

*****SBTS & BOYCE COLLEGE
INTERNATIONAL
2012 ~ ADMISSIONS GUIDE ~ 2013**

After you have read this guide, we welcome you to contact the Manager for International Resources, Mike Withers, at (502) 897-4208, fax (502) 897-4031, or email international@sbts.edu. Mailing address: SBTS, International Resources Office, 2825 Lexington Road, Louisville, KY 40280 USA. SBTS, including Boyce College, is authorized under federal law to admit non-immigrant alien students. However, only the Louisville campuses – not extension centers – are authorized to enroll students in F-1 visa status. SBTS can enroll students in H-1B, H-4, J-2, and R visa categories under most circumstances, but *cannot* enroll those with J-1, B-1/B-2 visas, or anyone “visa-less.”

For internationals seeking F-1 student visas, there is a three-step process:
Step 1. Academic Admission (PARTS 1-3); and Step 2. Finances for I-20 (PARTS 4-6)
Step 3. Student Visa Process

Any **QUESTIONS** about admission file requirements or status (**PARTS 1-3**) for:

All Master’s programs (except Th.M): contact Ms. Allison Whitworth
awhitworth@sbts.edu, phone 502-897-4617 (ext 5290).

Th.M., Doctoral, and Boyce College: contact Ms. Jessica Gardner jessicagardner@sbts.edu, phone 502-897-4617 (ext 5289).

All program-related (course contents, qualifications, ministry preparation, etc.):
contact Admissions Counselors at admissions@sbts.edu phone 502-897-4617.

All visa-related and other matters (PARTS 4 to 6): contact Mike Withers at
mwithers@sbts.edu, phone 502-897-4208, fax 502-897-4031.

APPLICATION DEADLINES:

All Master’s programs (M.A., M.M., M.Div., Th.M.):

January Term — (application is due by) December 1

Spring Semester — December 1

Summer Term — May 1

Fall Semester — July 15

Professional Doctoral Programs: Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.), or Doctor of Educational Ministry (D.Ed.Min.):

January Term – (application is due by) October 15

Summer Term - March 15

Doctor of Missiology (D.Miss.), or Doctor of Music Ministry (D.M.M.):

30 days prior to the doctoral qualifying examination

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.): School of Theology and Billy Graham School

Spring Semester - (application is due by) August 1

Fall Semester - January 15

Ph.D.: School Church Ministries:

Fall Semester only – (application is due by) January 15

PART 1: APPLICATION

Send the application appropriate for your degree program with the \$35.00 non-refundable application fee to the Admissions Office. Currently, applications may be accepted via email to admissions@sbts.edu or fax (from outside the U.S.) to 011 1 502 897 4723, or by regular mail, attention: "Admissions." You will see instructions on the forms, but *generally* an application file includes:

- A. Three Recommendation forms
- B. Church Affirmation form
- C. Official transcripts of all college academic work for seminary applicants, or high school work for Boyce College applicants (a "transcript" lists courses and marks earned) translated into English (photocopies are not acceptable; official transcripts must remain in the school's unopened envelope)
- D. Personal Spiritual Autobiography describing your conversion experience and call to ministry (should be at least two pages in length)
- E. Housing Application. (If you desire campus housing, you should include the \$100 deposit simply in one US \$135 refundable check to "The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary." Your bank will know how to do this. Write "housing deposit" in the check's memo or notes section.

Once your application (for all non-doctoral programs) is complete, you can expect to be notified of a decision within two weeks.

PART 2: TOEFL SCORE

An official TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) score report is required for admission to the Seminary. **No person whose native language is other than English may be admitted without a TOEFL score, unless he or she has obtained an accredited bachelor's degree at an English-speaking institution.** A minimum TOEFL **83 iBT** (internet-based test) score (560 PBT, or 220 CBT) is required for M.A. and M.Div. programs; **90 iBT** (575 PBT, 232 CBT) for Th.M. and Ph.D. programs; and **80 iBT** (550 PBT, 213 CBT) for Boyce College. *We do not offer ESL (English as a Second Language) courses; so cannot grant "conditional admission."*

For information about this test offered around the world, visit Educational Testing Service's TOEFL website www.ets.org/toefl, or email toefl@ets.org. Official TOEFL score reports should be mailed directly to The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (SBTS) by ETS. Our **SBTS/Boyce institutional code is 1724**; if you put this number in the appropriate place on the test registration form, your score report will be mailed to us.

PART 3: ADDITIONAL ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The following degree programs have special admission requirements:

Doctor of Philosophy, Doctor of Music Ministry, Doctor of Educational Ministry, Doctor of Education, Doctor of Missiology. Testing is required, and the reporting of the test scores will take a longer amount of time. The Director of Admissions can supply you with the information you will need both to apply and prepare testing for these advanced degrees. D.Ed.Min. and D.Min. applicants who are seeking the F-1 visa should contact the Manager for International Resources about certain immigration or visa restrictions.

F-1 TRANSFER STUDENTS (now in the U.S.):

Transferring F-1 students already living in the U.S. should phone the Manager for International Resources toll free 800-626-5525 ext 4208 to discuss the simple process of SEVIS “F-1 transfer,” and any special circumstances in your case. SBTS can issue a new I-20 for you *only after* your current school has “transferred out” your SEVIS record to us. The Manager will email you our simple “F-1 transfer” form to aid in this process. Your school will require you to offer evidence that you in fact have been admitted to SBTS, and we require that you offer evidence of your new annual support for studying at SBTS, described below.

PART 4: FINANCIAL EVIDENCE & F-1 DEPOSIT FOR I-20

The U.S. Government requires that you provide proof of financial support in an amount not less than the cost of your program of study plus living expenses for *each year* you are in the U.S. (see table below). So you will need to certify the source and amount of your annual financial support for visa purposes.

<u>Family Status</u>	<u>Must Evidence:</u>
Student	\$15,000 per year
Student & spouse*	\$24,000 per year
Student, spouse + 1 child*	\$27,000 per year
Student, spouse + 2 children*	\$30,000 per year
Student, spouse + 3 children*	\$33,000 per year
Student, spouse + 4 children*	\$36,000 per year

*Our policy requires that a married student and family live together, honoring Scripture commands toward spouses and children (cf. I Cor. 7:1-5), as superior to study.

Evidence of Annual Financial Support: Once you are admitted, *and ideally 3 or 4 months before you plan to arrive at Southern*, then you must provide SBTS, attention “International Office,” documents evidencing your **annual** (yearly) **financial support** for the length of your program (M.A. at 2.5 yrs., M.Div. at 3.5 yrs., Doctoral at 4.5 yrs.) Support may be expressed *by any combination of your personal savings, if any, and/or pledged support* from one or more sponsors. Sponsors should complete our simple, two-page “**Statement of Financial Support**” affidavit (official pledge), printable from the “International Students” page of our www.sbts.edu website. Importantly, sponsors must attach their bank or tax statements sufficiently (not necessarily *fully*) to show ability to honor their annual pledge. ***Please observe that SBTS cannot solicit (request) support from any potential sponsors, but the Manager for International Services will be glad to answer their questions about how best to express their support.

“F-1 Deposit”: As an advantage at your student visa interview, and a great convenience in your first semester, **we also require** for the issuance of the Immigration Form I-20 to you a fully refundable “**F-1 deposit**” of **\$5,000 for a single student, and**

\$7,000 for a family. *For the above considerations, transfer students already in F-1 status, and coming from other U.S. schools, need not make this deposit.* The check should be made payable in U.S. dollars to “The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary,” and its memo/notes section should indicate “For student [your name].” Your bank will know how to do these things. It should be mailed to the seminary’s International Office. The funds will be deposited in your student account for immediate use when you arrive on campus, and promptly refunded if you do not.

Financial Aid: Students granted the F-1 visa will automatically receive an “F-1 scholarship” of \$1,250 (paid \$625 per semester) in their first year. In following years, you, like all other students, must make new application for seminary-based financial aid. There are currently no seminary-funded grants or scholarships for Th.M. or doctoral applicants, but the Financial Aid page of our www.sbts.edu website will direct you to outside scholarships <http://www.sbts.edu/current-students/financial-aid/outside-scholarships/>.

Employment: At your student visa interview you *cannot* claim future work income toward your financial support, because the seminary cannot guarantee anyone a campus job. But you if you find one, you could reasonably expect to earn between \$4,000 and \$9,000 per year working part-time during semesters, possibly full-time during the summer and winter breaks. (Sponsors like to know this!)

You could work off-campus *only after your first two semesters and for a limited period*, under the Immigration Service’s (USCIS) authorization for “Practical Training” in your ministry field of study, or, in any work, if you can prove to the USCIS your unforeseen and extreme financial hardship.

PART 5: HOUSING

The convenience of on-campus housing makes it most often the least expensive or best value among living options. The seminary campus lies in the heart of a large, and nice residential area in Louisville called St. Matthews, and is situated on or near four bus lines (Louisville “TARC” lines 29, 55, 19, 31) so there is good access to off-campus housing, grocery stores, and malls.

For Single Students: Dorm rates range from **\$1100 to \$1525 per semester.**

For Married Students: One and two bedroom campus apartments are available for married students with or without children, ranging from **\$600 to \$825 per month.** Nearby off-campus apartment rates range from \$450 to \$900 per month.

The Housing Office welcomes you to contact them over your dorm or apartment preferences via email housing@sbts.edu, phone (502) 897-4203, or fax (502) 897-4202.

***Inform the Housing Office when you plan to arrive on campus so that it can arrange to receive you, even after office hours on a weekend no matter how late.

PART SIX: HEALTH INSURANCE

Each international student must purchase and maintain health insurance while at the seminary. The cost of medical insurance available through the Southern Baptist Convention’s Guidestone Insurance for pastors and seminary students is determined by the age of the student and the number of family members. Rates are subject to change. For detailed information on plans and rates, please consult the Guidestone at www.Guidestone.org.

Students may choose to acquire health insurance from a provider other than the Guidestone. Married couples planning to have children should maintain comprehensive medical insurance, since the cost of having a baby in the U.S. can exceed \$10,000.

Single students in good general health are recommended to maintain so-called “major medical” or “catastrophic” insurance, the least expensive kind.

The F-1 Visa Process – a Quick Outline

Visit the website of the US consular visa office where you will interview for its instructions on how to schedule it, the documents required (such as the **on-line Form DS-160**, and how to sit for the interview. You may also visit Education USA’s website www.education.state.gov for practical and official information about coming to the U.S. as a student. It offers “advising centers” in most countries.

The “I-20 packet” you receive from SBTS contains some **essential documents** for your student visa interview: **the Form I-20, your SBTS admission letter, and signed copies of all your sufficient financial support documents.**

Your I-20, which is our certification of your academic and financial eligibility for the student visa, contains your “SEVIS” number on the top right corner, something like “N0001234567.” This number is necessary for you to go **complete an on-line Immigration Form I-901 at www.fmjfee.com for paying the so-called “SEVIS” fee of \$200**, which helps to fund the “Student and Exchange Visitor Information System.” This secure US Government website will instruct you how to pay the fee by credit card, and direct you to print out the receipt/confirmation as sort of a “ticket” to your student visa interview.

The very **earliest you could interview for the F-1 visa is four months before classes begin**. And you could enter the U.S. no sooner than one month before classes start. Ideally, if your deposit and financial evidence reached the seminary’s International Office within 4 to 5 months before classes start, you will have ample time to make arrangements for the student visa and for travel. If you are granted the visa, very likely the US visa office will affix the visa into your passport within a day or two of your interview, ready for delivery or your collection.

It is possible to enter the seminary initially for our summer or winter terms, where more intensive, short-term courses are offered. For example, a typical 3 credit hour course involving 45 actual hours in the classroom during one 4 month semester are experienced in only one, or two weeks, sometimes more.