

## Teaching the Bible in Public Schools

As a part of Essentials in Education's commitment to supporting our clientele, we are providing this resource to help you write a proposal for implementing a Bible course in your school. This generic proposal develops four major points to be considered in presenting information to assist school or district personnel to make a decision to offer such a course.

- **Part 1: General Information**
- **Part 2: Rationale/Justification (Needs Assessment)**
- **Part 3: Instructional Information**
- **Part 4: Anticipated Budget requirements and Expenditures**

The information provided under each point is to help you in the writing process. You will need to adapt it to suit your needs. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions during this process at [info@bibleliteracy.org](mailto:info@bibleliteracy.org).

# NEW COURSE PROPOSAL

## PART 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

Name of School(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Proposal Completed by: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name and Contact Information)

For School Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Course Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Some Options

- **The Bible and Its Influence** (Note: This is the title of the textbook.)
- **The Impact of the Bible on the History and/or Literature of Western Civilization**
- **The Bible: Its Influence on Literature, World Events, Art, Music**
- **The Bible and Its Influence on the World**

**Date:** The date of submission

**Campus:** List the high school campuses that are interested in offering the course.

**Amount of Credit:**

- Many of the schools teach the course as a two semester course. The first semester concentrates on the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) and its impact and the second semester studies the New Testament and its impact. Some schools combine the courses into a single semester course, but must reduce much of the content.

**Type of Credit:** Indicate the discipline (English/Social Studies) and if the course would be eligible for state credit or would be used to fulfill a local credit.

## PART 2: RATIONALE/JUSTIFICATION (Needs Assessment)

According to the First Amendment and Supreme Court cases, the option for a Bible course in public schools is legal. Several state legislatures have enacted legislation supporting schools in this endeavor. In a study of 39 English professors at 34 top rated universities, they were asked to respond to the statement, "Regardless of a person's faith, an educated person needs to know about the Bible", not one professor disagreed. *Bible Literacy Report II*, Bible Literacy

Project, June, 2006) The Bible has a major influence on Western civilization in many areas such as literature, art, music, government, history, etc. It is important for our students to know the content of the Bible and understand this influence, especially in the academic areas of English and Social Studies. Some of the major points are summarized below.

#### **English:**

- Many great works of literature (both classic and modern), music, and art use Biblical imagery to express major thoughts. Students who do not have knowledge of the Bible content are at a disadvantage when analyzing and determining the meaning of passages containing those allusions.
- In his famous speech, Martin Luther King, Jr. said: "...I've been to the mountaintop... And I've looked over. And I've seen the Promised Land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight, that we, as a people, will get to the Promised Land." To fully understand the meaning of this imagery requires knowledge of the Old Testament story of the Jewish nation. Many authors throughout history have used biblical imagery to express thoughts and feelings in their novels and other literary works.
- This course is an academic course that will allow students to reinforce English skills and analyze biblical content and its application to various forms of literature, while being held to high academic standards.

#### **Social Studies:**

- The Mayflower Compact, Abraham Lincoln's "House Divided" speech, the temperance and abolitionist movements, and many others relate to biblical content.
- This course is an academic course that will allow students to reinforce social studies skills and analyze biblical content and its application to various history and political events, while being held to high academic standards.

In this section, you may want to include some references local or state instructional English or social studies objectives that could be incorporated in this course. For example, what state English composition objectives could be reinforced in requiring various reports during the Bible course?

### **PART 3: INSTRUCTIONAL INFORMATION**

#### **Sample activities, strategies, major resources, and materials to be used**

1. Activities:
  - a. Students will receive unit and chapter objectives and hints to guide their preparation for the lesson. Graphic organizers may be used to help students in assigned tasks.
  - b. A Bible text will be used to initiate the class discussion.

- c. Assigned tasks will be given to the class. In some cases the work is independent and in other cases, it is collaborative.
  - d. Students will define vocabulary words to be used in the lesson, they will identify the places and people involved, and they will study cross-curricular connections (literature/language, social studies, and the arts).
  - e. Students will complete activities that involve critical thinking skills
  - f. Throughout the course, students will use reading, writing, and analysis skills to complete assigned tasks.
  - g. As in any academic class, students will be expected to complete homework assignments, take tests, complete projects (group/individual), and exhibit appropriate classroom behavior.
2. Strategies: The teacher will employ several instructional strategies such as
- a. using technology when appropriate.
  - b. mixing independent and collaborative instructional environments.
  - c. guiding discussions in a classroom environment.
  - d. correlating classroom activities to the appropriate state/local standards.
3. Resources:
- a. Bible
  - b. Textbook: *The Bible and Its Influence* – Second Edition (Print/Digital) This book has been used in more than 625 high schools throughout the United States.
  - c. Teacher Edition: *The Bible and Its Influence* – Second Edition
    - i. Teacher Lesson Plans for each Unit
    - ii. Multiple Classroom Activities for each lesson
  - d. Resource CD- Pacing Guide, Graphic Organizers, People of Influence, Places of Influence, Chapter and Unit Tests, Unit Bibliography (scholarly research, resources, and other helpful information), Unit Project Activities, Unit Project Rubrics, Unit Writing Activity, Unit Writing Rubrics
  - e. Additional resources identified via the Internet
4. Materials: Course Basic List developed by the teacher. Each student should bring a Bible of his/her choice. Note: Some may elect to bring a smart phone with a Bible App.

#### D. Method for evaluating student performance.

Students will be evaluated consistent with any other academic class. Grades will be assigned according to the school standards: periodic assessments (tests), assignments (in class/homework), projects (individual/collaborative), and other criteria developed by the teacher.

#### E. Qualifications/certifications/experience required of teacher(s):

The qualifications of the teacher depend on the subject under which the class is taught. If it being taught as English credit, then the teacher should be a certified English teacher; if students will receive social studies credit, then the teacher should be a certified social studies teacher. No Bible courses are required of the teacher.

## **PART 4: ANTICIPATED BUDGET REQUIREMENTS AND EXPENDITURES**

1. Payroll: Since this course will be taught by either an English or social studies teacher, it would be a class in that teacher's schedule. In other words, one or more of the classes he/she would be teaching. There are two ways to consider this point:

- a. This is revenue neutral since the teacher would be teaching a class anyway.
- b. If the teacher is "paid" for 6 periods per day, this would be 1/6 of his/her salary.

2. Professional and Contracted Services: None

Note: Essentials in Education will provide training for teachers and administrators. Topics included in the sessions include Legal Basis for Course, Instructional Strategies, and Use of Resources. Teachers will develop lesson plans and a syllabus for the course.

3. Supplies and Materials:

*The Bible and Its Influence*

- a. Student Textbook: (print version \$70 + \$6 S&H) (digital version \$60)
- b. Teacher Edition: (print version \$105 + \$6 S&H) (digital version \$90)  
(Note: If a class set of 25 or more student editions are purchased, the teacher edition is provided free of charge.)
- c. Test Master: print version only -- \$40 + 6 S&H

Note: A teacher might want to include other items such as digital maps, projection device to use Google Earth to view sites mentioned in the Bible, etc. These costs should be indicated in this section.

4. Travel: None

5. Capital Outlay: None