

**UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
MINISTERIAL INTERNSHIP
MANUAL**



**INFORMATION, GUIDELINES, AND RESOURCES
MFC RULES AND POLICIES**

FOR

**INTERNS ♦ SUPERVISORS ♦ INTERNSHIP COMMITTEES
CONGREGATIONS ♦ COMMUNITY-BASED SETTINGS**



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**Unitarian Universalist Association
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I. INTRODUCTION

A. WHO SHOULD READ THIS MANUAL?

Congratulations if you are reading this manual! The Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) believes that the internship requirement is one of the more critical formative experiences for those who seek to become fellowshiped Unitarian Universalist ministers and for the congregations that are committed to supporting our ministry. It is very important for all interns, supervisors, and internship committee members to read [this manual and its supplements](#) in their entirety. Everyone has a role to play with guidelines, rules, and policies to follow, and the manual is by far the simplest and most reliable way to become familiar with the expectations of the [Ministerial Fellowship Committee](#) (MFC) regarding internships. Members of a congregation's governing body, seminary field education directors, and those working with an intern in a community-based setting may also find this manual helpful.

Special Note: Given that [MFC rules, policies, and guidelines](#) do change from year to year, the Internship Manual is updated annually. **Effective September 2010, Learning and Service Agreements will no longer require formal approval. However, interns are responsible to complete their L/SA and forward a copy to the Ministerial Credentialing Director for review within two months of the start of the internship.**

B. THE MINISTERIAL CREDENTIALING DIRECTOR

The Ministerial Credentialing Director (MCD) serves the Ministerial Credentialing Office within the Ministries and Faith Development Staff Group at the UUA. The MCD can answer questions; help clarify internship MFC Rules and Policies; help in the planning, selecting, and arranging of an internship; help with designing community-based internships; give guidance through the proposal process for internships needing MFC approval; provide information for interns seeking a site and sites seeking an intern; review Learning and Service Agreements and evaluations; and be available for consultation about any proposed internship as well as any issue that may arise during an internship. The Ministerial Credentialing Director can be contacted at mcodirector@uua.org M-F, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. EST at (617) 948-6402.

C. INTERNSHIP INFORMATION ON THE WEB

In 1997, the [Panel on Theological Education](#) provided the initial funding to help create an Internship Clearinghouse to support the work of the Ministerial Credentialing Director. The Internship Clearinghouse became a valuable resource for interns, supervisors, internship committees, field education directors, congregations, and other institutions hosting internships. The Clearinghouse has evolved to include a web page on www.uua.org. This is where all internship resources are located, including a list of internship site profiles and prospective intern biographies. www.uua.org/programs/ministry/credentialing/internship

This Internship Manual and its two supplements are available to download. The supplements are integral to the main document and are intended to be utilized as a single unit. They are: [Religious Education Opportunities in Parish and Community-Based Internships](#), an overview of what interns are expected to know about religious education; and [A Guide to Music Opportunities and Resources](#), an overview of the role of music in worship and the life of the congregation and practical information for interns. Each includes a valuable resource guide.

II. INTERNSHIP OVERVIEW

Academic learning takes on new meaning when grounded by practical experience. The MFC's philosophy of ministerial formation is based on the integration of theory and practice, commonly understood as critical practice, or praxis. The MFC believes that an internship is central to preparation for the ministry. The best professional training includes an intensive practical experience under a qualified supervisor in a congregation and/or community-based setting.

Although an internship will not make an intern a seasoned minister, it does offer opportunities to develop ministerial skills in a supportive setting and with an experienced supervisor. It provides an environment in which to integrate historical and theological understandings with the practice of ministry—developing skills, self-awareness, confidence, ease in relationships, and a sense of vocation.

A. BASIC REQUIREMENTS FOR INTERNSHIPS

Every aspirant or candidate seeking ministerial fellowship with the Unitarian Universalist Association must complete a supervised internship, or seek a waiver of the internship requirement from the Ministerial Fellowship Committee. Interns are advised to use their internship experience to explore and learn to articulate a comprehensive vision of ministry. The MFC expects that by the end of an internship, the intern will have developed competence across the full range of ministerial skills and a strong sense of their authority and identity as a minister, whatever the area of specialization the intern plans to pursue. The areas of ministerial competence have been defined jointly by the MFC and the UU Minister's Association as Pastoral Work, Prophetic Outreach, Teaching, Practical Arts, and Worship (see Section VII.B for more detailed information.)

The MFC expects that each intern will have at least scheduled an interview with a Regional Sub-Committee on Candidacy prior to commencement of their internship. Those who commence an internship without having arranged an interview with an RSCC assume the risk that the MFC may not recognize the internship to meet the internship requirement.

Some ministers seeking transfer or plural standing with the UUA may be able to have the internship requirement waived by the MFC. Please speak with the Ministerial Credentialing Director.

On rare occasion, an aspirant is denied candidacy status by an RSCC. When this occurs, the aspirant no longer has standing within the ministerial credentialing process and further preparation toward ministerial fellowship, including the completion of an internship, is discouraged.

1. TIME COMMITMENT

An internship is at least nine months, full-time (approximately 40 hours per week) or part-time (at least 20 hours per week) over two congregational years (generally September through June).

2. ELEMENTS OF AN INTERNSHIP

- a. **Internship Supervisor:** The supervisor must be a Unitarian Universalist minister in Final Fellowship, preferably with supervisory training and has been settled in the congregation or community-based setting for at least one year. The internship supervisor meets weekly with the intern.
- b. **Internship Committee:** The committee consists of at least five persons representative of the congregation or community-based setting. This committee meets monthly with the intern.
- c. **Internship Agreement:** Arrangements for an internship are negotiated between the intern and congregation or community-based setting and should be written out in the form of an internship agreement prior to the beginning of an internship.

- d. **Learning and Service Agreement:** The intern, in consultation with their supervisor and the internship committee, will develop a Learning and Service Agreement that ensures broad exposure and experience in all areas of learning required of candidates. The MFC requires every intern to submit the Learning and Service Agreement to the MCD for review no more than two months into the internship. Failure to do so may jeopardize the validity of the internship. Please refer to Learning and Service Agreement at the end of this document.
- e. **Evaluation:** Evaluation by the intern's supervisor, by the internship committee, and by the intern is an ongoing part of the internship process. More formally, the supervisor, the internship committee, and the intern will each evaluate the internship experience midway through the process and at its conclusion.

3. TYPES OF INTERNSHIPS

- a. **Internship in a Unitarian Universalist congregational setting:** A parish internship is located in a UU congregation where the primary focus is learning and practice of ministerial tasks within a congregation. *Interns cannot complete an internship in their home congregation, except under rare circumstances.*
- b. **Internship in a Unitarian Universalist congregational religious education setting:** A religious education internship takes place within a UU congregation. A minister with a strong background in religious education typically supervises the intern. The internship should place emphasis on the congregation's lifespan religious education program, with the intern having significant responsibility in all aspects of the program. *Interns cannot complete an internship in their home congregation, except under rare circumstances.*
- c. **Internship in a community-based setting:** A community internship takes place at an institution, agency, organization, or other non-congregational setting. A Clinical Pastoral Education residency may be used as an internship, as long as it does not include the initial required unit of CPE. In many cases, the intern will need to participate in the development or creation of an internship site in their field of interest. (See Section V.A.2 regarding committee makeup.)

All interns are required to be involved in a Unitarian Universalist congregation. The MFC expects all candidates to be familiar with UU polity and "to be able to demonstrate an understanding of and experience with UU congregational life based on at least two years' active involvement" (MFC Rule 11).

In addition, some of the areas of competence as defined by the MFC (see Section VII.B) require the intern's involvement in a congregation. Spending some time in the congregational setting as a ministerial leader can add breadth and depth to the aspiring minister's self-identity and developing ministerial presence.

The extent of a community-based intern's relationship with a congregation and the nature of that relationship will depend upon the opportunities the congregation presents and upon the intern's time commitments. In situations in which there is no congregation accessible to the intern, or in which it is not possible to create a formal relationship, community-based interns should include an opportunity to work with a congregation at some point in their ministerial training and formation—either through a part-time field education placement, a summer ministry position, or other equivalent experience. This experience should be noted in the Learning and Service Agreement.

- d. **Hybrid internship:** An arrangement in which an intern divides their time between a UU congregation and a community-based setting. In some cases, the intern works at both sites concurrently, but in others, the two components are completed separately.
- e. **Field education as an internship:** Field education is commonly a part-time academic placement that a student completes as part of a Master of Divinity degree program. *Field education sites may be upgraded to meet the UUA internship requirement but this must occur before the field*

placement begins. Please contact the MCD for further information. The MFC will accept two academic years of field education, at a minimum of 20 hours per week, in the same congregation with the same supervising minister to meet the internship requirement.

- f. **Supervised ministry:** Occasionally, aspirants and candidates will commence the ministerial fellowship process after having been called to serve a UU congregation as a non-fellowshipped minister. In this circumstance, it may be possible for the intern to meet the internship requirement in their current place of employment. Please speak with the Ministerial Credentialing Director.

4. INTERNSHIPS REQUIRING ADVANCE MFC APPROVAL

Some community-based and hybrid internships will require advance approval from the MFC. There are also proposed internships which *may* need MFC approval, such as one that is developed from an aspirant's or candidate's existing position within in a community setting. If an internship will be in any way unconventional, interns are strongly advised to consult with the MCD. *It is the intern who is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the internship will be acceptable to the MFC.*

Upon contacting the MCD, the prospective intern may be asked to prepare a proposal that outlines the internship parameters. A proposal needs to include: a) a description of the setting; b) the name and qualifications of the supervisor; c) the scope of responsibilities; d) the time frame; e) the proposed makeup of the internship committee; and f) a paragraph or two on how this internship is understood as a ministry and how it will help prepare the intern for the kind of ministry they intend to pursue. The MCD may also request a rough draft of their Learning and Service Agreement.

Once a proposal is submitted, the [Ministerial Credentialing Director](#) will determine what further steps, if any, need to be taken. In some cases, proposals can be approved "as is" or with specific recommended changes. In other cases, the proposal will need to be submitted to the Candidacy Working Group of the MFC, which meets in September, December, and March/April, and which will either approve, modify, or reject the proposal.

Two criteria which the MFC always evaluates very carefully are: 1) Does the internship provide for adequate supervision? and, 2) Are there adequate opportunities for theological reflection and the development of a ministerial identity?

B. MAKING INTERNSHIP ARRANGEMENTS

1. APPLICATION PROCEDURES

- a. **Congregational and community-based internship sites:** The MFC hopes that available internship sites will be listed on the Internship Clearinghouse website [Internships web page](#). Application materials requested might include any or all of the following: biographical information; including education and professional background; a statement of ministerial aspirations; references; sample sermons; and academic transcripts. The supervisor and the internship committee often interview the leading candidates for the internship position. Once an offer has been made and accepted, please notify the Ministerial Credentialing Office and the other applicants as soon as possible.
- b. **Prospective interns:** Filling out a prospective intern profile on the Internship Clearinghouse website [Internships web page](#) allows internship sites to know more about prospective interns and their preferences. Once a position has been accepted, as a professional courtesy, the intern should immediately contact all other sites at which their application is pending.

2. TIMELINE

Prospective interns and sites generally begin planning for an internship more than a year prior to the expected start date. The chart below outlines a suggested timeline with an assumed starting date of September 1.

SITES	INTERNS
24 MONTHS AHEAD	
Begin discussion between minister, director, and board	
Educate members about becoming an internship site	
Make formal commitment to becoming a teaching site	
18 MONTHS AHEAD	
Approve budget	Begin to explore options for an internship
Form internship committee	Create profile with the Internship Clearinghouse
12 MONTHS AHEAD (SEPTEMBER – OCTOBER)	
Decide on application, interviewing, and final selection procedures	Begin checking Internships web page for available congregations and community sites
Determine roles of minister & committee in final selection of intern	Consult with MCD as needed
Create site profile on Internships web page	Begin assembling application materials
If qualified, apply for Internship Stipend Grant	
10 MONTHS AHEAD (NOVEMBER)	
Request password from MCD; contact prospective interns of interest	Contact sites in which you are interested
Receive and review applications; check references	Decide which sites to apply to; complete applications and submit
Select interviewees; begin interviewing	Begin interviewing
8 MONTHS AHEAD (JANUARY)	
Select intern for position and contact intern with offer	
7 MONTHS AHEAD (FEBRUARY)	
Once intern has accepted position, apprise other candidates of decision	Accept position and inform other sites you applied to
Contact MCD with name of intern	Contact MCD with name of site
4-5 MONTHS AHEAD (APRIL – MAY)	
Complete Internship Agreement and sign	Complete Internship Agreement and sign
MONTH 1 (SEPTEMBER)	
Begin internship!	Begin internship!
MONTHS 1-2 (SEPTEMBER – OCTOBER)	
Work with intern to develop Learning and Service Agreement .	Develop Learning and Service Agreement , submit to MCD for approval, and have it signed by all parties

C. BECOMING AN INTERNSHIP SITE

A congregation or community-based setting considering becoming an internship site should first determine if they are ready to enter into a partnership with an intern and the UUA (and sometimes a theological school) to provide a meaningful internship experience. In consideration of the time and commitment required to provide a quality internship, a congregation or community-based setting should be deliberate in the decision making. Interns are looking for sites that will empower them to function in roles of ministry appropriate to their goals, objectives and needs.

The congregation or community-based site is expected to give the intern direct ministerial responsibilities, almost as if they were an assistant minister or chaplain, and engage the intern in a wide range of ministerial duties, including worship, religious education, pastoral care and counseling, programming, institutional management and finance, program development, and community and social action. A good teaching site:

- is dedicated to excellence in ministry
- perceives the formation of ministerial interns as part of its mission
- gives an intern the opportunity to make a significant contribution
- enables an intern to pursue learning goals in a supportive atmosphere
- provides opportunities for a variety of professional experiences
- understands the value of Unitarian Universalism in the larger community

1. FINANCES

The UUA expects that a congregation or a community-based setting will provide a full-time intern with a stipend adequate to cover living expenses for housing, food, transportation, incidentals, and at least some professional expenses.

As of September 2006, for congregations of less than 250 members, the UUA recommends a minimum stipend of \$1300 per month for a full-time internship. For congregations of 250 to 499 members, \$1500 per month; for congregations of 500 to 749 members, \$1600 per month; and for congregations with 750+ members, \$1750 per month. Minimum amounts for part-time internships should be pro-rated. Although the UUA does not raise the recommended minimum stipend amounts every year, the UUA advises congregations to include cost-of-living adjustments. The UUA does not establish recommended stipends for interns in community-based settings.

2. INTERNSHIP STIPEND GRANTS PROGRAM

The Ministerial Credentialing Office oversees an internship stipend grants program to develop new internship sites. The program provides financial support to congregations offering either full or part-time parish or hybrid internships. This is always a competitive program, so funding cannot be guaranteed. Guidelines and an application form can be downloaded directly from the Internship Clearinghouse [Internships web page](#).

III. INTERNSHIP GUIDELINES

A. ISSUES TO CONSIDER

1. FULL-TIME OR PART-TIME INTERNSHIP?

Prospective interns are encouraged to consider the following questions:

Will a full-time internship be more valuable in realizing future goals than dividing energies between school and an internship over two academic years?

What impact will each option have upon an intern's family life and finances?

Which will offer an experience closest to professional goals in terms of workload, pacing, prioritizing, etc.? For example, a full-time internship is generally considered better preparation for full-time ministry.

2. WHEN SHOULD AN INTERNSHIP BE COMPLETED?

The MFC encourages students to complete an internship before graduation. Undertaking an internship before the last year or last semester of academic preparation is often ideal. As interns, they will be able to test the extent to which academic experience has prepared them for professional ministry, as well as to affirm areas of strength and reveal areas of needed growth. The internship can then provide direction for the last year in theological school. It is preferable to have completed, or minimally have the mid-term internship evaluation available, before meeting with the MFC.

3. CHOOSING THE INTERNSHIP SETTING

The Internships web page's profile list for teaching sites, the MCD, field education advisors, and ministers are all excellent resources for information about teaching sites.

- **General considerations:** A site that is in a different geographic locale and type of community (urban, suburban, or rural; ethnically, racially and/or economically diverse) from what the intern is familiar with enhances the wealth of learning opportunities. Also consider size, health, and theological diversity of the setting.
- **Finances:** Prospective interns are strongly encouraged to calculate carefully to determine the financial feasibility of the internship and whether it will involve going into debt (or incurring more debt) and to be aware that negotiating financial terms should take place prior to signing any agreement to accept an internship.
- **Planning ahead:** Interns are encouraged explore internship sites 12 - 18 months in advance. It is permissible for the intern to speak with former interns to ascertain if the internship was a positive learning environment.
- **Consideration of alternative sites:** A person may have criteria, such as proximity to home, not met by any of the sites listed. In such cases, it is appropriate to contact the minister(s) or supervisor(s) serving sites of interest about internship possibilities.

4. INTERVIEWS

Interviews are usually conducted by the supervising minister, the internship committee, or both. Interns can typically expect a separate interview with the prospective supervisor.

The MFC discourages interviewers from requesting copies of an intern's career assessment or CPE final evaluation as part of the interview process. The information in these documents is confidential, often includes information about other persons, and is not prepared for internship committees. Internship committees can and should ask the intern to report on their identified areas of strength and potential growth. Internship committees are also encouraged to ask candidates about any specific recommendations from their RSCC interviews that pertain to the internship. The supervisor might request to see the RSCC letter and discuss its contents in a one-on-one setting.

Interviews typically cover general information about the congregation or community-based site, its size, staff, members or persons served, vision and mission statements, and the community. The interviewers will want to know about the intern's background, theological understandings, goals for ministry, and what the intern will bring to the prospective partnership. Discussion should also cover expectations, supervision, and contractual issues. It is important to reach clear understandings about these areas before the internship begins. Interns are encouraged to speak with former interns for their perspectives. Usually, the minister or internship committee chair will extend an offer to the chosen candidate. The candidate is expected to communicate their decision to the teaching site within a reasonable time frame.

B. GETTING STARTED

The supervisor and the internship committee share the tasks of preparing for and welcoming an intern. In a congregational setting, the intern needs to be thoughtfully and intentionally introduced to the staff, the lay leadership, and the rest of the congregation. In a community-based setting, a planned welcome and orientation with introductions to the staff and other appropriate persons work well.

To help get oriented and settled in the new internship, many interns study the site's membership directory and other materials, attend board and committee meetings, and participate in programs and events whenever possible. Community-based interns become better acquainted with the constituency and staff by talking with them about their experiences there and the community they serve.

C. WHERE TO GO FOR HELP

Issues of one sort or another are part of any internship in which an intern is growing and being challenged. Most issues can be addressed effectively with the supervisor, the internship committee, or a trusted ministerial mentor or adviser. If there is uncertainty about where to turn, consult first with the MCD, who is available to interns, supervisors, and internship committee chairs for counsel.

IV. SUPERVISION

The late UU minister Rev. Dr. Peter S. Raible once noted that “experience teaches best when it is reflected upon, brought to greater consciousness, and looked at holistically in terms of feelings, behavior, and one's conceptual framework.” In supervision, a teacher and a learner covenant together to reflect critically on their ministry as a way to grow in self-awareness, professional competence, theological understanding, and religious commitment. The MFC considers the supervisory dimension of the internship to be vital for ministerial formation. The MFC also stipulates that the supervisor be working on-site with the intern, except “in situations where on-site supervision is impossible” (Policies of the MFC, Policy 5a). Offsite supervision offers far less time for the supervisor to observe and work with the intern and so carries with it the risk that the intern's needs for growth and development will not be adequately met. Weekly supervisory meetings of one to two hours, focused on the intern's experiences and without other agendas, are a required component of any internship. Please consult with the MCD regarding any proposed internship involving off-site supervision.

A. WHAT IS IMPORTANT ABOUT SUPERVISION?

Supervision is a dynamic process from which professional growth emerges. A supervised internship lets the intern experience practical ministry in a supportive context with regular theological and pastoral reflection on the intern's ministry. Supervisory sessions will help interns gain perspective on the experiences of the past week, clarify what was unclear or unstated, explore the relationship between insights gained in praxis and theological education, and identify areas of needed growth.

B. WHO CAN SUPERVISE?

Any UU minister in Final Fellowship interested in supervising an intern may do so. The MFC prefers that the minister be in their present position for at least one year. In congregations with two or more ministers, each minister may provide supervision in their area(s) of primary focus. Interns may plan to meet with each supervisor on alternate weeks with an occasional joint conference, or with one minister during the first half of the internship and another during the second half.

In the case of community-based internships, ideally, the supervisor will be a UU minister, but can be an ordained clergyperson in another tradition. Note: When a CPE residency is used to meet the internship requirement, the MFC prefers that the supervisor not be the same as the supervisor for the candidate's required unit of CPE.

C. SUPERVISORY TRAINING

The MFC does not require supervisory training, although it is highly recommended. The field education departments of many theological schools have resources for training as do some educational or professional organizations. Some UUMA chapters may sometimes offer supervisory training, as does the UUA on occasion.

D. SUPERVISORY SESSIONS

In weekly conferences, the supervisor and the intern reflect together on ministry, examining the feelings, needs, concerns, and satisfactions of the past week. Both can raise issues, evaluate experiences, and explore possible next steps. In a good supervisor-intern relationship, mutual trust and respect will develop, confidentiality will be honored, and both minister and intern will be receptive to new understandings and ideas shared by the other. Interns need to know that it is all right, even desirable, to expose their vulnerabilities, inexperience, weaknesses, areas of discomfort, emotional triggers, doubt, and difficulties. They need candid feedback from the supervisor that is given in a supportive and constructive manner. Supervisory feedback serves as the catalyst for the intern's professional, personal, and theological growth.

Interns are encouraged to keep a daily journal of experiences from which selected data can be drawn for the reflection. Brief written descriptions of one or two experiences of the past week (with reflections on those experiences) can form the basis of many supervisory sessions.

Reflections may also focus on events, struggles, successes, or issues that arise. The sources of the reflections may come from an experience in leadership, observations of others, participation in an event or program, inner struggles with UU heritage and/or theology, or with what it means to be a professional leader.

Probing and raising theological, ethical, and historical implications are essential roles of the UU internship supervisor. Interns should be encouraged to learn to articulate their personal theology and to recognize that in a living faith, one's theology is constantly being challenged, refined, and reformed. If, by the end of the internship, the intern is able to seek the meaning of events and experiences in the larger context of ministry and to reflect theologically on the practice of ministry, then the primary goal of supervision has been achieved.

V. THE INTERNSHIP COMMITTEE

The internship committee plays a critical role in a successful internship. Its primary goal is to help the intern to develop and hone the personal and professional skills of ministry. The committee should be a caring, resourceful liaison with the congregation or community-based setting and a group to which the intern can turn for information and guidance. It is important to be intentional about membership selection, to be clear about the purpose of the committee, and to anticipate how the committee will build relationships with the intern and the site.

A. QUALITIES FOR INTERN COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Members of the internship committee are chosen for the particular life experiences and qualities they bring to the committee. They should be active members who are knowledgeable about the site's mission, worship life, religious education programs, and operation. Personal qualities that contribute to an effective committee include a capacity for objective thinking, the ability to maintain confidentiality, sound judgment, sensitivity to the intern's individuality, and the skills to work constructively with others toward consensus while allowing for differences of opinion. These qualities, along with leadership experience, are especially important in the chair of the committee. The chair or another member should have supervisory experience, preferably in a helping profession such as social work, health care, teaching, or leadership development. Members should also be representative of the site in age, gender, attitudes, theological spectrum, involvement, and length of membership.

1. IN A RELIGIOUS EDUCATION INTERNSHIP

Members should include people experienced with various facets of religious education programming for children and adults and/or those involved in other areas of congregational life.

2. IN A COMMUNITY-BASED INTERNSHIP

The intern may need to help form the internship committee. It must include at least two UU's, one of whom should be a layperson. If the internship supervisor is *not* a UU minister in Final Fellowship, then another member of the committee *must* be a UU minister in Final Fellowship. The minister often chairs the committee, but is not required to do so. Members should have an interest in the intern's goals as well as knowledge and expertise about the particular skills and qualities which need to be developed in the internship. If the intern is doing congregational work concurrently, one or more members from the congregation should be included on the committee if possible.

B. SELECTION OF INTERNSHIP COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Depending upon the setting, the intern committee might be appointed by the governing body or the minister or nominated and elected by the congregation, often with recommendations from the minister. The intern may be invited to select one or two members of their committee. *The intern's supervisor is not a member of the intern committee*, but often participates in the first meeting in order to help clarify the distinctions between the supervisor's and committee's roles and to review mutual expectations and schedules. The supervisor and intern committee may want to meet again at the middle and end of the internship.

The number of intern committee members **must** be at least five. Internship sites are urged to have in place an ongoing committee whose members have limited, staggered terms. There also should be a plan for replacing members who leave the committee before their terms have been completed.

C. FUNCTION, ROLE, AND TASKS OF THE COMMITTEE

The internship committee's primary function is to contribute to the ministerial formation of the intern. Its members should advise, support, listen, give feedback, and evaluate the intern in their personal and professional development as a minister. The committee's role is one of offering guidance to the intern (as distinct from "fixing" them). It is the intern's responsibility to choose how to respond to the committee's guidance.

The two most concrete tasks of the committee are its participation in monthly meetings with the intern and its representation at functions where the intern has a leadership role. The committee will also want to learn through conversation with the intern how the intern seems to be handling the less visible functions of ministry such as counseling, administration, and staff relationships.

A third but equally important task for internship committees is to encourage interns to engage in thoughtful reflection on how their theology informs their ministry and vice versa.

1. BEFORE THE INTERN HAS BEEN SELECTED

In many settings, the internship committee is responsible for reviewing applications, interviewing prospective interns, and presenting its choice to the governing board. The committee can help the congregation form and strengthen its identity as an internship site or, for a community-based internship that involves work in a congregation, help the congregation begin to imagine what a relationship with the community site might mean. Publishing articles in the newsletter, advocating for an adequate internship stipend, listing the internship on the [Internships web page](#), and sending out flyers to theological schools are all things the committee can do to prepare for an internship.

2. WHEN THE INTERN IS BEING SELECTED

Before the interviewing process begins, internship committees often send a packet of information about the congregation and the community to each applicant. The packet might include: letters from the chair of the internship committee and head of the governing board; a profile and history of the teaching site; a newsletter and a member directory; a budget and annual report; a description of programs and activities; a local newspaper; and maps and information about the community. Some committees also provide brief biographical sketches of the committee's members and include a letter from each committee member describing their religious journey, the role of the congregation or community setting in their lives, and why they've chosen to participate on the internship committee.

3. WHEN THE INTERN HAS BEEN SELECTED

The committee will often send out a letter of welcome from the governing board and internship committee once the intern selection has been confirmed. The intern will be counting on the committee to be looking out for their best interests and for finalizing arrival plans. The internship committee should do what it can to see that the intern has an adequate office space. An office should include a desk and chair, extra seating, a computer, and a phone. It should be quiet and private so the intern can work, study, and meet with people. The committee should also arrange for a mail slot and to have the intern's name included in staff listings, the newsletter, orders of service, and other appropriate places. If the intern will be relocating for the internship, the committee can help with moving plans and finding housing.

4. WHEN THE INTERN ARRIVES

Many internship committees arrange opportunities for the committee members to meet individually with the intern for a meal, coffee, or just a chat so that they can each get acquainted with the intern. The committee can help introduce the intern through newsletters and announcements; by arranging a brief ceremony of introduction at a worship service that includes the intern, the minister(s), and the committee; and by organizing a social hour reception, dinner, or other event which would be attended by the intern, their family, members of the internship committee, and the minister(s). Being intentional about introducing the intern can be particularly important in the case of community-based interns, both in the community setting (especially if this is its first intern) and in the congregation where they will be spending a portion of their time.

5. WHILE THE INTERNSHIP IS UNDERWAY

During the first month, the internship committee chair should set a monthly meeting time that is agreeable to everyone. At the first meeting, understandings and expectations of the intern/internship committee relationship should be clarified. It is important for committee members to become familiar with the intern's qualities and experiences early on and to work with the intern to develop the Learning and Service Agreement (LSA). Topics to discuss during the first couple of meetings include: the meaning of the word "ministry;" how the congregation or institution lives its faith and performs its mission; and the possible settings in which the committee will be able to observe the intern. The intern needs the active observation and participation of internship committee members in as many venues as possible, which may include organizing and implementing a program, leadership training, chairing committees, teaching, leading worship, preaching, and conducting rites of passage. Some committees have each member focus on a particular area of learning over the course of the internship.

a. Considerations for community-based internships: When an intern is engaging in a community-based internship, it is desirable to have at least one committee member commit to observing the intern in action. If no committee members are able to do so, they will need to base much of their feedback on the intern's reports, reflections, and self-critique. Particular questions to explore with community-based interns might include: Why is what the intern is doing a form of ministry? What are the prophetic, pastoral, preaching, worship, and teaching aspects of this work? How does it reflect UU Principles and Purposes? What are the theological foundations of this internship? How does the intern develop relationships with UU and interfaith colleagues? Discussing such questions can help the committee and the intern integrate the practice of ministry with its theological meaning and relevance.

Another important area to explore is how the community-based intern's congregational participation informs their role in the community setting, and vice versa. Interns in a community setting sometimes find that opportunities to develop particular competencies are limited. In such cases, internship committees may be able to fill the gaps. For example, to compensate for the lack of opportunity to prepare and deliver sermons, an intern might deliver a short sermon to the committee at each monthly meeting.

- b. Offering feedback:** The paramount responsibility of the internship committee is to give candid, evaluative feedback to the intern in a supportive manner. Feedback needs to be ongoing and timely. From the beginning of the internship, committees need to be intentional and disciplined in giving the intern thoughtful, constructive, and supportive feedback, addressing both strengths and areas of needed growth. This is not always easy, especially when there are concerns. It may be helpful to bear in mind that withholding input about areas of weakness is likely to curtail the intern's professional growth during the internship.

Feedback goes both ways. Interns are encouraged to raise issues that puzzle or trouble them. The internship committee is a valuable resource. Interns may want to ask committee members for their insights into the institution's mission, vision, and long-range goals, and to probe the idiosyncrasies of its administration, such as budgeting, fundraising, and membership.

Keeping in mind that most interns feel relatively vulnerable, consider prefacing any criticisms or concerns with one or two specific positive observations. Also consider using "I" or "we" language: "I felt confused when..." or "Several of us on the committee were a little concerned about..." These statements are more likely to be "heard" than statements that begin with, "You." "Noticing" statements can also be effective: "Jose and I noticed that..." And a member might want to begin by soliciting the intern's own observations: "How did you feel/what were your thoughts and reactions when...?"

Committees often have difficulty when they have significant doubts about an intern's capacity for ministry. Members will want to consider in advance how to confront such a situation in an effective manner, especially when the intern may be feeling a sense of frustration and failure. It is important to confront concerns when they arise rather than waiting until the end of the internship. If the committee is unsure how to best handle a situation, the MCD is available for consultation.

- c. Receiving feedback:** It is not uncommon for a member of the congregation or someone at a community site to want to give feedback about the intern through a committee member. Feedback from members is welcomed. Often, however, the member will not want their name included with the feedback. Committee members need to make it clear that anonymous feedback cannot be accepted. They should also emphasize that their feedback *is* valuable but that it needs to either have a name attached or to be given directly to the intern. A member of the committee should offer to accompany them if they are reluctant to follow through. Although it may seem like a good idea initially, it is also best to stay away from soliciting anonymous feedback about the intern's performance. Sharing such feedback with the intern is likely to result in upset and frustration, for two reasons. One, there is no context (nothing about the person giving the feedback is known, including what led to the comments) and two, resolution is impossible (the intern will never have an opportunity to reach a common understanding with the person who gave it).

If a conflict or misunderstanding develops between the intern and another person, it may be appropriate for the committee to encourage the intern to speak directly with the other person in order to reach resolution. Occasionally, a conflict develops between the intern and the intern supervisor. *Interns in candidate status are accountable to the [UUMA Code of Professional Practice](#) regarding collegial relationships, which requires that issues be taken directly to the supervisor, rather than discussed with the intern committee.*

6. WHEN THE INTERNSHIP ENDS

The successful completion of the internship is cause for celebration for both the intern and the site. The committee can help recognize and thank the congregation or community-based site for its willingness to host an intern. Having a clear and finite end to the internship is a significant yet sometimes overlooked aspect of the intern's experience. In part because interns need to encounter the emotions associated with saying good-bye, it is customary for the intern not to maintain any

contact with members of the teaching site for at least a year. Ministry is fundamentally about service to a congregation or a community-based entity. When an intern has the opportunity to cope successfully with the grief that is a part of leaving, it enables them to gain that understanding of ministry as service. The other reason for making a clean break is that any incoming intern deserves to be welcomed by a congregation or constituency that is not still engaged in a relationship with a former intern, along with all the feelings and loyalties that might accompany that relationship.

VI. THE INTERNSHIP AGREEMENT

The Internship Agreement is a covenantal agreement between intern and teaching site, setting forth each party's full intentions. The intern agrees to come to the site prepared to learn and share with the congregation or constituents and to immerse themselves in the work of ministry at the teaching site. In addition to the practical things such as a stipend and professional expenses, the teaching site also agrees to provide a caring and hospitable environment.

Often there is some flexibility in the terms of the agreement. Typically, the supervisor and the intern negotiate the particulars of stipend, benefits, hours, transportation, and so on. When terms have been agreed upon, the Internship Agreement is signed. Experience has shown that a face-to-face meeting to finalize the intern agreement before, or as soon as possible after the intern has accepted the position, can help avoid misunderstandings. Items which may be negotiated include:

- **Hours:** This includes the number of hours to be worked per week and arrangements for time off.
- **Housing:** Depending on the circumstances, the internship site may provide housing or assist in finding housing. If housing is not provided, the stipend should cover rent and utilities. Interns should be wary of housing arrangements that do not offer sufficient privacy. On occasion, congregations offer to house the intern in an apartment owned by a member of the congregation or to arrange boarding with parishioners in a private home. Because of the complexities of these kinds of arrangements, they are best avoided if at all possible.
- **Stipend:** An intern deserves fair **compensation**, an amount that will allow the intern to live in the community without going into debt. A stipend should include food, living, and transportation expenses.
- **Health Insurance and Other Benefits:** If the intern will not be covered during the internship by a health-care provider or the school's student health-insurance plan, can short-term health insurance be provided by the internship site? Additional benefits to consider are professionally related expenses, particularly fees and travel costs for denominational events that the intern is expected to attend.
- **Taxes:** The United States and Canadian governments view stipends as taxable income. In the US, Federal and state income taxes, along with Social Security, are withheld by employers and paid directly to the IRS. Unless ordained, interns are subject to the same tax policies as non-ordained staff. The congregation is thus responsible for paying the employer's portion of FICA (Social Security), which equals 7.65% of the internship stipend, and must withhold an additional 7.65% from the stipend for the intern's portion of FICA. The congregation is also required to withhold income taxes from the intern's stipend and to report wages to the IRS on form W2. This applies whether the intern works full-time or part-time and for one year or two. Interns in a community-based setting are encouraged to contact the UUA [Office of Church Staff Finances](#) for further guidance.
- **Term:** The starting and termination dates must be clear. Mutually agreeable terms for notice of resignation or discharge should also be included.

VII. THE LEARNING AND SERVICE AGREEMENT

One of the intern's first tasks will be to negotiate a Learning and Service Agreement with the supervisor and the intern committee. This document establishes the goals, objectives, responsibilities, tasks, resources, and time commitments of the internship and will be useful for the midpoint and final internship evaluations. The first draft is negotiated between the intern and the supervisor followed by input with the internship committee. The final draft must be sent to the MCD for review, preferably via e-mail, no later than two months after the internship has begun. LSA's which meet the MFC's requirements will receive a letter of receipt from the MCD, often with helpful feedback. Once any changes have been incorporated, all parties—intern, supervisor, and committee—need to sign the agreement. The LSA should be sent to the MCO and it will become part of the intern's MFC packet. The site's governing board should be made aware of relevant LSA plans, such as participation in worship services, board and committee meetings, activities, and any new initiatives.

A. PREPARING A LEARNING AND SERVICE AGREEMENT

The first step in creating an LSA is to have the intern clarify the overall goal or goals for the internship, with two or three specific learning objectives derived from the each goal. The goals are developed based on the intern's specific needs for academic, UU, and professional learning and growth. If the RSCC has made any recommendations concerning the internship or areas of growth which could be addressed in the internship, it is advisable to incorporate those recommendations into the goals for the internship. The internship supervisor helps the intern match internship goals and learning needs with the opportunities and resources that the congregation or community-based setting offers. The intern then prepares a written description of concrete experiences, responsibilities, tasks, and resources which will help them to achieve these goals and objectives. The LSA is not a final, unalterable document. Rather, it is a statement of intention, agreed to by all parties so that each has a clear understanding of the goals and how the intern intends to achieve those goals. Formulating the agreement will help the intern focus on what they most need to experience and learn during the internship. It will not prevent the intern from taking advantage of opportunities for learning as they arise. Specific tasks, ministerial competence areas, objectives, and goals can always be revised along the way if necessary.

B. AREAS OF ACADEMIC, UU, AND PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE

The MFC expects all candidates, regardless of their setting, to be able to demonstrate their abilities in the full range of ministerial competencies. These five areas of competence are defined jointly by the MFC and the UUMA. All interns are expected to have professional knowledge and basic competence in each of these areas. Reflecting honestly upon the required competencies, perhaps in a supervisory session, can help the intern to assess areas of strength as well as areas of inexperience or lack of skill. This assessment process clarifies the intern's needs, which are then translated fairly easily into appropriate tasks within each area of competence, all of which should reflect the overarching goals and objectives for the internship. Note that not all of the basic competencies need to be addressed during the internship. Some interns who are pursuing ministry as a second career will bring considerable relevant professional experience and training. If an area of competence will not be addressed during the internship, it is suggested that the intern describe their previous relevant experience within "The Resources I Bring" section of the LSA. The descriptions of the five ministerial competencies which follow are not meant to be exhaustive, nor does the MFC expect that all interns will incorporate every task into an LSA.

Pastoral Work: direct service to persons, families, or groups within a congregation or community-based setting. This work includes:

- Counseling with regard to life issues, relationships, and spiritual growth. The minister needs to be cognizant of her/his abilities and limitations.
- Small group facilitation and leadership.
- Care-giving to individuals and groups.
- Tending to the institution's spirit.

Prophetic Outreach: those aspects of ministry that extend the Unitarian Universalist commitment to justice, peace, democratic process, and interdependence beyond the congregational or community-based setting. This work includes:

- Public witness or the intern’s personal involvement with regard to community or world issues.
- Social advocacy and the intern’s engagement with anti-racism, anti-oppression, and multi-cultural initiatives.
- Promotion of institutional inclusivity and commitment to Unitarian Universalist values.

Teaching: creating, leading, and facilitating educational programs. This work includes:

- Educational program development.
- Fostering theological thoughtfulness and depth in individuals and the congregation or community-based setting, as appropriate.
- Advancing Unitarian Universalism, its heritage, its practices, and its ideals.

Practical Arts: the nuts and bolts of everyday congregational or institutional life. This work includes:

- Program administration and development.
- Denominational participation.
- Working with governing boards, committees, and volunteers.
- Working with peer and support staff.
- The direct provision of service(s).

Worship: all aspects of worship. This work includes:

- The art of preaching and leading worship.
- Worship service development and leadership for all ages.
- The intern’s personal spiritual life.
- Administering rites of passage (child dedications, coming of age ceremonies, weddings, and memorial and funeral services).

VIII. EVALUATION

Ongoing evaluation and feedback from the supervisor and internship committee are vital to a successful internship. The MFC requires that two formal, written evaluations be completed during the internship: a midterm, which should be done approximately half-way through the internship, and a final, which should be finished a few weeks before the internship ends. Using the form provided on the following pages, the intern, the supervisor, and the committee as a whole should each complete a copy of the form by the agreed-upon date. It is expected that the three final evaluations will be sent to the UUA for inclusion in the intern’s MFC packet. Note that the final section, “Intern Self-Evaluation,” is to be completed by the intern in addition to the rest of the evaluation.

In the case of a CPE residency, the supervisor’s CPE evaluation form is acceptable. The evaluations are then shared in a supportive and affirming manner during a joint session involving the intern, committee, and supervisor. It is essential that evaluators provide candid feedback, even if it is difficult or uncomfortable to do so. The more specific the comments are, the better. There should be no surprises if the intern committee and supervisor have been providing the intern with ongoing feedback. The MCD is available to the intern to discuss the evaluations, if desired.

A. MIDTERM EVALUATION

The evaluation at midpoint will reveal the progress that has been made and any difficulties or persistent areas of weakness to address. It enables the intern to shift course or concentrate on areas in which additional growth is recommended. This is often a good time to review and to modify the Learning and Service Agreement, if changes are needed. Generally, the midterm evaluation is considered an “in-house” document and does not need to be sent to the MCD or MFC. The MFC will request copies of midterm evaluations only when an intern is engaged in an internship at the time of their MFC interview.

B. FINAL EVALUATION

A few weeks before the internship ends, the intern, supervisor, and internship committee will assess the intern's growth in each area of ministry, personal and professional development, and the degree to which the intern has achieved a sense of authority and self-identity as a minister. The Learning and Service Agreement is one standard of measurement to use in assessing the degree to which goals and objectives have been achieved. The supervisor, internship committee, and intern should complete the evaluation forms separately. The evaluations from the supervisor and the committee should be shared with the intern in an open and candid manner. When the evaluation process has been completed, copies of the three separate final evaluations should be sent to the MFC: one from the supervisor, one *composite* from the internship committee, and one from the intern.

C. IF AN MFC APPOINTMENT IS SCHEDULED BEFORE THE MIDTERM EVALUATION

Any time an intern is scheduled to see the MFC before the midterm evaluation can be completed, a letter of self-evaluation will need to be completed and submitted as part of the MFC packet. The intern should include responses to the following:

1. Describe the highlights of the contracting process.
2. Describe a significant encounter with a congregant.
3. How do you see your emerging role as a minister?
4. What setbacks have you experienced in your internship thus far?

INTERNSHIP AGREEMENT

This agreement is between name of teaching site hereinafter referred to as “the Teaching Site,” and name of intern, hereinafter referred to as “the Intern,” and covers the period from start date through end date.

The Teaching Site agrees to offer an internship position focused on its best understanding of ministry, commensurate with the requirements of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee of the Unitarian Universalist Association. Supervision will be provided by the Internship Supervisor Rev. _____, and the Internship Committee. The Teaching Site will offer a stipend of \$ _____ per month. Additional benefits include \$ for professional expenses, moving expenses, health insurance, housing, etc. The Teaching Site shall be responsible for paying the employer’s portion of FICA, which equals 7.65% of the internship stipend, and will withhold an additional 7.65% from the stipend for the Intern’s portion of FICA. The Teaching Site will also withhold the required Federal and state income taxes from the Intern’s stipend. The Teaching Site will provide office space with a desk, computer, and telephone.

The Intern agrees to work a minimum of _____ hours per week, not to exceed _____ hours per week. The Intern will have time off per week and per month free from Internship obligations, as well as vacation time. The Intern will draft the Learning and Service Agreement, mutually agreeable to the Intern, the Supervisor, and the Internship Committee, during the first two month’s of the Internship to explain in detail the Intern’s specific learning goals and responsibilities.

The Teaching Site agrees to provide a welcoming and nurturing environment, which invites the Intern to become a part of the life of the Teaching Site. Both the Teaching Site and the Intern will work to create a bond of mutuality and trust in their relationship.

The Supervisor, Internship Committee, and the Intern will provide evaluations to whatever educational or credentialing bodies that may require them. The Internship Supervisor will provide weekly meetings of one to two hours. The Internship Committee will meet monthly with the intern for support, reflection, and evaluation.

Should there be sound and compelling reason for either party to terminate this agreement before the end of the contract, a minimum of thirty days’ written notice shall be given. In such an event, the stipend will be paid through the end of thirty days’ notice.

Supervisor

Date

Intern Minister

Date

Internship Committee Chair

Date

President, Board of Trustees

Date

Copies to: Teaching Site, Supervisor, Intern, Ministerial Credentialing Director

LEARNING AND SERVICE AGREEMENT

NOTE: Please complete and e-mail as attachment to the MCD for review before adding signatures.

INTERN:

INTERNSHIP COMMITTEE:

(at least 5 members)

Note: community interns, please list each member's association with the type of ministry you are pursuing

ADDRESS (INTERNSHIP):

1.

2.

3.

ADDRESS (PERMANENT):

4.

5.

PHONE:

DATE OF RSCC MEETING:

EMAIL:

TEACHING SITE(S):

SUPERVISOR(S):

Offsite

BEGINNING DATE:

END DATE:

HOURS PER WEEK:

SUPERVISORY SESSIONS:

Stipend: \$

Expenses: \$

\$

CONTEXT:

THE RESOURCES I BRING:

MY SPECIAL INTERESTS:

MY LEARNING NEEDS:

PLAN FOR LEARNING

LEARNING GOAL:

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

<u>AREAS</u>	<u>TASKS</u>
1. Pastoral Care	<input type="text"/>
2. Prophetic Outreach (including Anti-racism, Anti-oppression, and Multiculturalism work)	<input type="text"/>
3. Teaching	<input type="text"/>
4. Practical Arts (including Denominational Participation)	<input type="text"/>
5. Worship	<input type="text"/>

6. Self Care

7. Spiritual Practice

8. Other:

THIS AGREEMENT WAS SENT TO THE MINISTERIAL CREDENTIALING DIRECTOR ON:

DATE: _____

THIS AGREEMENT ACCEPTED BY: _____ DATE: _____

INTERN: _____

SUPERVISOR: _____

INTERNSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIR: _____

Name of Intern: _____

INTERNSHIP EVALUATION

CIRCLE ONE: This is a **MIDTERM FINAL** evaluation.

Send all Final evaluations to: Ministerial Fellowship Committee
c/o Ministerial Credentialing Office
Unitarian Universalist Association
25 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02108

Supervisor, internship committee, and intern each complete a separate evaluation. This evaluation completed by:

Supervisor: _____
Name

Intern: _____
Name

Internship Committee: _____ (Submit one form)
Number participating

NAME(S) OF TEACHING SITE(S) _____

ADDRESS: _____

DATES OF INTERNSHIP: From: _____ To: _____

HOURS WORKED: Full-time ___ Part-time ___ Hours per week _____

Is this internship administered through intern's theological school? _____

For credit? ___ Non-credit? ___

The Ministerial Fellowship Committee expects all internship evaluations to be shared and discussed with intern, supervisor, and internship committee. This signature certifies that this evaluation has been shared:

Name of Evaluator _____

Signature _____

Position/Title _____

Date Shared _____

Name of Intern: _____

INTERNSHIP EVALUATION

Please type your responses and write in narrative form. This form can be expanded to accommodate your responses. Committees should consolidate their evaluations onto one form.

Please comment on the intern's religious and spiritual development: evidence of spiritual life, ability to reflect theologically, understanding of religious concepts, ability to articulate personal theology, etc.

Please comment on the intern's professional abilities: worship, preaching, teaching, counseling, administration/practical arts, program development, staff and volunteer leadership skills, clarity of expression, group leadership skills, etc.

Please comment on the intern's personal qualities as they relate to ministry: emotional maturity and flexibility, self-knowledge, ability to accept praise and criticism, integrity, ability to deal with setbacks, interpersonal skills, ability to make close relationships, ability to respond appropriately to others' emotions, appropriate professional appearance, etc.

Please comment on the intern's work style: organization, time management, decision-making abilities, initiative, independence, ability to work collegially and cooperatively, ability to work under pressure, etc.

Please comment on the intern's understanding of organizational dynamics: ability to work with boards and committees, ability to motivate volunteers, understanding of role of minister in the congregation or community-based setting, etc.

Please comment on any circumstances that have contributed to the fulfillment or frustration of the goals of this internship:

Please comment on intern's ability to fulfill the requirements of the ministry for which they are preparing: knowledge, understanding, compassion, skills, character, personality, ministerial presence and identity, etc.

Name of Intern: _____

Internship committee only: please demonstrate that you have had the opportunity to view the work of the intern, particularly when the intern is in a community setting.

Additional Comments: please add anything else which you think would help the MFC to have a fuller picture of the intern's experience.

Recommendations for the future: future learning experiences to enhance particular ministerial abilities or qualities.

Name of Intern: _____

Intern Self Evaluation

Intern should complete this section *in addition to* the rest of the evaluation.

Please describe your relationship with your supervisor.

Parish interns: please provide a specific example of how you functioned as an intern with members of your congregation.

Community interns: please describe the connection and services you provided with the supporting congregation.

Interns who used a CPE residency to meet the internship requirement: please provide a specific example of how you functioned as a chaplain with patients in your CPE setting.