

# Getting Started Guide

## What is BASIC trying to accomplish?

Right now in cities all over the United States, there are local churches placed within short distances of colleges and universities. Most of these churches make no focused effort to reach out to the students that are so close. It should be no surprise that young adults are the most missing age group in the Church today.

One of the reasons churches don't make an effort is that they have embraced a thinking that says, "In order to reach college students, one must be a specialist/expert in college ministry." This has led to the creation of specialist para church organizations. These organizations and specialists have done a fantastic job recruiting laborers and ministering, but we are missing out on the potential of tens of thousands of local churches that could be contributing to this mission field.

What could be a more Biblical, cost-effective, and strategic way to reach college campuses than to use an already established local church that has set its sights on seeing its area college campus won for Christ? The volunteers, resources, and community are already present. And the church is in the perfect position to teach how students can contribute their spiritual gifts within the body of Christ.

It's time for the Church to stop shirking the responsibility to reach college students for Christ by leaving it to the "experts." And that's where BASIC comes in. We strive to be experts in college ministry, but specifically *servicing and equipping churches* to effectively reach and disciple college students. Our goal is to help your church run a successful on-campus college ministry by providing resources, leadership training, conferences, mission opportunities, and more.

## What is a church advisor?

A church advisor is someone selected by a local church to minister and give direction to a BASIC group. The advisor is the lifeblood of a BASIC group since he or she provides leadership, stability, and care for the group.

Some churches put together an advisor team, where a number of individuals fulfill the advisors' responsibilities. Other churches choose a single individual or couple to oversee the group.

There is no mold for what an advisor should look like. Successful advisors have been male, female, single, married, young adults, and empty-nesters. The important qualities are a burden and vision for reaching college students for Christ, and a willingness to put in the energy and time required.

### *Advisor's role*

The church advisor is *primarily responsible for the spiritual leadership of the group*. This includes:

- ▶ Discipling student leaders so that they will grow into reproducing spiritual leaders.
- ▶ Overseeing the teaching of the Word.
- ▶ Relational, one-on-one ministry with students.

The advisor acts as liaison between the students and the church. This entails:

- ▶ Communicating the vision and teaching of the local church to the students.
- ▶ Communicating the needs of the students to the church.

### ***Other info***

- ▶ Church advisors will have more responsibilities at the beginning of a year than at the end. Eventually, many of the organizational needs and functions can be student-run.
- ▶ It is best for church advisors to commit for 3 to 5 years (this is not a necessity, but rather an ideal). Students will come and go, but the advisor and church provide stability for the ministry.
- ▶ The advisor will have a prominent role in shaping the meetings and activities of the BASIC group.

## **What does a BASIC group do?**

### ***General meetings***

- ▶ BASIC general meetings are held weekly. These can include: worship, a message from the Word, testimonies, prayer, and announcements. This is generally the first phase of starting an on-campus ministry.
- ▶ If you have the resources available, bringing food to these meetings can encourage fellowship. It is a “social lubricant” that gets people talking!
- ▶ Advisors usually share the messages at general meetings. There can also be guest speakers such as area pastors, Christian professors, student leaders, etc. or even video sermons.

### ***Other meetings***

- ▶ You will need to hold weekly or bi-weekly leadership meetings with student leaders. This can be done before or after a general meeting for ease in scheduling since that evening is already set aside in everyone’s schedule.
- ▶ As the group grows, it may be beneficial to start small groups, Bible studies, evangelism, prayer meetings, etc. These can be run by student leaders you trust.
- ▶ Once the group grows, bigger and more specialized events can be held, like social, evangelistic, or service events.

### ***BASIC events***

- ▶ BASIC holds a conference each semester (two per year), bringing together all of our groups for a weekend of encouragement, worship, and ministry.
- ▶ BASIC holds an annual leadership event, BASIC Live. This event is free and streamed online. It includes teaching, free resources, and strategic planning sessions for student leaders and church advisors.
- ▶ All of these conferences are important and we have seen that the groups who regularly attend are more likely to succeed.

## **What are the first steps to starting a BASIC group?**

1. Begin praying daily for the campus and figure out if there are others from your church who are going to work as a team with you.
2. Find interested students in your church or on campus and communicate your vision to them.
3. Decide what time and day to hold general meetings. Typically, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday nights work best for most colleges, but groups at community colleges usually try to meet during the day or at the end of the workday.
4. Find a public place to meet on campus that is normally available during the day/time chosen.
5. Hand out flyers on campus each week advertising your first couple meetings. BASIC provides free flyers to help you get the word out.
6. Connect students with those who can provide rides to church.
7. Begin looking into the process of getting recognized as an official student organization. This typically opens up the opportunities to reserve rooms, receive funding, and advertise publicly with posters.
8. Initially, we suggest you talk with someone weekly on the BASIC staff for advice and to answer any questions. Our job is to serve you!