

# Religious Education Credentialing Program

Effective May 1, 2009

## Introduction

The Religious Education Credentialing Program is a three-level program for religious education professionals intended to nurture the call to religious education as a profession, provide a comprehensive path for professional development, and articulate and uphold professional standards and guidelines in religious education leadership in order to strengthen religious education and faith development in Unitarian Universalist congregations. Important features of this program are:

- Flexibility and choice in the ways to demonstrate competency and attain credentialing are key components of the program. Modalities in learning and communication are recognized and various expressions in production of the required work are encouraged.
- Candidates at all levels have a core group of required competency areas and will make choices of what supplemental competency areas they wish to address. The number of competency areas more accurately reflects a more realistic program workload.
- Demonstrated mastery of religious education leadership is not solely tied to academic achievement. In fact, the name of Credentialed Religious Educator –Master Level is intended to emphasize that this level of credentialing is reflected in a master religious educator rather than a Master’s Degree. Multiple paths to achieving the Master Level credential have been created.
- Recognition is given to the experience of long term practitioners in the field of religious education. Their Tenure-Track path to credentialing is unique.
- Allowing candidates to show proficiency where they are in the profession is essential. It is important to demonstrate competency in working with the age groups of a candidate’s current or future position. Thus, for example, we have added a competency in Youth and Young Adult Education and the candidates may choose the supplemental competencies which are more pertinent to their work situation.

What follows is a chart of key issues in religious education credentialing and how they are addressed in the Religious Education Credentialing Program, with details at the Master, Credentialed, and Associate levels of credentialing.

For more information on the Religious Education Credentialing Program, please contact:

Paula Welling, Religious Education and Music Leadership Credentialing Assistant  
UUA, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02108  
Voice: 617-948-6418 E-mail: [pwelling@uua.org](mailto:pwelling@uua.org)

## Summary Chart

For specifics of the level requirements and choices please see detail pages

<p><b>Credentialed level Tenure-Track requirements</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stream-lined credentialing process for religious educators with 10 or more years of experience prior to May 1, 2009</li> <li>• Leads to credentialing at the Credentialed Religious Educator level.</li> <li>• Option open until May 1, 2014.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Master level requirements</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Note that a candidate does not need a Master’s degree to be credentialed at the Master level.</li> <li>• 3 graduate courses</li> <li>• 16 competency areas, 10 of which are core, and a choice 3 from a group of 4 and a choice of 3 from a group of 5. A lifespan focus is optional.</li> <li>• Choice of final project form.</li> <li>• Choice of evaluation modes</li> <li>• Reading list</li> <li>• 5 or more years of experience, at least ½ time or 10 years of ¼ time work.</li> <li>• Candidate may use their Credentialed level portfolio material and add to it for the Master level</li> <li>• Evaluation with the RECC, unless the candidate has already met with the RECC and was approved at the level sought at the time</li> </ul>
<p><b>Credentialed level requirements</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 competency areas, 8 of which are core, a choice of 2 from a group of 4, and a choice of 2 from a group of 4. A lifespan focus is optional.</li> <li>• Choice of final project form depending on track</li> <li>• Reading list</li> <li>• 2 years of ½ time work</li> <li>• Candidate may use their Associate Level portfolio material and add to it for the Credentialed level</li> <li>• Evaluation with RECC</li> </ul>
<p><b>Credentialed Associate level requirements</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8 competency areas, 5 of which are core, a choice of 1 from a group of 3, and a choice of 2 from a group of 5. A lifespan focus is optional.</li> <li>• A portfolio which may be demonstrated in a variety of modes and media Reading list</li> <li>• 75 hours of relevant training</li> <li>• 2 years of ¼ time work</li> </ul>

# Master Level: Detail page

## I. Beginning Requirements

- Endorsement Forms: Two (2) endorsement forms are needed. These forms may come from the Board Chair, RE Committee Chair, Minister, Peer, Lay Leader (may include a YAC Chair or other youth leader), District Executive or Program Consultant. One Endorsement form must come from a person in the candidate's congregation (or organization, for a candidate based outside a congregation). These forms must be shared with the applicant.
- Statement of Intent
- Resume outlining academic achievement, relevant job experience and contributions to the UU movement.
- Brief statement describing why you want to enter the program, your professional goals, and aspirations, and your professional journey so far.
- Criminal Offense Disclosure Form

## II. Personal/ Self-assessment

- Statement of pedagogy
- Statement of meaning of faith
- Statement of personal theology
- Complete an RECC Self-Assessment form

## III. Course Work

- Required graduate course in Learning Theory
- Two other required graduate courses from the following list. (Alternatives may be considered as equivalencies with prior approval from the RECC.):
  - UU History
  - Liberal Theologies
  - UU Polity
  - Community-based Organizing
  - Pastoral Care
  - Contextual Education (e.g. Cross-cultural Experience) with prior approval
  - Teaching Methods
  - History & Philosophy of UU RE
  - Organizational Development
  - Small Group Ministry
  - Faith Development
  - Family Ministry

All course work transcripts need to be submitted to the RECC office

## IV. Competencies to Address

Core – all required

- AO/AR/MC
- Philosophy of RE – UU
- Right Relations & Professional Ethics
- UU History & Polity
- Worship
- Human and Faith Development

- Systems Theory
- Conflict Management
- Jewish and Christian Heritages
- Liberal Theologies

#### Supplemental Group A (Choose 3)

- Teaching Methods
- Stewardship
- Family Ministry and Pastoral Care
- Leadership Development & Small Group Ministry

#### Supplemental Group B (Choose 3)

- World Religions
- Sacred Texts
- Social Justice Theory and Practice
- Spiritual life and self-care
- Youth and/or Young Adult

See the Path Options grid in the DOCUMENTATION and MEETING WITH THE RECC sections for how to address the competencies

Your work should be informed by the UUA RECC Continuum of Competencies

A lifespan focus is optional

## V. Reading list

- See Reading list for book choices
- Write a brief annotation for each required and chosen book on:
  - How this reading has informed your understanding of this subject
  - How have you applied, or how do you plan to apply, this understanding to your ministry  
OR your reasons for taking exception to the reading

## VI. Path Options

Path	Degree	Courses	Documentation	Meeting with RECC
1	Master's Degree in any field, or equivalency, transcripts submitted.	Grad course in Learning theories and 2 additional grad courses from the list below, Transcripts submitted.	No portfolio, but reflection paper (see tenure track)	Competency based Evaluative interview OR ½ hr presentation (with proposal for the presentation previously approved by the RECC) plus ½ hr of evaluative questions on presentation and documents submitted. Please see the <b>RECC Interview Protocol &amp; Standards</b> section for more information.
2	Bachelor's Degree in any field, or equivalency, transcripts submitted.	Grad course in Learning theories and 2 additional grad courses from list below, transcripts submitted.	Portfolio, # of competencies, 10 core plus 6.	Competency based Evaluative interview OR ½ hr presentation (with proposal for the presentation previously approved by the RECC) plus ½ hr of evaluative questions on presentation and documents submitted. Please see the <b>RECC Interview Protocol &amp; Standards</b> section for more information.
3	Bachelor's Degree in any field, or equivalency, transcripts submitted.	Grad course in Learning theories and 2 additional grad courses from list below, transcripts submitted.	Submit a generative project (proposal for generative project must be submitted for approval first)	Competency based Evaluative interview OR ½ hr presentation of generative project (with proposal for the presentation previously approved by the RECC) plus ½ hr of evaluative questions on project and documents submitted. Please see the <b>RECC Interview Protocol &amp; Standards</b> section for more information.

<b>Path</b>	<b>Degree</b>	<b>Courses</b>	<b>Documentation</b>	<b>Meeting with RECC</b>
4 Add-on for Credentialed Religious Educator (including tenure track)	See documentation column.	Grad course in Learning theories and 2 additional grad courses from list below, transcripts submitted.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. with Master's degree or equivalency, a reflection paper OR</li> <li>2. with Bachelor's degree or equivalency, a supplemental portfolio OR</li> <li>3. with Bachelor's degree or equivalency, a major generative project (past or present) which must be approved by the RECC</li> </ol> <p>Each of the above would be evaluated by the RECC.</p>	Not required if you have already met with RECC and were credentialed at the level for which you applied.

Portfolios: With each competency you are to include a reflection, learning experiences, leadership experiences and sample work products. Do not exceed three examples per section under each competency.

Portfolios can be structured using alternate methods of demonstration to accommodate learning styles. This requires prior approval from the RECC.

A lifespan focus is optional.

## **VII. Evaluation-** Appear before the RECC—see grid

## **VIII. Completion Requirements:**

- 5 years of ½ or full time work OR 10 years of ¼ time work
- BA or equiv.
- Updated resume, with three (3) graduate courses (as previously specified) documented
- Recommendation forms: Three (3) recommendation forms need to be submitted. These forms may come from the Board Chair, RE Committee Chair, Minister, Peer, Lay Leader (may include a YAC Chair or other youth leader), District Executive or Program Consultant. One Endorsement form must come from a person in the candidate's congregation (or organization, for a candidate based outside a congregation).
- Criminal Background Check from approved vendor.

# Credentialed Level: Detail Page

## I. Beginning requirements:

- Endorsement Forms: Two (2) endorsement forms are needed. These forms may come from the Board Chair, RE Committee Chair, Minister, Peer, Lay Leader (may include a YAC Chair or other youth leader), District Executive or Program Consultant. One Endorsement form must come from a person in the candidate's congregation (or organization, for a candidate based outside a congregation). These forms must be shared with the applicant.
- Statement of Intent
- Resume outlining academic achievement, relevant job experience and contributions to the UU movement.
- Brief statement describing why you want to enter the program, your professional goals, and aspirations, and your professional journey so far
- Criminal Offense Disclosure Form.

## II. Personal/Self-assessment

- Statement of pedagogy
- Statement of meaning of faith
- Statement of personal theology
- Complete an RECC Self-Assessment form

## III. Competencies

Core – all required

- Administration
- AO/AR/MC
- Philosophy of RE – UU
- Human & Faith Development
- Right Relations & Professional Ethics
- UU History & Polity
- Volunteer Management
- Worship

Supplemental Group A (Choose 2)

- Teaching Methods
- Family Ministry and Pastoral Care
- Leadership Development & Small Group Ministry
- Conflict Management
- Youth and/or Young Adult

Supplemental Group B (Choose 2)

- Learning Theories
- History & Philosophy of RE – General
- World Religions
- Jewish & Christian Heritages
- Stewardship

See Path Options grid in the DOCUMENTATION and MEETING WITH THE RECC sections for how to address the competencies

Your work should be informed by the UUA RECC Continuum of Competencies

#### IV. Reading List

- See Reading list for book choices
- Write a brief annotation for each required and chosen book on:
  - How this reading has informed your understanding of this subject
  - How have you applied, or how do you plan to apply, this understanding to your ministry  
OR your reasons for taking exception to the reading

#### V. Path

Path	Degree	Professional Experience	Documentation	Meeting with RECC
1	Bachelor's Degree in any field, or equivalency, transcripts submitted.	2 years of ½ or full time work or 4 years of ¼ time work	Portfolio, # of competencies, 8 core plus 4.	Competency based 45 minute Evaluative interview beginning with a 2 – 3 minute worship component, and a 5 – 7 min presentation on an aspect of the portfolio. Please see the <b>RECC Interview Protocol &amp; Standards</b> section for more information.

Portfolios can be structured using alternate methods of demonstration to accommodate learning styles.

This requires prior approval from the RECC.

A lifespan focus is optional

#### VI. Evaluation- Appear before the RECC—see grid

#### VII. Completion Requirements:

- 2 years of ½ time work or 4 years of ¼ work
- BA or equivalent
- 75 hours of relevant training plus 7 structured learning experiences, documented on an updated resume
- Three (3) recommendation forms need to be submitted. These forms may come from the Board Chair, RE Committee Chair, Minister, Peer, Lay Leader (may include a YAC Chair or other youth leader), District Executive or Program Consultant. One Endorsement form must come from a person in the candidate's congregation (or organization, for a candidate based outside a congregation)
- Criminal Background Check from approved vendor.

# Tenure Track: Detail Page

**Entrance to Tenure Track option open until May 1, 2014.**

Successful completion leads to Credentialed Religious Educator status.

## I. Beginning requirements:

- Ten or more years of Unitarian Universalist D.R.E. experience prior to May 1, 2009.
- Endorsement Forms: Two (2) endorsement forms are needed. These forms may come from the Board Chair, RE Committee Chair, Minister, Peer, Lay Leader (may include a YAC Chair or other youth leader), District Executive or Program Consultant. One Endorsement form must come from a person in the candidate's congregation (or organization, for a candidate based outside a congregation). These forms must be shared with the applicant.
- Statement of Intent
- Resume outlining academic achievement, relevant job experience and contributions to the UU movement.
- Brief statement describing why you want to enter the program, your professional goals, and aspirations, and your professional journey so far
- Criminal Offense Disclosure Form.

## II. Personal/Self-assessment

- Statement of Pedagogy,
- Statement of the meaning of Faith
- Statement of Personal Theology
- Complete an RECC self-assessment form

## III. Workshop Training

Renaissance Recognition, e.g. five modules, or 75 hours of relevant training

## IV. Reading List

- See Reading list for book choices
- Write a brief annotation for each required and chosen book on:
  - How this reading has informed your understanding of this subject
  - How have you applied, or how do you plan to apply, this understanding to your ministry  
OR your reasons for taking exception to the reading

## V. Paper Requirement:

- See **Reflection Paper Standards** section for a description of this requirement

## VI. Path

<b>Path</b>	<b>Degree</b>	<b>Professional Experience</b>	<b>Documentation</b>	<b>Meeting with RECC</b>
Tenure Track to Credentialed Level	None	10 years prior to May 1, 2009	Reflection paper – 3500 to 5000 words	45 minute Evaluative interview beginning with a 2 – 3 minute worship component, and a 5 – 7 min presentation and questions will relate to the reflection paper and other documents submitted. Please see the <b>RECC Interview Protocol &amp; Standards</b> section for more information.

## VII. Evaluation – Appear before the RECC—see grid

## VIII. Completion Requirements:

- Three (3) recommendation forms need to be submitted. These forms may come from the Board Chair, RE Committee Chair, Minister, Peer, Lay Leader (may include a YAC Chair or other youth leader), District Executive or Program Consultant. One Endorsement form must come from a person in the candidate’s congregation (or organization, for a candidate based outside a congregation).
- Criminal Background Check from approved vendor.

# Credentialed---Associate Level: Detail Page

## I. Beginning Requirements

- Endorsement Forms: Two (2) endorsement forms are needed. These forms may come from the Board Chair, RE Committee Chair, Minister, Peer, Lay Leader (may include a YAC Chair or other youth leader), District Executive or Program Consultant. One Endorsement form must come from a person in the candidate's congregation (or organization, for a candidate based outside a congregation). These forms must be shared with the applicant.
- Statement of Intent
- Resume outlining academic achievement, relevant job experience and contributions to the UU movement.
- Brief statement describing why you want to enter the program, your professional goals, and aspirations, and your professional journey so far.
- Criminal Offense Disclosure Form

## II. Personal/Self-assessment

- Statement of personal theology
- Statement on the meaning of faith
- Self-assessment

## III. Reading list

- See Reading list for book choices
- Write a brief annotation for each required and chosen book on:
  - How this reading has informed your understanding of this subject
  - How have you applied, or how do you plan to apply, this understanding to your ministry OR your reasons for taking exception to the reading

## IV. Path

Path	Degree/Training	Documentation	Meeting with RECC
1	75 hours of relevant training	Portfolio, # of competencies, 5 core plus 3.	None

## V. Competencies for the portfolio

Core – all required

- Administration
- AO/AR/MC
- RE Program Resources
- Right Relations & Professional Ethics
- Volunteer Management

Supplemental Group A (Choose 1)

- Philosophy of RE – UU
- UU History
- UU Polity

Supplemental Group B (Choose 2)

- Youth and/or Young Adult

- Worship
- World Religions
- Jewish & Christian Heritages
- Stewardship

Your work should be informed by the UUA RECC Continuum of Competencies

A lifespan focus is optional

Portfolios are to be structured with a reflection, learning experiences, leadership experiences and sample work products. Do not exceed three examples per section under each competency.

Portfolios can be structured using alternate methods of demonstration to accommodate learning styles. This requires prior approval from RECC.

**VI. Workshop Training:** 75 hours of relevant training

**VII. Evaluation:**

The UUA Religious Education and Music Leadership Credentialing Director will award credential on behalf of the RECC.

**VIII. Completion Requirements:**

- 2 years of ¼ time work
- Updated resume with 75 hours of relevant training documented.
- Three (3) recommendation forms need to be submitted. These forms may come from the Board Chair, RE Committee Chair, Minister, Peer, Lay Leader (may include a YAC Chair or other youth leader), District Executive or Program Consultant. One Endorsement form must come from a person in the candidate's congregation (or organization, for a candidate based outside a congregation).
- Criminal Background Check from approved vendor.

# RECC Interview Protocol and Standards

## Master Level, Path 1, 2, or 3 (60 minutes of meeting time with the RECC)

- If Candidate chooses “Competency-Based Evaluative Interview”
  - Brief Element of Worship (2 to 3 minutes)
  - Brief Presentation (8 to 10 minutes)
    - Topic: Some aspect of religious leadership. No prior approval is needed, but please keep in mind that the RECC is looking for a presentation that demonstrates your understanding of what it means to be a religious leader and how you have lived that in your professional life. If this is not made clear in the presentation, you will be asked in the interview how the presentation demonstrated your understanding of being a religious leader.
  - Evaluative Interview (remaining time)
    - Questions will be drawn from the competency areas applicable to the candidate (that is, the Core competencies plus the “A” and “B” option competencies selected by the candidate for the reading list annotations) and from documents submitted.
  
- If Candidate chooses “Presentation plus Evaluative Questions”
  - Brief Element of Worship (2 to 3 minutes)
  - Extended Presentation (25 to 28 minutes)
    - Topic: All presentation topics must be approved in advanced by the RECC based upon a written proposal.
    - Proposal: The proposal must include a clear articulation of the purpose of the presentation; It must explain how the presentation relates to religious education leadership, and Master Level Core and chosen Supplemental competencies, especially UU faith development, heritage, and theologies, and must explain your method for conveying a Master Level grasp of these subjects, incorporating phrases from Bloom’s taxonomy whenever possible.
  - Evaluative Interview (remaining time)
    - Questions will be drawn from the presentation and from the various documents submitted by the candidate.

## Master Level, Path 4

- If the Candidate has already met with the RECC and was approved at the level sought at that time:
  - No meeting with the RECC is needed.

## Credentialed Level, Path 1 or Tenure Track (45 minutes of meeting time with the RECC)

- The Candidate will have an “Evaluative Interview”
  - Brief Element of Worship (2 to 3 minutes)
  - Brief Presentation (5 to 7 minutes)
    - Topic:
      - If the candidate has developed a portfolio (Path 1), then the presentation is to be on some aspect of the portfolio. Prior approval of the specific topic is not required.
      - If the candidate has written a reflection paper (Tenure Track)\*, then the topic of the presentation must be approved in advance by the RECC.
        - \* Only available for the Tenure Track option
  - Evaluative Interview (remaining time)
    - For Path 1, questions will be drawn from the competency areas applicable to the candidate (that is, the Core competencies plus the “A” and “B” option competencies selected by the candidate for the reading list annotations) and from documents submitted.
    - For Tenure Track, questions will relate to the reflection paper and other documents submitted.

# Generative Project Standards

Generative Projects can occur for:

- Master Level Track 3 (person with Bachelor's Degree).
- Master Level Track 4 (Add-on – alternative for person with Bachelor's Degree).

A Generative Project needs to:

- promote and further religious education in congregations, districts and/or by individuals throughout the Association
- contribute to the profession of religious education in the UUA
- be the individual's original work (in case of a collaborative effort the individual's work must be clearly discernable)
- have more than a one time application in more than one setting

A Generative Project might include such things as \*:

- books or chapters in books
- a curriculum
- a collection of children's worship
- lecture series
- manual on a specific issue relating to religious education

\*Depending on the length/depth of the project, it may not be necessary to complete and submit the total project.

Process:

- prior approval of proposed project by RECC
- the Generative Project Proposal form should be used; see next page for a sample of the form.

Please note that files and documents submitted remain the property of the UUA; the intellectual property rights of the generative project remain with the project's creator

# **Generative Project Proposal**

For the UUA Religious Education Credentialing Program

**Applicant Name:**

**Congregation(s) or UU Organization(s) Served:**

**Organization City and State:**

**Applicant Title/Position in the Organization:**

**1. Project Title:**

**2. Target Audience(s):**

**3. Project Goal(s):** (1 sentence to 1 paragraph)

**4. Project Description:** (1 paragraph)

**5. Project Structure and Details:** (1 to 3 pages)

**6. Format of the Final Project:** (Mark "X" by one)

- A book or chapters in a book
- A curriculum
- A collection of children's worship
- A lecture series in video or electronic format
- A manual on a specific issue relating to religious education
- Other, as described here:

**7. How much of the project will be completed and presented to the RE Credentialing Committee at the time you seek credentialing?** (Mark "X" by one)

- All of it in final form
- All of it in draft form
- A portion of it, as described below:

- 8. How will the project have more than one application in more than one setting? (1 to 3 paragraphs)**
  
- 9. How will this project promote and further religious education in congregations, districts, and/or by individuals throughout the Association? (Information on how the project will benefit religious education professionals in their work would be especially appreciated.) (1 to 3 paragraphs)**
  
- 10. How will this project contribute to the profession of religious education in the UUA? (1 to 3 paragraphs)**
  
- 11. Will all of the project be the applicant's work? If not, what portion will be the applicant's work and what portion will be the work of others?**
  
- 12. Any other information that the applicant feels would be helpful to the Religious Education Credentialing Committee in evaluating this proposal:**

# Reflection Paper Standards

Reflection Papers can occur for:

- Master Level Track 1 (person with Master's Degree).
- Master Level Track 4 (Add-on – alternative for person with Master's Degree).
- Credentialed Level Tenure Track (required).

**Length:** 3,500 words minimum, 5,000 words maximum suggested length

**Content for Tenure Track (all are required):**

- Your professional formation as a religious educator over the course of your career.
- Significant learnings (i.e., experiences, courses, workshops, books, etc.) and leadership experiences.
- Application of learnings to your work, addressing specifically the core and supplemental competencies outlined in the credentialing program.

**Strategies for success:**

- Make sure you address both the core competencies for your level and your chosen supplemental competencies for your level in your paper.
- Identify both learning experiences as well as leadership experiences
- Elaborate on any brief mention of theorists or practitioners who may be addressed or referenced
- When making general statements, give specific examples related to your professional practice
- Don't worry about exceeding the maximum size of paper

**Content for Master Level:**

- All of the above, plus:
- Your vision for Religious Education within the evolving Unitarian Universalist movement, including the steps needed to move us toward that vision.

**Strategy for success:**

- Make sure your vision for the future focuses on the future of religious education within Unitarian Universalism, rather than the future of Unitarian Universalism itself.