Philippians

Suggested Syllabus
This schedule may not be accurate to the date. We recognize that some groups will start earlier and others later. We've left you a column to fill in the actual date for your group to help you prepare.

Study #	Potential Week	Actual Week	Passage
1	Jan. 23		Reconnect w/group
2	Jan. 30		Overview
3	Feb. 6		Phil. 1:1-11
4	Feb. 13		Phil. 1:12-18
5	Feb. 20		Phil. 1:19-30
6	Feb. 27		Phil. 2:1-11
7	Mar. 6		Phil. 2:12-18
	Mar. 13		Spring Break
8	Mar. 20		Phil. 2:19-30
9	Mar. 27		Phil. 3:1-21
10	Apr. 3		Phil. 4:1-9
11	Apr. 10		Phil. 4:10-23
	Apr. 17		Hang Out
	Apr. 24		

Some Things to Remember
1. Lead in such a way that acknowledges the homework your group has done. You want them to share what they have learned over the week.

2. Seek to be creative. Avoid doing the same thing every week. Attached is a leader's guide. Use it to guide you, but feel free to do things differently.

3. Avoid spending every week asking the same questions (i.e. "So, what did you observe?" and "What interpretations did you make?"). Again, seek to be creative and think of ways to ask these questions in a new and fresh way. Definitely don't follow the same routine every week.

4. Avoid close-ended questions (yes/no questions).

5. Seek to guide a discussion, not a lecture.

6. Make sure that you make time throughout the semester for building community, prayer, application, etc. Some weeks may be heavier on community and others heavier on Bible study. That's good—mix it up.

7. Don't miss application! The goal of Bible study is transformation. How are the truths learned going to be lived out?

8. Use the internet for ice0breakers and creative ideas for leading your group. You can Google "ice breakers" and it will lead you to some great sites. Also, share ideas with other leaders! Ask your group members to lead out creatively on different weeks. This will get them involved and encourage leadership among them.

9. If you lead a leader group: Remember that on **February 7, March 7, and April 4** your group will not meet. Your leaders will go to Leadership Development time from 7-9 pm. You are welcome to join them or take the week off.

Please Note
What follows is a suggested plan for your group. If you want to do prayer or community building in a different way, you are invited to be as creative as you like. Share your ideas with us and other leaders! As you prepare the Bible Study part, you might come up with better questions. The key is that as a group, you pray together, build community, and open God's Word. Make sure you have planned your time well in order to serve your group.

We are continually thankful and amazed at how God blesses our ministry with quality leaders. Thank you for your desire to be Christ's disciple and a disciple maker.

Week	Leading Your Time Together
One Reconnecting/Getting to Know	1. Get together with your group to reconnect. You might think about having them over for dinner or going out together. Ask about highs and lows of the break. What was life-giving to them? What was hard? Fun vacations? If you have new people in your group, have them introduce themselves. 2. Talk about expectations and goals for the coming semester. Feel free to hand out the attached mid-year evaluation to get their feedback. You can tweak the one we give you, or make one of your own. 3. Hand out the study sheets for next week, or have the group download them from www.echoaustin.com. Look under Resources, then Small Group Resources, then Philippians Curriculum. 4. Spend time in prayer.
Two Overview of Philippians	1. Build Community: Ask: If you could have any job in the world (no limits), what would you do? Why? Find out what makes the group members come alive. What are they passionate about? 2. Ask: What was it like to read the whole book of Philippians in one sitting? What was good about it? Challenging? What did you learn from outside resources about the context of Philippians? Who is the author? The audience? What was the purpose of the book? Talk about repeated themes and ideas. If you have a group of seekers or young believers you might spend most of your time looking at Paul. Consider together his conversion in Acts 9. Focus on the grace of Jesus' pursuit of him. Paul was doing nothing to merit the favor of God – in fact, he was on his way to persecute Christians. What does this tell you about the kind of people God will pursue and use for His glory? 3. Share prayer requests and pray for the person on your right. Encourage the members to share personal requests. (Definitely be sensitive and gentle, but try to discourage "Pray for my neighbor's sick gerbil.") 4. Hand out the sheets for next week or have them download them from the website. *For next week: Have everyone bring a picture that would help the group know them better. It could be a family photo, an old elementary school picture, a best friend, a crush, etc.

Three Phil. 1:1-11	1. Build Community: Have each person explain the photo they brought to help the group know them better. 2. Read Philippians 1:1-11 out loud. Go around and have each person read a few verses, or choose one person to read the entire passage. 3. Ask: Did anyone use the study packet this week? What stood out to you? What do we learn about Paul's relationship with the Philippians? What does he say about them? What does he not say? 4. Pray together: Consider having the group split into pairs and to pray for one another the prayer Paul prays for the Philippians, using their name. Ex: "Leslie, it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment…"
Four Phil. 1:12-18	1. Have someone open in prayer. 2. Read Philippians 1:12-18 out loud. 3. Ask: What is the definition of courage? Fear? What are differences between the two? What made the "brothers more bold to speak the word without fear" (Phil. 1:14)? What makes you fearful when it comes to proclaiming Christ? What gives you courage? 4. Train: *Take some time to train your group in sharing their faith. Consider using the Bridge Illustration (attached). Feel free to spend a portion of your time for a couple of meetings, or all of one meeting, to focus on this. Go back and review and have volunteers take turns presenting it to the group.
Five Phil. 1:19-30	1. Ask who did the study sheets and what stood out this week. 2. Read Philippians 1:19-30 out loud. 3. What is the definition of suffering? 4. Look up the following passages and discuss Jesus' suffering: Romans 5:6-8; 1 Peter 3:18; Philippians 3:10 5. How have you suffered for Christ's sake? 6. Pray together—that we might draw nearer to Jesus and know Him in His suffering.

Six Phil. 2:1-11	1. Look up: Philippians 2:1-11. What does this passage say about Jesus? 2. Ask: What is the definition of the word "servant"? How was Jesus a servant? What are some characteristics of a servant? Look up some other passages that tell us about being a servant. Discuss: Mark 10:45; Mark 9:35; Acts 26:16; Colossians 4:12; Titus 1:1; James 1:1 3. Pray through Philippians 2:1-11. Instruct the group to prayer short sentence prayers. For example: "Lord, help me consider others more significant than myself." 3. Plan a time to serve together this semester. Maybe even this week. Suggestions: **a. Eastside Community Connection Food Pantry** contact: Jennifer Nation, Volunteer Coordinator volunteer@austinecc.org (512) 870-8404 Tuesdays 4-6pm Wednesdays 3-4pm (to restock) and 4-6pm Thursdays 4-6pm **b. Smart Start** contact: Bianca Vimont bvimont@communitynewstart.org (512)708-1232 ext. 12 **c. King's Club** contact: Kurtis White kurtis.white@gmail.com **d. Various opportunities within FEFC** contact: Jeff Loomis jeff.loomis@fefc.org (512) 891-1600
Seven Phil. 2:12-18	1. Build community: Give each person a sheet of paper. Give them 5 minutes to "draw their relationship with God today." Share. 2. Read Philippians 2:12-18 out loud. Take turns reading or have one person read the entire passage. 3. Ask: What does it mean to "work out your salvation with fear and trembling"? 4. Discuss justification vs. sanctification. Look also at Ephesians 2:1-10, Hebrews 12:2, and Ephesians 4:17-5:14. What does Ephesians 4:17-5:14 say about our sanctification? 4. Share Spring Break plans and pray for one another.
Eight Spring Break	**No Study** Pray for our teams in New Orleans and Matamoros. Pray that those in your group would walk with Jesus over the break.

Nine Phil. 2:19-30	1. Build Community: Have a "backwards spelling bee." Use the words: operation, compassion, hilarious, pneumonia, scandalous, grandeur (these words are completely random. You can choose others of your own!) 2. Consider the relationships Paul had with those with whom he ministered. Look at Ephesians 6:21-24 and 2 Timothy 4:9-22. What do these passages tell us about his relationships? Who do you share ministry with? 3. Pray: Have the group split into pairs and pray for one another--for God to send you partners in ministry (with family, roommates, sorority/fraternity, classmates, Austin, the world.) Hand out blank index cards and have them write their requests and trade cards with their partner and commit to pray for them every day this week.
Ten Phil. 3:1-21	1. Have everyone list five times they felt successful. Also write down the honors and extra-curricular activities they would list on a resume when applying for a job. Share these with the group. 2. Read Philippians 3:1-6 and consider Paul's resume. 3. Read Philippians 3:7-21 Ask: What are the things in your life that you tend to count as more significant than Jesus? What would it look like in your life if you were to count all things loss for the sake of knowing Jesus? 4. Pray through the passage. Praise Jesus for all the beautiful things you discover about Him in these verses.
Eleven Phil. 4:1-9	1. Build community: Did you sleep with a stuffed animal or blanket or other strange object when you were a child? (Do you still?) Describe it. How old were you when you got rid of it/someone got rid of it for you? 2. Ask if anyone did the study sheets this week and what stood out. 3. Read Philippians 4:1-9 out loud. Ask: Summarize this passage in one sentence. Next summarize it in one word. What are you thankful for? Pray: Simply pray, "Lord, thank You for…"

Twelve Phil. 4:10-23	1. Ask if anyone did the study sheets this week and what stood out. 2. Read Philippians 4:10-23 out loud. 3. Ask: What does this passage say about giving to the Church and ministries of the Gospel. What does chapter 3 have to do with chapter 4? How does chapter 4 fit in with the whole book of Philippians? 4. Apply: consider supporting a missionary or giving to a local ministry individually or as a group (if you will stay together after the semester) . Contact: echo@fefc.org on more information on how to do this. Suggestions: AGO missionaries: January Johnson, Jonathan Hicks, Amanda McKinley, Cliff Holubec Echo East Asia STINT team Echo East Asia summer project Echo Kenya summer project 4. Pray: Pass out notecards and envelopes and have each person write a prayer for the person to their right. Pray for contentment in Christ for that person, no matter the circumstance. Seal the envelope and give to the person for them to open during the week.
Thirteen	Have dinner together. Discuss what God has taught you over the past several weeks. How can you pray for and encourage one another over the summer?