

# ATS continues to improve student questionnaires

By MEGHAN NISKACH

*It's that time of year again. The fall semester is upon us, and schools are busy orienting new students, launching fall courses, and gathering data through the Entering Student Questionnaires—a free survey available to all ATS member schools.*



ATS will be starting the new academic year with upgraded security measures for the questionnaires by building upon improvements that began in fall 2020.

## **What are the ATS questionnaires?**

Did you know that almost 25% of entering master's degree students plan to continue working full-time ministry positions while completing their degrees? Another 25% plan to continue working or volunteering part-time in ministry. How do your entering students compare?

The ATS Student Questionnaires (Entering, Graduating, and Alumni) can provide you and your institution detailed demographics, data on vocational pathways, perceptions of institutional effectiveness, and more that can be used for institutional evaluation, degree program assessment, and tracking trends in enrollment and placement. The survey also has the option to add additional customizable questions and more to help uncover this type of information.

Both the Entering and Graduating Student Questionnaires are currently being offered for free—if you have been thinking about trying a survey like this, now is the time. The more schools that participate and the more students we reach, the more we can potentially learn.

If your school would like to participate in the student questionnaires for the 2021–2022 academic year, please [submit an order form](#) for each questionnaire instrument you intend to use.

## **How is ATS improving security, and how will this impact my school?**

To better serve our member schools and their students, we are always trying to improve the questionnaires. We implemented a new revision of the questionnaires last year that included a new user interface, improved mobile access for students, and updates to questions on student demographics, finances, and vocational goals.

Currently, we are transitioning to a more secure form of password protection. As is our standard practice, ATS changes school passwords for the Entering Student, Graduating Student, and Alumni questionnaires every year. This year we will shift from a single institutional login to logins and passwords for each unique user, providing an additional layer of security for your school and its data gathered from the ATS Questionnaires.

This process will begin on August 17 with downtime to the Question Management Interface (QMI) for the duration of the day. During that time, students will not have

access to complete the survey, and coordinators will not have access to set up batches or make any changes to existing batches. The QMI will be made available again for both coordinators and students on August 18. Those who have ordered passwords prior to that date will

receive an email with instructions on how to set up their new individual accounts and passwords on August 18.

Please contact [Meghan Niskach](#) with any questions.



*Meghan Niskach is Coordinator for Student Personnel and Questionnaires at The Association of Theological Schools in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.*



### **Available Now:**

- Sign up for the ATS Student Questionnaires
- Order annual passwords
- Set up your questionnaire
- Begin distributing to new students

### **August 17:**

- ATS Student Questionnaires unavailable

### **August 18:**

- Schools receive instructions regarding new passwords for administrators

### **October 16:**

- Deadline to submit your Entering Student Data to ATS for the fall semester