
THE INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR YOUTH MINISTRY

**The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
The International Center for Youth Ministry**

Dr. David E Adams, Executive Director

The International Center for Youth Ministry (ICYM) serves as the comprehensive training and networking arm of the institution for those called into youth ministry as a lifetime career. Youth ministry professors, coordinated curriculum, and field education function under the authority of the Executive Director to produce one of the most comprehensive programs in the country. In addition to partnering with ten local approved site churches, international strategic partnerships were established in Kenya, Ukraine, Malaysia, and Mexico in the pursuit of the goal to “recruit, train, place, and network local church youth leaders globally.

Objectives: The purpose of the International Center for Youth Ministry is to prepare students to enter the career path of youth ministry in such positions as youth minister, para-church staff, and positions in adolescent social work and related fields. In addition to the mission statement, goals, and requirements of the institution, the objectives of the ICYM are to enable the youth ministry student to:

- Communicate the gospel effectively to individuals comprising the adolescent culture.
- Acquire and develop skills essential to function and contribute to a local church staff.
- Have a clear understanding of programming for effective adolescent ministry.
- Develop confidence and skills in the recruitment and development of a lay staff.
- Learn the process of assessment, goal development, and strategic planning.
- Facilitate a comprehensive ministry of discipleship that results in maturing the believer so that he can do the work of the ministry.
- Articulate current cross-cultural concepts and strategies and apply theological, historical, and anthropological principles in planning for evangelism, discipleship, and leadership in a cross-cultural setting.
- Be prepared to function as a minister in a local church in the areas of Bible teaching, Christian counseling, organizational administration, and ecclesiastical duties.
- Develop an attitude and strategy for life-long learning that continues to develop the student leader as a professional and ultimately makes a significant contribution toward youth ministry.
- Equip youth pastors with the Strategy Family Ministry Model. As trainers of youth pastors who shepherd young people and their parents, we embrace the Strategic Family Ministry Model as outlined below.

The Strategic Family Ministry Model Is:

- Biblically and theologically grounded
- Missions oriented
- Local church structured
- Pastor led
- Family focused

Biblically and Theologically Grounded

- God has ordained the institutions of the church and the family.
- Scripture has articulated the cultural and evangelistic mandates (i.e. Francis Schaffer & Nancy Pearcey paradigms).
- The Strategic Family Ministry Model (SFM) goal is to present a model that affirms the God-ordained institutions and pursues the divinely issued mandates.

Missions Oriented

- Local churches are commissioned by God to reach all people, in all family contexts, in every nation, with the Gospel of Jesus.
- Churches must empower and encourage individuals to reach and disciple their own families...while at the same time recognize the evangelistic responsibility extends beyond the doors of Christian homes.
- Various approaches have been effectively used by God to minister to people in multiple family contexts.
- As directed by God, churches have developed youth ministries, children's ministries, young adult ministries, recovery groups, women's ministries, etc.
- Any local church that, in function, accommodates only intact Christian families neglects its evangelistic responsibility.

Local Church Structured

- God has granted authority and autonomy to each local church.
- Within Biblical parameters, there is freedom for local churches to organize themselves in a variety of ways.
- The Strategic Family Ministry Model affirms a multiplicity of church styles and models.
- SFM disagrees with those who have declared age-graded ministries to be unbiblical.
- SFM affirms, believes, teaches, and models a “multiple ministers approach” including but not limited to: senior pastors, youth pastors, children’s pastors, worship pastors, women’s ministers, etc.

Pastor Led

- Churches should be led by biblically qualified pastors.
- Scripture affirms the ability of churches to appoint pastors to oversee various ministry areas including age-graded ministries.
- The Bible encourages churches to delegate responsibilities to a multiplicity of ministers (volunteer or paid).
- The willingness of many churches to place unprepared, untrained, unqualified ministers in the significant positions of church leadership has had a negative impact on families, churches, and their influence in their respective communities.

Family Focused

- God’s design for a family is one man, married to one woman, for life, with whatever children God blesses them.
- Fathers are responsible to be the spiritual leaders of their homes.
- Churches are to equip fathers and mothers to disciple their own children.
- Pastors and their families are to model marriage and parenting for their congregations.
- The diversity of family situations in Scripture demonstrates that God loves, cares for, and uses people in diverse family contexts.
- In our society, the intact, nuclear family is becoming a cultural minority.
- The Great Commission requires churches to aggressively engage people in diverse family settings for the purpose of evangelism and discipleship.

Overall Functions:

- ICYM Student Leadership Team – Under the supervision of the ICYM the Student Leadership Team facilitates an awareness and commitment within the campus community for a global Christian work among youth.
- Field Education with partnering churches – This gives the student the opportunity to serve weekly in an effective youth ministry under the guidance of a tenured youth ministry professional.
- ICYM Student Outreach Teams – These are opportunities for youth ministry students to gain exposure to effective local church youth ministries around the country.
- Networking of youth leaders – The ICYM exists to foster cooperation among Southern Baptists as well as youth ministries with a compatibility of vision and doctrine.
- Recruitment and development – As the ICYM meets the needs of youth leaders they will expose their prospective students to Boyce College and Southern Seminary.
- Conferences and forums – The ICYM will host meetings for the purpose of leadership and student development such as Vision Conference for youth leaders and the Youth Emphasis Week for students.
- Consultation services – The ICYM will provide personalized consultation to local church and para-church ministry. An extensive on-site evaluation and personalized recommendation accompanies each visit.
- Outreach and youth missions – The ICYM will host outreach opportunities and overseas mission trips for youth leaders and their students.
- Academic training – The program offers two fully accredited master’s degrees with emphasis in youth ministry, a 64 hour degree with 23 hours of youth ministry courses, and a 88 hour degree (M.Div.) with 26 hours of youth ministry courses.
Program Distinctives: This program is the result of years of research, field evaluation, and process implementation. Continued interaction with colleagues and alumni guarantee that today’s youth ministry student will be equipped for tomorrow’s ministry.
- Academically Based – The strictest of academic standards permeate the youth ministry program.
- Biblically Integrated – Every student is required to successfully complete a comprehensive program of study in Scripture that includes general Bible knowledge, systematic theology with a historical perspective, and contemporary application.
- Culturally Relevant – The basic principle of “identify the culture, use the culture, to reach the culture” is an axiom that is an integral part of the classroom and field education.
- “Cutting Edge” Curriculum – The extensive academic program of youth ministry is built upon a philosophical paradigm in response to the church’s greatest need and theological non-negotiables.
- Field Education – The student will serve as an apprentice with a full-time professional youth leader in excess of 280 clock hours through four semesters (2 credit hours) of Youth Ministry Field Education (YMFE).
- Experienced Professors and Mentors – Professors and site supervisors are successful veterans and academically credentialed practitioners.