



Partial Document

9. Seminarian Financial Aid

9.1. Purpose

This program was established to provide financial assistance to members of FECA member churches, as they receive basic theological training to become Christian ministers or missionaries. Our focus on Christian ministers and missionaries is due to the desperate need for committed ministers for pastoral ministry in the Chinese churches today and for missionaries who are willing to go where other people are not willing to go.

Besides theological education and character formation, it is also important and indispensable for applicants to learn the lesson of faith in financial matters during the formation process of becoming a servant of God.

9.1.1. Sacrificial Giving

As church members, we need to utilize our own finances first and not to assume that our church will finance our advanced studies. Full-time ministry is a journey of faith. A basic test of faith is whether one is willing to use his/her own finances in a sacrificial manner for God's Kingdom. The financial support of AMC is meant to assist with tuition costs and not serve as the primary source of financial support.

9.1.2. Unexpected Intervention from God

God will always surprise us. Sometimes, He will sovereignly guide somebody to a ministry beyond our established priorities and foci. Such guidance, however, will definitely be revealed and confirmed by God in a communal setting. In other words, the leaders will be clear about God's leading in this respect. In such a case, we will prayerfully support the applicant accordingly.

9.2 Eligibility

9.2.1. The applicant must have received a clear call to full-time ministry and have corporate confirmation of it by the local FEC member church congregation pastor and Senior Pastor.

9.2.2. The applicant should be an active member of a FECA member church for three consecutive years immediately prior to the time of application. However, the committee in its discretion may consider an applicant who has been a member of a FECA member church for a shorter time.

9.2.3. In line with the above-stated purpose, financial aid is provided to a qualified applicant studying toward a first theological degree (MDiv, MA). FECA recommends full-time study for the applicant.

9.2.4. The applicant must attend an Association of Theological Schools (ATS) accredited seminary.

9.3 Application and Disbursement Procedures

9.3.1 FECA will accept applications once a year, commencing Feb. 15 of each year for disbursements for the Fall quarter or semester. The applicant must complete and submit the following no later than June 15 prior to the Fall quarter or semester in which the applicant will begin his or her studies:

9.3.1.1 The financial aid application (Form 612-9-A for new applicant or Form 612-9-B & C for returning seminarian) along with a recent photo;

9.3.1.2 Two references - one must be from his/her congregation/ senior pastor, and the other from his/her supervisor/ mentor (Form 612-9-D); and

9.3.1.3 Receipt from a LiveScan (fingerprinting) service confirming that the applicant's fingerprints have been submitted to the FBI and Department of Justice (DOJ) for review. If the applicant's fingerprints have been submitted to the FBI and DOJ within the past two years on behalf of a FECA-member church, and the applicant's record shows no criminal conviction, then a letter regarding such report from the FECA-member church will be accepted.

9.3.2 Upon receiving the completed application, AMC sub-committee will schedule an interview with the applicant within 45 days.

9.3.3 After the interview is completed, as part of the application process, the applicant must complete psychological testing with a psychologist or psychological service chosen by AMC. AMC will bear the costs of such testing. The testing shall include MMPI, 16PF and 2 interview sessions related to the applicant's suitability for full-time ministry.

Within 30 days of the completion of the psychological evaluation, a report prepared by the psychologist or psychological service mentioned previously, shall be sent to FECA office (Attn: Missions Director of FECA). The report and the information from the testing will be held in strict confidence. Applicants will be asked to sign a release form, allowing the Financial Aid Sub-committee to review the report for the purpose of qualifying for financial aid only. Each subcommittee member shall also sign a confidentiality agreement and will not disclose or discuss the contents of the report outside of the sub-committee meetings.

9.3.4 Within 30 days of the report's delivery, AMC will notify the applicant of its decision on the application.

9.3.5 [Tuition Fee](#): Once an application is approved, AMC will determine the financial aid based on the applicant's need. AMC will approve sums up to \$10,000 (for full-time study or prorated for part-time study) per year to cover tuition and books with a maximum lifetime award of \$30,000 for completion of the MDiv or MA degree. Funding is limited to the regular school year (three quarters or two semesters) and will not be allocated for Summer or abbreviated intersessions. However, the committee has the discretion to consider an applicant's circumstances and the need to take a course during Summer School or an abbreviated intersession.

9.3.6 [Living Expenses](#): In addition to Tuition Fee awarded under 9.3.5 above, applicants may apply up to \$500 per month per academic year for living expenses only, i.e.: rent, utilities, etc. "Academic year" is defined based on the enrolled college system, up to 9 months period. Funds are available pending missions fund income and total seminarian disbursement.

9.3.7 Tuition fee disbursements will be made in installments prior to the beginning of each quarter or semester and shall be paid directly to the seminary, while living expenses disbursement will be paid monthly to the applicant. The recipient must submit to AMC a copy of his/her registration at the beginning of each quarter or semester.

9.3.8 All financial aid awards are renewable on an annual basis for a period of up to four years for MDiv recipients or three years for MA recipients, unless special circumstances preclude the possibility of finishing in this timeframe. Decisions on any exceptions to the time frames set forth in 9.3.7 shall be made by the AMC. Applications for renewal (Form 612-9-B & C) must be submitted by June 30, prior to the beginning of the academic year.

9.3.9 Applicants will be considered on a first come first served basis with priority given to seminarians previously approved to receive FECA financial aid. The total amount available for disbursement to seminarian applicants is also dependent on the approved mission budget and missions fund income.

Lifetime award for seminary tuition and living expenses under this policy will be adjusted based on inflation every three years by AMC.

9.3.10. It is recommended that the recipient obtain a paid internship at church or other work to make up for any shortfall of funds.

9.4 Compliance Guidelines

9.4.1 A financial aid recipient shall be supervised and guided by a member of the pastoral staff of a FECA member church. All recipients are strongly recommended to participate in the Ministry Development Fellowship or equivalent community that will provide one-on-one mentorship.

9.4.2 The recipient is responsible for preparing an annual report summarizing the progress of his/her studies and ministry. The pastoral adviser will review this report and offer his/her comments. In addition, the pastoral adviser, the recipient, and a Ministry Development Fellowship staff will work together on a specific plan of growth for the recipient. The annual progress report and a copy of the growth plan should be forwarded to the AMC. They will be taken into consideration in approving the renewal of the applicant's aid or his/her future applications.

9.4.3 The recipient is expected to serve in a full-time ministry capacity for at least one year upon the completion of their degree as governed by 9.3.7.

9.5 Repayment

9.5.1 Repayment of financial aid shall be waived if the recipient, upon graduation, immediately engages in full-time ministry for a minimum of one year. If the recipient fails to engage in full-time ministry within three years of completing the degree, the recipient shall repay the financial aid received to AMC. A Repayment Plan can be arranged with the AMC.

9.5.2 A recipient who discontinues his/her studies due to non-extenuating circumstances is obliged to repay his/her financial aid according to a schedule determined by the AMC.

Partial Document (End)