



# FAQs

## **What is STS Marketing College®?**

Since its inception in 1992, Southeast Tourism Society's Marketing College has hosted travel and tourism professionals for one week, each year, at the University of North Georgia. In 2022, Mercer University in Macon became the new host. Students participate in a curriculum of courses designed to teach marketing techniques from all facets of the tourism industry. Marketing College professors are industry-related professionals from across the U.S., noted as experts in their field, who bring a working-knowledge of current trends, data, and implementation for tourism and travel. Upon completion of the three-year Marketing College curriculum, students receive a Travel Marketing Professional (TMP) certification. To date, the program has graduated over 1,400 TMPs.

## **Why STS Marketing College®?**

Marketing College is the premier program for continuing education in the tourism industry. It's an investment not only for your region but also for your career. With industry leaders sharing the latest trends, topics and real-world applications, it is easy for students to return home and immediately begin implementing what they have learned. As one attendee said, "This is more than just marketing." Networking, friendships, and ideas are created amid the beautiful campus of Mercer University.

## **How long does it take to be a TMP?**

This is a three-year program and, while the years do not have to be sequential, it is strongly encouraged due to the networking and friendships built within your first year.

## **Where is STS Marketing College and how do I get there?**

STS Marketing College is held annually on the campus of Mercer University in Macon, Georgia. Macon has a rich, diverse history that you can enjoy during your free time.

Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport (ATL) is 75 miles from downtown Macon. You can request shuttle service from the Atlanta Airport to Mercer University through Groome Transportation. The fee is about \$100 RT, which is much less expensive than renting a car for five days.

## **What are my lodging options?**

Tuition options include housing in the on-campus dorms. All attendees get their own bedroom, so most elect to stay on campus. If you prefer, you can register under the "no room" option and stay in a hotel, motel, or cabin, which you would book and pay for on your own.

### **Dorms:**

The dorm is Legacy Hall. <https://residencelife.mercer.edu/macon/halls/legacy/>. It has one full-size kitchen with a full-size refrigerator.

It is a newer dorm, so no carpeting. Each person will be solo in a room, unless they want to share with a person of the same sex. There are two community baths on each hall. They are very nice. Six toilet closets with a full-sized closing door and six “doored” shower stalls. Each sleeping room has a sink and vanity. Men and women will be on separate halls. Great networking area on each floor. Smoking is allowed on campus if you are outside, 50’ away from a building entrance.

### **Would I be the only one staying in the dorms?**

“Dorm Life” has proven to be a great outlet for additional networking among the attendees. Very similar to what one would have experienced attending college, the dorms help solidify new friendships among attendees. More than half of Marketing College attendees choose to stay in the dorms. Not only is it budget-friendly but it’s actually fun! If you have a spouse or pet attending with you, we ask that you please elect to stay in a hotel or other off-campus lodging.

### **What do I pack to stay in the dorms?**

Bring twin bed sheets (extra-long), sleeping bag, or extra blanket(s). Some like to pack an egg crate for extra cushion, but a sleeping bag between the sheets and mattress works well, too. Please also bring pillows, fan (for white noise or to stay cool), desk lamp/clip light, flip flops, bath towels/hand towels, soap, toiletries, and snacks/bottled water. Some of the beds sit a little higher off the floor, so a mini step stool (one or two steps) would be a bonus for yourself. If you forget anything, there is a Walmart nearby.

### **Is there Wi-Fi on campus?**

Yes. A password will be provided upon arrival.

### **What is the schedule like?**

Classes are held on the Mercer University campus. First and Second-year classes will be five days, Monday – Friday, ending at 11:00 am on Friday. Students will have a free afternoon on Wednesday unless they are participating in the Festival & Events Classes. Third-year students will have full days on Monday and Tuesday and end at Noon on Wednesday.

### **What happens if I attend the First Year and cannot attend the Second Year?**

That is okay! You can return to Marketing College as a Second-Year student whether it be the following year or a year or more later. There is not a set timeframe for completion, though it is more fulfilling if you can attend all three years in a row. All students must attend all three years to receive a TMP certification.

### **Are meals included?**

Yes, the only meal you will be responsible for is dinner on Thursday evening. Breakfast and lunch are served at the campus dining hall. A wide variety of options are available – they even have Hibachi! (where you can select your carb, protein, and veggies, and they will cook it onsite for you). The dining hall is also able to work with special dietary restrictions. And don’t even get us started on the snacks you will have between meals/classes – so good!

### **Can my spouse or children attend any of the classes or events?**

We know some of our attendees like to bring their families with them during this time, but please note that an attendee’s registration fee covers solely their classes and meals for the week. We ask that family members or spouses

not be brought to classes or in the dining hall. Our events are also not catered for anyone under the age of 21, so we ask that attendees refrain from bringing any children to scheduled events. If you have a specific question/concern about this, please feel free to discuss with Suzanne aka “Momma Moon”.

### **What are the Alumni Courses?**

Your Marketing College experience doesn’t have to end after you graduate as a TMP! (Actual tears are shed upon completion of Marketing College). STS offers two classes, each lasting two days, and alumni have the option to attend one or both. Class topics change each year. The Festival and Events Track is also available to Alumni as well as current students.

### **What is the Festival & Events Track?**

In 2010, Southeast Tourism Society added a Festivals and Events Track.

The First-Year F&E Track is a half-day session that takes place on Wednesday afternoon. For general MC attendees, Wednesday afternoon is “free time,” so you will not miss out on any additional Marketing College Classes.

For Second-Year F&E students, sessions are held all day on Wednesday. You will miss out on the general classes on Wednesday morning, but you are “excused” from them because you must attend all the Festivals and Event sessions to receive the additional certification.

Third-year students complete their general MC classes on Wednesday morning, and Festival and Event sessions follow on Wednesday afternoon and all day on Thursday (You normally wrap up classes by 2 pm on Thursday). You do not miss any general Marketing College sessions. \*Please note, if you are registered for the Thursday/Friday alumni classes, you will not be able to register for the Third Year Festivals and Events Track or vice versa as they occur at the same time on Thursday.

Upon completing all three years, you receive a Festival & Events Planner Certification at the next STS Marketing College Graduation Ceremony.

### **What topics are discussed for Festival & Event Planners?**

First Year: Topics include a general overview as well as sponsorship/ideas

Second Year: Operations/Logistics, Sponsorship, Entertainment/Stage management

Third Year: Data Collection/Surveys//Demographics, Sponsorship & Case Studies

### **What should I take to class?**

Bring your favorite writing utensil, laptop, water bottle, and jacket (in case the A/C is working hard that day). 10-15-minute breaks will be given hourly throughout the day. There are outlets and/or charging stations in the classrooms.

### **Do students receive the lecture presentations?**

Yes, this year students will receive their class curriculum via Dropbox files, which they can download to their laptop or print for note-taking.

### **Are all classes mandatory or do I pick and choose?**

Yes, all classes are mandatory. It is imperative you attend all the classes to achieve qualifications for graduation. If an emergency occurs, please speak with a member of the STS Staff.

### **What is required to graduate as a Travel Marketing Professional?**

In addition to attending three years of Marketing College, a third-year student is required to complete two projects prior to the Marketing College Graduation luncheon at STS Connections. Details will be given to you during your third year of Marketing College. Upon completion of your last day of Marketing College, as a third-year student, you have about two months to complete your projects.

### **Where does graduation take place?**

STS Marketing College Graduation is held at a special luncheon during STS Connections (the annual meeting of STS). The 2024 STS Connections will be held in Auburn, Alabama on September 9-11. Details will be posted at [www.SoutheastTourism.org](http://www.SoutheastTourism.org).