

ATS Student Questionnaires enhance school strengths

BY ELISE W. SUTTER
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Thoughtful institutions devote time, space, and energy to ensure they can support students and the programs serving them. The ATS Student Questionnaires (the Qs) provide member schools with the information and insight needed to guide these strategic and evaluative efforts. Student data from the Qs represent a range of actionable information, from data points that are unique to your institution to data trends representative of the broader ATS membership.

If you have ever wondered, *How well do we prepare our students for ministry in the real world?*, the Qs can help! ATS provides student research and data services to your school as a member benefit. In recent years, member school access to both the Entering Student Questionnaire (ESQ) and the Graduating Student Questionnaire (GSQ) has been underwritten by a generous grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. as part of the ATS Organizational and Educational Models initiative. These ATS-designed instruments, at no cost to your school, are adaptable and customizable to your institution's needs and offer starting points for qualitative discovery. The Qs also provide quantifiable insight into student satisfaction and preparedness, helping you not only to evaluate your school's educational and cocurricular services but also to learn important demographic information about your students/ alums.

Your institution's use of the Qs enables ATS to supply individualized data, aggregate reporting, and specialized



support that enhances the strength and effectiveness of your unique programs. By participating in the Qs and partnering with fellow ATS member schools, you are ensuring the vitality of these valuable resources for strengthening your own school's commitments to improving the way you serve students and—by extension—the communities they represent.

ATS student data represent the most widely used system of learning from, for, and with graduating and entering theological school students in North America. The following key features were introduced or enhanced upon the fall 2020 revision of the Qs:

- mobile access for students,
- expanded options for additional questions customizable per school,
- safer security protocols for school coordinators and personnel, and
- improved questions that better attend to the changing demographics, vocational goals, and educational models of ATS students and institutions.

ATS publishes Total School Profile Reports each year that summarize the entering and graduating student data from participating schools and offer helpful benchmark data and trendlines. In addition, schools that use the Qs are supported by numerous resources including webinars, workshops, and an online community supporting the administration and interpretation of Qs data.

"I always benefit from these webinars and am grateful to have them be so accessible. This fall, I'll be doing a five-year review presentation to faculty and staff of our GSQ results, by comparison to sister evangelical schools. This webinar gave me additional ideas for how I could group results by subject matter," said one past participant.

"I serve on the faculty committee for assessment at my school. It was helpful to have this webinar and the points raised as a model of how to look at the data as a committee locally," said another past participant.

In an Engage ATS post titled, "Market Research on Incoming Students thanks to ATS," a new marketing director mentioned needing a tool to better understand new students—"who they are, what they're hoping to achieve...

instead of running on instinct"—and eventually came across the ESQ. "If you haven't taken a look, I recommend it," she said, "it's free research!"

Now is the time for member schools to administer the GSQ to their rising graduates and to make plans by summertime for administering the ESQ when matriculation season begins in August and September. Beyond the ESQ and GSQ, ATS also offers the Alum Questionnaire (AQ) that schools can use to improve and enhance their donor-alum relations strategies and other institutional planning priorities. Your school can register for access to any of the Qs via the order form on the ATS website. If you are unsure about your school's participation or status, please email us at qmail@ats.edu for additional information.

Our next virtual event is fast approaching! If you are wondering how the Qs—and our emerging community of practice using these tools—can help in the work you do, we invite you to bring your questions or share your Qs-related experiences at our Questionnaires-Virtual Info Session (Q-VIS) on April 20 from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. ET.







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Spring 2023 Timeline

Graduating Student Questionnaire

Today	April 1	June 19	July 20
			
ORDER	ADMINISTER	SUBMIT	LEARN
Visit www.ats.edu/Questionnaires	Set up your instrument(s) and invite your students	Confirm participation and finalize responses	Review GSQ data/reports provided by ATS