

2020 Ministry Inquiries

Cooperative Program:

1. SBC entities, especially those which receive Cooperative Program funding, share an equal responsibility in promoting and advancing the Cooperative Program, in compliance with the Business and Financial Plan, Section VI, Part C (*Cooperative Program Promotion – Each Convention entity shall report on its efforts during the year in promoting Cooperative Program missions giving*). Providing examples, please describe Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary's (SEBTS's) commitment to promote the Cooperative Program.
 - Classroom Emphasis – SEBTS has many classes, including some of the required history courses, that emphasize both the history and the impact of the Cooperative Program.
 - College/Seminary Introduction Courses – These courses introduce students to their educational experience at SEBTS. In both courses, the importance and impact of the Cooperative Program is discussed.
 - Faculty/Staff Church Encounters – We encourage all our Faculty & Staff, when speaking in local churches, to note their thankfulness for the Cooperative Program and that local church's support of it. The goal is to connect the local churches to what they are supporting through the Cooperative Program.
 - Magazine Advertisements – In each issue of the Southeastern Magazine, a full-page advertisement is included to say thank you to Southern Baptists for their support of the Cooperative Program. The goal is to remind the readers of the magazine of the importance of the Cooperative Program.
 - Communication to Graduates – An email is sent to all graduates each semester letting them know the specific impact of the Cooperative Program's financial impact on them. In addition, we share the collective impact of the Cooperative Program on the graduating class. The goal is to make sure the graduates know how much they were blessed by the Cooperative Program, and to encourage their continued participation in it.
2. How effective is SEBTS in creating an awareness and appreciation for the Southern Baptist Convention and its model for cooperative missions and cooperative funding among the student body? What level of confidence does SEBTS have that its graduates will continue to engage in SBC missions and ministries and support funding these ministries through the Cooperative Program?

SEBTS regularly emphasizes among our students our connection with the Southern Baptist Convention and the benefits of being a part of the Southern Baptist Convention. One of the ways that this is communicated is that the primary source of Chapel speakers are pastors of Southern Baptist Churches. In addition, SEBTS regularly hosts the Executives and other leaders from sister Southern Baptist Entities. The impact of the Cooperative Program is communicated through the tuition billing for each student that is an active member of a church cooperating with the Southern Baptist Convention. SEBTS believes that a student's time at SEBTS will enhance their desire to be a part of and support the work of the Southern Baptist Convention in their future ministries.

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

Without the Cooperative Program SEBTS could not carry out her ministry assignments at the same level of effectiveness as with the Cooperative Program. Educational debt is weighing down future ministers across the evangelical world. However, those preparing for ministry among Southern Baptists are able to mitigate the current trends related to educational debt. The Cooperative Program is in part what makes us Southern Baptist. Because of the Cooperative Program, Southern Baptists are SEBTS's largest donor. Therefore, SEBTS places the highest value on our relationship. SEBTS benefits from the Cooperative Program significantly through the ability to offer reduced tuition to members of churches that cooperate with the Southern Baptist Convention. The Cooperative Program also allows the institution to not have to expend as many dollars as other theological institutions on raising funds to support the ongoing operations of the institution.

4. Please give examples of how SEBTS operates within the guidelines of the SBC Business and Financial Plan as described in Section VI, Part D (*No Financial Appeals to Churches – In no case shall any Convention entity approach a church for inclusion in its church budget or appeal for financial contributions*).

The Business and Financial Plan of the Southern Baptist Convention in Pat IV(D) states, "No Financial Appeals to Churches – In no case shall any Convention entity approach a church for inclusion in its church budget or appeal for financial contributions."

Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary does not make direct appeals to churches for inclusion of Southeastern in their budget or for other financial contributions. Southeastern does have churches that directly contribute to Southeastern, but those have come through the decision of those churches without any influence from the seminary. Any fundraising emails or mailings sent out from the seminary are sent to individuals and not churches.

Ethnic Participation

5. This past year a motion was made by Leroy Fountain asking the Executive Committee to give a progress update to ten recommendations adopted by the SBC in 2011 with respect to ethnic church and ethnic church leader participation in Southern Baptist life. The 2011 recommendation that specifically refers to our SBC entities is as follows:

"The Executive Committee to request from the Southern Baptist Convention entities to submit as part of its annual 'data call' [as described in Bylaw 18. E [12] a descriptive report of participation of ethnic churches and church leaders in the life and ministry of the respective SBC entity."

Given this context, and using previous years' submissions to this question as a model, please give a robust descriptive report of ethnic participation, including active involvement of ethnic churches and church leaders, across all levels and aspects of SEBTS's ministry—such things as senior administrative staff, other professional staff, faculty, student body,

support staff, other customer facing representatives, and written and spoken language resources—demonstrating progress, if any, in ethnic participation over the past eight years, 2011–2019.

Preparing students for ministry in an increasingly diverse America and across the nations is an essential part of Southeastern mission. Consequently, central to ministry preparation is intentionally involving those who comprise the tapestry of God’s people in John’s Revelation 7:9 is essential to our success as an institution. This has occurred in a number of ways at Southeastern this year including:

- Southeastern’s Kingdom Choir, intentionally named after the school’s Kingdom Diversity Initiative, is comprised Southeastern students and intentionally draws ongoing participation and leadership from local minority churches for numerous annual performances on campus and in the community.
- The Southeastern family celebrated a chapel speaker lineup that reflects the demographics of our convention unlike any year in our history.
- The Kingdom Diversity Initiative media platform called “From the Lectern” featured numerous multicultural contributors in its weekly installments this year.
- Throughout the year Southeastern faculty and staff have pursued countless opportunities to facilitate and participate in workshops, conferences, and curriculum development led by minority-majority churches and ministries.
- Southeastern hosted its Fifth Annual Black History Celebration Luncheon. This event gathers seminary faculty, administration, and local church leaders for fellowship and intellectual engagement on a topic that is pertinent to equipping students and church members to serve in diversifying domestic and international communities.
- Southeastern hosted a conference called “Adopted: Understanding the Journey of Cross Cultural Adoption” that invited local church members and students to campus to equip them for the challenges of adopting and raising children of a different ethnicity.
- The seminary family hosted a Hispanic Evangelism Conference prepare local Spanish-speaking church leaders to share the gospel with effectiveness in their communities.
- Southeastern welcomed Hispanic leaders to campus for a strategic luncheon and introduction to campus life to publicize institutional efforts to equip Hispanic students to serve the church and fulfill the Great Commission.

Each of these efforts are situated within our school’s stated mission and for the purpose of “Seek and equip students from every corner of the Kingdom to serve in every context of the Kingdom.”

Caring Well Response

6. How is SEBTS making an effort to protect against sexual abuse? How will SEBTS integrate aspects of Caring Well in its policies and practices, and engage across SEBTS’s broad constituency?

The following response was approved by SEBTS’s Board of Trustees in October 2019 in response to the SBC’s motion.

Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary is fully supportive of the work of the Sexual Abuse Advisory Group. SEBTS has worked to ensure that our campus has the resources and training necessary to help prevent sexual abuse and provide an environment where those who have suffered from abuse at any time in their life can receive the care and support they need to

flourish.

1. What is their entity doing to foster effective abuse awareness, prevention, and care?

SEBTS employs the use of background checks for all employees, and background checks are also included as a part of the application process for all prospective students. If someone has been convicted of a sex abuse crime in the past, this effort will allow us to take the steps necessary to help ensure that no one on campus is put at risk.

Our Student and Employee Handbook makes SEBTS policy clear that we do not tolerate abuse, neglect, and exploitation. We also encourage the reporting of even suspected incidents.

SEBTS has a Counseling Center that is available to all on campus for those seeking help on a variety of issues. This center is equipped to deal with domestic and sexual abuse issues and is prepared to assist with intake, initial counsel and then make referrals to other professionals when necessary. In addition, our Student Life Staff has been trained to notify Campus Security authorities in all reported or suspected cases. Similarly, our Residence Life Staff has been trained on recognizing signs of abuse and harassment and on proper reporting protocols. We have worked with the senior leadership of this institution as well as with our security department to develop an "emergency response team" and "emergency response team protocol" on how to identify and report potential threat.

In order to raise awareness among our student body, we have instituted a policy in which all of our incoming students are required to watch a training video that helps inform students on how to recognize and report harassment and abuse as part of New Student Orientation training. This video training features the insight and advice of a local lawyer who specializes in domestic and sexual abuse litigation.

Regarding curriculum for ministry preparation, our Biblical Counseling professors address abuse and trauma in several classes. MDiv students receive instruction on how to handle abuse and response to accusations of abuse in the BCO5500: Introduction to Biblical Counseling, and the faculty is currently taking steps to add significant portions of the Church Cares curriculum to BCO5500. This addition includes a number of the videos from the curriculum and making the book that accompanies the curriculum required reading. The reporting requirements are also taught in BCO7501: Practicum 1, and covered in B06570: Counseling Parents and Children during lectures that address counseling children and parents in the midst of/after instances of abuse. Post-traumatic Stress Disorder and counseling abused and traumatized adults are dealt with in BCO6551: Counseling Problematic Emotions. In a Doctor of Ministry seminar, DMN 8161: The Minister as Person and Professional, the Church Cares Curriculum will be required reading.

2. What additional steps has their entity taken to address abuse since the 2018 SBC annual meeting in Dallas, Texas?

Since the annual meeting in Dallas, SEBTS has take the opportunity to review all policies and procedures to make sure they are current and comprehensive. In addition, though unrelated to the actions in Dallas, but related to the topic of abuse awareness, prevention, and care, SEBTS' Director of Campus Security has been established as our Title IX Coordinator. Title IX

encompasses the federal regulations that educational institutions are required to follow to cover issues of protection in the cases of sexual abuse and misconduct.

SEBTS has also implemented a Threat Assessment Tool. This program is a web-based application provided through a company called CLPS Consultants in partnership with Utica, SEBTS' liability provider. This tool provides a standardized method of investigating and recording various kinds of threats to the SEBTS campus and community. The tool also analyzes the results of any investigation and makes recommendations on the further handling of and monitoring of involved persons. Campus Security and many personnel from Student Life have been trained on the use of this program for investigative purposes.

3. How is their entity partnering with the efforts of the Sexual Abuse Advisory Group to address abuse?

Those in leadership at SEBTS have all read the Caring Well report produced by the Sexual Abuse Advisory Group, and have made our students aware of the resource. We fully support the work of the Sexual Abuse Advisory Group and desire to continue to see this effort provide relief and care for the victims as well as help to train to protect victims in the future.

SEBTS will have in place, by the next Annual Meeting, a requirement for all students to complete the Caring Well certificate as well as additional certificate work focused on sexual abuse prevention and care for victims.

Metrics

7. What has proven to be SEBTS's most reliable metric for indicating future accomplishments or challenges across all SEBTS's ministry assignments? Why is that metric the most important to watch relative to specific ministry assignments?

One of the main metrics that SEBTS regularly monitors is our student headcount. This headcount is an indicator for the institution to know if future and current ministers are finding SEBTS a place in which they believe they can receive the training that they need for ministry. In addition, the headcount points to the financial stability of the institution. A growing headcount means that SEBTS is able to invest in our Faculty and Staff as well as other resources to benefit the students. Headcount is also a leading indicator of graduates who are heading into various forms of ministry. A growing headcount means more students are heading towards graduation and their future ministry locations. There are many other metrics that are important to measuring the success of SEBTS. However, headcount is integral to all of those other metrics.