

Funding Your Studies at ARTS

Students who are admitted to Africa Reformation Theological Seminary are amazed at the low student fees for tuition and residency. All you need to do is check out other graduate level seminaries on the internet and you will also be amazed. ARTS has some of the lowest graduate level seminary fees on the African continent. Student fees per course (in Uganda shillings): tuition 40,000 per credit course (c. \$11.27) or 80,000 per two-credit course (\$22.54); estimated textbooks cost per course 90,000 (\$25.35); resident fee per week: (room, food, utilities) 130,000 (\$36.62). Dollar prices vary according to exchange rate.

Three reasons why ARTS fees are so low:

1. Because ARTS is committed to making graduate level theological study affordable for African students.
2. Because ARTS is committed to making seminary study affordable for sponsors of African students.
3. Because the ARTS faculty is almost entirely composed of self-supporting ex-patriot and national missionaries. This enables the operating expenses of ARTS to be extremely low.

But even with low student fees, paying for study at ARTS is a financial challenge for almost all of our students.

Five suggestions on how to fund your studies at ARTS:

1. **Pray.** You serve a great God who owns the universe. If God wants you at ARTS He will provide the funding you need in His timing. So pray and seek his provision.
2. **Self-investment.** Determine that you will seek to raise some of your funding from your own resources (your savings, your income, your employment, your spouse's income, a part-time job, your farming, your projects, etc.). Self-investment encourages healthy self-reliance, ownership, valuing, prizing and perseverance when your studies become difficult and trials come. When you invest some of your own "blood" in the cost of your education then the education will mean more to you. Self-investment will let potential sponsors and donors know that you are serious about seminary training and that you are willing to work hard to make a way. The amount of self-investment will vary with each individual case. But the principle is universal: self-investment means intentional ownership and commitment.
3. **Seek to prayerfully recruit funding from your church.** This is the place to start. Your church is sending you to ARTS because you have gifts, a genuine calling from the Lord and evidence for present or future fruitfulness in the ministry of the gospel of grace. Your church includes both your local congregation and your regional church (presbytery, diocese or district, and national denomination). Since your studies will benefit your church and since you plan to return to your church or to minister from your church in evangelism, church planting, counseling or in planting a school, etc., your church is the natural group to invest in your studies at ARTS. If your church is unwilling to invest, possibly your church has not been trained in biblical stewardship. This is where to begin. You or your pastor will need to preach on stewardship. Your church should invest in your studies and in your preparation for more effective ministry. It is both their responsibility and privilege.
4. **Seek to prayerfully recruit funding from you family, relatives and close friends** and other sources. These people, like your church, know you well. They know your character, your gifts, your strengths and weaknesses. If they know God's call on your

life to gospel ministry, and see you growing in grace and holiness, and being serious about fulfilling God's call, they will be willing to invest.

5. **Seek to prayerfully recruit a sponsor.** Sponsors, who love Christ and love his church, know the great need for well-trained pastors, church planters, counselors and educators. Many people who are potential sponsors are on the look-out for men and women who have godly character, a love for the gospel and a love for the church and a hunger to be trained in the Bible. When they see a faithful man or woman with a zeal and clear call to gospel ministry, they will gladly invest. They will count it a privilege. So pray for and trust the Lord to bring a sponsor of his choice to help. Some NGOs are a resource for student sponsorships. Investigate.

Eight problem attitudes to flee:

1. **Unbelief.** If God wants you at ARTS, he will provide in his way. He is fully able. Don't doubt his power. God asked Jeremiah, "Behold I am the Lord the God of all flesh, is there anything too hard for Me?" (Jer 32:27). Trust God for his provision in his time. He is able to supply from various sources.
2. **Impatience.** We usually want things to happen in our timing. This is human and very normal. But God's timing is not always our timing. You may have to wait. As you wait for God's timing he will teach you many lessons. The biggest lesson may be the simplest: God is saying to you, "Trust Me. I will provide when it is for your good and for my glory. Wait on Me. Trust Me. Trust My timing."
3. **Refusal to bloom while you wait.** This is a form of laziness. Some say "Since God has not provided now, I will wait and do nothing until He does provide." No, the Lord calls you to trust and obey now. He calls you NOW to be busy in ministry in your congregation and in your gospel labors in your area, and to work to provide financially for yourself and your family, as you wait for God's provision for ARTS. God calls you to "bloom" where He has presently planted you.
4. **Refusal to begin private and personal study before you begin formal study.** The best student is the one who is motivated to study personally and privately, to begin to read good Christian books even before he or she enrolls in ARTS courses. The self-motivated and self-starting student is the one who has a developed foundation and background when the formal and institutional studies begin. Email the Director of Admissions or the Principal of ARTS for ideas on books to read before you come to Seminary. Get prepared while you wait on God's provision. The self-motivated student is the student that a sponsor loves to sponsor.
5. **Stubborn pride/ superiority.** "I am so qualified to go to ARTS. I am much better than other students who are already enrolled. Certainly God knows this. Why is he so slow in providing for my training to develop my superior gifts?" Maybe God calls you to wait to learn humility
6. **Stubborn pride/self-pity.** "If God doesn't provide for my ARTS fees, then I will pout and feel self-pity. I will complain and grumble and refuse to do anything with joy and faithfulness until I get my way and get funding to go to Seminary." Maybe God calls you to wait to learn faithfulness in your current ministry and through self-denial. Don't feel sorry for yourself (a form of pride) but trust and obey without grumbling as you wait on the Lord.
7. **Prayerlessness.** Keep praying and asking God to show you His plan. Or ask God to change your mind and heart and lead you in a different direction than seminary study, if this is His will. He always makes His plan known in His timing. Ask Him to show you His plan and to provide as He sees best.

8. **I will attempt to enroll anyway even when I don't have funds.** "The Seminary has money. I will pressure them to pay my fees." This is not the way for a seminary student to pursue training for gospel ministry. If the Lord has not provided your fees, then he calls you to wait until he does provide fees.