The Association of Theological Schools
The Commission on Accrediting

Getting Started, Navigating the Application

GETTING STARTED

ATS member schools are required to complete the Annual Report Forms. These forms collect various data regarding admissions, completions, enrollment, development, finance, personnel, salary, etc. E-mails are sent in early September announcing the beginning of the collection period, the due date for data submission and the passwords for the current survey year.

Please Note: Completing these forms each year is a condition of membership—both for Associate members (see ATS Procedures II.C) and for Candidate and Accredited members (see Commission Policies and Procedures II.D and III.D)

Website: To access the Annual Report Forms (ARF) login screen type into a web browser address bar, ARF.ATS.EDU (without "www" or "http://").

Username and Passwords: There are three levels of access, General, Personnel and Salary/Submit, each level requires a separate Username and password set. ATS provides the usernames and passwords each year. The General and Personnel passwords are provided to the member school's Chief Executive Officer or equivalent and the member school's Academic Vice President/Academic Dean or equivalent. The Salary/Submit passwords are only sent to the member school's Chief Executive Officer or equivalent. The passwords are reset in August each year.

General access is for completion of information on forms other than Finance, Personnel, and Salary. Usernames end with "-G"

Personnel access is for completion of school personnel information. Usernames end with "-P"

Salary/Submit access, accesses all parts of the ARF, and is the only code that accesses the Finance and Salary forms as well as the only code that can submit the information to ATS. Usernames end with "-S"

Note: For password purposes, please note the number 1 has a "flag" on the top and the letter l does not. Passwords are case sensitive.

The member school name, survey year field, ARF due date and Submission Status are displayed above the form list.

Survey year: The survey year field is used to switch between accessing the current and previous data collection period. Current survey year data can be edited until the data is submitted, at which point the data is read only. The previous survey year data is always read only.

Please note Survey year represents the academic year of the ARF processing period. The time period of the data reported will vary for the different form and is displayed in the form list next to the form name, just below the name of the form within the forms and within the instructions is a note indicating the period the data should cover.

ARF Due Date: ARF data should be submitted no later than the ARF due date displayed. Email requests for an extension to arf@ats.edu no later than the ARF Due Date. Include the reason for the extension request and a specific proposed submission date. The email subject should read: ARF Extension request for *member school name.* If an extension is granted the ARF due date will reflect the new due date.

ARF Form list: The list of forms provides access to the various Annual Report Forms for data entry. Some forms may be disabled depending on the Username used to access the application.

Forms may be completed in any order with the following exceptions.

- Complete EF-1 Enrollment (Race and Gender) before EF-2 Enrollment (Age and Gender)* and EF-3 Enrollment (Denomination). *EF-2 Enrollment (Age and Gender) is required biennially only and is disabled in even numbered years.

- Complete CF-1 Completions (Race and Gender) before CF-2 Completions (Time and Gender) and CF-3 Completions (Placement and Gender).

- Complete FF-1 Financial Data before FF-2 Finance Data (additional).

- Complete PF-1Personnel – Full-Time before SF-1 Salary and EF-5 Enrollment (Extension and Distance Ed).

Links to printer friendly blank form (not formatted for your institution) and instructions are available on the ATS website at www.ats.edu, Resources, Annual Report Forms. Printer friendly forms (formatted for your institution) and instructions can be viewed and printed from the online application. See below for details.

FORM FIELDS SHADING/PATTERNS

degree NOT reviewed/approved   **Shaded fields:** The Admissions, Completions, and Enrollment forms may have gray shaded fields to indicate degree program areas that are either not reviewed for approval or are not approved for the member school. The application will skip over these fields during data entry, however as there are always exceptions, data entry is possible within these fields. If entering data in a shaded field, an explanation should be entered in the comments field of the relevant form. Some forms require explanations and the form cannot be saved without entering comments.

auto calculated field   **Patterned fields:** Patterned fields represent fields for which data entry is not allowed. These fields are either auto calculated fields (blue slashed) or contain amounts that are brought forward from another part of the form or in some cases another form (wide gray slashes).

data provided for reference   Forms CF-1 Completions (Race and Gender), CF-2 Completions (Time and Gender), and CF-3 Completions (Placement and Gender) are collecting data for the same set of students, therefore the totals on these forms are expected to match. Forms CF-2, and CF-3 will include patterned fields with the data from CF-1. Similarly, EF-1 Enrollment (Race and Gender), EF-2 Enrollment (Age and Gender) and EF-3 (Denomination) are for the same set of students and will include patterned fields with the data from EF-1.

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NAVIGATING THE APPLICATION

Submit Data: The submit data screen displays a list of items for review. At the top of the list are Submit Errors (in red) that require correction before the data can be submitted. Next in the list are items that appear to be in error, however they will not prevent submission of the data. Finally, are Review items that may be missing data or the data entered is significantly greater than or less than the data reported last year. Below the Review List is the respondent field for identifying the person submitting the ARF, and a button for adding a new respondent if the respondent is not listed. After the errors are resolved and the respondent is selected click the Submit Now button to submit the ARF. A window will display confirmation ATS received the data. ATS will review the data and contact the respondent(s) if additional information is required. This icon is only enabled for the "-S" username, otherwise it will appear grayed out.

Form Selection: Click the Form Selection icon to open the form data entry screen.

Comments: The Comments button accesses the comments field. Comments can be left for each form to further explain the data entered. Some forms will require explanations be entered in the comments to continue. The Comments button changes to from solid black to include lines when comments are entered.

Save/Close: The Save/Close button saves the information entered and returns to the ARF Form List screen. Some of the forms have fields that are validated upon saving. If validation fails an error message is displayed, and if the form allows saving the data with errors a **Close Now** button will appear in the validation error message. If the option is not available all errors must be resolved to close the form with the data saved. If the errors cannot be resolved at the time of attempting to close, use the Cancel button to exit the form, no data will be saved.

The Close Now button is provided as a convenience to prevent the need to re-enter large amounts of data if the errors cannot be corrected immediately. If the errors are not corrected before submission ATS will contact the respondent for the corrected information to complete the ARF process.

Page/Record Navigation buttons: Forms with multiple pages/records have buttons to navigate the screens. A button with a bar and a filled arrowhead pointed left navigates to the first screen, pointed right navigates to the last screen. A button with a single arrowhead pointed to the left navigates to the previous screen, pointed right navigates to the next screen. The PF-1 Personnel Full-Time, SF-1 Salary and RF-1 Respondents forms display one screen per record identified by a person's name. For these forms there will be a drop-down list of records identified by the Personnel/Respondent's name for navigating directly to the record.

Cancel: Throughout the application, click the X icon to close and return to the previous screen without saving changes.

Printer Friendly Forms: Forms can be printed individually or as a complete set. From the main form selection screen, click the printer icon in the top right corner of the online application. The screen will display a list of available forms and to the right of the forms list a link for "All forms in one document". Above the forms list is a selection box to choose your Print Options. After selecting "Print Forms" for forms filled with the data entered or "Blank Forms" for blank forms formatted for your institution, click the printer icon next to the individual form to print or for a complete set select "All forms in one document". Forms can also be printed directly from the data entry screen by selecting the print option and clicking the printer icon in the top right of the form.

Instructions: Instructions can be viewed and printed individually or as a complete set. From the main form selection screen, click the question mark icon in the top right corner of the online application. A new window will open with a list of the available form instructions and a link for "All forms in one document" to the right of the forms list. Click the printer icon next to the individual form to view/print or for a complete set select "All forms in one document". Instructions can also be viewed/printed directly from the data entry screen by clicking the question mark icon in the top right of the form.

Form Review: The Form Review report can be viewed and printed individually or as a complete set. From the main form selection screen, click the Form Review icon om the top right corner of the online application. The form review report can be viewed and printed for an individual form by selecting the Form Review button within the form or all the forms in one report by selecting Form Review from the Form list. The report provides a summarized comparison of the current survey year to the previous survey year as well as any user comments and validation comments. The differences between the survey years are shown in number and percentage format. Validation comments are system generated comments to assist reviewing the data for missing information, possible errors and anomalies. There are four types of Validation comments; Informational, Review, Error and Submit Error.

Informational comments provide additional information regarding the relevant data.

Review comments identify unexpected values and large changes in the data compared to the previous survey year. After review of these items, if no corrections are needed a comment should be provided explaining the reason for the anomaly by clicking the comment button within the relevant form.

Error comments identify items requiring correction or completion. These types of errors will not prevent submission of the ARF, however ATS will contact the respondent(s) for correction(s) and/or additional information.

Submit error comments identify items that <u>must</u> be corrected before submitting the ARF.

Note: Form Review and All forms in one document for both Print Forms and Instructions, will only include the forms available with the current login.