



2018 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 both internally and externally as entity personnel engage Southern Baptists.**

For ninety-three years, the Cooperative Program has served as a tangible expression of the partnership between Southern Baptists and The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. From the first conversation with a prospective student to alumni gatherings, Southern seeks to instill gratitude for and commitment to the cooperating churches of the SBC and the furtherance of the Cooperative Program. The seminary works to promote the Cooperative Program internally in a number of ways. Prospective students learn during the admissions process how Cooperative Program giving makes their education affordable. As part of their degree requirements, Master's level students take a course entitled "Southern Baptist Heritage and Mission." One of the main objectives of this course is to instill a love for Southern Baptists and their cooperative efforts. 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. Weekly chapel speakers, drawn from primarily SBC churches, as well as special events, remind students regularly of the bond between Southern Seminary and the SBC. 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. Externally, faculty and administration regularly speak in Southern Baptist churches, connecting the seminary with the local churches who support our mission. The annual meeting of the SBC, as well as numerous state conventions, also serves as a key venue by which Southern Seminary leadership, faculty, and students engage with the convention and convey our gratitude.

Every week, many SBTS faculty teach and preach in SBC churches, demonstrating the partnership we share. Dr. Mohler preaches in dozens of SBC churches each year and he prioritizes preaching to SBC state conventions and associations, as well as fellow SBC entities. Our partnership through the Cooperative Program is constantly affirmed and emphasized.



- 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?**

Just as every generation of Christians must appropriate the truths of the gospel for themselves, the rising generation of Southern Baptists must embrace the commitment to cooperative missions and funding. At Southern Seminary, we are proud of the efforts we have made so far to ensure the rising generation of pastors and ministry leaders understand the importance of the Cooperative Program and the ministries of the Southern Baptist Convention. We believe the strategy currently in place is effective and that the overwhelming majority of our students will maintain a commitment to the churches and mission of the Southern Baptist Convention and the state Baptist conventions throughout their lifetime.

One of the best indicators of what our future graduates will do is what our recent graduates are doing. At Southern, we are proud to see graduates participating in Southern Baptist life through a variety of avenues from associational directors to state executives and entity heads. Most importantly are the local church pastors who as graduates of this institution are building on the foundation of commitment to the SBC laid during their time at Southern Seminary.

- 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?**

Southern Seminary was founded in 1859 for the purpose of training those called to minister within a Southern Baptist context. This cooperative endeavor has been affirmed over and over through the gifts of SBC churches and the Cooperative Program. Furthermore, the training of thousands for ministry in the SBC would not be possible without this cooperation. In all we do, Southern Seminary seeks to serve Southern Baptist churches. To put it sharply, Southern Seminary derives its reason for existence from the God-given calling upon the churches of the Southern Baptist Convention to train pastors and ministry leaders to fulfill the purposes God has laid before us.

- 4. How does SBTS benefit from and utilize the CP funds in fulfilling SBT's ministry assignments?**

None of what we do would be possible without the generous support of the churches of the Southern Baptist Convention through the Cooperative Program. This is indispensable and invaluable. For SBTS, this means that Southern Baptists provide nearly 20% of our income. The funding provided through the Cooperative Program serves as the tangible expression of the relationship between Southern Baptists and Southern Seminary. Due to the generosity of



THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Southern Baptists, every student sent to us by a Southern Baptist church receives a significant discount on their education. Due to the cooperation of Southern Baptists, SBTS is able to serve students from a variety of Southern Baptist contexts.

Ethnic Participation

- 5. Please give a descriptive report of participation of ethnic churches and other ethnic leaders in the life and ministry of your entity. Over the past 12 months, (2016 – 2017) has your seminary seen changes (increase or decrease) in the number of ethnic leaders among the faculty and within the student body?**

Southern Seminary stands committed to pursuing ethnic diversity within the life and leadership of the seminary and the Southern Baptist Convention. Over the past year, the Seminary has continued to make great strides in pursuing this commitment. Kevin Jones, Assistant Professor of Education at Boyce College, completed his first full year as Associate Dean, providing leadership for new initiatives. Also, Felipe Castro, Director of Hispanic Initiatives, has continued to expand the reach of Southern Seminary among Spanish speakers both within the United States and in South America. Dr. Miguel Núñez, senior pastor of the International Baptist Church in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, has continued to lead in efforts in South America as the Lead Strategist for Latin American Initiatives. Dr. Juan Sanchez, senior pastor of High Pointe Baptist Church in Austin Texas, has continued to work to expand the work of Seminary among Hispanics in North America as the Lead Strategist for North American Hispanic Initiatives. These efforts have resulted in a total of 202 students being enrolled in our online Hispanic program. 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.

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 to provide students with additional curricular options to prepare for engagement in ethnic ministries throughout the SBC. The leadership of Southern Seminary remains committed to expanding its efforts and is constantly evaluating the possibility of needed and viable program expansions to serve the needs of a growing number of ethnically diverse Southern Baptist churches.

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 and 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 2018 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.

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 Master of Divinity program forms the core of what we are called to do here at Southern Seminary. Thus, the percentage of total enrollment comprised by our M.Div. 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. In a very real sense, the health of the M.Div. programs at SBC seminaries has direct bearing on the future health of the denomination. And while all seminaries

have faced challenges relating to M.Div. enrollment, we are grateful to have maintained a healthy and constantly growing enrollment in this important degree program.