

Cooperative Program:

1. With an understanding that SBC entities which receive Cooperative Program funding share an equal responsibility to promote and advance the Cooperative Program, please give a description of MBTS's efforts to promote the Cooperative Program.

Midwestern has established a campus-wide atmosphere which fosters awareness of the Cooperative Program and support for its continued vitality. The institution recognizes its accountability to the local churches of the SBC and the necessity of its own efforts to produce graduates of its programs who are deeply committed to the Cooperative Program and to the ministries funded by it. To that end, the faculty and staff make much of the Cooperative Program in contexts such as lectures, preaching engagements, and other venues.

Beyond these informal measures, the institution requires a course in Baptist History, 30% of which is devoted to the Southern Baptist Convention and thus, by natural extension, the Cooperative Program. Students are required to read One Sacred Effort, to work through the One Sacred Effort Workbook, to write a paper on the Cooperative Program, and to watch the DVD on this topic produced by the Executive Committee.

Midwestern will not hire a full-time faculty member, or member of its core administrative staff, who does not demonstrate an awareness of the Cooperative Program and commitment to the missions efforts funded by it. Questionnaires given both to prospective full-time faculty members and to adjunctive personnel require responses that indicate an enthusiasm for the work funded by the Cooperative Program and thus for the Cooperative Program itself. Courses given at all levels emphasize the privilege that Southern Baptist students have not only to access the resources offered by the IMB and NAMB, both funded through the Cooperative Program, but also to experience a clear sense of partnership between local autonomous churches and the larger goals that they can accomplish through cooperation. New Student Orientation has become one of the most strategic venues in which the importance of the Cooperative Program can be emphasized, especially in terms of how its existence alters the cost-structure of the education soon to be received.

Further, Midwestern's President, Jason K. Allen, has written regularly on the importance of and Midwestern's appreciation of the Cooperative Program stating, in part, "Whether the Cooperative Program supplies 100 percent of an SBC seminary's budget or one percent, from an ownership standpoint, the amount is irrelevant. Southern Baptists have built, funded, and own their seminaries. Any cleavage between the seminaries and the churches that own them is a malicious act against which the denomination must guard. As it relates to ownership and governance, the issue is not just current funding, but past funding and present ownership. This generation bears a moral stewardship to our Southern Baptist forebears who built six great

seminaries. We honor them when we keep the six Southern Baptist seminaries faithful to the denomination.”

Midwestern trusts that these measures, combined with a visible SBC *esprit de corps*, will cause each class of graduates to see the decisive advantages of Baptist identity, cooperation, and mission.

2. What are the expected outcomes of MBTS’s efforts to raise awareness of Cooperative Program funding?

Midwestern hopes that the expected outcomes of raised awareness of Cooperative Program funding results in future pastors and missionaries holding even more to deeply held conviction for and support of churches working together through the CP. Midwestern sees itself playing a vital role in ensuring the rising generation embraces and understands the opportunity for Great Commission advance available through the Cooperative Program.

3. Please articulate for Southern Baptists how MBTS perceives the role of the Cooperative Program to fund theological education in the Midwest. What value does MBTS place upon its partnership with SBC churches through the Cooperative Program?

Midwestern believes that the CP is the finest and most effective missionary-sending endeavor imaginable, particularly in difficulty times such as these, when the ability of any one church to support the work of North American and International missions can be easily threatened by economic headwinds. Thus, Midwestern treasures and prioritizes its partnership with SBC churches through the Cooperative Program.

4. Please explain the “value add” of Cooperative Program funding for MBTS, and how is this different from any and all other sources of funding for your seminary.

Midwestern sees the educating, elevating and promotion of Southern Baptist Convention missions and ministries, fueled by the Cooperative Program as the most essential and important source of funding for the seminary. This is because, regardless of total financial amount given, healthy support of the Cooperative Program across the denomination shows churches working together, bounded by a common confessional agreement, seeking to fulfill the Great Commission. In short, Cooperative Program funding is, like Midwestern, “for the church.”

Ethnic Participation

5. Please give a progress report of ethnic participation within MBTS, including active involvement of ethnic churches and church leaders, across all levels and aspects of the MBTS ministry—such things as board of trustees composition, senior administrative staff, other professional staff, support staff, faculty, and ethnic church and church leader composition of any external advisory

groups— demonstrating progress, if any, in ethnic participation over the past two decades (1996-2016), giving special attention to progress over the past five years (2011-2016).

Midwestern recognizes that cross-cultural and multiethnic fellowship and ministry is definitive expression of God's power in Christ, reconciling sinners to himself. As such, the institution has sought to create programs of study and informal experiences of learning that address the educational needs of multiethnic Christian communities. Midwestern offers degrees tailored specifically for students who anticipate overseas, and thus cross-cultural, missionary service, and the institution has developed programs delivered in Korean and Spanish, ranging from the Bachelors level to Professional Doctoral practice and research.

Mental Health Resource

6. What programs, ministries or strategies has MBTS implemented to assist SBC Churches in training and equipping individuals with mental health challenges and how will the MBTS continue to seek ways to work in cooperation with SBC entities and others to address the severe challenges imposed by mental illness?

Midwestern offers a Bachelor of Arts in Biblical Studies and Counseling Psychology and a Bachelor of Arts in Christian Ministry and Counseling Psychology to prepare students who intend to go into the field of Christian Counseling. These degrees prepare the student to enter graduate degree programs. In addition, all Bachelor of Arts students are required to take the Introduction to Psychology course that gives an overview of the scientific study of the behavioral and mental processes of human beings.

The Master of Arts in Counseling and a Master of Divinity with a concentration in Counseling are designed to help students meet the educational requirements for licensure in Missouri as a licensed professional counselor. In addition, Midwestern offers the Master of Theological Studies in Counseling for Korean students. The goal is to provide the student with the skills required to deliver appropriate mental health counseling services to individuals in either a ministry or private setting. In addition, all Master of Divinity Students are required to take the Introduction to Pastoral Care and Counseling course that includes a biblical basis for care, a model of care, and problem areas that require pastoral care-giving.

The Doctor of Counseling degree is a program of professional study for student who desire to practice professional counseling at the highest level of clinical competence. The Doctor of Counseling is unique in its practice of a Clinically Descriptive and Biblically Prescriptive counseling model. This model combines the best practices of the behavioral sciences to describe emotional issues and applies Biblical concepts to solve emotional issues. This treatment approach is compatible with counselors who desire to join correctly the Christian perspective with contemporary scientific methodology and clinical techniques of the counseling profession.

Midwestern seeks to equip men and women to serve local churches and sees soul care as an integral part of local church ministry. Thus, wherever possible, Midwestern desires to partner with the entities of the Southern Baptist Convention in addressing the severe challenges that face local churches with regard to mental illness.

MWBTS Specific Ministry Inquiries

7. What has proven to be MBTS's most reliable metric indicating future accomplishments of, or challenges to MBTS, and why is that metric the one MBTS believes is most important to watch?

The state and health of the Cooperative Program is the most reliable metric for indicating future accomplishments or challenges for Midwestern. As a seminary of the churches of the Southern Baptist Convention, Midwestern is, at its core, for the Southern Baptist Convention. Regardless of total financial amount given, healthy support of the Cooperative Program across the denomination shows churches working together, bounded by a common confessional agreement, seeking to fulfill the Great Commission. This is the shared purpose and desire of Midwestern and thus the Cooperative Program is the most important metric to watch.

8. Please provide a status report of MBTS's baccalaureate program, including origins, current status, and expansion/growth. Also, what is distinctive about MBTS's baccalaureate experience at your seminary that distinguishes it from other Baptist colleges, as well as other divinity schools, colleges and universities within your geographical area?

The basic difference between an undergraduate education received at Midwestern and at other Baptist colleges in Midwestern's geographical area is the vocational trajectory presupposed by the entering students and the faculty who would teach them. Traditionally, in American society, college has become an experience in which entering student explore their options and settle, through that process, on a career that suits their gifts and abilities. In that sense, a greater emphasis is placed on exposure to a wider range of understanding and inquiry than is practical in an institution like Midwestern, notwithstanding the latter's robust general education requirements.

At Midwestern, the entering undergraduate is assumed to have been called specifically to full-time vocational ministry or to be seriously looking in that direction. Thus, the experiences and activities emphasized in the educational process are tailored for students who will become leaders of local churches, missionary efforts, and other Christian endeavors including bi-vocational ministry. The Midwestern faculty communicates with students in the language of Christian ministry, on the assumption that they are preparing to serve as such. The faculty's own qualifications include experience in ministry and an ongoing connection to the local church.

Furthermore, since the graduate programs of Midwestern have the same larger, vocational objective, undergraduates of Midwestern have the advantage of interacting substantially with students who are themselves fully engaged in the work of ministry. They can look ahead,

though the eyes of upper classmen, at the blessings and challenges of ministry in these areas. In this sense, Midwestern considers its course offerings to be designed for a specific kind of student who is probably, by the nature of the case, infrequently represented in the general undergraduate population.

9. Understanding the seminary ministry assignment(s) to "*....assist churches by programs of master's level, professional doctoral and research doctoral education for ministers and theological educators...*" how does MBTS counsel students to pursue different degree programs?

Nearly all students who enter the programs of Midwestern do so with fairly clear vocational objectives. They have formed a basic sense of where they will eventually serve and what degrees and types of learning, very generally, pertain to their goals. Nevertheless, the faculty and staff of Midwestern are useful to students at every stage of this process, from enrollment to graduation, based on information generated by the each student's own self-description combined with his/her actual performance in various disciplines. The seminary attempts to assist the student in recognizing the areas of service for which he/she may be specially gifted, sometimes recognizing this giftedness before the student has done so. A vital part of the counseling process is the faculty and staff's own assessment of what the local church needs, so that students can plan their careers, not in a vacuum, but with due consideration as to what they can best contribute to the work of present work of ministry.

10. Please give a status report of MBTS's additional campuses where theological education/training is being conducted? How does having additional campuses strengthen Southern Baptists' ability to penetrate *lostness* across North America and around the world?

Midwestern currently operates two church-based extension campuses at Cornerstone Church in Ames, Iowa and The Journey Church in St. Louis, Missouri. In addition, theological education and training does take place off campus through the Contextualized Leadership Development program and the Midwestern Training Network. As church-connected programs, these exist to equip local church leaders in their ministry settings further to engage in fulfilling the Great Commission and thus joining the effort of penetrating lostness across North America and around the world.

11. Can you predict the long term viability and sustainability of multiple campuses for MBTS? Does the growing number of online students impact future projections along this line? Please explain.

Midwestern believes that only extension campuses with long term viability and sustainability are those that are church-based and are located in settings where there is a pre-existent culture and desire for on-ground theological education. These extension campuses are designed to work in conjunction with Midwestern's online course offerings as a student cannot complete an entire degree at an extension campus.

12. Does MBTS have written and formal guidelines for Admissions Office personnel to follow when determining whether or not a prospective student qualifies for the Southern Baptist student discount? If so, please attach a copy of the written guidelines.

Yes, all students are required to complete the Local Church Membership Certification Form. http://www.mbts.edu/downloads/_current_students/local_church_membership_certification.pdf

13. What is the most newsworthy feature, initiative or issue currently orbiting around the programs of MBTS? Please explain.

Among many newsworthy issues currently orbiting around the programs of Midwestern Seminary, the institution's focus on rightly emphasizing its in-residence Master of Divinity program would be most significant. In 2014, Midwestern Seminary retooled its Master of Divinity degree to an 81-hour format for the purpose of aiding students significantly toward completing their ministry education and training more efficiently and effectively. The M.Div. is the gold-standard in theological education, and as an institution that exists for the Church, Midwestern Seminary abides under an Ephesians 4 mandate, equipping pastors, ministers, and missionaries for local church service. While not every graduate will minister within a local church setting, seminary students should view their calling through the prism of serving the church. There is no better degree for preparing a student for ministry than the M.Div. After a year within the retooled program, Midwestern Seminary has experienced a resurgence of students pursuing the M.Div. for their ministry training. Provided is a link to a news story further covering Midwestern Seminary's emphasis on the in-residence M.Div.

14. Would you consider a change in ministry assignment to develop seminary education locations in strategic international locations in cooperation with the IMB?

Yes, if the IMB requested us to partner with them in this way.