

## 2017 Ministry Inquiries

### 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 SBTS's efforts to promote the Cooperative Program.**

From recruitment to graduation, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary seeks to instill both gratitude and passion for the Cooperative Program. Prospective students learn during the admissions process how giving through the Cooperative Program impacts the continued availability of their theological education. All Master's level students are now required to take a course entitled "Southern Baptist Heritage and Mission." One of the primary objectives of this course is to promote the cooperative endeavors of Southern Baptists. Non-master's students are required to complete a comprehensive online course educating them about the function and purpose of the Cooperative Program toward fulfilling the Great Commission. Students are exposed to SBC sending agencies, programs, and initiatives throughout their time on campus through events like our annual Great Commission Week and speakers in our weekly chapel services. Donors and friends are advised regularly about the Cooperative Program as a primary conduit of institutional support. Finally, students are regularly reminded during the year and graduates are particularly reminded during commencement services how their education was provided in part from the countless hands of Southern Baptists through the provisions of the Cooperative Program.

2. **How effective is SBTS in creating an awareness and appreciation for the Southern Baptist Convention and its model for cooperative missions and cooperative funding? What level of confidence does SBTS have that its graduates will continue to engage and invest in SBC missions and ministries?**

While Southern Seminary aims to continually increase its effectiveness in promoting an awareness and appreciation of the Southern Baptist Convention and the Cooperative Program, the strategy currently in place is effective for encouraging and equipping students for a lifetime of support of and involvement in the Southern Baptist Convention. We believe with great confidence that the vast majority of our student body will demonstrate a commitment to the churches of the Southern Baptist Convention throughout the duration of their ministry.

3. **Please articulate for Southern Baptists how SBTS perceives the role of the Cooperative Program funding theological education in the Southern region. What value does SBTS place upon its partnership with SBC churches through the Cooperative Program?**



# THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

The purpose and influence of the Cooperative Program permeates every endeavor at Southern Seminary. Put simply, Southern exists to fulfill its mission of training students for ministry within Southern Baptist Churches and could not do so without the continued support of Southern Baptist churches through the Cooperative Program. Our desire is to serve the churches of the Southern Baptist Convention by offering the best theological education available to the students they send us, and then deploying those students back out into the congregations.

#### **4. How does SBTS benefit from the Cooperative Program?**

Unlike any other source of funding, the Cooperative Program forms a core identity marker for Southern Seminary. The support given is the tangible expression of the relationship between Southern Baptists and the Seminary. The funding given through the Cooperative Program not only forms a large part of the operating budget of Southern, but serves as a binding and concrete expression of Southern Seminary's commitment to training ministers of the gospel to serve Southern Baptist churches.

#### **Ethnic Participation**

#### **5. Please give a descriptive report of participation of ethnic leaders, ethnic churches and other ethnic church leaders in the life and ministry of your entity. Over the past 12 months, (2015 – 2016) has your seminary increased or decreased the number of ethnic leaders among the faculty and within the student body?**

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary is committed to ethnic participation in every aspect of institutional life. The admissions strategy at Southern includes recruiting from ethnically diverse schools and conferences. These strategic endeavors have enabled Southern to build its diversity to the extent that approximately 22.5% of our student population is now ethnically diverse, up slightly from previous years. Five members of our resident faculty are also ethnically diverse, including Kevin Jones, who was recently promoted to the position of associate dean of Boyce College.

Southern Seminary embraces ethnic diversity through its curriculum by offering doctoral and master's degrees with concentrations in Black Church Leadership and Urban Ministry. The Master of Divinity in Missions and Evangelism (Great Commission Ministries) is offered entirely in Spanish. Other individual courses are taught in Spanish and bilingually in Vietnamese and English to provide students with additional curricular options to prepare for engagement in ethnic ministries throughout the SBC.

Southern also provides opportunities for ethnic engagement outside the classroom. Student leadership groups on campus continued to expand and now include the Intercultural Student Fellowship, Hispanic Association, Korean Student Fellowship, Nigerian Student Fellowship, Canada Club, and ONE, a group committed specifically to the task of racial reconciliation. Our Bevin Center for Missions Mobilization remained diligent in training and mobilizing the seminary



community to be engaged in missions from the city of Louisville to places such as Latin America, Europe, the Middle East, and more. Many Southern students also serve locally by teaching English as a second language and ministering to an array of nationalities through chaplaincy opportunities in local schools, sport leagues, jails, and hospitals.

Like other SBC entities, Southern Seminary also encourages its students and staff to engage in ministry with ethnic churches and church leaders on the field. Many students choose to perform their field ministry in churches with varying ethnic backgrounds, including Korean, Vietnamese, and African-American congregations.

Southern Seminary continues to work to better serve the Hispanic population. Felipe Castro serves as the Director of Hispanic Initiatives. Also, Dr. Miguel Núñez, senior pastor of the International Baptist Church in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, serves as the Lead Strategist for Latin American Initiatives and Dr. Juan Sanchez, senior pastor of High Pointe Baptist Church in Austin Texas, serves as the Lead Strategist for North American Hispanic Initiatives.

#### **Mental Health Resource**

- 6. In response to a Ronnie Floyd motion, June 2013, Houston, TX, requesting that the Executive Committee and SBC Entities assist churches with mental health ministries, the Executive Committee appointed an advisory group, Fall 2013, to determine ways in which Southern Baptist entities and SBC churches can best help those who are in need of mental health assistance. The final report of this advisory group was presented to Dr. Frank S. Page, Fall 2014.**

**In the 2015 & 2016 Ministry Report(s) the following question was asked of each SBC entity:**

**Please give a progress report on what SBTS has implemented to assist SBC churches with training and equipping people with mental health challenges and how will SBTS**

**continue to seek ways to work in cooperation with SBC entities and others to address the severe challenges imposed by mental illness?**

**For the 2017 Ministry Report please provide the following:**

**If SBTS feels that reporting on this subject is within its purview, or falls within the scope of its ministry assignment(s), or has made any progress in the area of assisting churches with training and equipping people with mental health challenges, or has developed or identified resources to assist SBC churches in the area of mental health ministry, please provide a detailed progress report.**

In keeping with the overall mission of Southern, the curriculum contains our most important efforts at training and equipping students to address mental health challenges. An Introduction to Biblical Counseling course is in the core curriculum for all M.Div. students except those concentrating in Worldview and Apologetics. Additional courses such as Typical Problems in Biblical Counseling at the M.Div. level and Theological Hermeneutics in the Care of People at the Ph.D. level are available for students wishing to go deeper into the pastoral care of persons facing these challenges.

During the previous year, Southern offered an Alumni Academy course on the subject of “The Pastor and Counseling,” led by Professor Jeremy Pierre and a Southern alum, Deepak Reju. This event, free to alumni and students and open to members of the community for a nominal charge, provided an opportunity for alumni to receive continued specialized training in these areas.

### **SBTS Specific Ministry Inquiries**

- 7. What has proven to be SBTS’s most reliable metric indicating future accomplishments of, or challenges to SBTS across all of its ministry assignments? Why is that metric the one SBTS believes is most important to watch relative to each ministry assignment?**

The percentage of total enrollment comprised by our Master of Divinity program forms our most reliable metric for evaluating the status of our academic programs. The M.Div. is our central degree program for preparing Southern Baptist pastors for churches, church planting, and mission work both at home and abroad. Southern Seminary currently has more M.Div. students than any Master of Divinity program in the history of Southern Baptist seminaries.

- 8. 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...” please list each degree program offered at SBTS.**

Master of Divinity  
Master of Arts in (specialized ministry)  
Master of Arts (Islamic Studies)  
Master of Arts in Theological Studies  
Master of Theology  
Doctor of Ministry  
Doctor of Missiology  
Doctor of Education  
Doctor of Philosophy

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

One of the most exciting happenings at Southern Seminary is the tremendous success of the Global Campus. As the number of online students grows, the extension center student population shrinks. The extension centers are evaluated on an annual basis to determine financial viability and usefulness to the student population. Southern has made the strategic decision to shrink to five extension centers by 2018.

**10. What is the most newsworthy feature, initiative or issue currently orbiting around the programs of SBTS? Please explain.**

While there are numerous noteworthy initiatives happening at Southern, the recent emphasis on the Christian understanding of Islam and taking the gospel to Muslims both at home and abroad stands out as an important initiative both for Southern Seminary and Southern Baptists. Recently unveiled, the Master of Arts (Islamic Studies) is an academic degree that combines a study of classical Islam and the Arabic language with specialized biblical and theological studies for those who are preparing for ministry in Muslim contexts or wishing to pursue further graduate studies on Islam.

Southern Seminary's commitment to reaching our Muslim's neighbors, however, extends beyond the classroom. At the Jenkins Center for the Christian Understanding of Islam, we examine Muslim texts, doctrines, and traditions, and critically assess them from a Christian viewpoint. Students engage the broader world of Islamic Studies by frequently attending seminars and lectures so that we may glean insights from the contributions of leading academic Islamic Studies scholars. We encourage our faculty and students to conduct research and to write scholarly pieces and publish academic works, as they initiate relationships with Muslim neighbors in our city and beyond.

Faculty and students also reach out to Muslims in our city and beyond. Every semester, students visit local mosques, where they speak directly with the Imam. Students also travel to Dearborn/Detroit every semester to bring the Gospel to a city inhabited by the majority of Muslims in the US. Furthermore, every summer we offer at least two international mission trips to engage Muslims and help our students discern their calling to minister to Muslims overseas. Last year we traveled to Jordan and Israel, and this year we will be going to Iraq, Spain, and Morocco. These trips are aimed at taking the Good News to Syrian and Iraqi refugees in places in turmoil in the Middle East.