



**SOUTHERN  
EVANGELICAL**  
*Seminary & Bible College*

# **INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT REPORT** 2024/25





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## INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT PLAN & SCHEDULE

### Direct Student Learning Assessment – Faculty

1. Degree Program Review (rotating five-year schedule)	Spring by Faculty and Registrar
2. Portfolio Rubric (each degree program)	Spring by Academic Advisor

### Student Learning & Experience Inventory – Registrar

1. Entering Student Inventory (ESI)	Summer
2. Seminary Experience Inventory (SEI)	Summer
3. Graduating Student Inventory (GSI)	Summer
4. Alumni Inventory (AI)	Every five years (next up in 2025; replaces GSI)

## 2023/24 RECOMMENDATIONS REVIEW

Recommendation	Person/Department Responsible	Documented Change
Enhance feedback on assignments to improve learning outcomes (SEI)	Faculty	TBD
Improve communication from administration/faculty for timely information delivery (GSI)	Student Life; Faculty	TBD
Increase library resource accessibility for better academic support (ESI)	Library; Online Ed; Student Life	TBD

## 2024/25 INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATIONS

The 2025 student surveys show that SES students are deeply aligned with the seminary’s mission and highly value its apologetics-focused, academically rigorous education. Most are online, bi-vocational learners seeking ministry training or further scholarship. Students express strong satisfaction with faculty and the curriculum but highlight needs for faster communication, clearer advising, and more connection with peers. Addressing these areas will further enhance the experience without compromising SES’s core values.

Recommendation	Person/Department Responsible
Improve responsiveness to student inquiries	Faculty; Student Life; Registrar
Enhance academic advising experience by becoming more proactive in the process	Faculty; Student Life; Registrar
Increase community engagement, communication, and student interaction	Student Life; Communications

## RETENTION & GRADUATION RATES

### Undergraduate Retention Rates\*

2024/25	<b>42%</b>
2023/24	<b>45%</b>
2022/23	<b>21%</b>
3 Year Average	<b>36%</b>

### Graduate Retention Rates\*

2024/25	<b>59%</b>
2023/24	<b>54%</b>
2022/23	<b>56%</b>
3 Year Average	<b>56%</b>

### Undergraduate Graduation Rates\*\*

2019 Cohort	<b>9%</b>
2018 Cohort	<b>21%</b>
2017 Cohort	<b>15%</b>
Average	<b>15%</b>

### Graduate Graduation Rates\*\*

2019 Cohort	<b>23%</b>
2018 Cohort	<b>18%</b>
2017 Cohort	<b>13%</b>
Average	<b>18%</b>

\*Retention rates are fall-to-fall headcount comparisons (including certificate students) minus graduates and, given the non-traditional SES student demographic, include all part-time and full-time students (this does not account for students who skip semesters).

\*\*The graduation rates above are fall-to-fall measurements at 150% of the expected time for completion (bachelor degree rate is 6 years from the first enrollment) and include all certificate and degree students (this is not necessarily representative of our actual student body).



## DEGREE PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Beginning in January 2026, several degree programs will move to inactive status. They have been crossed out below. For this year, the Bachelor of Arts Religious Studies and the Master of Arts in Christian Apologetics have been assessed (results below).

Degree Program	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Bachelor of Arts Religious Studies	X				
<del>Master of Arts in Religion</del>	<del>X</del>				
Master of Arts in Christian Apologetics	X				
Master of Arts in Apologetics & Theology		X			
Master of Arts in Philosophy		X			
Master of Arts in Biblical Studies			X		
<del>Master of Arts in Church Ministry</del>	<del></del>	<del></del>	<del>X</del>		
Master of Divinity in Apologetics				X	
Master of Divinity in Biblical Studies				X	
<del>Master of Theology</del>	<del></del>	<del></del>	<del></del>	<del>X</del>	
Doctor of Ministry in Apologetics					X
Doctor of Philosophy in Philosophy of Religion					X

### *Bachelor of Arts Religious Studies Assessment*

A total of 63 surveys were sent to current B.A. students.

#### Total Responses

3

#### Overall Assessment

- All respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Southern Evangelical Seminary is achieving its overall institutional objectives.
- Two of three respondents strongly agreed that the BA degree program objectives are being achieved.
- One respondent expressed disagreement regarding degree-specific objectives, indicating some uneven perceptions at the program level.

#### Strengths Identified

- General satisfaction with the program's goals and outcomes.
- Affirmation that the BA program aligns well with SES's broader mission and objectives.

#### Areas for Improvement

Recurring themes from open-ended responses included:

- Course availability and scheduling: Desire for more classes offered per semester.
- Instructional balance: Interest in more direct teaching and less reliance on reading and recorded material.
- Program structure:
  - Suggestions to streamline or reduce the field experience requirement.
  - Interest in better tools for academic planning and course sequencing visibility.

## Summary Evaluation

Despite the small sample size, feedback suggests that the BA program is generally perceived as effective and mission-aligned, with targeted concerns focused on delivery format, course availability, and program structure rather than core content or objectives.

## Comparison with Other Institutions

BIOLA University (Regional Accred.)	Veritas International University (TRACS)	SES (TRACS)
General Ed – 60 hrs	General Ed – 60 hrs	General Ed – 60 hrs
BBST103 Biblical Interpretation and Spiritual Formation (3)	AP301 Christian Apologetics (3)	AP302 World Religions & New Religious Movements (3)
BBST165 Foundations of Christian Thought (3)	PH301 Survey of Philosophy (3)	AP401 Introduction to Christian Apologetics (3)
BBST209 Old Testament History and Literature (3)	RE304 World Religions (3)	AP412 Ethics (3)
BBST210 New Testament History and Literature (3)	PH302 Critical Thinking/Logic (3)	PH301 Critical Thinking (3)
BBST306 Early Christian History - Acts (3)	RE305 Cults and New Religious Movements (3)	PH302 Introduction to Philosophy (3)
BBST311 Biblical Backgrounds (Understanding Bible's Context) (3)	FC410 Gospel and Culture (3)	BL(GK/HB) 401 Biblical Languages (3)
BBST251 Theology I (3)	TH301 Philosophical Theology (3)	OT301 Old Testament Survey (3)
BBST354 Theology II (3)	TH320 Bible Study Methods and Interpretation (3)	OT400 Book Study (3)
BBST365 Gospel, Kingdom, and Culture (3)	TH330 Bibliology (3)	NT301 New Testament Survey (3)
BBST465 Integration Seminar (3)	TH440 Christ and the Holy Spirit (3)	NT400 Book Study (3)
BBST310 Geography of Israel (3)	TH460 Sin and Salvation (3)	ST301 Introduction to Theology (3)
BBST316 Gospel of John (3)	TH470 Church and Last Things (3)	ST302 Survey of Bible Doctrine (3)
BBST330 Jesus' Life and Ministry (3)	OT/NT400s Book Study (3) or Biblical Language course (3)	ST303 Bible Study Methods (3)
BBST409 Topics in Old Testament Ethics (3)	OT310 Old Testament Survey (3)	HT410 Church History (3)
BBST450 Advanced Study: Systematic Theology (Apologetics) (3)	NT320 New Testament Survey (3)	ME405 Practical Evangelism & Apologetics (3)
BBST456 God, Evil, and Suffering (3)	CH480 Church History I (3)	ME407 History of Missions & World Christianity (3)
BBST457 Evidence for the Resurrection (3)	CH490 Church History II (3)	CE301 Communication in a Theological Context (3)
BBST320 Methods of Bible Study (3)	Biblical Studies Elective (3)	SM401 Writing & Research Skills (3)
CEED150 Foundations of Ministry (3)	ME401 Missions and Evangelism (3)	AP Elective (3)
CEED330 Biblical Interpretation and Teaching (3)	PM302 Christian Leadership (3)	Any Elective (3)
<b>Total – 120 hrs</b>	<b>Total – 120 hrs</b>	FE401 Field Experience 1 (0)
		FE402 Field Experience 2 (0)
		<b>Total – 120 hrs</b>

## **Master of Arts in Christian Apologetics Assessment**

A total of 78 surveys were sent to current M.A. Christian Apologetics students.

### **Total Responses**

**23**

### **Overall Assessment**

- All respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Southern Evangelical Seminary is meeting its overall institutional objectives.
- A strong majority agreed or strongly agreed that the MACA program objectives are being achieved.
- No respondents expressed outright disagreement with program effectiveness, indicating broad confidence in the degree's academic aims.

### **Strengths Identified**

- Clear affirmation of the academic rigor and apologetics focus of the program.
- Strong alignment between the MACA program and SES's mission.
- Appreciation for faculty expertise and the philosophical/theological depth of the curriculum.

### **Areas for Improvement**

Open-ended responses highlighted several recurring themes:

- Course scheduling and rotation: Desire for greater predictability and availability of required courses.
- Instructional delivery:
  - Requests for more live or interactive teaching components.
  - Some concern about heavy reliance on independent reading or asynchronous formats.
- Program logistics:
  - Interest in clearer degree planning tools.
  - Suggestions for smoother sequencing of courses, especially for working students.

### **Summary Evaluation**

Although based on a small response pool, the MACA review reflects consistently positive perceptions of program quality, mission alignment, and academic depth. Identified concerns focus primarily on delivery format and scheduling logistics, rather than on the substance or legitimacy of the apologetics curriculum itself.

*Comparison found on next page ...*

## Comparison with Other Institutions

BIOLA University (Regional Accred.)	Veritas International University (TRACS)	SES (TRACS)
CSAP510 Apologetics Research and Writing (1)	OT510 Old Testament Survey (3)	SM501 Writing & Research Skills (0)
CSAP529 Scripture: Authority, Canon, and Criticism (2)	NT515 New Testament Survey (3)	AP501 Intro to Christian Apologetics (3)
CSAP625 Philosophy of Religion (2)	TH520 Biblical Hermeneutics (3)	AP503 Logic (3)
CSAP626 Ethics (2)	TH530 Prolegomena and Bibliology (3)	AP511 Christian Apologetic Systems (3)
CSAP628 Why God Allows Evil (2)	TH540 Theology Proper and Creation (3)	AP512 Ethics (3)
CSAP629 Scientific Apologetics (2)	TH550 Christology and Pneumatology (3)	AP518 Resurrection of Jesus (3)
CSAP651 Comparative Religions (2)	TH560 Anthropology, Hamartiology, and Soteriology (3)	PH501 Classical Philosophy (3)
CSAP691 In Defense of the Resurrection (2)	TH570 Ecclesiology and Eschatology (3)	PH601 Philosophy of Religion (3)
CSAP696 Apologetics Practicum (1)	AP501 Christian Apologetics (3)	BSS01 Biblical Backgrounds & Criticism (3)
CSAP521 Old Testament Survey (3)	RW499 Research Methods and Technology (P/F)	ST501 Prolegomena & Bibliology (3)
CSAP522 New Testament Survey (3)	CM501 Church/Mission Experience I (P/F)	ST502 Theology Proper & Creation (3)
CSAP541 Essential Christian Doctrine I (2)	CM502 Church/Mission Experience II (P/F)	ST503 Hamartiology & Soteriology (3)
CSAP542 Essential Christian Doctrine II (3)	AP501 Christian Apologetics (3)	ST504 Ecclesiology & Eschatology (3)
CSAP638 Spiritual Formation and the Life of the Mind I (2)	AP504 Christian Ethics & Moral Philosophy (3)	<b>Total – 36 hrs</b>
CSAP639 Spiritual Formation and the Life of the Mind II (1)	AP507 Problem of Evil (3)	
AP Electives (9)	AP510 Cultural & Social Apologetics (3)	
CEED150 Foundations of Ministry (3)	RE504 World Religions (3)	
CEED330 Biblical Interpretation and Teaching (3)	RE505 Contemporary Cults (3)	
<b>Total – 39 hrs</b>	PH510 Classical Logic & Beginning Symbolic Logic (3)	
	CM503 CM Church/Mission Experience III (P/F)	
	Elective (3)	
	<b>Total – 48 hrs</b>	

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVMENTS OF BA AND MACA

The academic committee and the faculty approved these degree program reviews on February 24, 2026 and made the following recommendations:

1. Explore planning courses of study. Responsibility: Registrar
2. Evaluate field experience requirements for specific degree programs. Responsibility: Director of Field Experience.

### DIRECT ASSESSMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL AND DEGREE PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The Faculty approved a plan to curriculum map all degree programs by implementing the completion of a Course Learning Assessment form upon the completion of each class that is scored and linked to the degree and institutional objectives. This is contained in a separate document.

## ENTERING STUDENT INVENTORY (ESI) 2024/25

The Entering Student Inventory for 2024/25 offers insights into the backgrounds, experiences, plans, and satisfaction of new students at Southern Evangelical Seminary (SES). Their feedback, summarized below, will guide SES in enhancing student engagement and addressing concerns.

### Total Responses

12

#### Awareness & Recruitment

All respondents learned about SES from external sources, most commonly from alumni, prominent apologists (such as Frank Turek, Alisa Childers, Melissa Dougherty), podcasts, and internet research. Word of mouth and notable faculty/alumni play a significant role in recruitment.

#### Enrollment Patterns

Every student reported SES as their first or second choice, and each only applied to SES or one other seminary. All respondents live over 100 miles from campus, indicating our online presence is key.

#### Aspirations

- *Planned Uses for Degree:* Most intend to serve in various ministries, including church ministry, para-church ministry, teaching, or personal enrichment.
- *Degree Goals:* The majority (over 75%) aim for a Master's degree; a smaller group plans for a Ph.D. or Bachelor's degree.

#### Lifestyle & Preferences

- 12 out of 13 intend to work full-time (40 hours/week) while attending SES, emphasizing the need for continued flexible, asynchronous learning options.
- Most plan to dedicate 6–15 hours/week to SES studies.

#### Financial Concerns

- While most feel they can manage academic and personal demands, about half express concern about financing their education, with several indicating they would apply for federal funding if available.
- The majority report knowing where to get financial aid information.

#### Academic Experience & Support

- Students express high confidence in using SES's digital tools (Canvas, Digital Theological Library, Populi).
- Nearly all plan to engage with professors via email; fewer plan to use the phone.
- Most rely on degree worksheets, advisers, or the school catalog to track degree requirements.

## ESI, continued ...

### Key Testimonials

“Love the apologetics focus in every class! It’s one of the main reasons I chose SES!”

“Lord willing, and GPA allowing, I am interested in pursuing a PhD after the master’s degree.”

“First, SES was not my first choice, but the necessary choice. ...the reason I chose SES was also because of their founders and faculty (Geisler, Turek, Childers, Wallace) and its concentration on apologetics, even among bible classes.”

“Overall, I would recommend SES, but I would have some commentary for the new student as to what to expect and how to prepare.”



### Conclusion

The ESI survey highlights SES’s appeal to geographically dispersed, working professionals seeking advanced, apologetics-focused theological education. Students are primarily recruited through high-profile alumni, faculty, and online content, underscoring the importance of digital presence and word of mouth. While satisfaction is generally high, students note a need for improved financial aid options and suggest enhancements in online course pacing and interactivity. The unwavering emphasis on apologetics emerges as a strong, distinctive draw for the incoming class.

## SEMINARY EXPERIENCE INVENTORY (SEI) 2024/25

The Seminary Experience Inventory (SEI) 2024/25 survey provides a comprehensive overview of student experiences at Southern Evangelical Seminary (SES). This detailed report includes key findings, testimonials, and recommendations based on the survey data.

### Total Responses

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52

### Overall Academic Satisfaction

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Most students are highly satisfied with SES, frequently choosing the highest rating (5) for academic experience, faculty, and mission achievement. Strong loyalty and positive morale are repeatedly indicated.

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### Administration & Communication

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- While the majority rate administration and communication positively, several students experience frustration with faculty and administrative response times, particularly via email.
  - A few note challenges reaching staff due to the remote work model and lack of direct phone access.
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### Course Availability & Delivery

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- Most find course registration and use of Populi/Canvas easy and satisfactory.
  - A minority express concern about the availability of required courses when needed and about courses being too condensed or missing deeper interaction.
  - Students appreciate the overall online environment but suggest more consistency in grading (especially regarding Turabian format) and request more feedback on assignments.
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### Community & Student Life

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- Participation in virtual events and clubs is low, with many respondents unaware of or not engaging with these opportunities; some cite lack of time due to full-time ministry.
  - Prayer support and awareness of volunteering opportunities receive mixed responses, with a minority reporting high engagement.
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### Library & Resources

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- Opinions are split: some appreciate the library, while others find its interface difficult or the digital format of books suboptimal for extended reading.
  - Several suggest technical improvements (e.g., easier navigation, more user-friendly search).
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### Financial Considerations

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Students acknowledge tuition as competitive and affordable, which is appreciated, but note the trade-offs involved in system features and service speed.

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## SEI, continued ...

### Key Testimonials

"I am deeply grateful to God to be enrolled at SES and I am loving my studies! As a South African I never would have been able to afford an education like this without the discount that you have offered, thanks! SES has significantly impacted my life and ministry!"

"My advice, keep tuition reasonable, focus on the core, and when you're able to solve the other issues go for it, but let's NEVER compromise our teaching of God's word or our mission."

### Conclusion

The SEI 2025 results indicate that SES is succeeding in its mission to provide a meaningful academic experience grounded in Christian apologetics and theology. Students hold the faculty and educational quality in high regard, with many expressing deep gratitude for their formation at SES. At the same time, the data surface actionable opportunities for improvement, particularly in administrative responsiveness, faculty-student communication, course availability, and digital resource accessibility. While SES's focus and affordability are valued, especially among international and bi-vocational students, enhanced feedback mechanisms and expanded support resources would further strengthen student satisfaction and engagement.



## GSI, continued ...

### Key Testimonials

"I'm looking forward to learning more at SES so I can grow in my personal faith and fulfill the Great Commission."

"Great experience. Very thankful for SES!"

"The reason I chose SES was the integration of philosophy, theology, and apologetics."

"My adviser was helpful"

"I developed an ability to defend the Bible and the doctrines of the historic Christian faith."

### Conclusion

The GSI 2025 responses underscore SES's core strengths in classical apologetics and integrated Christian worldview education, which draw and retain distance-learning, working professionals. Graduate satisfaction is high, with students affirming notable growth in their biblical understanding, apologetic competency, and spiritual maturity. While experiences with academic advising and digital campus tools show some variability, the overall academic environment, faculty quality, and mission fulfillment receive strong marks. Graduates leave SES well-prepared for ministry, ongoing scholarship, and leadership, attesting to the seminary's success in meeting its educational and formational objectives



## GRADUATING STUDENT INVENTORY (GSI) 2024/25

The survey results from the Graduating Student Inventory (GSI) for 2024/25 provide valuable insights into the experiences and future plans of recent graduates of Southern Evangelical Seminary (SES). The following is a summary of the key findings, including notable testimonials.

### Total Responses

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8

### Motivation for Attending SES

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- The apologetics focus and the integration of philosophy, theology, and apologetics are the two leading reasons students chose SES.
  - References are frequent to SES's unique blend of classical philosophy and Christian apologetics.
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### Satisfaction & Recommendation

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- Nearly all graduates rate their overall experience as "Good" to "Excellent," with most choosing "Excellent."
  - The majority would recommend SES "without reservation" to prospective students, reflecting strong institutional loyalty and satisfaction.
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### Course Delivery & Student Profile

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- Almost all graduates are residing more than three hours from campus.
  - The predominant enrollment pattern is part-time study while working full-time (40+ hours/week).
  - Students indicated that SES's structure accommodates working professionals and distance learners.
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### Academic & Spiritual Outcomes

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- Respondents report increases in understanding of the Bible, Christian doctrine, and apologetics.
  - Most agree they have developed a distinctly Christian worldview and critical skills for evaluating theological and moral issues.
  - Several note maturation in their relationship with God and training for evangelism, missions, and apologetic ministry.
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### Support Services & Advising

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- Ratings for faculty accessibility, teaching quality, and course availability are consistently high.
  - Academic advising receives mixed ratings, with some finding their adviser less available or helpful.
  - Library and digital campus environments are generally rated "good" to "excellent" but receive occasional constructive criticism regarding usability and navigation.
  - Timeliness of staff response is seen as adequate but noted for occasional delays.
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### Post-Graduation Plans

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- Graduates plan diverse next steps, including full-time ministry employment, pursuing higher degrees (Ph.D., professional degrees), or launching online ministries (e.g., YouTube, podcasting).
  - A minority are pursuing secular employment or further professional training.
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## SES Alumni Survey

### Overview

The 2026 Alumni Survey collected responses from 18 graduates, all of whom were male and married, with the majority aged 41–50. Nearly all completed their coursework online or via livestream (94.4%), and most were employed 40+ hours per week (77.8%) while studying. Graduates represented a broad range of SES programs, with the largest clusters in apologetics, religion, and ministry-related degrees.

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### Key Findings

#### Academic and Spiritual Outcomes

Alumni reported strong positive outcomes across nearly all educational objectives. Respondents overwhelmingly agreed that they:

- Increased in understanding of Scripture and historic Christian doctrine.
  - “I increased in my understanding of the Bible and doctrines of the historic Christian faith.”
  - Developed the ability to defend the faith and evaluate theological and moral issues biblically.
  - Grew in Christian worldview formation and spiritual maturity.
  - Benefited from SES’s emphasis on rigorous, biblically centered education.
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Open comments reinforced this theme, noting SES’s academic rigor and transformative impact:

“The quality of the classes at SES have been very challenging... Students will come away from SES as better individuals serving Christ.”

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### Institutional Confidence

Perceptions of SES leadership, faculty confidence, and public relations were mixed and polarized. Many items showed both Strongly agree and Strongly disagree responses, indicating divergent alumni experiences. For example: “I am satisfied with the administrative leadership of SES.” included responses at both extremes.

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### Field Education

Field Education outcomes were inconsistent. Some alumni affirmed spiritual formation benefits, while others disagreed that the program effectively integrated classroom learning with ministry practice.

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### Library Resources

Library services emerged as the most consistently negative area:

- Concerns about adequacy of the book collection.
  - Lack of professional assistance.
  - “The library has professional assistance available.” included Strongly disagree responses.
  - Difficulty accessing the online catalog.
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### Faculty Feedback

One of the most actionable themes from open comments was the desire for more substantive feedback on written assignments: “I very rarely got any feedback and often felt that my papers were not even read.”

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### Strengths

- Strong academic rigor and theological formation.
- Significant spiritual growth and worldview development.
- High appreciation for SES overall.
- Effective online instructional delivery.

- Alumni serving in a wide range of ministry and leadership roles.
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**Weaknesses / Areas for Improvement**

- Polarized confidence in leadership and institutional direction.
- Library resources, staffing, and digital access require attention.
- Field Education program needs clearer structure and stronger integration.
- Insufficient faculty feedback on student work.