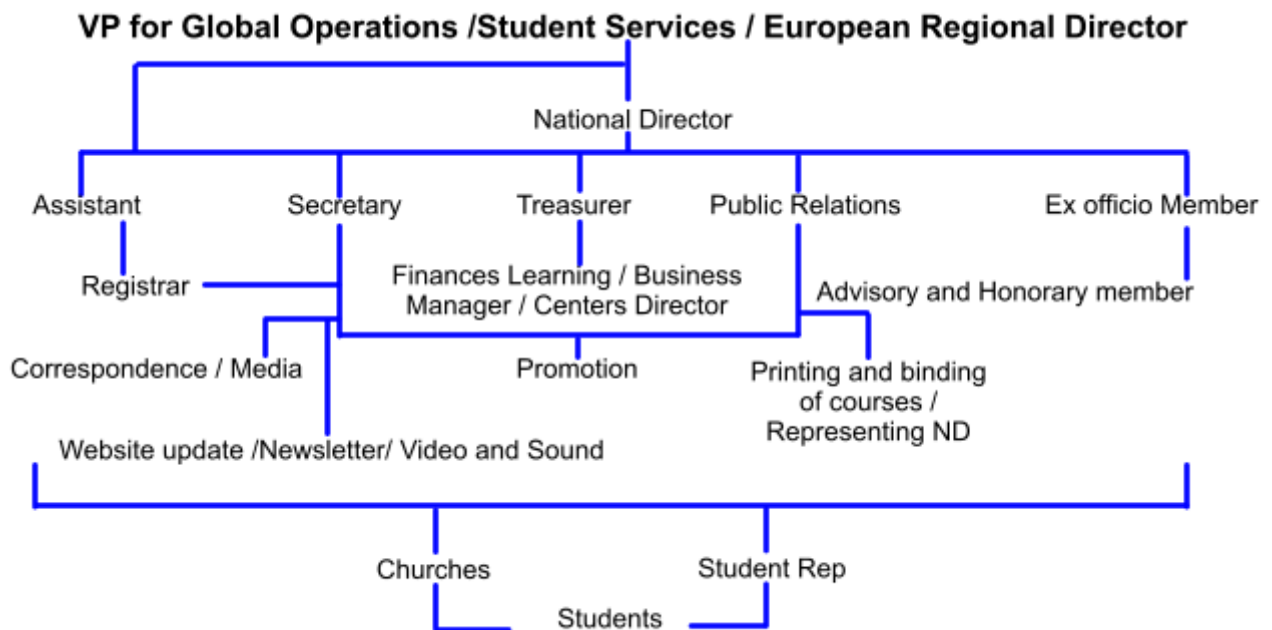
² <http://www.git.edu.mt/board%20of%20directors.htm>

GU's European Regional Director. Under this structure, the National Director works with the local Board of Directors³ as a team. All board members meet regularly to evaluate the progress, discuss and pray about problems, and adjust goals if needed.

However, each board member has his or her own responsibilities. The chart below has a number of offices, which at the time of writing are being filled with the present board members. Conversely, it also depicts what the plans are for the near future as some posts are still vacant. Consequently, it will best to consider the posts as "functions," rather than people. That is, one person on the board fills one or more functions as part of his or her responsibilities (Smith 1991, 54). The Board is determined not to fill the offices with people who are not called, or competent to the responsibilities the post demands. Hypothetically, the writer will assume that the offices are filled with the appropriate staff.

³ The Maltese Board of Directors functions more as an Administrative Council.

Chart 1



The Director⁴

Global University’s network of Regional and National Directors form the framework for the international structure of the university. In fact, the driving force for GU activities on every continent is the Director and the Director’s staff. The Director legally represent GU in Malta. His main responsibility is to ensure the internal quality assurance GU is legally bound to provide. This responsibility is three-fold. It is towards (1) Jesus who established the ministry, (2) the local educational authorities (NCHE), and (3) and the students without prejudice.

Assistant Director⁵

The assistant to the director will also have direct communication with GU officials. The person corresponds with Student Services and the Vice President when needed. The office has the responsibility to oversee and keep all records. GIT has a policy that all emails

⁴ For a detailed job description explaining the guidelines of the director see document “General Guidelines for Director.

⁵ Ibid

sent by any board member is to be copied to the National Director, and anyone else concerned. The assistant to the director oversees the registrar who enrolls new students and other record keeping, which is kept at the Assistant's office. The Registrar is also responsible for sending Student Enrollment Cards to Student Services and keep the received exams on file.

The Secretary

The secretary has the responsibility to cooperate with the assistant to the director in sending letter, emails and other clerical work such as the keeping of the minutes. The office requires coordinating with the Registrar and the treasurer concerning payment made by students for courses and exams. The Secretary also coordinates with the media department by keeping the website updated, sending the monthly newsletter⁶ and passing on to the media department videos or recordings of teachings taught in the Bible School or other learning centers.

The Treasurer

The treasurer/business manager has the responsibilities of all accounts and financial transactions. The public relation officer has responsibilities to promote GIT in Malta and the courses the Bible School offers. The office also prints and binds GU courses and makes them available to the students. Equally important, he represents the National Director in governmental offices and other errands when needed. The Ex-officio member is the Southern Europe AG Mission Office. The role of this office to advice, support and guide the GIT Board of Directors.

GIT is an inclusive Bible School. It works to maximize Evangelical and Pentecostal participation. Therefore, GIT keeps in touch, at least monthly with all the churches in Malta

⁶ For an example follow kindly this [link](#).

and Gozo in general, and specifically with interested local leadership. However, GIT keeps also in close contact with its students on a personal level.

PART THREE

ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE IN ORGANIZATION AND COMMUNICATION

Biblical Precedents for Excellence in Communication

Where two or more people meet, breakdown of communication is bound to happen. It is a matter of when, and not if. In a Bible school, communication is a key factor. First, the teachers must be excellent communicators. They are communicating the Words of Life to their students, who in turn will communicate the message to others. The Biblical principle of this philosophy can be understood by two Biblical precedents. (1) The first example is from the secular world. Even in ages past, the secular society demanded excellence from students and teachers. Young men who were to serve in Nebuchadnezzar's government were to be "qualified" to serve. They were to learn the language and rules of the kingdom before serving the Chaldeans (Daniel 1:2—5). If pagan and secularist societies demand qualifications, how much more must the Church demand qualifications of her ministers of God's Word, whether they are the Bible School teachers or the preachers behind the pulpit. (2) Paul gives the instruction to Timothy, his student, to entrust his (Paul's) teaching to reliable teachers who were also "qualified" to teach others (2 Timothy 2:2). Here, one can see the principle of the Dean and administrators instructing the faculty to choose competent (ἱκανοὺς) teachers to teach soundly in their Bible Schools.

Secondly, good communication between the administrators' departments and students gives signals a dynamic Bible School built on healthy human relations. As the whole point of a Bible School is to build the kingdom of God in the aspect of Christian education, clear communication is essential. It is the ingredient of sound administration (Durasoff 2005, 19).

It helps to (1) to maintain unity in the school, (2) keep goals in focus, (3) maintain a commitment to reach objectives, and (4) “who is doing what, and why and how it is being accomplished (19). Even in his own experience, the writer notes that the willingness to share information with GIT teachers and pastors wins him respect and trust. The excellence in communication keeps the Bible school and the churches working together. The “Tower of Babel” incident clearly shows how communication was important for the builders. Even God said about the builders, “If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them” (Genesis 11:6-7 NIV). Consequently, transparent communication gives the quality assurance of the school visibility, an important link for the credibility of the school.

Achieving Excellence Communication

Building and maintaining communication is a learned skill. A number of Biblical characters knew they had communication problems. Moses and Jeremiah are good examples. Both thought they are not able to communicate God’s message to their world. Many experiences this frustration. “However, every good leader is a good communicator” (Rush 2003, 122). A Bible School is built up of leaders teaching leaders. One basic imperative for communication is what Gangel calls, “the messages of communication” (410). There are six elements which describe this principle. (1) What the source intends to say. (2) What the source actually says. (3) What the source thinks he has said. (4) What the receiver wants to hear. (5) What the receiver hears. (6) What the receiver thinks he heard (410—413). All of these elements shape the message which is transmitted from the sender and how it is interpreted by the receiver.

Communication is a Fundamental need for Human Relations

Human relations are important to God. He sent the Most Excellent Human Relation Officer from heaven to build a relationship between a loving God and His estranged creation.

Consequently, it is most important for a Bible School to use any means to keep cooperation between all departments healthy. The Psalmist observed the procession of the Israelites going up to Jerusalem to worship. He witnessed their unity of purpose and commented, “How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity” (Psalms 133:1). The communication was clear and human relations were to their best. In fact, God pours His blessings on such relationships (133:3). Good communication is essential to the development of unity and motivation which so important for a Bible School. “It is the basis for unlimited group innovation, creativity, and achievement” (Rush, 109). Seymour, enforces this concept when he claims that excellency requires honesty, efficiency, openness, ... and fault-free lines of communication. Consequently, these goals further substantiate the “visibility” that a theological school’s quality assurance deserves.

CONCLUSION

The integration of faith and learning is a series challenges to the Bible School. Without this integration, there is no justification for its existence (Oats 1995, 131). It is what makes a Bible School different from secular colleges. Christianity makes it possible for this integration to take place. Christian faith is not a program the Bible School offers, but should be the embodiment of it. This is why serious planning must take place before one endeavors to start a Bible School. Without prayer and a clear direction from God, the Bible School would be just another educational Institute.

The Bible clearly teaches that the Church is the body of Christ. It is an active body operating with gifts given by the Holy Spirit. This is the reason why maximum participation is encouraged at GIT. Pastors and students can offer the gifts to make the school successful and meaningful for the Kingdom of God. Its administration is not interested in self-glory. They envision people learning sound Biblical principles to pastor churches and lead churches. They envision teachers and preachers handling with all integrity and excellence the word of

God. Sandin notes that most churches lost their influence on society (1982. 96). With careful planning guided by the Holy Spirit, the Bible School can produce a new generation of Maltese Evangelicals and Pentecostals, who will influence the Island with God's holiness, purity and integrity of Character. The Bible School can be the means of communicating God's will on the Island.

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