

Ranked as One of the Best Apologetics-Focused Seminaries

IMPACT REPORT 2023



Celebrating God's Provision
& Growth

**INTEGRATED APOLOGETICS-FOCUSED
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**





After a distinguished career as both a lawyer and a judge, Judge Phil Ginn retired as the Senior Resident Superior Court Judge for the 24th Judicial District in North Carolina. He holds a B.A. from Appalachian State University, a J.D. from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and a Doctor of Ministry from Southern Evangelical Seminary.

Impacting the Culture for the Kingdom of God

As we conclude this special time of the year when we celebrate the birth of our Savior, we also embrace the coming end of one year and the new beginning of the next. So, with that in mind, I want to give you a brief look at the year in review for Southern Evangelical Seminary and a glimpse into our vision of the new opportunities arriving.

The Lord has blessed SES in 2023 and there is a breath of freshness in the atmosphere as we look to the vision that we have been given for 2024. I hope that you will take just a few minutes to look through the following impact report. It is my hope that you, in some way, will also catch the excitement that we share with each other and our partners as we launch new initiatives and seek to impact our culture for God's Kingdom in a new way both with the traditional educational opportunities at SES, but also with the training which will be made available through our Truth That Matters initiative.

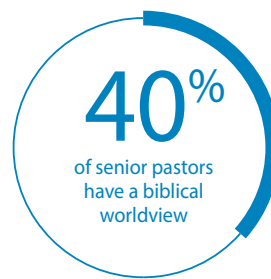
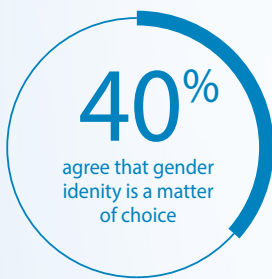
It goes without saying that none of this would be possible without you, our friends who have stood by us through the years. It is your prayers, hard work and generosity that are the catalysts for our success, and we know that none of this would be possible without the Spirit of the Lord in our midst. Please accept my personal thanks for all you do for the Kingdom and especially through our work here at SES.

From the SES family to you and yours, we wish you a most joyous New Year!

Judge Phil Ginn, *SES President*

Together, We're Battling a 'Pandemic' of Bad Ideas

More and more we see reality, including the reality of biblical Christianity, being abandoned and exchanged for a caricature of the truth. Christ-followers are called to combat this infection of bad ideas and point people to the Gospel (2 Cor. 10:3-5; 1 Peter 3:15; Jude 3). Sadly, the church too often teaches an intellectually anemic faith that is shallow and seems to have little to say about the real issues of life. Thus, it's no surprise we see an apparent stream of Christian "celebrities" publicly express their doubts or walk away from the faith completely. Recent studies show the following examples of additional confusion among American churchgoers:



YOU MAKE APOLOGETICS-FOCUSED EDUCATION POSSIBLE

The ability to address the bad ideas plaguing today's culture requires intentional preparation. As SES co-founder, Dr. Norman Geisler, said, "[*Apologetics*] is opening the door, clearing the rubble, and getting rid of the hurdles so that people can come to Christ." For more than three decades, SES has provided *integrated* apologetics-focused education, undergirded with sound philosophy and theology, that equips students to form a complete and systematic Christian worldview. This biblical foundation you make possible aids in both evangelism and building mature disciples who remain *steadfast in the truth*.



Scan to learn more



OUR VISION

Every believer equipped to effectively proclaim the Gospel, engage the bad ideas that stand in the way of the Gospel, and defend the truth of the Gospel in any cultural context



OUR MISSION

To train men and women, based on the inerrant and infallible written Word of God, for the evangelization of the world and defense of the historic Christian faith



OUR PROMISE

Every student will get an integrated and apologetics-focused Christian education that will equip them to be steadfast in the truth



Marketing & Admissions

Through our strategic marketing plan, influencer partnerships, a completely overhauled website, and robust automated marketing software, we are excited to be on track to see **more applications and new students than we have seen in the last 12-15 years!** Admissions counselors are staying busy walking prospective students through the application process, and alumni are being continually engaged which is yet another extremely important source of new students.

+29%

Increase in **new for-credit students** for fall year-over-year

+15%

Increase in **for-credit applications** year-over-year

+19%

Increase in **inquiries** year-over-year

Overall For-Credit Enrollment Projected to Be the Highest in 12 Years



CONTENT MARKETING SNAPSHOT

In addition to paid advertising and search engine optimization on our redesigned website, content marketing remains one of the primary methods of modern-day marketing when many voices seek someone's attention. By utilizing national conference recordings, in addition to our helpful apologetics content produced in-house, this year saw explosive results on the SES YouTube channel:

490K+

Views

115K+

Hours of Watch Time

+4K

New Subscribers



“I can hardly find words to express how thankful I am for SES. After my Christianity was deconstructed, they literally shepherded me, one class at a time, through my faith reconstruction. SES continues to equip students to defend objective truth, the true Gospel, and the inerrancy of Scripture. They are also holding the line by rejecting cultural trends like wokeness and redefinitions of gender and sexuality.”

ALISA CHILDERS

*SES Student, Author, Former
Member of ZOEgirl*



50K+

Views on
YouTube

121

Videos created to
date, in addition
to class content

4

New professor
YouTube
channels with
more coming

Faculty & Online Education

In addition to regular teaching responsibilities, our professors have been very busy. Here is a sampling:

- SES Provost Dr. Richard Howe had the opportunity to teach numerous times in South Africa over the summer, in addition to Alaska, attending the Evangelical Philosophical Society annual meeting, and appearing on several other podcasts
- Dr. Bernard Mauser attended the prestigious Acton conference in NYC
- Dr. Brian Huffling spoke at a Canada conference on Christianity and aliens, has a book accepted for publication, and has appeared on numerous podcasts
- Dr. Mel Winstead lead a group to Israel
- Dr. Tom Howe has a book accepted for publication

PROFESSOR DEVELOPMENT

SES is committed to continually supporting faculty, recognizing that their expertise and preparedness contribute to an exceptional learning environment for students. For this reason, we recently embarked on a **Professor Development Project**, dedicated to empowering faculty with the resources and training essential for delivering a top-tier learning experience. Through this initiative, faculty members received a comprehensive home studio package, including cutting-edge equipment and software, as well as ongoing training opportunities. This enables high-quality recorded materials and real-time streaming.

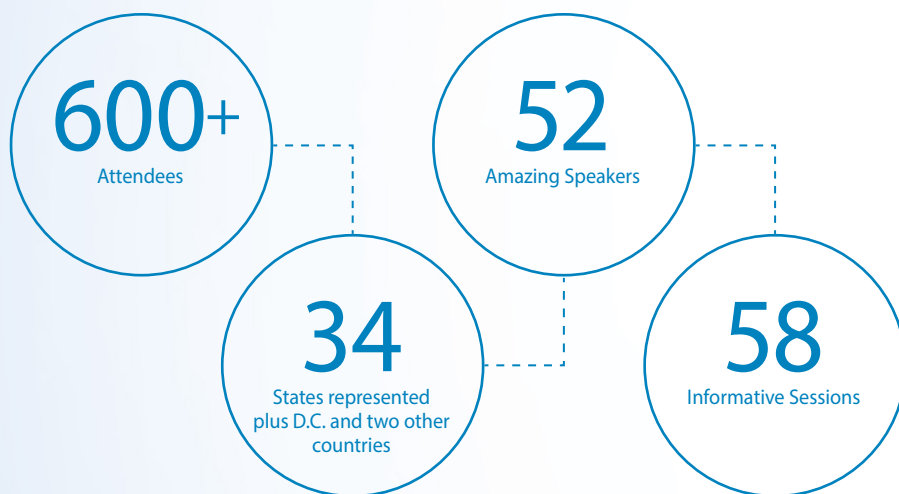
The investment in quality video and audio proves instrumental in enhancing online learning experiences, fostering engagement, comprehension, accessibility,

retention, and motivation for post-secondary students. In addition to the studio package, faculty benefit from a creative and production software stack as well. These tools facilitate efficient content delivery, interactive learning, personalization, assessment, collaboration, analytics, and professional development. The initiative goes beyond equipment and software, providing faculty with ongoing training programs and personalized assistance to address specific issues or optimize system usage.



2023 National Conference

The 29th annual SES National Conference on Christian Apologetics took place Oct. 12-13, 2023. It was rebranded this year to the *SES Steadfast National Conference*. As always, there were many top quality speakers focusing on a variety of topics related to apologetics and evangelism. Once again, the wonderful folks at First Baptist Church Rock Hill were extremely gracious hosts.



In addition to the conference itself, we hosted Reasons to Believe for a Thursday night pre-event on the intersection of Christianity and artificial intelligence. We also served over 75 church leaders at a very informative pastor's luncheon, in addition to more than 40 prospective students and guests at our prospective student luncheon.



DID YOU KNOW?

As a member institution of the Digital Theological Library, SES students have access to the following:

- 620,000 E-Books
- 150 databases
- 35,000 journal titles
- 50 million full-text, peer-reviewed articles
- 2.6 million full-text dissertations and theses
- 71,000 multi-disciplinary videos

Jamison Library

We are excited to highlight significant advancements in the library's technological infrastructure, notably the implementation of LibGuides and Atrium. LibGuides, a research guide system, empowers library staff to create comprehensive guides for specific subjects or classes, seamlessly linking users to electronic resources and the digital theological library. This system benefits both students and faculty, enhancing access to relevant articles and resources. The adoption of Atrium, a library management system, allows students to access an online card catalog, providing a clear overview of available print books, special collections, and resources such as the Phil Johnson Research Collection on science and faith. The library's automation efforts contribute to improved accessibility, creating a more user-friendly experience for both students and faculty.

CAROLINAS THEOLOGICAL LIBRARY CONSORTIUM

Additionally, we are pleased to announce the library's participation in the Carolinas Theological Library Consortium, facilitating inter-library borrowing and collaboration. The Director of Library Services has assumed the role of Chairman, underscoring the institution's commitment to fostering partnerships and resource-sharing among theological libraries in the Carolinas. These advancements collectively demonstrate a commitment to enhancing library services, embracing technology for improved access, and fostering collaboration within the theological community.



Truth that Matters

The Christian church is in crisis, and the decline of Christianity among the general population, particularly youth, continues at a rapid pace. And because the church is in crisis, so is our world.

To cultivate the level of discipleship needed to strengthen the church in our modern world and address the problems in contemporary culture SES presents the outreach initiative, Truth That Matters.

WHAT IS TRUTH THAT MATTERS?

Truth That Matters (TTM) serves the mission of SES through systematic efforts to remedy gaps between the current needs of individual Christian believers, churches, and organizations and the very best in apologetic, evangelistic, and discipleship resources.

TTM carries forward SES's unique program in classical apologetics, love of Christ, high view of Scripture, and defense of biblical inerrancy as described in the Chicago Statements while seeking to:

- 1) **Engage with and equip individual believers, churches, and organizations "on the ground"**
- 2) **Build trust and credibility through doctrinally-sound, innovative, and effective resources**
- 3) **Create positive, biblical impact that empowers the church and stabilizes our culture**

This critical initiative is already well under way in 2024:

- We have hired an Executive Director to helm Truth That Matters and bring the vision to full fruition
- TTM will be launching its first small group and individual study curriculum in Quarter One of 2024 that equips believers with foundational apologetic knowledge
- We have created a podcast and filming studio to create state-of-the-art content for training, edification, and encouragement
- We have launched the Steadfast Leaders Network to meet critical needs for both training and supporting leaders within the church
- Through TTM, Southern Evangelical Seminary is working towards a vision of every believer standing Steadfast in the Truth





“These are very troubling times and though I know there’s always been a need for accurate information about God and Christianity, it seems like now more than ever we need that in our world. This is why I feel fortunate to be able to give to SES.”

KITTY AUSTRIA

SES Student & Financial Partner

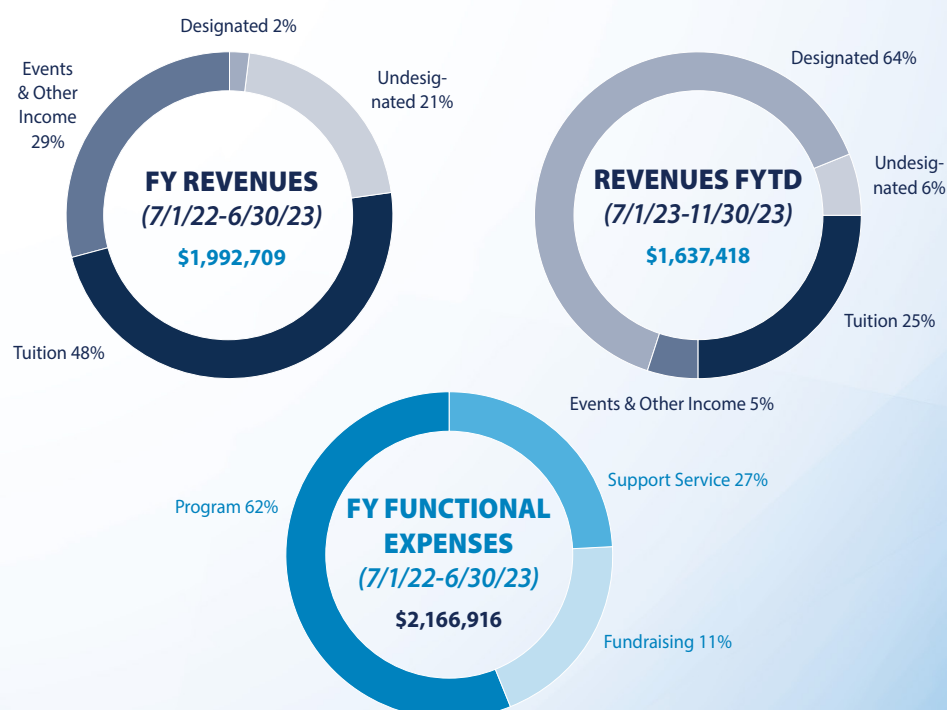


Scan to partner
with SES

Institutional Development

Your prayers, encouragement, and generous support have been instrumental in our growth, and we’re deeply thankful for your partnership. With your incredible support, SES experienced a flood of blessings in 2023. For this past fiscal year (July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023), we were blessed with 221 partners contributing \$468,396 from 35 states and Canada. The top 5 states for giving were North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Texas, and California. Over 70% of these funds are directed toward program expenses, ensuring your generosity is making a significant impact. In addition, we launched the *Steadfast Vanguard* monthly giving program and the *SES Legacy Circle* for those who include SES in their estate plans.

In the months following the close of the fiscal year, we received a monumental \$1,000,000 gift on August 7, 2023, toward the Truth That Matters initiative and a generous property gift in North Carolina from Fred and Vonis Waugh on August 15, 2023. **Combined with record-level Giving Tuesday contributions of over \$50,000 for the launch of the Steadfast Leaders Network, we’ve nearly matched last year’s total in just the first five months of the new fiscal year.** Your investments are being wisely stewarded for God’s Kingdom, propelling SES toward its God-sized vision.



“It all started three months ago. God took a message, and the Holy Spirit fine-tuned the message to speak to us. ... Today God closed the door after 8 years of waiting (to give our property). We are so thankful to God and his Word ... Behold, God is doing a thing for us and SES. Thank you God. We are all chosen to be on the Amazing Race with God directing the program ... and we are excited and expectant ... to ‘Behold I, God will do a new thing!’”

FRED & VONIS WAUGH

SES Financial Partners (seated below)



SES is honored to be a long-term member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability, an organization founded by Billy Graham. In today's world, demonstrating trustworthiness is more important than ever in effectively reaching the world for Christ. ECFA exists to help enhance that trust.

“You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard
so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men
and fall from your own steadfastness ...”

2 PETER 3:17 ESV

