

2017 Goals and Accomplishments

Please describe accomplishments, relative to each of your convention assigned Ministry Assignments, in the past year that create "value added" to the Cooperative Program dollars that Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary receives.

I. Assist churches by programs of prebaccalaureate and baccalaureate theological education for ministers.

In 2016, The College at Southeastern established the following initiatives to further the mission of the SBC. First, we expanded our bachelor's programs to include the Bachelor of Science degree. This program is designed to allow students to prepare for both vocation and theological/ministerial careers. Second, The College also started work on expanding its 5 year BA/MDiv programs to allow for additional areas of specialization. This program allows students to earn a bachelor's degree and an MDiv in 5 years, significantly shortening the time and financial restraints that prevent young men from training for pastoral ministry. Third, the College developed partnerships with likeminded evangelical schools to allow students to earn degrees in teacher education. All of these initiatives add significant value to the work of Southern Baptists through the Cooperative Program. Fourth, the College began work on creating an extension center at Nash County Correctional facility for the purpose of training field ministers in the prisons of North Carolina. Finally, the College started a House system for student life that further enhances the missional community of the College.

II. Assist churches by programs of master's level theological education for ministers.

In the past year, Southeastern Seminary has focused on several areas to strengthen our work in "assisting churches by programs of master's level theological education for ministers." First, we have now implemented our revised graduate curriculum developed in response to interviews with faculty, SBC constituents, local church pastors, and alumni. Particularly, this revised curriculum now includes more required classes in preaching, leadership, biblical counseling, spiritual formation, and ministry praxis. Our goal has been to strengthen the practical training we offer our students without compromising our unflinching commitment to a biblical and theological foundation.

Second, we reviewed our Biblical Counseling program to strengthen it. Recognizing the need for pastors and laity who are equipped to do counseling, we now require a basic Biblical Counseling course for masters students. Moreover, we have been in the process of developing a Master of Arts Counseling degree that leads to licensure. This degree will open the door for future employment for some of our students.

Third, we continue to develop and grow our EQUIP program, which allows students to earn a percentage of their degree while serving in an EQUIP-certified local church. This program gives students the opportunity to remain in their local church, learn from a credentialed pastor, and earn a degree at the

same time. The combination of academic training and ministry experience contributes to our training the best local church leaders.

III. Assist churches by programs of professional doctoral education for ministers.

The Doctor of Ministry program at Southeastern experienced several notable accomplishments in 2016. The first accomplishment resulted in an increase in our student graduation numbers. The number of students graduating in 2016 doubled due to adjustments made in the program to help students in the preparation and execution of the project. A research element was added to selected workshops helping students in the selection and development of the ministry project. This preparation work gave students a better foundation for identifying a ministry project focused on a significant need in the ministry context. In addition, students received support throughout the program to develop writing skills and idea flow. The students responded to the additional attention by producing better ministry project reports in a timely manner. The emphases led to the higher graduation rates with the possibility of doubling the graduation rate next year, based on the number already registered for graduation in 2017.

The steady rise in the student population is noted as the second accomplishment. Our enlistment efforts have led to the steady growth, resulting in an all-time high in enrollment numbers. The addition of a better recording system, a person dedicated to the enlistment process, and an improved enlistment process has facilitated the growth. These changes have led to greater efficiency, quicker response, and more accountability. The continued push for excellence in the classroom that strengthens the ministry training, also contributes to the enlistment growth. The administrative and classroom improvements have formed the formula for growth in student enrollment.

The addition of new offerings keeps the program on a continued track for relevancy in light of the changes characterizing this century and affecting our convention. The missions and church planting faculty received approval to begin a Catalytic Church Planting Leadership Specialization targeting church planters and coordinators of church planting in churches, associations, organizations, and agencies. The specialization provides additional professional support in the church planting arena of our convention's Great Commission efforts.

The accomplishments give evidence of Southeastern's commitment to offering professional and advanced degree training to support our churches and their leaders. The D.Min. program will continue to strive for a student-friendly approach, academic excellence, relevant content, and a high level of professional training. These markers of our program will provide the foundation to meet the convention expectations and Southeastern's program goal.

IV. Assist churches by programs of research doctoral education for ministers and theological educators.

In 2016, eighteen students graduated from the Doctor of Philosophy program at Southeastern and began or continued strategic ministries such as Vice President for Mobilization for the International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, Vice President of Academic Affairs at Shepherds Theological Seminary, Triangle Strategy coordinator for the North Carolina Baptist Convention, Strategic Advisor for Louie Giglio's Passion Movement, and pastors of established Southern Baptist churches and

church plants. The Biblical Studies area and the Faculty of Southeastern just approved major modifications to the Ph.D. in Biblical Studies to ensure that the program fulfills its mission of equipping “pastors and teachers who intend to teach biblical studies in liberal arts colleges and universities, churches, and majority world academic or ecclesial contexts.” The revised curriculum emphasizes biblical exegesis and is designed to develop generalists who have expertise in all three primary areas of study: New Testament, Old Testament, and biblical theology. This redesigned curriculum should better prepare graduates for outstanding service in the academy, church, and mission field.

The Ed.D. program at Southeastern has graduated 82 Doctors of Education since its inception in 2006. Our office acts as a catalyst for connecting the many institutions, denominational offices, and local churches who contact us seeking highly trained ministers and educators. The Ed.D. program supports the local church by training graduates who possess Christ like character and ministry skill sets for positions that include children and youth ministry; administration, Bible teaching, and pastoral positions; and discipleship and missions leadership. Current students and graduates also lead parachurch organizations, such as camp ministry, publishing companies, and Christian school administration. Several current students and graduates have major leadership positions in denominational offices and at Lifeway Resources. Approximately twenty percent of our Ed.D. graduates serve in higher education in positions including a college president, two deans of faculty, two vice presidents of administration, and numerous full-time faculty. Our graduates also support the Cooperative Program through curriculum development and various publications offering uniquely Southern Baptist perspectives.

Among current students and Ed.D. graduates there are numerous leaders serving in other countries, including Ethiopia, Liberia, and Nigeria. These students have come to Southeastern to prepare themselves to have a far-reaching impact on theological education in their home country. Other residential students have obtained a visa to live, work, and study in the U.S. with plans to return to their native country. These include South Korea, China, and the Dominican Republic.

Based on each of SEBTS' Convention assigned ministry statements, what opportunities or challenges do you see on the horizon from 2017 and beyond that would necessitate changes, or new directions, in how SEBTS is accomplishing the listed Ministry Assignments?

I. Assist churches by programs of prebaccalaureate and baccalaureate theological education for ministers.

The College at Southeastern has a great opportunity in the state of North Carolina. The College is uniquely positioned in the state of North Carolina to provide theological education to undergraduate students. With no other conservative evangelical colleges or universities in the state, the College at Southeastern fills a massive need for Southern Baptists in North Carolina.

One major challenge for the College in coming years is the need for additional tuition resources for our students. We work hard to keep our cost affordable without the assistance of federal scholarships.

II. Assist churches by programs of master's level theological education for ministers.

Southeastern Seminary, like most educational institutions, continues to face several challenges. For example, our students are increasingly busy with families, jobs, church, and school responsibilities. Often, they choose to take fewer credit to save both cost and time – and the result is a longer time to complete a degree. Based on changes we have made in the past two years, we are now monitoring our shorter M.Div. degree and our five-year BA/MDiv program to see if these offerings address some of these issues.

Second, the changing world of educational delivery systems demands that we continually strive to improve our online and hybrid course offerings. That work requires that we remain informed about the most current technologies and most effective pedagogies for these options. Particularly challenging is the need to help students feel connected to an educational community when they are not physically present on the campus.

These challenges, though, are also opportunities. Evaluating and improving curriculum offerings and classroom presentations must be an ongoing process if we intend to enlist new students. Partnerships with local churches are vital to our work; thus, we must connect with, listen to, and work alongside the congregations that will send us students and employ our graduates. Moreover, we now have unprecedented opportunities to train students around the world via online education.

III. Assist churches by programs of professional doctoral education for ministers.

Technological advances create expanded learning opportunities in the Doctor of Ministry program at Southeastern. The technological advances include the utilization of Moodle/Panopto interaction, video conferencing, and social media. The advances offer multiple avenues of communication and content delivery. While the advances will require the DMin administration and faculty to consider the learning methodology and potential of the different modes of communication, learning potential will increase. Our program leadership will need to use different and multiple formats to reach a wide range of students in an effective manner.

The multiple ethnic groups locally and internationally offer a great opportunity for expanded reach of the program. We hope addressing multiple fields of potential students will impact the current student makeup. Leaders will need to use great sensitivity when expanding, to understand language, economic, and cultural differences. Differences will impact the administrative procedures and course content, creating a richer experience in learning and training. Expansion will equip ministers for different settings and benefit our convention by creating unity in diversity.

The vocational Master of Arts degrees create an opportunity to build an academic bridge from the MA degree to Doctor of Ministry equivalency. The Master of Divinity degree faces a growing challenge with the two-year Master of Arts degrees. The Master of Arts degree requires less hours, usually in the ministry practice areas. A bridge to the equivalency gives the DMin program an opportunity to facilitate courses designed to link theology and practice in preparation for the Doctor of Ministry degree. The need for strengthening ministry skill-sets underlies the move to create such a bridge and encourage ministers and missionaries to seek advanced training in the practice of ministry.

The multiplicity of ministry styles and church expressions in our convention bring the opportunity for both diverse and specific training. A sensitivity to the unique aspects of various church expressions will allow the program to address specific needs shared by select groups. The specificity includes ministry style, church practice, cultural expressions, and even church government. The faculty will need to expand horizons to engage the uniqueness of various congregations, including the connection of practitioners in specificities to the learning experience. A "one style fits all" attitude will not match the multiplicity in our convention. Multiple educational approaches will offer the best opportunities for training without weakening the unity in doctrinal conviction.

The challenge of offering a Doctor of Ministry degree rich in academic and practitioner excellence remains an unending endeavor. A danger exists of weakening the balance needed in this practitioner degree by emphasizing one over the other. Balance requires serious attention to biblical and theological integrity and a plethora of new methodologies and approaches in ministry. Faculty will need to strive for integration and relevancy to promote effective training in various areas of ministry.

A multiethnic student population will require the securement of faculty with advanced degrees, fitting the multiethnic composition of the student population. Multilingual faculty members in the program would be a great advantage in such a student population. Finding qualified faculty who meet accreditation standards, for some of the language groups, will present a challenge. The need includes faculty to teach as well as serve on faculty supervision teams for students. Beyond the accreditation standards, the faculty for the DMin program should carry ministry experience to fit the practitioner nature of the degree. The faculty will need to become more multiethnic and multilingual. Along with the faculty need to represent the multiethnic composition of the student body, a challenge exists to find substantive, scholarly research sources. Minimal textbook and research sources exist in some ethnic groups. Book and periodical translations are needed to meet the demand of the linguistic diversity.

IV. Assist churches by programs of research doctoral education for ministers and theological educators.

The ministry assignment entails research doctoral education for both ministers who will serve the local church and theological educators who will serve in the academy. Maintaining this dual focus is sometimes difficult. Due to rapid advances in educational technology and delivery systems, educators sometimes need skills that the typical pastor or missionary does not, such as the ability to develop online courses that teach content effectively despite some of the pedagogical challenges of the online delivery system. Since the inception of the PhD program at Southeastern, approximately two-thirds of the graduates have focused their ministries on service to the local church and one-third have served as theological educators in the academy. The PhD office anticipates the need to provide additional training for hopeful theological educators, above and beyond that required of other students, in order to prepare them for the challenges of the 21st century classroom and make the graduates attractive to innovative institutions.

The demand for high quality distance education remains at the forefront among populations worldwide. As academic institutions and churches respond to this need, the Ed.D. program at Southeastern seeks to equip every student with the tools necessary to utilize an online platform for gospel proclamation and theological training. In addition to modeling for students the best practices in virtual classroom instruction, Ed.D. professors and course assignments challenge students to utilize social media and the most up-to-date technologies in their teaching, leading, and discipling. Valuing the time that students have with their local church ministries, current employers, and family, Southeastern provides an ideal means for continued education through the quarter-system-modified-residency model of the Ed.D. program. This allows students to complete their work from a distance and only travel to campus four times per year for intensives. As the Ed.D. program continues to gain popularity among universities in other countries, cross-cultural training continues to be a component of each missional classroom.

Scholarly influence is greatly needed in all ministry contexts today. Graduates need to be able to carry-out research, draw conclusions, and publish sound theologically based works to participate in the discussion of ideas within our culture. Toward this end, the Ed.D. program emphasizes two much-needed skills: problem solving through social science approaches and scholarly writing techniques that lead to publication. Those Ed.D. students in the dissertation stage are carrying out research in all facets of adult, youth, children's, and cross-cultural ministry-the findings of which will be published in their dissertations. Dr. Coley is modeling proper research procedures for students, while gaining data on the effectiveness of the cohort model from students at various stages of their Ed.D. program experience. They plan to publish their findings and improve the Ed.D. program accordingly.

In a time when so many ministry leaders fall away due to moral failure, poor administrative management, or just plain discouragement, ministers need a support structure of colleagues and friends who can be available for advice and support. The Ed.D. program recognizes the need to place graduates in a team of other theological educators through the use of the cohort model. The goal is that these connections will serve to strengthen the resolve of these educators as sources of encouragement and accountability. In addition, these networks of communication will help to strengthen fellowship and effectiveness in our churches and denomination.