

Preliminary enrollment data for fall 2025 shows another year of promising trends

By CHRIS MEINZER

*As of October 17, 2025, 250 ATS member schools have reported enrollment data, representing nearly 90 percent of the membership. Of these schools, 55 percent have shown year-over-year enrollment increases, and 45 percent have shown declines. **For the second year in a row, more ATS schools have grown than declined.** Total enrollment at these 250 schools reflects a 1.3 percent increase compared to fall 2024. They reported enrollments of about 71,500 students in fall 2024 and about 72,400 in fall 2025.*

When looking at degree categories, some interesting trends can be found within these 250 reporting schools. All degree categories currently reflect year-over-year increases except for Other Professional Doctorates. ATS staff will continue to monitor enrollment as the final 30 schools report to see how these overall trends change, and an updated and more detailed article will follow in December.

A summary of results to date

For the same-set 250 schools reporting data:

- Master of Divinity (MDiv) enrollment rose for the first time in many years, reflecting a 2.4 percent increase. Fifty-six percent of the schools reporting so far have shown year-over-year MDiv enrollment increases. By ecclesial family, 58 percent of reporting evangelical schools, 56 percent of mainline schools, and 47 percent of Catholic/Orthodox schools all show increases. This is an interesting development—overall



MDiv enrollment is up, and the growth is widespread. In comparison, over the last several years, only 45 percent of schools had year-over-year MDiv enrollment growth.

- MA enrollment, which had been a significant growth area across ATS schools, has slowed its growth rate in recent years. Fifty-six percent of the reporting schools disclose increases in MA enrollment. By ecclesial family, increases show in 52 percent of reporting evangelical schools, 56 percent of mainline schools, and 68 percent of Catholic/Orthodox schools. It's important to note that the broad number of schools reporting MA enrollment increases is offset by one large school reporting a substantial decrease. This data point will be investigated for accuracy.
- Doctor of Ministry (DMin) enrollment is also essentially flat this year, and this trend will warrant deeper assessment as schools finalize their enrollment reporting. Like the MA, this degree category has been a substantial growth area for ATS member schools for more than a decade. Over the last several years, DMin enrollment has settled in at about 10,000 students, so it may be that a flat trend has been established. Fifty-four percent of the reporting schools disclose increases in DMin enrollment. By ecclesial family, increases show in 52 percent of reporting evangelical schools, 59 percent of mainline schools, and 44 percent of Catholic/Orthodox schools.

- PhD/Doctor of Theology (ThD) shows an increase of 2.9 percent, Other Professional Doctorates had a decrease of 5.6 percent, and Master of Theology (ThM)/ Master of Sacred Theology (STM) reflects an increase of 7.4 percent.
- Degree-seeking students reflect an increase of 1.0 percent from fall 2024 to fall 2025.
- Last year, the enrollment of non-degree students grew significantly. This year, enrollment continued to increase, although at a more modest level. Of the schools reporting so far, enrollment has increased by 4.1 percent, with 57 percent of the schools reporting year-over-year increases.

Reported to-Date Same-Set 250 Schools	Fall 2024	Fall 2025	% Change	% Schools Increased
MDiv	23,840	24,408	2.4%	56%
MAs	26,181	26,165	-0.1%	56%
ThM/STM	1,032	1,108	7.4%	65%
DMin	9,011	9,028	0.2%	54%
Other Professional Doctorates	1,391	1,313	-5.6%	46%
PhD/ThD	3,929	4,043	2.9%	53%
Degree-seeking students	65,384	66,065	1.0%	55%
Non-degree students	6,113	6,362	4.1%	57%
Total students	71,497	72,427	1.3%	55%

Much to celebrate!

With this new data and for the second year in a row, there is much to celebrate. It appears that ATS member schools will reflect overall increases in head count enrollment, and this looks like a broader trend across all

schools, with 55 percent reflecting enrollment increases from fall 2024. Further analysis will be done, so stay tuned for an update next month as we look deeper into some of these promising trends.



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