

# Language School Handbook

## DLS

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### Purpose Statement Of DLS

Our language school's purpose is to guide Christian men and women during their time of language acquisition and help train them for full-time ministry in mainland China. We desire to help each student to effectively learn the language, build relationships with the Chinese people in the Chinese language and to teach you how to evangelize, disciple, plant churches and train others.

Our goal is not only to help you learn the Chinese language but to help you become effective church-planting missionaries inside mainland China. Therefore, we only accept those with the desire to have this type of ministry.

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### You Need 2,200 Hours Of Study Time

According to "[Foreign Service Institute](#)" you need approximately "88 weeks (2200 hours)" to learn the Chinese language as an English speaker because Chinese is exceptionally difficult for native English speakers. But after this particular study time, you will reach "General

Professional Proficiency in Speaking" and "General Professional Proficiency in Reading". Therefore, It is our goal to help you accomplish the needed 2200 hours of particular study time so that you can become proficient in speaking and reading Chinese.

Using their calculations, you need to be studying 25 hours a week for 88 weeks. There are 52 weeks in a year and 104 weeks in two years. That means there is plenty of time within a two-year period to learn Chinese if you are committed.

On top of this normal amount of study, we also will specialize in "Bible terminology" so there is added time for those who want to become effective in their ministries and proficient in teaching the Bible.

Finally, we will use the 25 hours a week of guided study as a standard for our program and encourage that you study at least 48 weeks of each year.

Let me encourage you to start counting your hours (keep track of each hour you study)!

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### Requirements

The following requirements are given so that the students will know the commitment level of the school and what is to be expected of them.

#### General Requirements

1. For couples: the husband and the wife are both required to be full-time students (this means 25 hours a week).

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2. For children: older children can attend the language school; younger children should be put in a Chinese daycare or watched by an in-house Chinese nanny or maid (we encourage Chinese only so that the children will learn the language as well). The children's schooling cannot interfere with the language school of the parents, including homeschool. Plans should be arranged prior to starting the language school to avoid any conflict. If there are any concerns about this, please discuss this with us before arriving on the field.
3. The students should participate in all the normal Chinese services and activities of the church while in language school. The students are not encouraged to start a church or lead their own ministry while in language school, but to serve in the church. They can ask the missionary what is the best way to serve and help in the church so that they stay active and don't become stagnant—they will be given more opportunities as their new language permits. (Concerning English ministry or services: the rule is that it is generally best not to do "main ministry"—lead or host English Bible studies, etc.—in English while you are in language school, but if this is already an existing outreach ministry within the church then you are welcome to be involved and to participate as long as it doesn't hinder the main thing—learning Chinese.)
4. The students should arrive 4-6 weeks before they start studying to allow for adequate time to rest and set up their home.
5. The students should be willing to submit to the leadership of the church (foreign and Chinese), veteran missionaries (husbands and wives) and school (teachers) during their time enrolled in the language school.
6. The students should agree and pay the following cost: the cost of DLS School, the university tuition, visas, books, and materials.
7. The students should make up the work they miss for being sick (or other reasons) according to the teacher's requirements.
8. The students should attend any classes, apart from the language classes, that the veteran missionary may choose to teach the students (culture, church-planting, discipleship, culture shock, etc.). There shouldn't be an extra charge for these classes except for the cost of books.
9. The students must have a good attitude towards the missionaries, the Chinese people, all teachers and know they represent this ministry and more importantly the Lord Jesus. They shouldn't presume to know more than that the missionaries, the Chinese people, or their teachers about the language or culture, interpersonal relationship, etc. but should have a learning attitude and ask questions when there is a misunderstanding about something. Pride and culture shock are two major problems all new students have to deal with when they arrive on the field.
10. The students should agree to the two-year plan of DLS, which includes the following generic schedule below. Adjustments will be made as needed since the university classes sometimes plan classes in the afternoon. If you would like to continue studying in the afternoon we can help provide a tutor or help you with study ideas, such as going to the market or doing a route of listeners.

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Husbands

University Classes	Lunch/Break	DLS Classes (Maybe University)
8:00-11:35	11:35-1:00	1:00-2:30

Wives

DLS Classes	Lunch/Break	DLS Classes
8:00-11:35	11:35-1:00	1:00-2:30

### Concerning Universities

11. For husbands: the husband (not the wife) is required to enroll full-time in one of the major universities recommended by the veteran missionary. Your visas will be granted from the universities as students, therefore, you will be expected to fulfill all the requirements (attendance, grades, passing/failing test, homework) of the university and will be at their mercy to be approved for a visa or have your visa revoked if you don't attend or have failing grades. The purpose of learning at the university is to give your learning time structure, accountability and help you learn in the areas of speaking, reading, writing and listening. The cost of the universities and visa are separate from the cost of the DLS. The estimated cost of the university is around \$3,000 per student per year (plus any extra fees).

### Concerning DLS Classes

12. For wives: the wife is required to enroll full-time in the DLS classes. This should be 25 hours a week. You will be expected to fulfill all the requirements (attendance, grades, passing/failing test, homework). The purpose of learning at the DLS is to give your learning time structure, accountability and help you learn in the areas of speaking, reading, writing and listening, but without the extra load of homework that comes from the universities. The cost of DLS and visas are separate from the cost of the university. The estimated cost of the DLS classes for a full-time student are around \$7,200 per student per year (plus any extra fees).

13. For husbands: the husband should take 1.5 hours of afternoon classes. Outside of the university classes, the DLS tuition will cover a required minimum of 7.5 hours of class per week. The purpose of the DLS classes is to help you learn to speak properly, correcting your tones, pronunciation, and accent. Also, through DLS you will learn the Bible vocabulary that is necessary for church ministry. The estimated cost of the DLS classes for a part-time student are around \$3,000 per student per year (plus any extra fees).

14. Each student is required to take any test or quiz that is given. Each student must maintain the grade point average of an 85% if they are to graduate from DLS.

15. All teachers at DLS will be Chinese, supplemented by veteran missionaries. The language school teacher will be hired by the missionary mentor and you should refer to the missionary mentor with any problems with the teacher.

16. The tuition cost of DLS is YEARLY but broken down into monthly payments for couples or per single adult as long as you are enrolled in the school (not based on the hours of class taken, so even if you cancel class one day you have to still pay for it). The cost for

each additional child will be calculated at the time of registration. Interns might receive a discounted rate for language school. The financial cost of the language school should be settled with the missionary mentor. (The actual cost will be decided upon arrival because it might change with the availability of teachers.)

17. For short-term interns: language school will be 4 hours a day 5 days a week, Tuesday through Friday, 8:00-12:00 AM. The first two hours of each class will focus on spoken Chinese and the last two hours will focus on written Chinese and listening practice.

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## **Our Language Classes**

Our classes are designed to help the students excel in spoken Chinese. Therefore, our classes are arranged as follows:

### **Classes For Full-time Students (During the 1.5 Hours)**

- Review your university lessons: We want our classes to help you excel at spoken Chinese, so spend no more than an hour reviewing your university lessons with the teacher as they correct your pronunciation and tones. Remember, this is not a time to do your university homework or assignments, but to focus on speaking the lesson correctly.
- Learning to Pray: Write a simple prayer in English and have it translate. You can practice this with one of your Christian teachers. Once you have it memorized and can say it with understanding, you should write another prayer, or expand on the old one. The teacher should not correct you during your prayer but will correct you when you are done praying.
- Study and memorize the bible verse. You will be given a list of Bible verse that needs to be memorized. Your goal should be to memorize one Bible verse a week—this includes speaking if from memory and writing the characters and pinyin. You can practice this with one of your teachers. You will be tested on these verses.

### **Classes For Full-time Students (During the 4 Hours)**

Note: The university has many breaks through the year. The two main breaks are “winter” and “summer”. During these breaks, you should be studying full-time at DLS. We have our own curriculum and during class, you will also be doing the following:

- Study the tone drills. First, review the previous classes tone drill (after your first day), then study that day’s tone drills. You should practice the tone drills one time for every hour of class that you have. The goal here is not to read the words with understanding, but to correctly say the tones with each different pronunciation and combination given.
- Study the lessons. First, review the previous class’ lesson (after your first day). You will move through the lessons at your own pace (but also be pushed to not go too slow). Second, study a new part of the lesson. The lessons are laid out in sentence patterns designed to help drill the grammatical patterns into your head. The words in the parenthesis are the new vocabulary. This should show you how to make a proper sentence using different vocabulary. Because these lessons are written to learn spoken Chinese, you—the learner should only pay attention to the pinyin, not the Chinese characters. What to do: Read through the example sentences, to get an understanding of how the sentence structure is arranged. Your teacher should correct you on every pronunciation and tone error that you make. They should only correct you three times per error and then move on to the next one. REMEMBER: You have to be thinking about what

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you are saying. If you find yourself simply repeating and not thinking about what you are doing, then take a short break and restart.

- **Weekly Test:** You will be able to take the test for each lesson when you feel comfortable enough to take it, but as a guide and to encourage progression you will be required to take a test on the last day of class every week (if you didn't take it earlier in the week). If you don't pass the test (85%) then you will have to review the lesson again and take the test again the following week. You also will be allowed to take the test home and study it. You will not be permitted to move on to the next lesson until you pass the test.

### **Other Aspects:**

- **Route of listeners:** When the weather permits, and you are not taking university classes you will be encouraged to write out ten sentences with the help of your teacher that you can say to others to practice your Chinese (you should do this for church services as well). After class, you will find 10 people and say these ten sentences to them. They probably will laugh or maybe not even understand what you are saying, but you are practicing speaking in the "wild" and hopefully, they will correct you along the way. You most likely won't understand their responses to the questions you ask them, but that is okay. You can try to write down their answers and ask your teacher the next day. As your language progresses, this will be a more enjoyable process because you are communicating with others outside of class. Once you feel comfortable with a sentence and have said it on your route of listeners at least once, then you and your teacher can write new ones for each day. If you don't feel comfortable, then you can keep the same sentences and say them each day until you do.
- **Study Characters.** We are encouraging our students to learn the 3000 Characters in the Chinese Bible. We will start with the most common and increase in sets of 250. After you learn the first set you will move on to the next set of 250 characters. In class, the teacher will introduce the character to you, you can quickly see its definition and usage and then learn the stroke order, which should be written out by the teacher. You should practice writing each character at least ten times while the teacher watches and corrects you. Each class should cover around 5-10 characters depending on your time and the difficulty of the characters. For homework, write each character 100 times in a practice notebook and show it to your teacher the next day. Third, you will be tested every day on the previous day's characters only. The last class of each week, your teacher will give you a test on all the characters that you have learned that week. He will say the character and you must write it accordingly. If there is more than one character with the same pronunciation, he will use it in a sentence for clarification. Each character missed should be reviewed until it is learned and passed on the test. Each day you can add new characters to replace the one that you learned. For example, if you study 40 characters a week and you missed 10 on your test. The next week you should only add 30 new characters and review 10. (Note: This is only for those who are not studying at the university. The university will give you enough characters to learn in a week.)

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### **Other Considerations**

- Plan your vacations ahead of time. You should take about two weeks of vacation a year.
- You are taking classes at the university but you are not a college student, therefore, when the university lets out for summer break, you are NOT on break, you have a job to do. Get with your missionary mentor so that you have a plan during summer and winter breaks and don't waste your time.

## Teamwork

Even though you are coming over as students, we want you to become part of our team. Missionary teams often don't work well and even are some of the biggest "culture shocks" that new missionaries experience when arriving on the field. This is a shame because Christians working together should be a great testimony to the everyone who witnesses it. Through our experiences (from the blog [here](#) and [here](#)) we have learned much about healthy teamwork.

First, why missionary teams? I think working in teams can benefit missionaries because:

- You can get more done.
- You can learn from those in different life stages.
- You can be encouraged by someone who has been there.
- You can teach the new and learn from the experienced.
- You can brainstorm with those who are like-minded.
- You can dream without being judged.
- You can be understood by other missionaries.

A team done right can become like a family who is rallied around a common goal or purpose. A team is about giving and taking. You will be benefited by it and should desire to benefit others. Why missionary teams? Because you need someone who says, "I got your back."

### Choosing Your Team

Choosing a team can be difficult. It is hard to find men you are willing to go into battle with.

A lot of people like the idea of teamwork but they have the wrong view of it. Therefore, the team idea doesn't last long and they simply become acquaintances.

So how exactly do you choose a team? Here is what I have discovered:

- Find those who have common ground as you. You don't have to do everything exactly the same but having the same doctrine and philosophy of ministry is going to be important.
- There needs to be a defined leader. Teams can get messy and there needs to be that person that can stop the noise and get everyone back on track. This leader won't abuse his influence and people aren't afraid to submit to him.
- Look for those who are looking to invest and learn. Being a team player takes some sort of commitment. Avoid those who are just looking for a handout.
- Know that you have to choose them and they have to choose you. It is a two-way road.

### Making it Work

After choosing a team to work with, how exactly do you make it work? Here is what I have learned so far:

- Develop Respect for Each Other. Do you really respect your teammate? If you can't respect them, it is going to be hard to really work with them. Do you see them as a man of God? Or a lesser annoying untrained missionary?

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- Treat them as Equals. Do you treat your teammates as equals? It doesn't matter your age, position in ministry, or how much experience you have if you are looking down on others. People want to work with those who listen to their ideas, who don't crush their dreams, who treat them as equals.
- Be Genuine Friends. Teammates should go past "acquaintances" to being genuine friends. Of course, this is hard if you don't genuinely like that person. You don't have to force the friendship. But you can lead, by trying to be their friend. Pray together. Eat together. Play together.
- Talk, Discuss and Stay in Contact. Healthy conversation, chewing the fat, encouraging each other, and brainstorming is all part of the fun. But don't get in the rut of arguing over the dumb issues. Avoid gossip and backstabbing. If you mess up, apologize.
- Share the glory but don't steal it! The up and downside of working together as a team is that any victory is a victory for everyone. What do I mean? I mean when you work to get a victory don't dismiss the team's role in helping you get the victory. At the same time don't steal the victory or work of others just because you are a team.

You should know that teamwork can be a great blessing. Yes, just like any relationship there will be those who take advantage of it. But once you experience working with a group of men of like passions from a distance and closely, you will be thankful for the opportunity and desire more people to be apart of this great team.

### Aspects and Advice

The following are things that I have learned as I have moved into different roles but continued to work in a team setting. Three aspects of team relationships that need to be understood for a proper relationship to form:

- Friendship: this is doing things together as equals. For example: going out for coffee or doing something fun together. This has to be worked on by both sides because it means investing time! If one side doesn't have any time to invest then this will not develop.
- Authority: this is one leading something and the other serving in it. For example, one leading the men's ministry and the other serving in it. This means one needs to humbly lead and the other needs to respectfully submit.
- Influence: this is one person having more experience in a specific area than the other and giving advice based on it. For example: living on the field longer than the other. This requires the one to not be a know-it-all and the other to be a learner at all times.

Each of these areas is part of missionary relationships on the field. To accomplish all three in harmony is hard. Some come naturally and others don't. So it is good to remember the following:

- Don't Judge—you are in this thing together and for the same purpose. You can talk about differences of opinions and go against advice but you don't need to judge each other or think bad of the other because of it. No one is right all of the time. Some need to learn the hard way.

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- Show grace—the other person is constantly going to be doing things or saying things that cause you to think, “They don’t deserve for me to be nice to them” and when this happens it is the perfect time to be nice and show grace.
- Control Attitudes—don’t let your attitude control you but control your attitude. This is easier said than done, but culture shock will put your attitude on an emotional roller coaster and we need to be able to face the downward spiral with confidence.
- Reject Selfishness—most problems stem from selfishness and pride. You think about ourselves and what is best for you, showing pity for yourself and not thinking about others. Reject this.
- Don’t Compare—everyone’s situation, schedule, kids, parenting styles, housing situations, schooling, maids, areas of hardship, background, learning speed and cultural adjustment is different. Don’t compare yourself among yourselves or you are setting yourself up to fail.
- Pray Daily—pray for the other person you are developing a relationship with daily. It is hard to harbor hard feelings against them when you take them by name before the Lord in prayer. You need God’s help.
- Admit Faults—no one is perfect and a fractured relationship means there are faults on both sides, thus be the one to admit faults and choose to love.

If you can recognize these three aspects of team relationship exists and remember the above advice then I think you can work towards a proper team relationship.