

SOUTHERN SEMINARY (SBTS) & BOYCE COLLEGE INTERNATIONAL ADMISSIONS GUIDE

This guide contains all pertinent information for admissions, financial concerns, housing and acquiring your F-1 visa.

Please read this guide in full before contacting International Student Services (ISS). You may contact the ISS office by emailing international@sbts.edu or phone (502) 897-4208.

SBTS, including Boyce College, is authorized under federal law to admit non-immigrant alien students. However, only the Louisville campus – not extension centers – is authorized to enroll students in F-1 visa status. SBTS may enroll students in most visa categories, including H-1B, H-4, J-2, and R, but *cannot* enroll anyone with a B-1/B-2 visa, or anyone “visa-less.” Those in J-1 status must maintain their status with their J school.

For those seeking F-1 student visas, there are **Four Steps**:

Step 1: Admissions

Step 2: Financial Evidence

Step 3: Housing

Step 4. The F-1 visa

The details about admissions, transferring credits, and degree programs are in our online SBTS and Boyce College academic catalogs.

All questions regarding admissions and applications can be directed to our Admissions Office through email at admissions@sbts.edu or phone (502) 897-4200. Once you apply, you will be assigned an Admissions Counselor. You will be able to track the progress of your application, and upload application requirements through the online application portal.

You may reach out to the ISS office if you have questions regarding the International Student F-1 Visa process, international Student Life here at SBTS, or questions regarding relocating to Louisville, Kentucky.

The process of becoming an international student in the US requires time and consistent communication. We will be with you every step of the way and we will assist you in the process as much as we possibly can!

We are delighted that you have chosen to pursue your studies with us and we cannot wait to see you on campus!

Tanner Williams
International Student Services Advisor
International@sbts.edu
(502) 897-4208

STEP 1: ADMISSION

Apply online. If you cannot apply online, scan and email your completed PDF application forms to admissions@sbts.edu, or mail (especially academic transcripts) to:

SBTS, Admissions Office
2825 Lexington Road
Louisville, KY 40280, USA.

Once you complete and submit all required admissions materials, a decision can usually be expected within two weeks except for students applying to a Master of Theology (Th.M.) or Doctoral program. Please find the general admissions requirements detailed below.

Official Academic Transcripts: An *official transcript* is a school's printout of all your courses by semester showing marks (grades) earned that is sealed by the school in its own envelope. If the transcript does not indicate the degree you earned and the date, this information should be shown on an attached document, such as a copy of a diploma. If you are unable to obtain an English translation from your institution, you will need to request an official credential evaluation from World Education Service www.wes.org.

Boyce College applicants must provide transcripts from high school (at least grades 9-12) and any university-level schooling, if applicable. Neither the SAT nor the ACT test (standard tests for American high school students seeking college) are required.

Master's or doctoral applicants must provide transcripts from every *university-level* (undergraduate or graduate) school from which a degree was earned. (This, therefore, excludes certificates or licenses from any specialized "vocational" or "trade" schools that do not require courses such as history, philosophy, the arts, and the sciences.)

If we are unable to determine that your school is sufficiently "credentialed" (recognized by a government or accredited by a reputable accrediting agency) for offering quality degree programs, we *may* request you to contact World Education Service www.wes.org to provide its evaluation of your degree. For master's programs, your undergraduate degree must equate to a 4-year US bachelor's degree.

English Proficiency: F-1 regulations require that SBTS and Boyce College to admit only students with English proficiency. Therefore, an official TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) score report is required for the admission of non-native English speakers. No non-native English speaker may be admitted to master's or bachelor's programs without a TOEFL iBT (internet-based test) score, unless he or she has obtained an accredited bachelor's degree from an English-speaking institution. ***In response to global restrictions caused by COVID-19, Students may also choose to take the Duolingo English Test (DET) and submit their scores for admissions review. The Duolingo English Test can be accessed here: <https://englishtest.duolingo.com>***

SCORE REQUIREMENTS:

Program	Boyce	Master	Ministry Th.M., D.Min, D.Ed. Min	Modular/Research Th.M., D.Miss., Ed.D., Ph.D.
Score (iBT)	80	83	90	95
DET	120	120		

We do not offer ESL (English as a Second Language) courses, therefore we cannot grant “conditional admission.” For information about the TOEFL test offered around the world, visit www.ets.org/toefl. Official TOEFL score reports must be sent by ETS to us. The SBTS/Boyce institutional code is **1724**; putting this number on the test registration form directs ETS to send the TOEFL report to us.

The following degree programs have special admission requirements:

Doctor of Philosophy, Doctor of Ministry, Doctor of Educational Ministry, Doctor of Education, Doctor of Missiology. Testing is required, and you should plan to assure that your score is submitted on time. The Admissions Office can supply you with the information you need both to apply and to prepare for testing for these advanced degrees.

F-1 TRANSFER STUDENTS (coming from U.S. schools):

Transferring F-1 students already living in the U.S. should contact the ISS Office by phone or email to discuss the simple process of *F-1 transfer* in SEVIS. SBTS can issue a new I-20 for you *only after* your current school has *transferred out* your SEVIS record to us. If your school requires an F-1 transfer form, our ISS office can email it to you.

STEP 2: FINANCIAL SUPPORT EVIDENCE

The U.S. Government requires that you provide proof of your financial support in an amount not less than the cost of your program of study plus all living expenses for the equivalent to one year of study in your program.

Financial Amount Required for One Academic Year (9 Months)							
Description:	Boyce	Masters	Th.M.	D.Min./D.Ed.Min.	D.Miss	Ed.D.	Ph.D.
Tuition and Fees	\$10,000	\$6,000	\$7,000	\$5,000	\$7,500	\$9,000	\$8,000
Dependents	\$9,000 for one dependent + \$3,000 for each additional dependent						
Living Expenses	\$7,000	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$12,000
Required Health Insurance	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000

***Our school policy requires that a married student and family live together, honoring Scripture’s concern for one’s spouse and children 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*, you must provide the ISS office with financial documents evidencing your annual (yearly) financial support. Please email international@sbts.edu your financial evidence in the form of bank statements or summaries. Support may be expressed by *any combination of your personal savings, or pledged support* from one or more sponsors.

Sponsors should complete the two-page “Statement of Financial Support” affidavit (official pledge). You will be sent more information about this form upon acceptance.

Please note that SBTS cannot solicit (request) support from any potential sponsors.

F-1 Deposit: As an advantage at your student visa interview and a convenience in your first semester, we also require for the issuance of the Certificate of Eligibility (COE) Form I-20 an “F-1 deposit” of \$5,000 for a single student, or \$7,000 for a family.

The deposit may be made by check or electronic (wire) transfer. 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 complete this. The check should be mailed to the SBTS/Boyce ISS office. The funds will be deposited into your student account for your immediate use when you arrive on campus or promptly refunded if you are unable to attend. For electronic transfer details, contact the ISS office at international@sbts.edu.

Transferring students already in F-1 status, and coming from other U.S. schools, do not need to complete this deposit.

Financial Aid: International students should apply for the F-1 Student Scholarship (\$800 per semester for master’s-level students or \$1,000 per semester for undergraduate students). The financial aid deadline for new students is July 1st for students entering in fall term or January 1st for students entering in spring term. Please note that these deadlines are firm. Further information regarding financial aid and eligibility can be found on the [financial aid website](#).

You can apply for **the F-1 international Student Scholarship** [here](#). Please read all instructions regarding qualifications and deadlines. You will be asked to complete the College Board PROFILES. This form will ask you for a U.S. Social Security Number (SSN). You may leave this line blank if you currently do not have an SSN. Instructions for how to receive a fee waiver for the College Board application fee are available on the “how to apply” pages linked on the webpage mentioned above. The “CSS code,” for SBTS is **9856**; for Boyce use **9785**. You will be required to re-apply for a scholarship each year by June 1, which is our annual financial aid deadline for continuing students. Unfortunately, due to limited resources, Southern is unable to provide grants or scholarships to Th.M. or doctoral students

Please email financialaid@sbts.edu or call (502) 897-4206 with further questions regarding the financial aid process.

Insurance: Our policy is that international F-1 students must purchase and maintain health insurance while at the seminary. Health insurance should be purchased prior to your arrival in the U.S. and you must provide evidence of your coverage to the ISS office before the completion of your first semester. You should investigate whether your current insurance can be extended to cover you in the U.S.

I-20 Shipping Cost: The ISS office will cover the cost of the initial I-20 issued to you. All subsequent I-20s that need to be issued due to a change in circumstance, deferred admission term, or other circumstances requiring an additional I-20 will be paid by the student or charged to their initial deposit. Instructions will be emailed to you if an I-20 shipping payment is required.

STEP 3: HOUSING

Students need to pay a \$25 application fee to get on the wait list for a campus apartment or dorm. This fee can be paid through the F-1 deposit. Once a unit becomes available, the housing office will send you an offer. To accept this offer, you will need to pay a security

deposit of \$200 (for a dorm), or \$400 (for an apartment). If you have already sent your F-1 deposit, the housing deposit can be drawn or taken from it, but not until you have received an offer from Housing.

Single students: Single room and shared occupancy suites can be viewed [here](#). To request a dorm or an apartment, complete the online [Housing Application](#).

Married students: Use the [Housing Application](#). If campus housing is not available, Housing can help direct you to off-campus options. You may follow-up with questions or concerns by email at housing@sbts.edu, or by phone (502) 897-4203.

For international students wanting or needing to investigate off-campus housing when they arrive, friends of the seminary can assist in the search effort.

You may also seek *temporary housing on campus* at our [Legacy Conference Center Hotel](#) at \$45.99 per night, the low rate offered to our newly arriving internationals only. Be sure to contact housing@sbts.edu when you have planned your arrival on campus so that you are ready to be received after office hours, or on a weekend. If you arrive after office hours, go to our Campus Police office (open day & night) accessed outside below the Duke K. McCall Pavilion, (502) 897-4444, campuspolice@sbts.edu.

The seminary campus lies in Louisville's Crescent Hill community on the northwest border of the large district to the east called St. Matthews and is on or near two city bus lines (Louisville [TARC](#) routes 29 and 25), so there is easy access to grocery stores, shopping centers, apartments, restaurants, and two large shopping malls.

STEP 4: The F-1 Student Visa

To apply for an F-1 Student Visa you will first need to receive the Form I-20 from SBTS by providing the financial requirements detailed above in **Step 2**, along with copies of your passport for yourself and any dependents traveling with you.

Once you receive your Form I-20 from SBTS, you will then need to complete the \$350.00 USD SEVIS I-901 payment. The payment is nonrefundable and is used to fund the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System. You can complete this payment here: <https://www.fmjfee.com/i901fee/index.html>

After you complete the SEVIS I-901 payment, please forward international@sbts.edu a copy of your payment confirmation receipt. Visit the website of the US consular visa office nearest you for its instructions on how to schedule the visa interview, the documents required (such as the online Form DS-160, and how to prepare for the interview).

It is very important that the information you provide on your SEVIS payment form and DS-160 is consistent with the information that is evidenced on your Acceptance Letter, Form I-20, and Passport. Please refer to these documents as you complete your Visa application.

We urge you read carefully the US Government's official and very helpful *Study in the States* website <http://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/> which explains the F-1 visa process and living and studying in F-1 visa status.

Planning for Your Visa Appointment and Arrival: The very earliest you could interview for the F-1 visa is 120 days before the program start date that is listed on your I-20. You may enter the U.S. no sooner than 30 days before the program start date that is listed on your I-20.

Ideally, if your deposit and financial evidence reaches our ISS office within 4 to 6 months before classes start, you will have enough time to make arrangements for the student visa and for travel.