



Following Jesus into the World

Financial Aid Handbook

2017-2018

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FROM THE FINANCIAL AID OFFICE:

In these difficult times, affording a quality higher education degree can be the determining factor on which an institution is selected. BTS's Financial Aid Office has one simple goal... to provide current and prospective students with the best possible assistance to facilitate their education goals at BTS.

Our students receive awards, scholarships, and grants from a wide variety of sources. Before applying for financial aid, BTS expects each student to meet his or her financial obligations through personal funds saved for education and by building a personal support network. A personal support network may include the student's home church, denomination, people to whom the student has ministered, friends, family, clubs, and foundations.

We also believe that no qualified student should be discouraged from pursuing seminary for merely financial reasons. We have established the financial aid program to supplement students' own financial resources.

1. FINANCIAL AID OPTIONS

a. Grants

Students with a demonstrated financial need who are enrolled full-time in an MA or MDiv degree program for at least 24 hours per year may be eligible for a grant. You must maintain a GPA of 2.0 or higher in order to qualify for a BTS grant as well as keep your account balance current with the Business Office. To apply, fill out the BTS Grant Application <http://biblical.edu/files/forms/admissions-grant-application.pdf>. Awards are valid for one year. Students must reapply each academic year.

b. BTS Merit Scholarships

The student must be an international student who is enrolled full-time in an MA or MDiv degree program. Eligibility is determined by the student's cumulative GPA following one year of education at BTS. The BTS Merit Award Application must be completed and submitted each academic year.

c. Scholarships

Occasionally scholarships become available which are awarded by the Financial Aid Committee to students who best meet specific criteria. You must be enrolled full-time in a degree program and maintain a GPA of 2.0 or higher. Scholarships are advertised on eCampus and through direct email to current students.

d. Entitlements

1. The spouse of a current, full-time student in a degree program is entitled to a 50% tuition discount on any class. If both are enrolled full-time in degree programs, the spouse with the lesser overall tuition program cost will receive the discount.
2. A 20% discount to the BTS alum who has completed a degree program and is accepted into a 2nd degree program.
3. A missionary is entitled to a twenty percent (20%) tuition discount on any class if he/she is sponsored by a recognized sending agency and is required to raise at least 50% of his/her support. You are required to provide a letter from your sponsoring organization that confirms your missionary status.

e. Church Match

For full-time, degree-program students whose churches want to support their education, BTS will match the church's sponsorship up to twenty-five percent of tuition costs. Your church officials will be required to complete a Promissory Note acknowledging the amount of their support and how they intend to pay. BTS will match the church's payment once it has been received, up to a maximum of twenty-five percent of the tuition total in each semester, provided the student account is kept up to date per the payment plan(s) on file. Promissory Notes are valid for one year and will be reissued each academic year. A limited number of Promissory Notes for new participants are issued each year. Request a copy of the Promissory Note from the Financial Aid Office.

f. Veterans Benefits

As an accredited school, BTS is recognized by the Veterans Administration. Our facilities code is 31015238. If you are serving or have served in the U.S. Military, you must contact a regional VA office to determine your eligibility. The processing of veteran benefit paperwork is handled by the Business Office at BTS Seminary.

g. Federal Loans

The most common form of aid is the William D. Ford Direct Loan Program or Direct Loans. This aid is administered directly through the U.S. Department of Education. These loans are also referred to as Direct Loans or by the name Title IV aid which refers to the Federal code that governs the administration of federal funds for educational purposes. These names - Direct Loans and Title IV aid - may be used interchangeably to refer to the federal aid we administer here at BTS.

The administration of Title IV aid is regulated by strict federal law, which must be faithfully followed by all financial aid administrators and is overseen by the Department of Education. The law determines the criteria by which a student is deemed eligible for Title IV aid. The law also determines the requirements for processing and managing those funds. All students who wish to receive financial aid in the form of federal Direct Loans must adhere to these laws as well. Students must have a minimum equivalent of 72 credits at the undergrad level or a combination of undergrad and graduate level in order to apply for and receive government funds.

The Title IV aid offered here at BTS is Direct Loans (Unsubsidized loans which are non-need based and Grad PLUS which requires a credit check). As of July 1, 2017 Unsubsidized Loans for graduate students have an interest rate of 6.00% and a Grad PLUS interest rate of 7.00%. The loan fee rates which are charged each time funds are disbursed as of October 1, 2016 are 1.069% for Unsub Loans and 4.276% for Grad PLUS Loans. Disbursements released October 1, 2017 or after will be charged a loan fee of 1.066% for Unsubsidized and 4.264% for Grad PLUS. Students would be wise to take the accumulation of interest into consideration when deciding how much of the available loan funds to accept.

It is important that each student loan borrower is informed about their rights and responsibilities under the Title IV loan program. Please be sure to go online to <http://studentaid.ed.gov> to read important information on your student loan. As always, you can receive additional assistance by contacting the Financial Aid Office at BTS.

2. FINANCIAL AID PROCESS

Step 1: FAFSA

All students who wish to receive Title IV aid must first complete a FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). The FAFSA collects financial and other information used to determine a student's eligibility for aid. A student may complete a FAFSA by visiting www.fafsa.ed.gov. You must first acquire an FSA ID by visiting <https://fsaid.ed.gov/npas/index.htm>. Once an FSA ID is obtained it is important to keep a record of it in a secure place as it will be needed for the secure completion of several online tasks required in the financial aid process. You will need copies of your **2015 Tax Return** for the 2017-2018 FAFSA. ***Please Note:*** *Beginning with the 2017-2018 FAFSA, students are required to report income information from an earlier tax year. For example, on the 2017-2018 FAFSA, students will be report their 2015 income information again, rather than their 2016 income information. This change was made in order for students to be able to successfully file their FAFSA at an earlier date.*

Be sure to list the school code for BTS. Our Title IV school code is **G23230**.

Students will receive a SAR (Student Aid Report) as a response to submitting a FAFSA. You must review this report for errors or conflicting information that may or may not have been highlighted by CPS (Central Processing System) or the FAFSA community. You may correct your FAFSA by returning to www.fafsa.ed.gov and using your pin. You may also call 1-800-4-FED-AID or 1-800-433-3243.

The school will receive an ISIR (Institutional Student Information Report). The financial aid administrator will also review your report for errors or conflicting information. All errors and conflicts **must** be resolved before aid can be disbursed.

Please inform your financial aid administrator of your desire to receive aid.

Reapply each year

You'll need to complete the FAFSA each academic year (Fall Semester thru Summer Term). You should receive an electronic or paper Renewal Application from the U.S. Department of Education in the mail. You must use the same FSA ID you used when you first filed an application with FAFSA to file your Renewal FAFSA online.

Loan originations and disbursements will be submitted to the National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS), and will be accessible by guaranty agencies, lenders, and schools determined

to be authorized users of the central database for federal student aid. You are encouraged to keep track of all your U.S. Department of Education loans by accessing NSLDS at www.nsls.ed.gov. You will need to use your student FSA ID to access your information.

Step 2: Admission and Enrollment

To be eligible for federal loans, you must be officially admitted to BTS and enrolled in a course of study leading to a degree. Students must have a minimum equivalent of 72 credits at the undergrad level or combination of undergrad and graduate level in order to apply for and receive Title IV aid. Non-degree students or students seeking a certificate only are not eligible for Title IV aid. If you have completed your FAFSA, indicating BTS as a recipient on the application, and decide not to attend BTS, notify the Financial Aid Office immediately.

New students must fulfill all the requirements of the admission office and be enrolled before aid can be administered.

Current students must enroll in classes for subsequent terms at the earliest opportunity to avoid a delay in aid. It is the student's responsibility to communicate effectively with the Financial Aid Office. Once enrolled, contact the Financial Aid Office for additional requirements.

Financial aid is based on the number of credit hours taken.

Half-time = 5-8 credit hours per semester (5 is the minimum required to be eligible for financial aid)

Full-time (for financial aid purposes) = 9 credit hours or more per semester

- **Graduate Program Requirements**

BTS welcomes men and women who have or are about to complete a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university. The admissions committee assesses each applicant on the basis of academic ability, personal characteristics, and educational and ministry goals and objectives. Prior study in Bible or theology is not required.

- **Doctor of Ministry Program Requirements**

Applicants must have a Master of Divinity degree or its equivalent and five years of ministry experience, three of which must be post-completion of an MDiv degree.

- **MDiv, MA and Certificate Programs**

To be considered for any of the master-level programs at BTS, the student must complete the application form, including all required elements of the application. The MDiv, MA, and Certificate programs are open to students who have or are about to complete a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.0. Please note the Certificate programs are not eligible for Title IV financial aid.

- **Non-Degree Students**

If the student has an undergraduate degree and would like to pursue a master's degree, but is unsure which program would be best for them, they should apply as a non-degree student. A non-degree student in this category is limited to a maximum of three courses before submitting an application for a degree program. Please keep in mind that as a non-degree student you are not eligible for student loans.

If the student is interested and meets these qualifications, they would complete the following forms: transcript & non-degree application.

- **Applying to a Degree Program**

The Student Advancement/Admissions Office accepts applications on a "rolling" basis. This means that the student may apply at any time during the year and can enter a degree program at the beginning of any of our semesters/terms (certain restrictions apply to students applying for the MA in Counseling cohort program). We encourage the student to apply at least three months in advance of their desired enrollment date. International students who will be entering the U.S. on a student visa should plan to enter either at the start of our fall or our spring semesters and must complete their application files no later than **July 1 for fall admission or December 1 for spring admission**.

- **Pre-requisite Coursework**

Preparatory coursework refers to courses a student is REQUIRED to take in order to be officially admitted into a degree program. At BTS, a student may be conditionally admitted into the Doctor of Ministry (DMin) Program with the expectation that they will take and successfully complete additional REQUIRED pre-requisite courses that do not count toward the requirements of this degree program. The student must be enrolled at least half-time (5 credits per semester). Only those courses REQUIRED for admission into the DMin program may be considered when determining enrollment level and student aid eligibility.

In order to be considered for Title IV financial aid while taking preparatory coursework, the student must have either the Registrar or DMin Program Director at BTS complete the Preparatory Coursework Request for Title IV Direct Loan form and have it submitted to the Financial Aid Office.

Title IV Direct Loan aid eligibility is limited to the amounts allowable as an independent undergraduate senior and a single consecutive 12-month period. Students will be monitored throughout the enrollment period to ensure they remain eligible.

Academic and spiritual qualifications as well as application procedures for all programs are the same.

Step 3: Communication

Students are responsible for providing the Financial Aid Office with a valid phone number and home address. Email is the primary mode of communication used by the Financial Aid Office. Inform the Financial Aid Office of any changes in your contact information.

Respond promptly

If the Financial Aid Office requests additional information to process your application, respond right away! A speedy response on your part ensures that your eligibility will be determined in a timely manner.

Step 4: Paperwork

Title IV aid has specific requirements and BTS has preferred procedures.

- **Master Promissory Note** -A valid Master Promissory Note (MPN) must be completed and signed. This may be done online at www.StudentLoans.gov using your FAFSA PIN. The MPN is valid for ten years.
- **Grad PLUS Promissory Note**-needed by the student who requests a DL Grad PLUS loan. This may be done online at www.StudentLoans.gov using your FAFSA PIN.
- **Loan Entrance Counseling**- Entrance Counseling is required upon entrance into the Title IV program and prior to the first disbursement of a Direct Loan at BTS Seminary. This can be completed online at www.studentloans.gov. Your student FSA ID is required to complete this process. First disbursements will not be processed unless the Financial Aid office at BTS Seminary has received

notification from COD [Common Origination & Disbursement] that Entrance Counseling has been completed.

- **Loan Exit Counseling-** You must complete Exit Counseling before you leave school [after last disbursement, either at graduation or after withdrawal] or when dropping below half-time enrollment in order to be sure you understand your rights and responsibilities as a borrower. Exit counseling can be completed online at www.studentloans.gov. Your student FSA ID is required to complete this process. A student who is graduating must show proof of completion by providing a copy of the final page confirming successful completion of Exit Counseling to the Academic Office before receiving their cap and gown. You will receive information about repayment and your loan servicer will notify you of the date loan repayment begins, usually six months after you graduate, leave school, or drop below half-time enrollment for Subsidize/Unsubsidized Loans. Repayment of Grad PLUS Loans begins immediately.
- **Credit Balance Authorization** – BTS requests that students sign this form. It enables students to carry aid from one semester to another should they ever wish to do so. This is not required and students may rescind such request at any time.
- **Verification** – Periodically, a student may be selected for further verification of the information supplied to FAFSA, most likely due to conflicting information. The Verification process requires a student to complete a Verification Worksheet and to submit signed copies of tax returns (student and spouse) and W-2's to the Financial Aid office. The student has 2 weeks from the time of notification to provide the requested documentation. No aid will be administered until the verification process is complete. The Financial Aid office may request, at any time, any additional documentation. Any student who is a non-tax filer must complete the 4506-T.
- **Scholarships** -Let the Financial Aid office know when you receive other funding, such as veteran's education benefits, non-BTS scholarships, funding from outside agencies, and so on. These resources are considered part of the total amount of financial aid you are awarded. If such additional financial resources arrive after your aid has been disbursed, other aid, typically loans will be reduced to adjust for any amount that exceeds your cost of attendance.

For more information on the financial aid process and deadlines, please contact the Financial Aid Office at 215-368-5000 ext 141 or vhartman@biblical.edu.

Step 5: Disbursement

Financial aid is disbursed in two disbursements throughout the academic year: 1 Fall/Winter, and 1 Spring/Summer disbursement.

The first disbursement will be made within 7 days following confirmed attendance in courses which carry a total of 5 credits or more. The Department of Education will send your disbursement funds to BTS via Electronic Funds Transfer.

The official disbursement date is the date your financial aid funds are credited to your student account. All tuition and fees will be paid by your financial aid funds first. If, after your tuition and fees have been paid, there is a financial aid credit on your account, a check will be issued to you within 14 days. The refund check is mailed to the student via the U.S. Postal Service unless the student has directed otherwise. Students wanting to keep their credit balance on their student account must have a signed Credit Balance Authorization Form on file in the Financial Aid Office.

BTS will not issue advances on your financial aid.

For more information, contact the Financial Aid Office at 215-368-5000 ext 141.

Determining Eligibility

Determining financial aid eligibility is the joint responsibility of the federal government and the school. Federal law also determines specific eligibility restrictions. For example, students who do not meet specific citizenship requirements are not eligible for federal aid. A student's past loan history can also affect future loan eligibility. A student's loan history may be viewed by visiting the National Student Loan Data System's website: www.nslds.ed.gov. The Financial Aid administrator is responsible for adhering to these eligibility requirements. The Financial Aid administrator is also responsible for monitoring the school based eligibility requirements.

Common reasons why funding is withheld

- **Failure to complete Entrance counseling, Master Promissory Note, or Grad PLUS Promissory Note-** A federal loan borrower must complete one counseling session upon entering the federal loan program at BTS. A completed Master Promissory Note (MPN) is, also, required before Federal funds can be disbursed. If you have completed the MPN within the last 10 years, you most likely will not need to complete another. The MPN is valid for a period of 10 years. You can complete your Master Promissory Note and

counseling session online: www.StudentLoans.gov . You will need your FSA ID to sign into the website.

- **Failure to complete verification process** – Failing to provide the Financial Aid Office with the requested documentation will result in ineligibility.
- **Failure to meet enrollment minimum** - Please **contact** the Financial Aid Office if you plan to enroll less than full-time. Your award will be adjusted accordingly. If you enroll less than half-time, you will not be eligible to receive federal loans. If you drop below 5 credit hours within the semester you may lose your financial aid eligibility and be required to repay any aid for which you are not eligible.
- **Failure to meet SAP** - You will be placed in a Financial Aid warning status or have your aid denied should you drop below the minimum SAP requirement. See the section on **Satisfactory Academic Progress** for details on satisfactory academic progress.

3. SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP)

SAP Requirements

- Minimum GPA – Grade Point Average
- Minimum PACE – PACE measures the rate at which students are completing classes. Is a student successfully completing the classes for which he or she has been registered?
- Maximum Timeframe – The amount of time to complete the degree

Students (both full-time and part-time) of all degree programs are evaluated after each semester by the Academic Administration Committee to make sure they are making Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP). Students will be notified in writing by the committee if they fail to make the standard, as will the Financial Aid Office if the student received Title IV assistance. Students whose cumulative grade point average (GPA) falls below “C” (2.00) after completing 9 or more credits will be placed on academic probation for the following term. The Academic Administration Committee individually reviews all students placed on academic probation to determine whether or not they will be eligible to continue taking courses for credit toward their program. If they are deemed so eligible, the committee will set forth the conditions under which they may do so. Students who remain on academic probation for two consecutive terms are subject to academic dismissal.

The Academic Administration Committee will review the academic progress of students within 20 days of the end of each semester. Copies of the academic probation report will be maintained in the Academic Office.

Students receiving Title IV assistance whose status is determined to be below the minimum cumulative GPA [2.00] or is exceeding the maximum timeframe or is not keeping PACE for his/her degree program will be placed in a Financial Aid Warning status for the following semester.

A student is still eligible to receive aid while in warning status for one semester. If a student has not met minimum SAP [Satisfactory Academic Progress] requirements at the end of that semester, the student will be placed on Financial Aid Dismissal and will no longer be eligible to receive financial aid.

Students' who have been placed on Financial Aid Dismissal and have been approved for Academic Probation, may appeal to the Financial Aid Office for an extension of time equal to one semester on aid in order to meet the required academic standards. If no appeal has been received or approved by the Financial Aid Office, the student may be reinstated after demonstration of the ability to meet minimum SAP standards.

The Financial Aid Office will confirm the student's eligibility with the Academic Administration Committee.

a. Grade Scale

To remain in good academic standing at BTS, a student must maintain a 2.00 grade point average.

BIBLICAL SEMINARY GRADING SYSTEM			
A	4.00	93.0 -100	Superior
A-	3.67	90.0 – 92.9	
B+	3.33	87.0 – 89.9	
B	3.00	83.0 – 86.9	Good
B-	2.67	80.0 – 82.9	
C+	2.33	77.0 – 79.9	
C	2.00	73.0 – 76.9	Fair
C-	1.70	70.0 – 72.9	
D+	1.30	67.0 – 69.9	Poor
D	1.00	63.0 – 66.9	
D-	.70	60.0 – 62.9	
F	0.00	00. - 59.9	Failing

b. Time Limits for Degree Completion

Degree	Maximum Timeframe
DMin (24 credits)	8 years
ThM (24–30 credits)	8 years
MDiv (90 credits)	10 years
MAC (60 credits)	8 years
MA (48 credits)	8 years

Students who require more time must request an extension from the Academic Administration Committee. If the extension is granted, the student will be charged a \$100 continuation fee at the beginning of each additional academic term (excluding summer) until the degree requirements are completed. **Note:** a student who previously received Title IV aid will no longer be eligible for additional financial aid once the maximum time frame has been reached. Such students will be evaluated semi-annually and notified when they reach their last year of eligibility.

Students understand that all course withdrawals and course repeats potentially lengthen the time they will need to complete their programs. Course withdrawals and failures are counted as credits attempted but not earned. Students receiving Title IV assistance may only receive aid for a repeat class they have not passed before, and they may only receive aid once for such a repeat course.

c. PACE

All students must maintain a satisfactory PACE while pursuing a degree. PACE is measured by dividing total completed hours by total attempted hours. All withdrawals which are reported on the transcript and transfer hours are calculated in this formula. All first year graduate students, those who have completed less than 24 credits hours, must have a completion rate, or PACE, of 50%. Second year students, between 24 and 47 credit hours, must have a PACE of 60%, and third year + students, 48 credit hours and above, must have a completion rate of at least 70%. Students should note that withdrawal from course work can adversely affect PACE and, therefore, affect financial aid eligibility.

d. Financial Aid Warning

Students who are not in compliance with the SAP policy are considered to be in an unsatisfactory status. A student whose status is determined to be below the minimum cumulative GPA or is exceeding the maximum timeframe for his/her degree program will be

placed in a Financial Aid Warning status. A student is still eligible to receive aid while in warning status for one semester. If a student has not met minimum SAP [Satisfactory Academic Progress] requirements at the end of that semester, the student will be placed on Financial Aid Dismissal and will no longer be able to receive financial aid.

Students' who have been placed on Financial Aid Dismissal and have been approved for Academic Probation, may appeal to the Financial Aid Office for an extension of time equal to one semester on aid in order to meet the required academic standards. If no appeal has been received or approved by the Financial Aid Office, the student may be reinstated after demonstration of the ability to meet minimum SAP standards.

e. Right to Appeal

Students who have had eligibility for Title IV aid suspended due to unsatisfactory academic progress may appeal to the Financial Aid Office for an extension of time to meet the standards detailed in this policy. A student whose academic performance was affected by circumstances beyond his/her control including, but not limited to, personal or family accident, illness or crisis; death of a close family member; loss of employment or employment transition; or divorce, may request a review of his or her situation by submitting an appeal in writing to the Financial Aid Office. The letter must describe in detail those circumstances and specific information about how his/her ability to meet the satisfactory progress standards detailed in the BTS policy was affected. The student should describe what has changed that will facilitate the student's ability to meet SAP in the future. In addition, independently verifiable supporting documentation from a third party may be required. Documentation may include a letter from a medical practitioner, lawyer, priest or pastor who is familiar with the student's circumstances; copies of bills; or copies of reports from government or local authorities. The documentation must contain the name and telephone number of a contact person in the event that the appeals committee wishes to confirm the authenticity of the documentation or to request additional information. All appeals will be reviewed by the finance committee.

f. Appeal Decisions and Financial Aid Probation

If the student's appeal is granted, the student will be placed on Financial Aid Probation and given an academic plan that if followed will ensure the student will be able to meet SAP requirements within a specified period of time. A student on Probation may only receive Title IV funds for ONE payment period. If the student does not meet the Satisfactory Academic Progress standards after the end of the semester of probation, then the student is determined to be ineligible for current and future Title IV aid until the student completes additional coursework sufficient to return to good standing. If the student fails to meet the terms of the academic plan, the student is deemed ineligible to receive aid.

g. Eligibility when Obtaining Additional Concentrations and Degrees

Students who have completed all of the requirements for a degree, and who have had the degree conferred by BTS and return seeking a second concentration for the degree are not eligible for Title IV aid. In order to be eligible for federal student loans, a student must be seeking a degree.

A graduated student may receive federal student loans for the pursuit of a second degree, provided the student has met SAP standards in pursuit of the first degree.

4. STUDENT WITHDRAWAL/ RETURN OF TUITION AND TITLE IV AID

In accordance with federal regulations, when a Title IV aid recipient withdraws from all classes during a semester, it is BTS's responsibility to determine the withdrawal date and amount of loan funds that the student has earned. If a student received less assistance than was earned, he/she may be able to receive those funds. On the other hand, if the student received more assistance than earned, the unearned funds must be returned by the school and/or aid recipient to the Department of Education (ED). If, when the school returns funds to the ED, a balance is created to the student's account, it is the student's responsibility to pay that balance. Note: The Return of Title IV aid calculation is different from the tuition refund calculation.

A student's withdrawal date varies depending on the type of withdrawal.

All Programs:

- Joining the program:

1. Last day to enroll in a program is prior to the second session of first course.
 2. Deadlines to drop classes: Last day to drop classes without record is prior to one third of the class sessions. Last day to drop classes Withdraw Passing (W/P) or Withdraw Failing (W/F) is prior to two thirds of the class sessions. Students should consult the posted add/drop schedule in the academic office.
- Tuition refund deadlines

Students dropping a class during a semester will receive a refund of the tuition for the semester based on the pro-rated schedule listed below. Students are charged \$15 for each add/drop form after classes start.

<u>If you drop prior to this # of class sessions . . .</u>	<u>... you will receive this % refund of the term's tuition</u>
2	100%
3	75%
4	50%
5+	0%

Additional information

- For courses dropped with the signed approval of the academic office past one third of the class, the professor also becomes involved. Drop/add forms are to be filled out and submitted to the academic office; if the student is unable to fill out the forms, drops and adds are to be communicated orally to the academic office.
- Dropping a course without following the proper procedure will result in a failure (F) being recorded and averaged for the course. No new course may be entered after the first full week of classes during the fall and spring terms. The add/drop schedule for all terms is available from the academic office.
- Note that the deadlines for dropping are prior to the class. For Saturday classes, students will need to contact the seminary by 2 p.m. on Friday to meet the deadlines. Drop forms are available on the website. Since MAC and MDiv students are automatically registered for each semester, there is no need to register for classes. However, to drop a course or withdraw from the program, students must complete a drop/withdrawal form.

WITHDRAWAL AND RE-ENTRY IN A PROGRAM

Students may find it necessary to withdraw from the program for a period of time for emergency reasons. Before withdrawing a student must speak with an admissions

counselor. Withdraw and re-entry forms are available on the website or in the Academic Office. Additional charges and fees will apply.

c. Drop/Withdrawal Process

Step 1: The Academic Office is to be contacted by the student with their intent to either drop a course or withdrawal from the program.

Step 2: The Academic Office will determine the percentage of the term that the student completed and advise the Financial Aid Office.

Step 3: The Financial Aid Office will determine the amount of earned aid based on the percentage of term attended.

Step 4: The Financial Aid Office will determine the amount of unearned aid by subtracting the earned aid from disbursed aid **or** determine the amount of a post-withdrawal disbursement by subtracting disbursed aid from earned aid.

Step 5: The Financial Aid Office will determine if unearned funds must be returned, that portion which is the school's and the student's share **or** if a post-withdrawal disbursement is due, determine the sources from which it will be funded.

d. No Official Withdrawal

If a student ceases attendance without providing official notification, the withdrawal date is the date that is reported as the last date of attendance at an academically related activity by a faculty member on a class roster, grade roster/sheet, or other documented source, e.g., grade book. The faculty member will maintain the documentation of the last date of attendance.

If the student fails to officially withdraw due to circumstances beyond the student's control, i.e., illness, accident, grievous personal loss or other circumstances, the date related to the onset of that circumstance could be used as the withdrawal date.

e. Exit Counseling after Withdrawal

After withdrawal from BTS, a student who has received Title IV aid must complete the federally required Direct Loan Exit Counseling. If counseling has not been completed, BTS reserves the right to withhold the student's transcripts until the requirement is met. Exit counseling can be completed at www.studentloans.gov.

f. Return of Title IV Aid

1. If after receiving Title IV aid for a student, the seminary determines that the student has not registered, the seminary will return the funds to the lender within 30 days of this determination.
2. If after receiving Title IV aid for a student, the seminary determines the student is not now eligible for the loan, the seminary will immediately return the funds to the lender within 30 days of this determination.
3. If a student's loan request is subject to verification requirements and verification is not complete, the Title IV aid will not be released to the student. If, as a result of verification, the seminary finds that the funds exceed the student's need for a loan, the excess funds will be returned to the lender if the excess cannot be resolved in future disbursements of the loan.
4. If a registered student withdraws or is expelled prior to the first day of classes of the enrollment period for which the loan is intended, or if the seminary is unable to document that the student attended class during the period, the seminary will return to the lender any loan proceeds credited directly by the seminary to the student's account and any loan proceeds disbursed to the student and subsequently paid by the student to the seminary.
5. If the school determines a refund is due under the seminary's refund policy, loan proceeds will be returned to the lender within 30 days after the date of the student's withdraw from school or within 30 days after the last day of any approved leave of absence in the case of a student who fails to return to the seminary at the expiration of the leave.
6. The school will use the required federal Return of Title IV worksheets to calculate the total aid earned by a withdrawn student. The same percentage of earned aid is applied to the amount of aid the school is able to accept to pay institutional charges. For example, if, as in the example above, a student has only earned 30% of the aid, the school may only apply aid to 30% of the institutional charges. This, however, does not release the student from the responsibility to pay the remaining 70% of the institutional charges if the student withdrew after the "Last day to withdraw with partial refund" as determined in the academic calendar. If all the aid has been disbursed at the time of the student's withdrawal, the school is only responsible to return its percentage of the

institutional charges. The student must pay the remainder of excess aid to the Department of Education. Any balance left on the student's account after a Title IV return calculation must be paid before the student can re-enroll in classes, receive transcripts, or utilize any other service of the school.

7. If the total amount of the Title IV loan funds earned as of the withdrawal date is more than the amount that was disbursed to the student, the difference between the two amounts will be treated as a post-withdrawal disbursement. In the event that there are outstanding charges on the student's account, BTS will credit the student's account for post-withdrawal disbursement of loan funds, up to the amount of the allowable charges. Any remaining funds will be disbursed to the student in the form of a check no later than 14 days after the funds have been credited to the student's account, unless otherwise instructed by the student to keep a credit balance on account.
8. If a percentage of Title IV aid is earned the withdrawal date is used to determine the percentage of the payment period completed by the student. If a student completed more than 60% of the payment period the percentage earned is 100%. If less than 60% is earned, the period earned is equal to the percentage of the payment period that was completed. The percentage of payment period completed is calculated by dividing the total number of class days in the payment period into the number of class days completed in the period.

Example 1: John is registered for three [3] classes in the winter term which begins January 5 and ends March 30. John informs the academic office on February 11th that he is dropping all courses in the winter term. John has attended 38 calendar days of the 85 calendar day term and has earned 45% in Title IV aid. John's tuition charges totaled \$3,915.00 and an unsubsidized loan of \$2,000 has been disbursed to his student account. John has earned \$978 of his aid. The school must return \$1,021 to the loan provider within 45 days of the students drop.

g. Enrollment Reporting

All Title IV participating schools are required to report the enrollment status of all Title IV aid recipients to the National Student Loan Data System or NSLDS. Those students who have received funds in the past and still have loans waiting repayment but are not currently receiving federal funds are included in this enrollment reporting. Lenders use this information to determine a student's eligibility for loan deferment. All unsubsidized loans receive a six month

grace period during which a student does not need to make payments. That grace period begins once a student drops below half-time enrollment status. This grace period is intended to provide student loan borrowers the opportunity to find employment after graduation before beginning loan repayment. However, any student who withdraws to below half-time, enrolls less than half-time, or takes a term off will lose some or all of this grace period and will have loan payments begin immediately upon graduation. Students who take a term off or withdraw from all coursework may lose their in-school deferment status, as well.

The National Student Loan Data System has an online borrower portal for borrowers to obtain copies of their student loan history. Students who wish to review their loan history may visit www.nslsds.ed.gov

5. GRADUATION AND REPAYMENT

As graduation approaches, a prospective graduate will need to consider how to fulfill the federal and school requirements for leaving the Title IV aid program. Graduates will also need to consider which repayment option best suits their financial situation. A prospective graduate may contact BTS' financial aid administrator to assist them in making that determination and to plan for future student loan debt management. Degrees at BTS may lead to careers that could qualify for Public Service Loan Forgiveness available through the Department of Education.

a. Exit Counseling

Direct Loan Exit Counseling is a federal requirement and can be completed by visiting www.studentloans.gov. A student will need the following:

- FSA ID
- Social Security Number and birth date
- Complete contact information for two personal references (one relative)

Once completed, a report will be made available to the BTS financial aid administrator. If counseling has not been completed, BTS reserves the right to withhold commencement regalia as well as the student's transcripts until the requirement is met.

b. Exit Interview with Financial Aid Administrator

BTS's financial aid staff will remain available to all BTS graduates should any guidance be needed concerning student debt and repayment at any time after the diploma has been awarded.

c. Deferment and Forbearance

Borrowers who find they are having difficulty meeting their payments for their student loans should contact their lender. Lenders are usually willing to help borrowers who find themselves temporarily unable to make their student loan payments by either placing the loans in forbearance or deferment. Remember borrowers who default on their student loans may find their credit rating adversely affected and may find it difficult to finance a mortgage or car. The federal government has the power to garnish wages. Federal loans cannot be dismissed through bankruptcy. You can find more information regarding repayment at <http://www2.ed.gov/offices/OSFAP/DirectLoan/inrepayment.html>.