

MFC December 2023 Week Agenda

Wednesday, November 29 - Sunday, December 3

Rebekah Savage, Amanda Poppei, Takiyah Amin, Nathalie Edmond, DC Fortune, Shirley Lange, Karen LoBracco, Cindy Malley, Alison ALG McLeod, Beth Norton, Kären Rasmussen, Michael Tino, Lindasusan Ulrich, Maria Cristina Vlassidis Burgoa. UUA Staff: Sarah Lammert, Marta Valentín, Marion Bell. Absent: Paul Langston-Daley

Thursday, November 30

Odyssey - Beth Norton

Welcome and Brief Check-In

Business Meeting:

- Affirming Our Covenant
 - Commitment Covenant
 - Approve September 2023 Minutes
- Motion to approve the September 2023 meeting minutes: Alison moves/Michael 2nd. Approved, unanimous.
- Overview of the Week

Panel Orientation

Caucus Time

Working Groups Meet in afternoon.

Friday, December 1

Odyssey - Beth Norton

Panels Meet for Candidate Interviews

Saturday, December 2

Odyssey – Beth Norton

Panels Meet for Candidate Interviews

Sunday, December 3

Rebekah Savage, Amanda Poppei, Takiyah Amin, Nathalie Edmond, DC Fortune, Shirley Lange, Karen LoBracco, Cindy Malley, Alison ALG McLeod, Beth Norton, Kären Rasmussen, Michael Tino, Lindasusan Ulrich, UUA Staff: Sarah Lammert, Marta Valentín, Marion Bell. Absent: Paul Langston-Daley, Maria Cristina Vlassidis Burgoa

Caucus Time

Memorial Service

Open Meeting

Guests: Meg Richardson, Michelle Favreault, Darrick Jackson, Margaret Rieser

Staff Reports

- ❖ From Sarah: I can't believe this is my last MFC Meeting and last staff report! I recently wrote a report for the UUA's Audit Committee updating them on work we've done in 2023 to improve our ministerial misconduct processes, and when I saw it all listed, it was impressive! Since this is a partnership with you, I thought I'd share this:
 - Recent updates to our policies and procedures include:
 - The UUA has invested in a Shared Covenant process in partnership with the UU professional organizations and credentialing bodies. The result is a draft "shared ethics" statement and a draft process based in restorative principles intended to be a lower-level place to resolve conflicts among religious professionals before they escalate. (Final vote anticipated in 2024 by all professional organizations).
 - The UUA Board of Trustees passed some major changes to the MFC Rules in February 2023. The changes allow greater latitude to the Executive Committee of the MFC to make determinations and balance the process so that it is fairer to all parties.
 - UUA staff (with the help of the UUMA and MFC) created a "Thresholds Document" as an appendix to the MFC Rules and Policies which more clearly defines "Ethical misconduct" and

“Incompetence” and the levels at which different accountability procedures are appropriate.

- The Consultants for Ethics and Safety who investigate misconduct have updated their procedures to current best practices guided in part by what has been learned in the realm of Title 9 investigations. They have been devoting many hours to co-working on documenting and refining these procedures so that they are transparent and consistent in their usage.
- A template was created for individuals who aren't ready to file a formal complaint but who have a serious concern to document those concerns to be added to the credentialed religious professional's record. The minister may make a written response to such letters of concern, and in some cases UUA staff follow up with the ministers to discuss additional training or coaching to address the concerns.

Non-Confidential Agenda:

Schedule Spring 2025 Meeting

Options are: (noting Passover begins April 12 and Easter is April 20)

Wed, March 19-Sun, March 23, 2025 xxx

Wed, March 26-Sun, March 30, 2025 Xx

Wed, April 2-Sun, April 6, 2025 xxX

Marta: no preference; same for Nathalie; same for Beth

Date Confirmed after meeting on December 6, 2023:

Wed, April 2-Sun, April 6, 2025

Candidacy Working Group – No non-confidential items to report.

Fellowship Working Group _ UUA board approved the changes to R&P in November. We are working on rolling out the forms and timeline. Aiming to have the new system in place so people can use the new process for the November 1, 2024, renewal deadline.

Proposed Changes to MFC Policies

These policy modifications were suggested by Marion to make her work easier.

Proposal to delete Policy 11.E: (Redundant - Mentor forms are submitted with renewals)

11. Mentorships

E. The mentor will affirm the mentor/mentee relationship annually by submitting the mentor form directly to the Professional Development Office.

Proposal to update Policy 12.B: (Clarifying the use of 1000 over a year and requirement to use MFC forms for renewal submissions)

12. Renewals of Preliminary Fellowship

B. Applications for Renewal

An application for renewal should be based on approximately 1000 hours of engagement in ministry. Both compensated and uncompensated hours are included in this total, as is time for self-reflection, spiritual practice, and continuing education, among other practices necessary for a healthy ministry. Ministers will not be expected to justify the time spent in ministry to the MFC. **The MFC expects ministers who have completed 1000 hours of engagement over the course of a year to submit an application for renewal. The MFC shall create and make available forms for each part of the application for renewal; applications for renewal must use these forms.** Please note policies elsewhere (14c) that prioritize requests from disabled ministers who need to waive the number of hours of engagement.

Motion (from the FWG) to accept the above FWG Policy recommendations. Approved, unanimous. (MB updated Policies 2/21/24)

Process Working Group –

1. Final Revisions (new reading list) of MFC Requirements Appendix – received from Cindy Malley – **See Addendum C (rollout timeline will be spring 2024)**

Other items noted:

retreat planning for spring 2024 is ongoing.

Would it be helpful for a checklist or rubric for making decisions on ARAOMC competence?

“I’ve done this reading” but nothing is integrated. How to impress on people the importance that the MFC feels more than reading and knowing about it has to be doing. Meg Richardson noted that the last reading list was added into their course list. For us it’s at the forefront of the pedagogy.

What does it say about their understanding of their own power and privileged and engage in the world.

Starting with sermon, who’s the audience, who’s assumed, ablest, binary in terms fo gender, theology (who are influencing their work and naming), energy

embodiment, ways they give examples from childhood, more recent? Who are they accountable to and with? Do they have depth? How can the help resource, and really dismantle white supremacy culture.

Michelle Favreault – Manager of MFN. Expressed gratitude for MFC members coming to see MFN folx in the fall. We are planning a convo with UUMA and folx continued in candidacy. One challenge we have is for supporting folx with UUMA resources (what can be shared and when, re: confidentiality).

Sarah noted those who engage with the MFN seem to do better with the MFC, those who don't engage, don't necessarily thrive. Encourage seminars to encourage their students to engage.

Meg Richardson – echos Michelle's appreciation for the work MFC does. Curious about comment on the rubric. Do you not have a rubric? Do you rank candidates? Amanda: we have the descriptions in the core competency and that's what we look for. As we move forward with new reading list, and competencies function now as the rubric, so we're wondering now what would be helpful going forward. We are looking for competence in all areas. Looking for that in the packet essays coursework, fulfilled and prepared, then in interview we focus on developmental needs of the candidate. Sometimes it's the case there's a gap in packet, or sure if they demonstrated that competency in the packet, so we ask about it. Takiyah: No ranking — wholistic assessment of the candidate's materials and interview. Alison: we take all the packet info and fashion questions on all that material. We've changed the process now and have a five minute break in middle of interview where we can ask ourselves if we're getting to the heart of our questions. We tailor interview so specifically to each candidate; we would do disservice if we ranked them.

Sarah noted Please note that the Fulfilling the Call document which created a huge rubric around each competency was helpful 10 years ago in digging into this, but also showed White Supremacy Culture bias and is now considered a historic document.

Darrick Jackson – co exec dire of UUMA – I oversee coaching program and you've made comments that have brought people to our program. So glad you're sharing that. One thing we're noticing is coaching works if ppl are committed to work itself. If they come because MGFC should come to do it, it won't work. Kathy Sage is helps ppl to work towards personal growth. We're doing very good work in redirecting so they can make the right connection. We get stuck when they can't articulate clearly what the MFC wants them to do. Is there a way to clarify in their letter to help with that coaching process?

Michael -we are trying hard to shift from "you need to work on this" to "here's what we didn't observe that we need to see". Getting much more specific about what was missing.

Amanda – also the staff person in the interview is always open to help a candidate reflect and debrief on the interview.

Darrick – with all changes, the UUMA will help with communication and to amplify the message.

Rebekah – we're working on a one-page brief with all the changes.

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Special Programing

Appreciation for Rev. Dr. Sarah Lammert

Adjourn 6pm ET