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# PANORAMA

parent newsletter | Fall 2020



## Southern Leaders Discuss Sabbath School Quarterly on *It Is Written* Broadcast

The *It Is Written* program discussing the Seventh-day Adventist Adult Bible Study Guide kicked off the 2020 fourth quarter with two guests from Southern Adventist University.

Various Adventist college and university presidents wrote a series of lessons on the topic of education, which make up this quarter's study guide. Southern President David Smith, PhD, who authored one lesson, and Vice President for Spiritual Life Joseph Khabbaz were recorded, via Skype, for a discussion on lesson one, "Education in the Garden of Eden." The segment aired the first weekend in October.

"I was amazed at how many principles of Adventist education are found in the experience of Adam and Eve in their garden home," Smith said. "There is so much to learn from how God taught and related to His two students in this idyllic setting. In particular, the revelation of God's amazing love in Eden provides a focus for any educational institution that would model itself after that first school."

Although the lessons were originally written a number of years ago, their release now seems relevant amid complex decision-making concerning education

methods during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"While many people are wondering about how to make education happen, *It Is Written* is able to strongly endorse Adventist institutions of higher learning by featuring college representatives teaching meaningful, spiritual material," said Tibor Shelley, associate director of production and media for the religious broadcast. "The timing seems divinely appointed."

According to Shelley, the half-hour Sabbath School program has received extensive positive feedback since it began in March, quickly becoming the most downloaded podcast produced by *It Is Written*.

"While we're going through these lessons together, our guests have the opportunity to talk about what is happening on their campuses," Shelley said. "It's a great chance for us to focus on Adventist education and highlight our



excellent schools. Adventist universities like Southern have an enormous amount to offer, and we want people to know that."

- by Trisney Bocala, junior mass communication major

## FAFSA Deadline Reminder: File by November 30

Because Southern's endowment grants are on a first-come, first-served basis, the university recommends filling out the FAFSA no later than November 30, 2020 in order for your student to receive the maximum amount of financial aid next school year.

The online form takes about an hour to complete—unless you file taxes electronically, which can help to speed up the process. Results are sent directly to the schools selected and used to determine the financial aid your student is eligible to receive, including:

- Federal grants and loans
- State grants
- Southern's endowment grants
- Scholarships

File your FAFSA online at [fafsa.ed.gov](https://fafsa.ed.gov).

### NOV

- 22** Fall 2020 Rent and Meal Plan Ends
- 23-29** Thanksgiving Break
- 30** Online Classes Resume
- 30** Priority Deadline for Filing 2021-2022 FAFSA

### DEC

- 11** Fall Semester Ends and Christmas Break Begins
- 12** School of Nursing Dedication
- 13** Winter Commencement
- 15** Book Buy Back (online)
- 21** First Day of Winter

### JAN

- 13** Residence Halls Open
- 18** Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- 19** Winter 2021 Classes Begin

**“Being confident of this very thing, that he who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.”**

**Philippians 1:6, NKJV**  
*favorite Bible verse of Lunelle Bertresse,  
Social Work professor*



## **Student Life:** **Constitution Week Events Celebrate Five Freedoms**

Southern celebrated national Constitution Week, September 17-23, through events that recognized the five freedoms of the First Amendment to the Constitution: religion, speech, press, petition, and assembly.

The School of Social Work and the School of Journalism and Communication collaborated with Stephanie Guster, senior advisor for diversity, to encourage voter registration, civic engagement, and civil dialogue on campus. The week included a march to commemorate 100 years of women's right to vote, as

well as a virtual town hall meeting and a spoken-word contest highlighting these five individual and collective constitutional freedoms.

“These events gave me a personal appreciation for how interconnected the five freedoms are in the First Amendment,” Guster said. “I believe that one of the things

college students almost unanimously appreciate is the exhilaration of freedom! There's nothing like the prerogative as a citizen to make your own choices and decide what is important to you and why. But if college students aren't aware of their freedoms, they may not recognize the power they hold to impact change all around them.”

Southern Votes, a student-led, nonpartisan voter engagement program, set up booths to provide students with information about how to register and vote in their individual states.

“College students are becoming more and more vocal about what they believe and outspoken about who they support or don't support,” said Xavier Snyder, junior history major and director of Southern Votes. “It's important that they have the information they need to vote and express their opinions in one of America's most powerful ways—at the ballot box.”

- by Madison Reinschmidt, sophomore mass communication major



## **Q&A with Jason Merryman Vice President for Enrollment Management**

**Q: What motivated you to return to Southern?**

**A:** After graduating from Southern in 1998, I served as the director for Student Finance and part of the Enrollment team from 2005 to 2012, until I took a job in the health care sector. Although I enjoyed the new experience, I started praying for God to open a door for me to return to Southern. I am humbled by how He has led me back this year, and my desire is to serve God and the university in a role that impacts students' lives for eternity.

**Q: As a part of the President's Cabinet, how do you strive to make Southern a great place for students?**

**A:** Leadership's goal is for all students to have the “Southern Experience.” I strive to ensure that students' time on campus helps them to learn about themselves personally, spiritually, and academically. I feel the Holy Spirit is leading us as an institution through one of the most uncertain times in history, and I am hopeful that students are still able to have positive and life-changing experiences while here at Southern.

**Q: What is the key to growing enrollment at Southern?**

**A:** We must remain true to our mission, vision, and values in a constantly changing world. I believe that understanding our students' needs and helping them overcome personal or financial barriers to an Adventist education is vitally important. Having authentic conversations with prospective students and families allows them to see the holistic value Southern can bring to their lives. We are committed to using innovative and relevant methods in our recruiting and admissions processes as the higher education landscape continues to change.

- by Madison Reinschmidt, sophomore mass communication major



## **Did You Know? Southern Scholars**

This year, Southern's chapter of the National Collegiate Honors Council, Southern Scholars, has 60 members, an increase of 25%, according to Hannah Moraga, junior allied health major and executive assistant for the chapter.

“To me, being a Scholar means seeking to gain the most from my college education,” said Abby Hansen, senior history and Spanish double major. “I like that the program offers such an interdisciplinary experience and encourages engagement with the world from multiple perspectives.”

The Southern Scholars program provides students with numerous opportunities to enrich their college experiences through educational travel, professional development, regional and national conferences, and local field trips. Scholars also have access to career mentorship, guidance for graduate school and scholarship applications, and academic advising for a significant senior research endeavor.

Students in the program explore in greater depth some of the fields outside of their academic majors. Hansen's favorite thing about the program is the Scholars-specific classes she has taken. Social psychology and the upper-division seminars “Belief” and “Doubt” were particularly memorable.

“The books that I read for those classes and the concepts we discussed really challenged my worldview and made me examine my beliefs more deeply,” she said.

Further, Southern Scholars quickly became a community where Hansen could surround herself with other high achievers.

“One of the biggest ways that Southern Scholars has enhanced my experience is with connections,” Hansen said. “The program introduced me to open-minded people who have very different perspectives and philosophies than me but are willing to have good discussions. Scholars is a great place for anyone looking to mine the most out of their education.”

Visit [southern.edu/southernscholars](https://southern.edu/southernscholars) to learn more about the program.

- by Trisney Bocala, junior mass communication major



## **Letter to Parents Robert Young, PhD, Senior Vice President for Academic Administration**

Thank you for all that you've done to support your sons and daughters throughout a remarkable time in higher education, and also for trusting them to the care of Southern Adventist University. Employees on campus are committed to maintaining high academic standards while rallying on behalf of students and making necessary allowances during the pandemic.

Grateful to have resumed face-to-face instruction this fall, we continue to explore how courses are delivered, assist teaching faculty using online and Zoom-based education, and share knowledge with students both online and in person. Masks and distancing protocols in classrooms are helping to keep the number of COVID-19 cases on campus very low.

In addition, to help minimize COVID-19 exposure in the winter semester, the academic calendar has been adjusted for next term to delay the start of the semester by one week, to reduce spring break to two days, and to finish the semester on time.

As part of ongoing, professional development, faculty receive training in the use of technology for best online teaching practices. They also have access to nearly 100 videos for ongoing support. Every course for this fall term is supported in eClass, Southern's online course management system, which includes a tech support ticketing system for students and faculty.

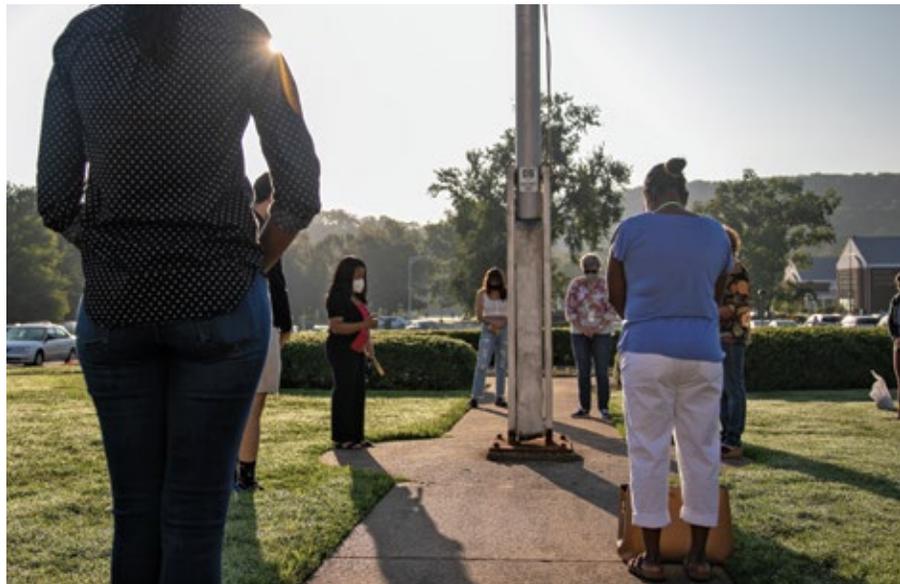
All of these changes were put in place to ensure a safe educational environment for students without sacrificing the quality of education that remains a Southern tradition. This has only been possible because of our highly dedicated, caring, and spiritually connected faculty and staff.

Let me share with you what one student said about her professors: “They took the time to really listen and assist me, inspired me in times of uncertainty, provided unforgettable guidance, and offered grace and help beyond expectation.” By God's goodwill, this experience has been multiplied over and over again within our student body.

Please continue to pray for Southern students daily, and let us know additional ways we can partner with you in your student's success.



# STUDENT LIFE





## ORCHESTRA CONCERT

Southern's Symphony Orchestra performed at the Goliath Wall for a socially distanced event on Sunday, October 4.

## SPOKEN WORD

Students participated in a poetry contest to celebrate Constitution Week and compete for a \$250 prize.

