FIRST-YEAR CERTIFICATION FORM

Ministerial Financial Assistance for Students Preparing for a Church-Related Vocation

Baptist General Convention of Texas

Dear Student and Church Leader:

In recognition of the special call of God sensed by those who minister, churches affiliated with the Baptist General Convention of Texas (BGCT) provide financial assistance to Baptist* students who are preparing for church-related vocational ministry at a Texas Baptist university.

Four participants are involved in the Ministerial Financial Assistance (MFA) program – (1) **the student** who, responding to God's call to a vocation in church-related ministry, is set aside by (2) a **local Baptist church** that pools resources with other cooperating Baptist churches and entrusts these resources to (3) the **BGCT** and its (4) partner **universities**.

Each applicant for the MFA program must show evidence of a divine call to church-related vocational ministry, must demonstrate a life-style of commitment to the principles of Christian life, and must be an active member of a Baptist***** church.

The student is required to provide certification from his or her church in **one** of the following forms:

- a certificate of ordination to the gospel ministry, **or**
- a certificate of license to the gospel ministry, **or**
- a statement of certification recognizing a call to church-related vocational ministry (such as pastor, church staff, missionary, or chaplain).

The student is also required to provide a letter of recommendation from his or her pastor (or other church approved leader if student is the pastor).

In certifying a student, the church joins the Baptist General Convention of Texas and related universities in being faithful stewards of mission funds entrusted to them by Texas Baptist churches to provide tuition assistance for students.

Thank you for joining in this sacred trust.

The Theological Education Council, BGCT

TEXAS ★ BAPTISTS
BAPTIST GENERAL CONVENTION OF TEXAS

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CHURCH LEADERS *(Page 2 & 3)*

Complete and sign the *Church Certification* and *Church Information* sections.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR STUDENTS *(Page 4 & 5)*

Sign and date the *Student Covenant*, complete the *Student Information Section*, and return completed forms to:

School: Baptist University of the Américas

Address: 2418 W Ansley Blvd, San Antonio, Texas 78224-1364

** First year students must be certified by a Baptist church. Annual renewal of MFA will require certification by a cooperating Baptist General Convention of Texas church.*

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To be completed by PASTOR OR CHURCH LEADER

CHURCH CERTIFICATION SECTION

(Check ✓ and complete the appropriate sections below)

☐ **Statement of Certification:**

If the church has not ordained or licensed this student, the following statement must be affirmed by the congregation.

We hereby certify that _____

(name of student)

- ***is an active member of our church***
- ***has shown evidence of a divine call to church-related vocational ministry***
- ***has shown sincere commitment to a career in church-related ministry***
- ***has demonstrated a Christian life-style***
- ***is the kind of person our church would be comfortable recommending as a minister to serve in a church-related vocational position***

☐ This congregation affirmed this student's involvement in our church as noted on page 5 of the form. This congregational certification has been acted upon by:

(check all that apply)

☐ Ordination of student on _____.
(date)

☐ Licensing of student on _____.
(date)

☐ Adoption of statement of certification above by congregation on _____.
(date)

☐ Adoption of statement of certification above by others (specify below) representing the congregation on _____.
(date)

Representing the congregation:

☐ Church Committee
☐ Deacons
☐ Elders or other governing board
☐ Council of church staff members
☐ Other *(please describe):*_____
_____
_____
_____

☐ I have talked with this student to discuss (1) the student's sense of call to church-related vocational ministry and (2) ways that the student might be involved in service at our church.

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☐ I affirm this student's application for Ministerial Financial Assistance.

Pastor's or Church Leader's Name (Printed) _____

Position at Church _____

Telephone Number _____

Signature _____

Date _____

_____

CHURCH INFORMATION SECTION

_____

Church Name and Address

Name of Church:_____

Mailing Address:_____

City, State, Zip:_____

Denominational Affiliations

Baptist association _____ City, State_____

Baptist state convention _____

Baptist affiliations, national _____

Signed: _____ Signed: _____
(Pastor or church approved leader if student is pastor) (Church Clerk)

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Baptist General Convention of Texas

To be completed by STUDENT

STUDENT COVENANT

Whereas *Texas Baptist* churches have committed their cooperative missions funds to providing financial assistance to men and women who are preparing for ministry vocations in the church and,

Whereas *Texas Baptist* universities have committed to providing theological education that prepares students for vocations in church-related ministries and,

Whereas I have sensed the call of God in my life to prepare for a vocation in a church-related ministry (such as pastor, church staff, missionary, chaplain);

I hereby enter into a covenant relationship with the churches of the *Baptist General Convention of Texas* to honor the sacred trust they have placed in me through their financial support and,

Should I come to a point in my understanding of God's will for my life that I no longer sense a call to a church-related vocation, I will immediately inform university officials and no longer accept this financial assistance provided by the churches of the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

_____ _____

(Student Signature) (Date)

STUDENT INFORMATION SECTION

Name of Student: _____

Permanent Address: _____

E-Mail: _____

Name of School: Baptist University of the Américas_____

Name of Church: _____

Church Address: _____

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To be completed by STUDENT

During the preceding academic year I have been an active member of a Baptist church and have been involved with, supportive of, and committed to the ministries of this church in the following ways:

Paid leadership responsibilities: _____

_____

_____

_____

Volunteer leadership or service: _____

_____

_____

Other involvement or means of support: _____

_____

_____

Sign the following affirmation, give this form to your pastor or church approved leader if student is pastor to complete *(pages 2 & 3)*, then return the completed forms along with any other materials required by your institution:

I hereby affirm my covenant with the churches, my sense of calling to a church-related vocation and my desire to receive the Ministerial Financial Assistance provided by the churches of the Baptist General Convention of Texas; and I promise to remain in compliance with the requirements of the BGCT and this partner institution.

Student's Signature: _____ Date: _____

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