The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary is comprised of three separate schools—an undergraduate college and two premier graduate schools. The School of Theology, the founding school of the institution, specializes in classic studies for ministry and scholarship, such as Bible, Theology, Church History and Preaching. The Billy Graham School of Missions, Evangelism and Ministry is the largest Great Commission school in the world, and is dedicated to training ministers and laypersons to fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20). It also prepares pastors and staff members for service in fields of education and church leadership.

### Admissions Requirements by Degree Program

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*Proof of missionary appointment is required for students applying to the MATS for Intercultural Leadership Program only. When applying online, recommendations and autobiography can be completed through the online application.
Admission Requirement Descriptions:

- **Church/Pastoral Recommendation**: All applicants must receive official endorsement from the local church where they are a member. All applicants are expected to have maintained official church membership for a minimum of one year. Additional recommendations may be required for applicants not attending the church which holds their membership.

- **Recommendation Forms**: We suggest that a professor and business acquaintance each complete a recommendation form. Family members may not complete a recommendation form. Recommenders must have known the applicant for a minimum of one year. If for some reason recommendations do not reflect this kind of diversity, the Admissions Office may request additional recommendations. Research Doctoral applicants are encouraged to submit at least two academic recommendations.

- **Pastor/Leader Form**: This is a requirement for all MATS and MATSIL applicants. The Pastor/Leader Recommendation is submitted in lieu of the normal Church/Pastoral Recommendation and two Recommendation Forms. MATSIL applicants should have the Pastor/Leader recommendation filled out by the IMB. For further information, see the application instruction page or contact the Admissions office.

- **Spiritual Autobiography**: The Spiritual Autobiography consists of a description of your understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ, conversion, spiritual growth, call to ministry and reason for choosing Southern Seminary. MATS applicants must indicate that they understand that the MATS degree is designed for laypersons only and not for those pursuing vocational ministry.

- **Academic Paper**: This is a requirement for Advanced Master of Divinity and all research doctoral applicants. Applicants are required to submit a writing sample from their undergraduate or seminary education, respectively. This requirement allows for proper analysis of an applicant’s writing and research abilities. Please submit an unmarked sample from your previous schooling. It should be a clean copy and may account for former professor’s editorial comments. The paper for the Advanced M.Div. and Doctoral programs should be 12-20 pages in length.

- **Official Transcripts**: Transcripts from all educational institutions in which a degree was conferred are required. Diploma applicants must submit an official copy of their high school diploma or the GED, unless the applicant has completed a minimum of 24 hours of college credit. The students (or applicants) must request that their official transcripts be submitted directly from the school to the Admissions office.

- **TOEFL**: A TOEFL exam is required of all international applicants whose native language is not English.
The Diploma Program

Admission Prerequisites:
- The Diploma Program is designed for candidates who have not completed or earned an accredited Bachelor’s degree. The student must give proof of high school graduation by submitting a high school transcript, General Educational Development (GED) transcript or equivalent. If the applicant has 24 or more college hours, a high school transcript or GED transcript is no longer required. Candidates must be over 30 years of age. Younger applicants are encouraged to complete an undergraduate degree prior to seminary or to apply to Boyce College, the undergraduate school of Southern Seminary.
- A minimum of one year of church membership.

Application Requirements:
- Please see the table and descriptions listed on pages 20-21.

International Applicants:
- For applicants whose native language is not English, an official score report of TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) with a minimum acceptable score of 83 (internet-based) or 220 (computer based) Scores may not be more than 3 years old.

Additional Information:
- Students in the Diploma Program within the School of Theology or Billy Graham School complete any of the M.Div. curricular concentrations with the exception of the Hebrew and Greek requirements.
- Any additional items requested by the Admissions Committee in order for the Committee to obtain a more in-depth profile of the applicant.

The Master’s Program
(M.A., M.Div.)

Admission Prerequisites:
- Baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution.
- A minimum college cumulative grade point average of 2.4 (on a 4.0 scale). Applicants with a college cumulative grade point average below 2.4 (on a 4.0 scale) may be accepted on academic probation on an individual basis.
- Music and Worship Degrees — Southern Seminary offers three graduate level degrees in the area of music and worship: Master of Divinity in Worship Leadership, Master of Arts in Worship Leadership and Master of Church Music. Students desiring to pursue the Master of Church Music degree should have a baccalaureate degree with a major in music from a regionally accredited institution. This degree must be approved by the National Association of Schools of Music (N.A.S.M). The Master of Divinity in Worship Leadership and Master of Arts in Worship Leadership do not require an undergraduate degree in music. All applicants entering music and worship degrees at Southern Seminary must take placement exams offered by the school at the beginning of graduate study. These exams evaluate knowledge and skill in music theory, sight singing, ear training, keyboard, voice and conducting. Students pursuing the Master of Church Music can expect additional testing in the areas of music theory, orchestration and music history. Students who show deficiencies in the placement exams will take some additional pre-graduate course work in the areas of their deficiency (music theory, aural skills, keyboard, etc.). These courses may be taken along side graduate level courses as long as the graduate level course does not rely on the particular skills the student is trying to improve through pre-graduate work. Students are expected to satisfy pre-graduate requirements dictated by the placement exams within the first year of study. Applicants with a less specialized course of study may provisionally enter the program and satisfactorily complete either placement examinations and auditions in music or accelerated pre-graduate studies in music theory, conducting, and applied major and minor areas. Study guides for the placement exams are available upon request by contacting the Billy Graham School.
- A minimum of one year of church membership.

Application Requirements:
- Please see the table and descriptions listed on pages 20-21.

International Applicants:
- International students must submit an official score report of TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) if English is not their native language. No score less than 83 (internet-based) or 220 (computer based) or older than 3 years is accepted.

Advanced Master of Divinity requirement:
- Applicants must submit an academic paper of 12-20 pages in length written during undergraduate study as a research and writing sample.

Additional Information:
- MATS students must indicate in their spiritual autobiography that they understand this degree is for laypersons only and they do not plan on serving in a pastoral or staff position. The only exception is the MATS for Intercultural Leadership. Students in the MATSIL are expected to be full time missionaries or candidates for appointment.
- Advanced M.Div. applicants must have a minimum of a 3.3 cumulative GPA on a 4.0 scale. Additionally, students must have completed at least 6 hours in: Old Testament Survey, New Testament Survey, Church History, and Systematic Theology. Only courses in which a grade of “B” or higher was achieved will be recognized. Other classes students should have completed on the undergraduate level include 3 hours in each of the following: Ethics, Philosophy, Hermeneutics, Preaching, Hebrew, and Greek. Under certain exceptions, students may be admitted into the Advanced M.Div. if they can complete these prerequisites within their first semester of enrollment.
- All students in Music degrees must go through Music Placement Exams to determine their level of ability.
during orientation.

- Master of Arts in Missiology — Missiology applicants must have declared a call to missions and must have approval of the school dean.
- Additional items may be requested by the Admissions Office as needed.

**The Professional Doctoral Program (D.Min., D.Ed.Min.)**

Applicants for Professional Doctoral Degrees will be considered on the basis of an overall profile rather than on a single, qualifying score.

Applicants will be evaluated in light of their academic record, performance on entrance examinations, personal aptitude, and motivation for graduate study. International applicants considering professional doctoral degree programs, should first contact the Center for Student Success to discuss the program’s special visa requirements.

**Admission Prerequisites for the Doctor of Ministry:**

- A Master of Divinity (M.Div.) or its equivalent from a regionally accredited or ATS accredited seminary. The M.Div. degree must include the minimum Hebrew and Greek required in the M.Div. program of Southern Seminary (at least 3 hours of one language at the elementary level and 3 hours of the other language at the intermediate level).

**Admission Prerequisites for the Doctor of Educational Ministry:**

- The Master of Arts in Christian Education (M.A.C.E.) or its equivalent is acceptable for some degrees within the Billy Graham School.
- A minimum master’s level cumulative grade point average of “B” (3.0 on a 4.0 scale). D.Min. applicants with a cumulative grade point average between 2.8 and 3.0 may be admitted on academic probation if they successfully complete all other application requirements, including any required standardized exam. Students admitted on probation whose work is not doctoral level after one semester, will not be permitted to continue in the program.
- In most cases, a minimum of three years of full-time ministry experience after graduating with an accredited theological master’s degree is required.

**Application Requirements:**

- Please see the table and descriptions listed on page 20-21.

**Additional Requirements:**

- A personal interview with the Director of Professional Doctoral Studies or a designated representative. The purpose of this interview is to provide insight into the applicant’s motivation for pursuing the degree and the applicant’s professional goals.
- A field essay related to the study area will be required of all applicants.
- A ministry resumé

- Additional writing samples may be required as needed by the program director.
- TOEFL: See International Applicant paragraph on pg 25.

**The Research Doctoral Program (Th.M., D.Miss., Ed.D., Ph.D.)**

All applicants for research doctoral programs will be evaluated on the basis of their previous academic record, performance on examinations, personal aptitude, and motivation for graduate study.

**Admission Prerequisites:**

- Master of Divinity or equivalent from a regionally accredited or ATS accredited seminary. The M.Div. degree must include the minimum Hebrew and Greek required in the M.Div. program of Southern Seminary (at least 3 hours of one language at the elementary level and 3 hours of the other language at the intermediate level).
- The Master of Arts in Christian Education (M.A.C.E.) or its equivalent is acceptable for the following Ph.D. programs: Higher Education, Christian Worship, and Leadership.
- Students desiring admission to the Doctor of Education program must have earned a regionally-accredited Master’s degree totaling no fewer than 48 hours, with at least 12 hours in biblical and theological studies and at least 12 hours in leadership, administration, education, or ministry studies. Students having earned a Master’s degree but lacking required hours may complete the additional hours through on-line or on-campus study at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.
- Master of Theology: For the Ministry Th.M., a minimum master’s level cumulative grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale. For the Research Th.M. a minimum master’s level cumulative grade point average of 3.3 on a 4.0 scale.
- Doctor of Education: A minimum master’s level cumulative grade point average of 3.3 on a 4.0 scale. Admission is competitive and a higher GPA is favored.
- Doctor of Philosophy: A minimum master’s level cumulative grade point average of 3.5 on a 4.0 scale. Admission is very competitive and a higher GPA is favored.
- Doctor of Missiology: A minimum master’s level cumulative grade point average of 3.3 on a 4.0 scale.

**Application Requirements:**

- Please see the table and descriptions listed on page 20-21.

**International Applicants:**

- Non-native English speakers, including those who have graduated from any U.S. school, must submit an official score report of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). For D.Min, D.Ed.Min, and takers of the TOEFL internet-based test (iBT) must submit a minimum score of 90 or a minimum computer-based (CBT) test score of 233. For Th.M. and Ph.D., takers of the iBT must submit a minimum score of 95 and for CBT, a minimum of 240. Students can go to www.toefl.org for more information about these tests.
Additional Requirements:
• An official copy of the GRE score.
• All test scores must be less than three years old and must be officially submitted to the Admissions Office by the appropriate application deadline in order to be considered for admission.
• Successful completion of the Entrance Exam (except Th.M. applicants). Applicants who have completed the application requirements by the appropriate deadline and who are believed to have a reasonable possibility of acceptance may be invited to take the Entrance Exam in the major area for which application is being made. Further information may be obtained from the Office of Research Doctoral Studies.
• Interview with the faculty of the school or division that covers the applicant’s desired area of study. Applicants who are invited to take the Entrance Exam will be scheduled for their faculty interview on the same day that the Entrance Exam or Qualifying Examination is taken.
• A graduate level research paper in the field to which the applicant is applying must be submitted along with the application.

Admissions Acceptance Categories
• New — These are students who have completed the entire admissions process by submitting all required information and who have been approved into a degree program.
• Readmit — Students who miss two years or less of classes may contact Academic Records to reactivate their status. Students who miss more than two years of classes can contact the Admissions Office to see if additional materials are required before re-enrolling for classes.
• Non-Degree Student status — This is a non-degree classification for students who are in the process of applying but will be unable to complete the requirements before the start of the semester. Non-degree students must submit the application, application fee, Church/Pastoral Recommendation and spiritual autobiography in order to be admitted. Admission as a non-degree student in no way guarantees admission into a degree program. Non-degree student status normally does not extend beyond one semester. Non-degree students may not take doctoral courses except for the Graduate Research Seminar, modern languages, and Latin.
• Transfer — Students must have 1 or more hours to transfer into a degree to be considered a transfer student.

Admissions Information
• Student Spouse — see “Non-Degree” above. Must submit application, Church/Pastoral Recommendation, and spiritual autobiography.
• Non-Southern Baptist Applicants — The purpose of Southern Seminary is to train, educate and prepare ministers of the gospel for more faithful service, regardless of their denomination. Nevertheless, Southern Seminary is a denominational institution and the tuition of Southern Baptist students is partly subsidized by the Cooperative Program (CP) of the SBC. CP funds support the denominational task of preparing biblically-trained Southern Baptist ministers, subsidizing approximately half of the institutional cost for all Southern Baptist students. Students not identified with the SBC benefit from comparatively lower costs afforded by CP funding, but are only eligible for the lower tuition rate under certain circumstances. These students will need to fill out a Southern Baptist Membership Verification Form and meet certain requirements. Requirements include being a regularly attending, participating member at a Southern Baptist church and identifying as a Southern Baptist out of conviction, agreeing with the Baptist Faith and Message 2000. Forms are available from the Admissions Office.
• Applicants Recently Divorced — Applicants who are divorced must wait a minimum of one calendar year before they can be considered for admission. Upon receipt of the application materials, additional information may be required, including an interview with the Center for Student Success.
• Academic Probation — Students lacking a 2.4 cumulative GPA (on a 4.0 scale) may be admitted on a case-by-case basis under Academic Probation. The student must maintain a “C” average for the first two semesters in order for Academic Probation to be removed.
• Visiting Student — A student who is regularly enrolled in another accredited institution may enroll at Southern Seminary for a limited period (one semester) upon recommendation of the dean and registrar of the student’s home institution. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that credit will transfer to the home institution.
• Visiting Scholar — The Visiting Scholar Program is designed for mature scholars, pastors and denominational staff seeking to improve their professional skills through individualized programs of study and research for a maximum of two consecutive semesters. Visiting scholars are free to pursue specialized interests by using the library facilities, consulting with professors and professional peers. Applicants should complete the Visiting Scholar Program Application from the SBTS website.
• Provisional — Provisional admission to master’s level programs may be granted, on an individual basis to applicants who have graduated from an institution lacking regional accreditation in the U.S. or Canada. In order to qualify, applicant’s cumulative GPA must be strong (over a 3.0). The applicant’s course of study must have included at least 60 hours in the areas listed below. No more than 30 hours can be from areas broadly considered to be courses of Instruction related to ministry preparation. The applicant must have taken classes in at least six of the following areas and no more than 12 hours from a single area can be counted towards the 60 hours total. If accepted under Provisional Admission, the student will be placed on
Academic Probation and must maintain a “C” average for the first two semesters.

- English/Speech
- History/Geography/Cultural Studies
- Philosophy/Ethics
- Psychology/Social Science/Management
- Fine Arts (music, art, drama)
- Natural Science
- Mathematics/Statistics
- Modern Foreign Languages
- Biblical Studies
- Religious Studies (history, theology, ministry)
- Biblical Languages
- Professional Studies

International
Southern Seminary is authorized under Federal law to enroll non-immigrant alien students. Students with F-1 visas can study at the Louisville campus only. The seminary is NOT authorized by the USCIS (Immigration Service) to accept international “visiting scholars” with J-1 Exchange Visitor visas, whether as students or researchers. As US immigration regulations are often subject to change, any international student seeking to study without F-1 visa status must first contact the Center for Student Success before making application.

International applicants must meet particular admission guidelines:

- For applicants whose native language is not English, an official score report not more than three years old on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) is required prior to admission. Applicants for Master of Arts or Master of Divinity programs must score at least 83 (internet-based) or 220 (computer-based); applicants for Doctor of Ministry or Doctor of Educational Ministry programs must score at least 90 (internet-based) or 233 (computer-based); and applicants for Master of Theology, Doctor of Missiology, Doctor of Education, or Doctor of Philosophy programs must score at least 95 (internet-based) or 240 (computer-based).
- Applicants, other than Doctoral applicants, who are graduates of a United States college or university may request a waiver of the TOEFL requirement.
- International students seeking F-1 (student) visas must provide the Center for Student Success with affidavit(s) of adequate annual financial support, and unless transferring from a U.S. school, provide a deposit. This deposit is necessary in order to ensure at least minimum funds to begin studies. Guidelines for determining the required amount for the deposit and the annual support are available on the “International Student Checklist” from the Admissions section of the seminary’s website. International applicants are advised to submit their applications at least four months prior to the semester or term in which they wish to begin studies. If admission materials are not complete at least 45 days prior to the date when the applicant wishes to begin studies at Southern, the applicant will be notified of the withdrawal of their application.

The seminary cannot provide any applicant a Form I-20 necessary for the F-1 (student) visa unless, at least 30 days before the semester or term begins, the applicant has been approved for admission, and has provided the financial documents and deposit mentioned. Once accepted, applicants should plan to arrive on campus at least one week before new student orientation (but may not arrive more than 30 days before classes begin) in order to adjust to the community and receive assistance for special needs. Health insurance must be obtained before the student can enroll in courses. F-1 visa status students are eligible to earn a maximum of two master’s level degrees at SBTS. Questions concerning admission to master’s programs may be directed to the Admissions Office. Questions regarding admission to doctoral programs should be addressed to the appropriate Doctoral Studies Office (either Professional or Research). Questions about financial or visa matters should be directed to the Center for Student Success (international@sbts.edu).
## Admission Deadlines

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