



FUSION 
so others may hear and live

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What is Fusion?

Fusion combines a unique process with a radical experience, throughout one year of college:

Fusion is a life transforming process. This process is designed to help Christian adolescents step into biblical adulthood. This means Fusion equips young believers to walk with Jesus for a lifetime using their gifts,

talents, abilities, and experience to serve the King.

Fusion is a radical, life changing experience. Fusion believes in the radical concepts that Jesus taught: like faith, honor, loyalty, courage, and sacrifice. We will sharpen your focus on the personal and the eternal. You will learn to put others ahead of yourself; and to allow who you are in Christ to define what you do.

Fusion is education. Fusion is one year (fall and spring semester) of a four year college degree program at Midwestern College for high school graduates, allowing participants earn 27 hours of college credit. It functions most effectively as the first year of college; however, many upperclassmen have participated in Fusion at various points during their college degree program.

Fusion, above all others, allows you to live your dream of serving the Lord; to be a hero for Christ. At Fusion, we still believe in heroes; heroes who exemplify the life of Christ; who always place Jesus first.

This is Fusion. There is nothing else like it!

Requirements

Fusion Candidates Qualifications:

Those applying to Fusion must have or exhibit the following:

- Willing to submit to the Fusion process.
- High school graduate (23 years old or younger).
- Must be admitted by Midwestern Baptist College as a student.
- Must be admitted by International Mission Board as a semester student missionary.

Application Information:

Fusion requires two applications. Fusion students are not only applying for a mission opportunity through the IMB, they are also applying for admittance into a Bachelor's degree at Midwestern. To apply for IMB service, you must complete the appropriate [application](#) to be a semester missionary. To apply as an undergraduate student at Midwestern, you must complete the appropriate [application](#).

Fusion Advocate

Advocates are the backbone of Fusion and serve in multiple capacities such as discipleship leaders, resident assistants, and international mission team leaders. The Advocate's leadership is intentionally designed to challenge high school graduates to an extraordinary commitment to evangelism and discipleship and provide young people a directional process from adolescence into Biblical adulthood.

Fusion Advocacy is an 11 month commitment (July - May).

- Must be at least 22 years old, or college graduate, or prior military 21 or older
- Strong leader
- Exhibit spiritual/personal maturity; with a thorough understanding of personal discipleship and experience disciplining others.
- Complete a personal interview with the Fusion Executive Leadership.

- Passionate about sharing the Gospel
- Highly motivated and highly flexible
- International mission experience
- Have excellent health and fitness
- Outdoor and wilderness survival experience is helpful but not required.
- Foreign mission experience is helpful but not required.
- Foreign language experience is helpful but not required.
- Attend Fusion Advocate Training the second two weeks of July.

Costs

As of 2014, Fusion costs an average of \$15,000 for the entire project.

Fusion is one year of a Bachelor of Arts, Christian Ministry (Missions Focus) degree program which is eligible for Title IV funding (FAFSA) for those who qualify. Thus, federal loans and grants may be applied toward the tuition costs of Fusion. On the other hand, the missions training and sending costs must be raised by the individual's family and church.

Approximate costs (subject to change):

Fall Semester: \$7740

This includes all fall semester tuition, room, board, and Fusion training.

Spring Semester: \$2760

This includes spring tuition.

Overseas Service: \$4500

Covers:

- International Travel (flights, ground, sea)
- In-Country Transportation
- Visas
- International Insurance
- Food
- Housing

Estimates of costs you will incur purchasing gear students will need when they show up in August. These costs will vary greatly based on the quality of gear you choose to purchase.

- Books: \$150 (Each Semester)
- Boots: \$50-\$200 (depending on brand)
- Passport: \$75
- Immunizations: \$100-\$300 (depending on provider)
- Backpack: \$50-\$400 (rental packs are available to rent on a first come, first served basis for \$50 for the

year)

- Sleeping bag and Ground Pad: \$50-600 (sleeping bags and ground pads are available to rent on a first come, first served basis for \$50 for the year)

School Credit

Fusion candidates are undergraduate students at Midwestern Baptist College in Kansas City, MO. The entire process includes 27 hours of college credit fulfilling nearly $\frac{1}{4}$ of the requirements of the Bachelor of Arts, Christian Ministry (Missions Focus) degree program.

Hours for Fusion

Phase One: Local Experience

- 3 hrs Discipleship and Evangelism
- 3 hrs World Views
- 3 hrs Foreign Language I
- 3 hrs Christian Leadership
- 4 hrs Church Planting Practicum

Total 15 hrs

Phase Two: International Experience

- 3 hrs Cross Cultural Studies
- 3 hrs Global Missions & Evangelism
- 3 hrs Foreign Language II
- 3 hrs Associates Missions Practicum

Total: 12 hrs

Total credits received for Fusion: 27 hrs

Apply/Register

- Complete an application to [Midwestern Baptist College](#).
- Complete an [IMB Student Missionary Application](#).
- Create a Fusion Account on the website.

Fusion is owned and operated by International Mission Board of the SBC. The IMB and Midwestern Baptist College do not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of educational policies, admission policies, or any other programs and activities.

The Fusion Lifestyle

Fusion Maxims

Of interest to many is the young age of Fusion cadre and leadership. Apart from Scott Brawner (who is WAY over 40...) the average age of Fusion's Cadre is 21. The question many ask is: "how can such young people ("kids"...) maintain their personal bearing and accomplish such amazing work for the Gospel on five continents around the world? The answer is: **STANDARDS**. Fusion alumni live by personal and corporate standards rooted in God's word and proven through their daily lives of commitment and service. Supporting that standard is an EXPECTATION of excellence in personal conduct, moral character, and spiritual humility that only comes from a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Fusion's standards are defined by their maxims; principles that guide Fusion's beliefs, conduct, expectations, and commitment to personal excellence. These standards are encapsulated in the following.

Fusion Ethos

The Fusion ethos describes the fundamental character and spirit of the organization. The ethos is the underlying sentiment that informs and influences the beliefs, customs and practices of Fusion students and cadre. The Fusion ethos is encapsulated by the following statements:

- I will serve the body of Christ
- I will lead the lost to Christ
- I will exemplify the life of Christ
- I will give my life for the cause of Christ
- I will go to the nations to proclaim Christ
- I will always place Christ first!

Fusion Creed

The Fusion creed seeks to encompass the true essence of the Christian life. It is the clarion call to all who are Fusion to remind them of life's true objective and the measure of our success. The heart of these words were originally penned by Karen Watson, IMB Missionary to Iraq who was martyred there in 2004. The Fusion Creed is to be memorized.

AS A FOLLOWER OF CHRIST:

I AM CALLED NOT TO COMFORT OR SUCCESS BUT TO OBEDIENCE. CONSEQUENTLY MY LIFE IS TO BE DEFINED NOT BY WHAT I DO BUT BY WHO I AM.

HENCEFORTH: I WILL PROCLAIM HIS NAME WITHOUT FEAR; FOLLOW HIM WITHOUT REGRET; AND SERVE HIM WITHOUT COMPROMISE.

THUS: TO OBEY IS MY OBJECTIVE, TO SUFFER IS EXPECTED, HIS GLORY IS MY REWARD.

THEREFORE: TO CHRIST ALONE BE ALL POWER, ALL HONOR AND ALL GLORY THAT THE WORLD MAY KNOW.

AMEN!

Fusion Foundation and Columns of Integrity

The core values of Fusion are embedded in the foundation of Be, Know, and Do.

Be encompasses who we are in Christ (born again believers Philippians 3:9) and what we are to become (...Conformed to the image of Christ. Romans 8:29).

Know involves what we learn as followers of Christ throughout our lives (...Present yourself approved to God as a workman...accurately handling the word of truth. 2 Timothy 2:15).

Do is how we daily live out BE and KNOW until the end of our lives (...I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 2 Timothy 4:7).

Upon the foundation rests five columns which identify and exemplify the Fusion commitment to Christian life and service. These columns stand together and are interdependent. They are the indicators that illustrate a life sold out to Jesus Christ. The Columns are to be memorized.

**FAITH
HONOR
LOYALTY
COURAGE
SACRIFICE**

Fusion Motto

The Fusion Motto is central to the Fusion lifestyle. Everything that Fusion cadre and students are to be and become is encapsulated in the motto. As individuals remember (and thus consider) the motto, they realize and remember why they are in Fusion in the first place. The Fusion Motto is to be memorized.

SO OTHERS MAY HEAR...AND LIVE!

Fusion's Rites of Passage

Rites of passage are incorporated into the Fusion experience. Rites of passage help transform the adolescent into a mature believer. A mature believer is capable of taking personal responsibility for his or her faith and conduct and has a proven ability to walk with Jesus for a lifetime.

At Fusion's inception, it was deemed of value to incorporate rites of passage into the Fusion experience. When Scott Brawner began crafting what would become Fusion as it is today, he was convinced that Fusion should be an experiential process rather than a simply program. That concept led to the development of a directed process that empowers young believers to step from adolescence into Biblical adulthood. As a result, the Fusion process is filled with rites of passage both large and small that help the adolescent begin his or her transformation into a Christ like adult. That is, a mature born again believer capable of taking personal responsibility for their faith (belief ownership) and possessing the ability to walk with Jesus for a lifetime.

Fusion's rites of passage are a central key for instilling in Fusion Candidates the idea of a *transcendent cause*; being part of something bigger than themselves (in this case, their personal commitment to living and fulfilling The Great Commission and their lifetime endeavor to become more like Jesus Christ). These unique rites of passage have proven to be of great significance in the lives of Fusion participants.

Fusion rites of passage incorporate:

- Individual and corporate discipline
- Spiritual/physical accountability
- Opportunities for pushing the physical, spiritual, emotional limits of the individual
- Providing the individual a “safe” place to fail and be restored
- Special intimate rite of passage ceremonies throughout the process

Candidate Expectations

The training regimen during Fusion can be rigorous. During Ground School, the schedule will include early rising for personal Bible study and quiet times, physical training, and inspection of living areas. Weekly corporate worship opportunities will be provided and participation is expected. Physical training opportunities will be provided for candidates and administered at their physical level.

The reason Fusion keeps a strict regimen early on can be found in 1 Corinthians 9:27 and 1 Timothy 4:7. We are told by Paul to “discipline our bodies” and to “discipline ourselves for the purpose of Godliness.” According to 1 Corinthians, through overcoming hardships, whether engineered by Fusion or brought on by a candidate’s own personal struggles, Godly life change is achieved as students realize they can no longer live or serve with an insincere or trivial spirit. It is imperative that everyone attending Fusion understand that they must be flexible and have a sincere commitment to personal and spiritual growth. Further, corporate discipline with a specific purpose and direction has a direct impact on a person’s ability to establish and maintain personal spiritual disciplines in keeping with 1 Timothy. It is through this discipline that candidates begin to recognize what motivates them and what they truly hold as their core values.

A Candidate’s Prayer

This prayer was penned anonymously by a Fusion Candidate in September 2009 on the whiteboard in the Camp New Hope Chapel. The chapel is a unique location as the chapel was the church where Jesse James’ Grandfather was one of the first Southern Baptist pastors in Northwest Missouri.

A Fusion Candidate’s Prayer

Lord, I humble myself before You.
Please forgive me for I am a sinner.
I have lustful hands and eyes.
Forgive me, I am unclean.

Lord help me, for I am weak.
I cannot do this without You.
I know that when You are within me though,
I am without myself, and I have the strength.

Dear God, I pray for those I leave behind.
I pray that they also can be strong with You Lord,
That they feel it sinful to worry when I am in Your hands,
And that they can carry on in the Great Commission
Without their daughter, son, aunt, uncle, or best friend.

Lord, I thank You so much for this chance, this blessing,
No matter how the people see me.

Heavenly Father, let me be a clean vessel
to do Your mighty will!

A Word About Fitness

Fusion is designed to provide an awesome ministry experience for Candidates with varying degrees of physical fitness and health. It is our goal to help students maintain healthy eating and exercise habits throughout the process. This will help individuals better cope with their service on the mission field and to be prepared to minister in areas of the USA and the world that require them to live and travel in a much more physically demanding way.

The International Mission Board and its partners reserve the right of final selection for all applicants based on the applicant's current health, fitness, emotional, spiritual, or maturity level. This means that Fusion reserves the right for acceptance into Fusion and international service placement. Once accepted, if Fusion's Cadre perceives a problem with a participant, whether physically, emotionally, or spiritually, it is Fusion's goal to personally work with each Candidate and get them to where they can be best used by the Lord in mission service. This is for the protection and safety of both the Candidate and the entire Fusion team.

Preparing to Go

International Travel

All international travel for Fusion are coordinated by Fusion. Fusion participants will not be required to make individual travel plans.

Passport and Visa:

Acquiring a passport is part of the Fusion application process. Most Fusion teams require a visa in order to enter the country. This document, (usually a sticker or stamp in your passport) is obtained through the country's consulate office in the United States. Visas are time sensitive and **MUST** be in your possession before traveling. No passport; no visa. No visa; no trip! [Click here](#) to apply for a passport.

Immunizations:

All candidates should have completed all their childhood immunizations and have current Tetanus and Hepatitis–A immunizations. Please contact the Fusion Office at 816-414-3777 or the [Center for Disease Control website](#) for recommended and required immunizations for your country.

Insurance:

All students are required to obtain comprehensive insurance through [Gallagher Charitable International Insurance Services](#). This insurance is comprehensive coverage, not just medical insurance. Insurance costs are included in the Fusion cost.

Payment Options

As you prepare to serve internationally you may have to trust GOD at a new level and you may have to evaluate your personal finances and stewardship. These resources are designed to help you understand your options.

Federal Aid (Title IV Funding) is available for Fusion candidates who qualify through completion of FAFSA. Additionally, there are multiple payment funding options available for Fusion participants.

Please visit fastweb.com or your private lender for scholarship and loan options. Also search the web for other options.

Raising support for Fusion is also a possibility. Many students choose to raise support to offset the cost of Fusion. Raising money through your home church is the best option. The money that is raised can be sent directly to Midwestern to be credited to your account.

The total cost of Fusion is \$15,000 (\$10500 for the stateside portion and \$4500 for the international portion). The following rules apply for paying for Fusion:

Many students choose to raise support. Money raised can be sent directly to Midwestern to be credited to your account. Midwestern Baptist College offers many ideas on funding and current scholarships.

- [FERPA Release Form](#)
- [Funding Your Education at Midwestern](#)
- [MBTS Scholarship Application](#)

For specific information on Fusion funding options, contact the Student Financial Services office at Midwestern by emailing sfs@mbts.edu or calling 816-414-3716.

Additional Information:

1. Students DO NOT owe the international portion (\$4500) until November 1st.

2. Students MUST have to have a plan communicated to MBTS to pay for the \$10500 at the beginning of the semester. There are two options to pay for the Fall portion (\$10500).

A. In full: Whether the student is paying for the entire year or if they will carry a balance after scholarships or loans, they can pay in full. If a student or their parents are paying in full, they have until the official first day of school to make that payment to the Midwestern. This payment has to be made by check, debit, or credit card.

B. Payment Plan: The school has a payment plan through which a student can make payments throughout the semester (either on the \$10500 total or on the balance after financial assistance).

Raising Money for Fusion

Many students choose to raise support to offset the cost of Fusion. Listed below are some ideas to help you raise funds to pay for Fusion.

1. **Make a List of People you Know**

Include friends, relatives, co-workers, church members, acquaintances, schoolteachers, professors, community leaders, coaches, etc. Get addresses, phone numbers, email addresses

**Do not rule anyone out; you do not know their heart.*

2. **Write a rough-draft support letter**

Make sure to include:

1. Who you are—Add a picture (It helps people remember)

Microsoft Publisher has a good template

1. Express your heart/passions/desire for this experience...Why is it important to you? How can they benefit by sending you?
2. Your financial need
3. How they can send money---Include a slip like the one provided to send with their checks

**Have a least one person proofread it for errors prior to sending it out.*

3. **Include a prayer card with your letter**

This should have your picture on it along with any prayer requests you want people to be lifting you up in during your trip or semester. This gives people another way to join your team if financially they cannot support you.

**Trust me, this is just as, if not more, important than a financial team.*

**Send letters out at least 1-2 months in advance of Fusion or simultaneously during your semester.*

4. **Set-up speaking engagements**

These can include individuals, community partnerships, churches, etc.

This is important to get more people on your team and to possibly meet new people that might want to be on your team in the future. The focus here is not necessarily just money, but articulating your desire and vision and showing people how they can be a part of it through supporting you.

At these events you will want to go through exactly what you would write in a letter, and also include a Question & Answer session so that people will have the chance to not only get to know you better, but find out what you are setting out to do as well.

5. **Follow-Up Letters**

Make sure to keep in contact with your supporters and prayer team. Send updates periodically on your progress or need so that they can continue to join in what you are doing. Sending pictures is always great

because it gives them a tangible, visual thing to help them understand.

6. Pray, Pray, Pray!

Most importantly pray in all things. God has money and people to put in your life. Sometimes he leads us one way and then things might change. Be willing and open to where he is leading, even if that means it is not this trip at this time. This is the most important and effective tool for raising support.

Support Letter Examples

In this section you will find samples of financial support letters for you to adapt. Please feel free to make changes or to write your own. Should you choose the latter, we suggest it be kept to one page; be upbeat, clear and specific. We encourage you to send this letter to friends, family and members of your church congregation. You will find the process much less stressful if you mail them as soon as possible. In addition to the letter, you may wish to include a self-addressed return envelope.

You could **ask your home church and your college church** to assist you in raising money. They may have a missions fund or know of suggested donors or classes that may support. If possible, you could give a presentation to the congregation or a particular church ministry. In addition, it may be useful to ask a particular group (i.e. your parents' Bible study, the senior adult ministry, the GA's, etc.) to "adopt" you financially or prayerfully. If a group has made an "official" partnership with you, they may be more likely to be committed and continued supporters.

Some students raise their money through **creative events or services**, such as a car wash or babysitting. These may be done on a large scale within your community, or you may choose to approach specific ministries, groups or families. For instance, ask to serve at your church's next prayer breakfast or senior luncheon – for tips! Approach the women's ministry with the idea of a "Date Night" – for a fee, they may drop their kids off on a Friday night for three hours of play. Ask your church to use their facilities and enlist a group of friends for help.

Donors may have questions as to the organization coordinating your trip or the exact nature of your trip. Please feel free to direct them to the Fusion office at Midwestern. Please call 816-414-3777.

Be certain to log who donates money for your trip. You will want to properly thank them upon your return. You may choose to send a thank-you letter and pictures, or you may choose to write a story about a person you met while abroad. Your church may also ask you to share with the congregation your experience.

IMPORTANT! Make sure you include the tear off slip for individuals to donate to your account!

EXAMPLE 1:

June 1, 2010

Dear Friends,

God is doing amazing things in my life. At the age of nine or ten God called me to missions/ministry. He has blessed me with a passion to share the Good News of Jesus Christ to others. To see the eyes of an unbeliever become open to the Truth and a fire ignite within them is my greatest desire. I long to serve my King in order that all have heard the Truth.

With this call has come an incredible opportunity to be personally trained and equipped for missions and ministry. I am taking this school year to complete Fusion: the most intensive personal evangelism and ministry training process for young adults. I am writing you this letter to ask you to be a part of my Missionary Counsel. In some way or another you have supported me in the past as part of the family of Christ.

You may be asking yourself, "What is the Missionary Counsel"? The Missionary Counsel is comprised of five people in my life that are mentors to me. Each member will help me with two things:

(1) *You will help me make a list of prayer partners.* The most important part of preparing for this trip is prayer. I need you to ask everyone that you know to be praying for me.

(2) *You will help me make a list of financial partners.* You will help me find 30 people to give \$6.00/week for four months (16 weeks). This comes to a total amount of \$3200. The cost for Fusion's mission this trip is \$3200. Each donor will receive a receipt for their tax deductible gift.

Please be in prayer as to whether you would like to be on my Missionary Counsel. I will be contacting you shortly to let you know about a meeting that I am going to have. During each of our meetings we will discuss the progress of prayer and financial support, as well as trip preparations. I will give you much more details during our first meeting. If you have any questions please call me at

_____.

Make your tax deductible gift out to *my church*: _____ *and mail it to:*

Church Address

Attention: "My Mission trip fund."

Thank You,

Jeremiah D. Pearson

EXAMPLE 2:

Dear Family and Friends,

I hope this letter finds you all doing well. I just wanted to drop you a few lines to let you know about an exciting opportunity that is going on in my life. I graduated last May from Truman High School. This fall, the Lord has opened the door for me to attend Fusion.

Fusion is a national evangelism training process that equips young people for evangelism, missions, and ministry. The Lord has opened a door for me to attend Fusion this next year. Fusion is a nine month process consisting of two phases. Phase One is four months of domestic training in personal evangelism and leadership development, followed by an intensive hands-on practicum in evangelism and church planting. The second phase is a five month international mission trip where I will place what I learned in phase one to the test as I work with international missionaries to share the Gospel.

My heart and passion is to share Jesus with others both domestically and internationally. I want you to be a part of my training experience. You can be a part of Fusion by helping me with two things. First and most important I need your prayer support. I am compiling a list of prayer warriors to begin praying for me as I begin Fusion. Secondly, in order for me to be able to commit to this I will need to raise nearly \$15,000 by the end of July 2011. Please pray and ask the Lord if he would have you pray or give toward this much needed training process. Your gift is tax deductible and you will receive a receipt for it.

Make your tax deductible gift out to my church: _____ and mail it to:

Church Address

Attention: "My Mission trip fund."

(Do not write my name in the "memo" on your check or you will not be able to receive a receipt for taxes. Please submit the form below with your gift)

Student Name _____ Date _____

Donor Name _____

Fusion Frequently Asked Questions

Do I have to be a member of a Southern Baptist Church to attend Fusion?

NO! You do NOT have to be a member of a Southern Baptist Church to attend Fusion. HOWEVER, the cost to attend Fusion is considerably higher for non-Southern Baptists. This is because Fusion's tuition and international travel costs are subsidized by Southern Baptist Convention monies. Per our guidelines, Southern Baptist funding can only be utilized to support members of Southern Baptist churches. For more information, please call 816-414-3767.

Do I have to be called to "vocational" ministry to attend Fusion?

The answer is NO! We at Fusion believe that all Christians are called to full time ministry, however, not all Christians are called to serve as a *vocational* ministers (pastor, missionary, etc). Besides those who have come to Fusion planning to pursue ministry vocations, many students who have completed Fusion intend to serve as to be teachers, doctors, engineers, biologists, soldiers, marines, airmen, even forestry workers. So regardless of your intended vocation, Fusion could be for you!

Compared to other colleges, Fusion's cost is quite competitive (\$15,000 for the year). Does Fusion qualify for financial aid or can I use my current scholarships and financial aid to help pay for Fusion?

Financial aid for students, including Title IV Funding (Federal Financial Aid), is available through Midwestern Baptist College-SBC for those who qualify. There are several options for payment. Fusion provides its students with a fundraising guide to help them raise the funds necessary to participate. As far as Fusion's total cost is concerned, Fusion is \$15,000 for the year, including tuition, room and board, training, and all international transportation and living expenses. Compare this to most colleges and universities who charge \$14,000-\$20,000 (or more) for tuition and housing and you will see that *Fusion's* cost is quite competitive!

How about fundraising, how hard is that?

Fusion offers students an entire packet of material that helps them raise funds. This includes lessons and templates on how to write letters and how to use a PowerPoint presentation for use with church congregations. You are only limited by your own creativity when it comes to raising funds. We do however suggest that you start early with this process.

Do I get to come home for Christmas?

Yes. Generally you leave Fusion for home around December 15 and begin travel overseas around January 10.

Who can I contact with any other questions or needs?

For information on Fusion at Midwestern Baptist College in Kansas City, MO, please contact the Fusion staff at 816-414-3777 or email fusion@mbts.edu.

Do I get to choose where I go overseas?

Fusion is committed to placing you where you are going to be most adequately used by the Lord and where you are most likely to have a good experience. The Fusion application process is designed to help you find that place of service. If during Phase One it becomes evident that you need to go to another Fusion international ministry site other than the one initially offered to you, then we will work with you to make it happen.

What is Ground School?

Ground school is Fusion's "basic training." It is 10 days of intensive discipline that is designed to help Fusion participants take their mind off themselves and place it on the body as a whole. Based on 1 Timothy 4:7-13 and Romans 12:1-2, Ground School instills personal and corporate disciplines in the lives of students. Ground school instills in participants a powerful commitment to Christ and each other through: Fusion customs and courtesies, high adventure team building, early rising, guard duty, physical training, and intensive quiet times. Training of this caliber empowers students to learn what it takes to be a catalytic follower of Jesus Christ.

Is Ground School hard?

Ground School is challenging but manageable. It is designed to push you out of your comfort zone but not to “break” you. Ground School, more than anything, is an intense time of personal and team bonding. The Fusion Cadre leading Ground School have been through Fusion’s Ground School before or have had similar experiences (Scott Brawner, Fusion founder, designed Ground School. Brawner is a US Army Ranger, youth pastor, and student mission team leader. Shawn Branscum, Fusion campus director, is a US Marine, Iraqi Freedom Veteran, youth pastor, and itinerant preacher). With all that said, there is no reason that anyone should not complete Ground School intact!

Can parents send packages to their student?

In the fall, the answer is yes. Once teams deploy internationally, it is not feasible to mail packages to individuals or teams (save the homemade cookies until they get home...).

Can parents visit their student on the field?

We appreciate parents' support of and interest in their students' ministry. However, given the intensity and tempo of deployment, parent visits are not advised.

IMPORTANT: How Fusion Really Does It

Building Integrity for Life

Fusion builds a young person’s personal responsibility and self confidence in themselves and their team through the use of significant tasks. That is, completing tasks that are of significant purpose or scope. These types of responsibilities bring gratitude and praise from one’s peers, leaders or society. However when one fails to complete such a task, others suffer as a consequence. Learning to complete significant tasks is no small thing; the Bible is clear on this issue: if a person can be trusted with the small tasks or responsibilities, then ultimately they can be trusted with great things (Luke 16; 19).

Many times these types of tasks may actually seem menial or of little consequence to the one assigned to accomplish them but failure to follow through can have disastrous results both for the person charged with the task and those the task impacts.

Unfortunately in today’s society many young people have not learned to take responsibility for their own actions, let alone being responsible enough to see to the needs of others. Many well meaning parents have interceded for their children when they failed to complete a significant task; only to see later that their son or daughter learned nothing from the incident that should have cost them dearly in the short term and been a good life lesson. It can start young: a child forgets to bring home a permission slip for a class trip. On the day of the event, he or she calls their parents frantically for a signature requiring mom or dad to drop everything they are doing to rescue their child. Later the youth may get caught stealing or committing vandalism and, again, mom and dad are there to bail out their child so as to “protect” them from the consequences of their actions. These delayed or avoided consequences for personal actions has catastrophic impact on what the young person sees as valuable or important to them. Many times parents will see their child’s lack of responsibility and lack of enduring consequences coalesce in college when this child, now an “adult” in the legal sense (over 18 years of age) heads to college and cannot get out of bed and to class, forgets to pay his bills (or worse, runs up a tremendous credit card debt) and mom and dad are still there to bail him out. The

burgeoning adult has still learned nothing other than when in trouble to call the parents because they will get them out of it!

Fusion utilizes significant tasks a means to an end: teaching personal responsibility to the individual so that they will develop the personal integrity to “do the right thing” when faced with important decisions that will impact their lives for the long term. This means not only providing our participants with significant tasks, **but also providing them with the option for failure and suffering the consequences thereof!**

At this young age, failure is a part of life for our students and as such can be a great teacher and motivator for future actions and decisions. Therefore, Fusion strives to provide in the first semester a safe **environment for failure and ultimate restoration**. That means, every student will be assigned specific significant tasks throughout the process that, if completed successfully, will lead to praise, encouragement, and commendation. However if they fail (and many do...) the consequences can be heavy for not only them but their team mates.

For example, during Ground School students are broken into teams and required to guard their guidons (flags). Throughout the night, there are individuals who are looking for every opportunity to steal the flag if the guard falls asleep. If the flag is stolen, there will be a great consequence not only for the individual who fell asleep to pay but also those in his or her cohort to pay (there is a saying in Fusion: “You can either get smart or strong...”).

Additionally, once a person is on guard duty, he or she must wait for their replacement to come to the flag and replace them. The one guarding the guidon cannot abandon their post to wake up their relief. That means that the one replacing the current guard must demonstrate the wherewithal (personal responsibility) to wake themselves up and get to the guidon on time; otherwise that person on guard duty all night is going to have a serious issue with his replacement! Complicating matters, if the person left on guard duty is not replaced on time, that person now has a personal ethical issue to deal with: Does that person stay up all night waiting in vain for someone to relieve him or does he throw his hand in the air and say “forget it” and go on to bed leave the guidon to be stolen and subsequent punishment to be handed down in the morning. After all **he** was the last one on guard duty regardless of who was to relieve him...

The environment that has thus been created is a safe place to fail because no one can get physically hurt but the issue of failure can be clearly dealt with. Additionally, the stage is now set for a confrontation which can get heated and messy. Therefore, teaching young people to deal positively with conflict according to Matthew 18 is a necessity. This means everyone in Fusion personally learns to walk through the process of confrontation, repentance, forgiveness and restoration; a process that many in our churches seem to have forgotten!

From these simple learning experiences Fusion students move on to greater responsibilities and tasks in the ministry. These include responsibilities where they literally hold each others’ lives in their hands. This can include rock climbing and rappelling opportunities, significant team building opportunities, ultimately finding true illustration demonstrating itself in missionary service in some of the most demanding places around the world. This is why Fusion graduates demonstrate maturity in Christ and the ability to handle responsibilities others their age are not capable of handling.

Spiritual Development and Training

Fusion also instills in its students a deep desire to develop personal spiritual disciplines through Fusion's spiritual training process. Many students have never learned how to share their faith let alone come to a place of **personal belief ownership**. That is, moving their personal faith in Jesus Christ from that of an obscure understanding about Jesus to an objective faith in and through Jesus. In others words moving from knowing about Christ to know Jesus personally and gaining the ability to communicate that personal relationship to others.

It is a sad reality today that half to three quarters of Southern Baptist high school graduates will fall away from the faith within two years of graduation. They are heading into a college and university environment that is hostile to Christianity and even seeks to strip them of their faith in Jesus Christ. Many Christian kids are studying under the professional atheist or homosexual and taking in all they have to say about organized religion. This problem is compounded by a culture on campus and in life that pits itself squarely against the young believer who many times is not firmly rooted in his faith. He or she may know all the right answers but has never been given the chance to test those answers by the fire of spiritual and theological engagement with those who believe different from them. Consequently, they have never settled in their own hearts who Jesus really is and what that faith means to them in the long term. Ultimately, without that firmly rooted foundation in what and why they believe, they eventually yield to the tide of secular humanism or other foreign beliefs and abandon their faith all together; regardless of the pleadings and proddings of their distraught parents.

To address this devastating reality in today's Christian culture, Fusion instills personal belief ownership or "faith responsibility" in students on three levels. First, students who come to Fusion memorize key passages of scripture that help guide their decision making and their behavior. Secondly, students learn multiple ways to share their faith cross-culturally and trans-religiously; giving them the tools they need to witness to people of other backgrounds, heritages, and religions. Finally, Fusion students are given opportunities and placed in positions where they must share their faith with lost people (especially those of other faiths) who may know the Bible better than they do. While this may sound spiritually dangerous, Fusion finds its success with young people, not by teaching them what to think, but **how to think** rightly about scripture. This is where 1 Timothy 2:15 bears itself out and makes the spiritual rubber meet an ungodly road; by correctly handling the Word of Truth. Fusion students are equipped to engage other faiths from Mormons to Muslims, to Atheists to Hindus. When they are presented with concepts or questions they do not have answers to, they don't become squeamish in the faith but seek out answers from God's Word, seminary professors, pastors, and missionaries who have confronted these issues and given credible answers for their faith in Jesus Christ.

By teaching scripture and spiritual disciplines, Fusion students are prepared to meet in the marketplace of ideas and not just stand against the tide; but to be catalytic and pull others from the flood by introducing them to the real King of kings and Lord of lords. Thus equipping the young person with the spiritual tools they need to walk with Jesus for a lifetime!