

MFC Fall 2021 Meeting – NON-Confidential

September 23 – 26, 2021

Thursday Business Meeting Present:

MFC: Rebekah Savage, Jackie Clement, Amanda Poppei, Paul Langston-Daley, Katie Romano-Griffin, Joetta Prost, Shirley Lange, Michael Tino Jacqueline Brett, Karen LoBracco, Nathalie Edmond, Alison ALG McLeod, Beth Norton, Greg Ward, Michael Lyde. FYMES- Ren Pasco, Ethan Loewi

UUA Staff; Sarah Lammert, Marta Valentin, Jonipher Kwong, Marion Bell

Identify Process Observers – Amanda logistics – power and privilege

Announcements

Marta asked for volunteers to assist with the Memorial Service

Affirming Our Covenant

Caucus Time

UUMA Guidelines Discussion with Melissa Carvill-Ziemer and Marlene Walker

Working Groups meet independently

Sunday Business Meeting *Present:*

Rebekah Savage, Co-Chair; Jackie Clement, Co-Chair; Shirley Lange; Karen LoBracco; Michael Lyde***; Amanda Poppei; Joetta Prost; Michael Tino; Greg Ward; Beth Norton, Alison ALG McLeod, Katie Romano Griffin, Jacqueline Brett, Paul Langston-Daley, Nathalie Edmond. UUA Staff - Sarah Lammert, Marta Valentin, Jonipher Kwong, Marion Bell,

*** Note that Michael Lyde submitted his resignation from the MFC at this meeting.

Identify Process Observers

Approve April Meeting Minutes

Jackie Moves to accept the minutes as written, Greg 2nd. Approved, unanimous

Future Meeting Dates

Summer 2022 Retreat

Right after GA, Monday, June 27-29th - TABLED

Fall 2022 - Rosh Hashanah begins Sunday night, September 25. Yom Kippur begins October 4 - OPTIONS:

First Choice: Wednesday, September 28, 2022 - Sunday, October 2, 2022 -approved.

~~Second Choice: Wednesday, September 21, 2022 - Sunday, September 25, 2022~~

Winter 2022- Thanksgiving is November 24, 2022

Wednesday, November 30, 2022 - Sunday, December 4, 2022 - approved

Spring 2023 - Easter is April 9. Passover is April 5-13. OPTIONS:

Wednesday, March 15- Sunday March 19, 2023

Wednesday, March 22- Sunday, March 26, 2023

Wednesday, March 29, 2023- Sunday, April 2, 2023

TABLED UNTIL WE KNOW FOWH DATES

PWG Report - September 2021

Submitted by Amanda Poppei

PWG debriefed on our sexual ethics/boundaries training with Sunshine Wolfe and Kate Walker. We began planning for future trainings (a short, ~2 hour training in December; perhaps a longer training in the spring; a multi-day training in July). Potential topics include trauma-informed care,

our every-18-months required anti-racism training (we are exploring Crossroads), and a disability justice training, possibly focusing on neurodivergence and mental health. Our intention is to work with all trainers so that trainings can be as focused as possible on our specific role on the MFC and our ability to support and evaluate candidates in the fullness of their selves and their ministries.

With Rebekah's leadership, we continue to move toward a revised reading list. Sofia Betancourt, Elias Ortega, and Dan McKinnon are working on this. Because of their schedules, and the desire to do deep work rather than fast work, this is a longer-term project. The new reading list will focus on an anti-racism lens cross all competencies (not just social justice) and will seek to supplement what candidates are already receiving in seminary training (both UU and non-UU seminaries).

We are eager to learn how the new categories impacted our panel experiences, and to learn whether any policy or practice rules are needed.

We have noted that the old question bank is outdated; we have changed the title to reflect that and have added a new question bank focused on the new categories.

We have reviewed our budget as we look ahead to training and consultants. We have requested a \$10k grant from funds to support COIC work, to be used to cover the cost of reading list overhaul.

CANDIDACY NON-CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS - Karen LoBracco

Policy, Handbook, Rules, Website, Etc. Changes Recommended

As a general rule, items highlighted are ADDITIONS and DELETIONS are crossed out. Rules and Policies of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee can be found at mfc_rules_policies.pdf (uua.org)

A. Revisions to Process on Transfers and Plural Affiliation for Ministers

Rationale: Simplify/streamline and facilitate the process for applicants. Below are suggested changes to the **website** and **Requirements Booklet**.

Resources: <https://www.uua.org/careers/ministers/becoming/transfer-plural-applicants>

The Unitarian Universalist Association welcomes religious leaders ordained and/or credentialed in generally recognized faith traditions to apply for plural affiliation or transfer to the Unitarian Universalist (UU) ministry. A Master of Divinity or its equivalent from an ATS-accredited institution will be acceptable as academic background, and years of experience will be considered for waivers of internships required for other candidates. Plural/Transfer candidates will be expected to do additional study in the area of UU History and Polity, and are accountable for the required forms and areas of knowledge and competency outlined in the process for becoming a UU minister. Particular attention will be paid to competency in Antiracism, Anti-oppression and Multiculturalism (ARAOMC) as well as up-to-date training in Sexual Ethics and Ministerial Boundaries.

~~The requirements for people transferring into the Unitarian Universalist (UU) ministry, or applying for plural standing, are essentially the same as for other candidates. While transfer candidates can be assured that a Master of Divinity degree from an accredited theological school will be acceptable as academic background, additional work in the areas of Unitarian Universalist history, polity, traditions and religious education is expected. The core curriculum listed previously outlines the areas of knowledge and competency that are expected.~~

In addition, a clear demonstration of motivation and commitment to Unitarian Universalism must be expressed through participation in a local congregation, **a UUA recognized Covenanting Community**, or the Church of the Larger Fellowship. ~~and in area [UU Ministers Association \(UUMA\)](#) meetings and/or district meetings.~~ A minimum of 2 years involvement is expected by the Ministerial Fellowship Committee (MFC). In many **some** cases, successful completion of a CPE program and an internship **supervised by a UU minister in full fellowship** ~~or supervised ministry~~ in a Unitarian Universalist congregation **or Covenanting Community** is also **may be** required. All transfer and plural affiliation candidates must:

1. Sign a consent form allowing for the release of information to certify **accreditation** status in current or prior denomination (located in the MFC Appendix);
2. Submit a letter of standing from current or prior denomination **affirming your credential**;
3. Submit a letter of reference from a ministerial colleague/judicatory head in ~~good standing from~~ **accountable relationship with** current or prior denomination.

The MFC requires two years active involvement in a **UU Community before achieving Aspirant status** ~~congregation~~. **It may be challenging for a plural/transfer individual to be a member of a UU congregation**, but the following represent different ways to address this requirement. The more you can do the better!

- attend [General Assembly](#) each June (and sign up for the [Polity Course at GA](#));
- attend your local [Unitarian Universalist Association \(UUA\) District Regional Assembly](#);
- develop a mentorship relationship with a UU minister in ~~final~~ full fellowship, preferably face to face;

- ~~consider attending a week long intensive at [Meadville Lombard Theological School](#);~~
- attend a UU summer camp **or conference**;
- attend a UUA Leadership School week, also often held in the summer;
- **Join the** contact your local [Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association](#) ministerial chapter about possible involvement and get involved with the Ministerial Formation Network;
- consider supply preaching **in a variety of UU congregations**;
- lead adult religious education courses at a local UU congregation;
- ~~join [CLF](#), the Church of the Larger Fellowship;~~
- consider online UU coursework **at a UU seminary or through the UUA's UU Leadership Institute or LeaderLab.**
- ~~consider doing another M. Div. Degree at a UU seminary.~~

Transfer/plural affiliation candidates should consult with the Ministerial Credentialing Director regarding specific requirements and paperwork expected by the Ministerial Fellowship Committee.

Those currently serving in a UU congregation or who are seeking board certification as a hospital chaplain may wish to review the [Provisional Endorsement procedure](#). Those serving as military or VA chaplains should consult with the UUA's Ecclesiastical Endorser.

Motion to approve the above revision to the Transfer Plural Affiliation Process: Approved, unanimous.

B. Candidate status for transfer/plural affiliation aspirants -policy change

Rationale: Proposal to add a Policy so Jonipher can approve material for transfers

Request: Add Policy 3F to MFC Policies. Revise Text on website and in Requirements Booklet. Rule 19 as published (p. 15) does not appear to need any changes MFC R&P

ADD:

Policy 3 F. Policy for Candidate Status for Transfer/Plural Affiliation Aspirants.

The MFC grants the MCD the authority to approve MDiv, CPE, and Internship equivalency material submitted by aspirants who have been credentialed by another denomination for at least five years to meet the requirements for candidate status.

Motion to approve the above proposal to add Policy 3.F. Approved, unanimous.(Updated MFC R&P 10/12/21 MAB)

C. Clarifying employment in congregation previously served – **RULE CHANGE (Rule 18A and then Policy 4, once Board approved)**

Rationale: Jonipher and CWG have fielded an increasing number of questions and waiver requests, some after the fact. Clarifying in advance will be a service to candidates, the congregations they wish to serve, the MCD/PDD, and the CWG. The language “settlement” seems to indicate a called ministerial position, when the intent of the MFC is to prohibit employment in a congregation where they served in a professional capacity.

Resources: Proposal for changes to Rule 18A and Policy 4

AMEND: (below Rule change would need to be approved by the Board)

Rule 18A. Three-Year Rule

A minister is not eligible ~~for settlement~~ to serve in a professional paid role in a congregation or other UU recognized covenanting community or associate member organization for at least three years following previous engagement in a professional capacity in that congregation. This includes but is not limited to interns, field-education students, interim ministers, contract ministers, Ministerial Settlement Representatives, religious educators, etc. Waivers may be granted by application to the MFC.

Motion to approve the above proposed amendment to Rule 18A. Approved, 13 yes, 1 no, 1 abstention.

AMEND: Policy 4. Internships

Interns must have achieved Aspirant Status prior to the commencement of their internship.

Candidates, supervisors, and intern committees must use the evaluation forms provided. Evaluative letters may also be included. When the Ministerial Fellowship Committee grants Preliminary Fellowship, it expects the Candidate to be competent to serve in any type of ministry (See “Rule 6”). Internships must be created with this in mind. Interns are required to develop a written “Learning and Service Agreement” with their supervisors and intern committees before, or at the beginning of, any internship.

Candidates are strongly discouraged from undertaking internships in their home congregations or current places of employment, and must seek a waiver of this policy from the MFC when considering such an internship.

Having served a congregation as an intern, student minister, summer minister, or contract minister, individuals are ineligible ~~for settlement~~ to serve in a professional paid role in that congregation under Rule 18.

D. Updating language on Congregational Sponsorship – RULE CHANGE (Rule 11 and then Policy 3B, once Board approved)

Rationale: Updating to add acceptable sponsors.

AMEND: (below Rule change will need to be approved by the Board)

Rule 11. General Qualifications

All candidates must have satisfactorily completed all educational and skill training programs and demonstrate the qualities, skills and aptitude required for Unitarian Universalist ministry as determined by the MFC. Those qualifications and requirements include, but are not limited to, the following:

- satisfactory completion of an approved clinical pastoral education (CPE) program and an internship (as described in Rule 12, "Internships"), or the equivalent;
- have completed the required reading;
- have undergone an approved career assessment program;
- be able to demonstrate an understanding of and experience with UU congregational life based on at least two years' active involvement or equivalent;
- must demonstrate a strong motivation for our ministry;
- must be sponsored by a member society, **UUA recognized covenanted community or associate member organization** ;
- and must demonstrate a balanced and healthy personality, a capacity for self-understanding, a concern for others, and ministerial leadership skills.

The Committee will further require that the candidate be well informed on the history and development of Unitarianism and Universalism, familiar with the Bylaws of the Unitarian Universalist Association, and fully committed to the purpose, objectives and guidelines of the Unitarian Universalist Ministers' Association. A candidate for the Ministry shall also have a Master of Divinity degree or its equivalent from a theological school approved by the Committee, or have had an equivalent educational experience. Any exceptions to these qualifications must be approved by the MFC.

The MFC retains the right to request and consider any and all information it deems relevant in making its determination regarding whether to accept or reject a candidate.

Motion to approve proposed amendment to Rule 11. Approved, unanimous.

AMEND:

Policy 3B. Aspirant Status

An Aspirant is a person sponsored for ministerial fellowship by a Unitarian Universalist congregation, **UUA recognized covenanting community or associate member organization**. To be in Aspirant Status, an Applicant must submit the following forms to the Ministerial Credentialing Office. All required forms are found in “Required Forms for Unitarian Universalist Ministerial Fellowship,” an appendix to these Policies.

i. Initial Inquiry Form;

ii. Interview Form from a Fellowshiped Unitarian Universalist minister;

iii. If not graduated from a graduate theological school, evidence of acceptance to a theological school or another approved program, such as an acceptance letter, enrollment verification letter, or unofficial transcript. Or, if graduated from a theological school, submission of that official transcript. Also, submission of all official transcripts from prior graduate level academic preparation.

iv. Signed Application for Candidate Status and Waiver of Claims and Authorization.

This form stipulates agreement to abide by the Rules and Policies of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee and to defer accepting any UUA congregationally-based position other than internships and student ministries unless approved by the Ministerial Credentialing Director.

v. Completed Criminal Background Check from an approved vendor;

vi. Statement of Congregational sponsorship submitted by sponsoring congregation, **UUA recognized covenanting community or associate member organization**.

Clergy seeking dual or transfer affiliation or active UUA Congregational Life staff may have this requirement waived.

vii. Transfer/Plural Affiliation Forms, if applicable.

This amendment to the Policies MUST Wait until the above change to Rule 11 has been affirmed by the UUA Board.

E. Update to Candidate Status in Policy 3 and Fellowship Requirement booklet

Rationale from Marion: Currently there are two levels of candidacy:

1. Completing the requirements to get to candidate status, as per Policies written below
2. Completing the requirements to make an MFC appointment.

Completing a Field Education unit is part of the requirements to get to candidate status. However, it's not enough to request an MFC appointment. Those who meet the requirements for candidate status using a field ed, still need to complete either a CPE or internship. There's really no reason to have these two levels of candidacy. Jonipher and I are proposing to remove the Field ed option, so that folx become candidates when they complete either a CPE or internship (along with their career assessment, etc.).

This process was likely instituted when there was a difference between the privileges between aspirant and candidate statuses. Maybe membership to the UUMA? That is no longer the case now, since aspirants can join the UUMA. The difference now between aspirants and candidates is that candidates have completed a career assessment, at least one year of seminary, and have submitted final evals all in order to make an MFC appointment.

Resources: Policy 3 B. Aspirant Status (Note: This wording is current, before modifications recommended in preceding item D)

An Aspirant is a person sponsored for ministerial fellowship by a Unitarian Universalist congregation. To be in Aspirant Status, an Applicant must submit the following forms to the Ministerial Credentialing Office. All required forms are found in "Required Forms for Unitarian Universalist Ministerial Fellowship," an appendix to these Policies.

i. Initial Inquiry Form;

ii. Interview Form from a Fellowshipped Unitarian Universalist minister;

iii. If not graduated from a graduate theological school, evidence of acceptance to a theological school or another approved program, such as an acceptance letter, enrollment verification letter, or unofficial transcript. Or, if graduated from a theological school, submission of that official transcript. Also, submission of all official transcripts from prior graduate level academic preparation.

iv. Signed Application for Candidate Status and Waiver of Claims and Authorization.

This form stipulates agreement to abide by the Rules and Policies of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee and to defer accepting any UUA congregationally-based position other than internships and student ministries unless approved by the Ministerial Credentialing Director.

v. Completed Criminal Background Check from an approved vendor;

vi. Statement of Congregational sponsorship submitted by sponsoring congregation.

Clergy seeking dual or transfer affiliation or active UUA Congregational Life staff may have this requirement waived.

vii. Transfer/Plural Affiliation Forms, if applicable.

AMEND: Policy 3 C. Candidate Status

In addition to the items completed for Aspirant Status, the following must be completed to enter candidate status: a Candidate has also:

- i. Completed an approved career assessment program (and the written report has been received by the Ministerial Credentialing Office);
- i. Completed at least one year of theological education;
- ii. Submitted final evaluations from ~~a field education experience~~, Level 1/Unit 1 Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE)/College of Pastoral Supervision and Psychotherapy (CPSP) unit or an internship. [MB2]

Motion to approve proposed amendment to Policy 3.c.. Approved, unanimous. (Updated MFC R&P on 10/12/21 by MAB)

PROPOSED CHANGE TO REQUIREMENTS FOR FELLOWSHIP BOOKLET

CANDIDATE STATUS

In addition to 1 through 7 above, a Candidate has also:

1. Completed a career assessment with an approved program and the written report has been received by the Ministerial Credentialing Office. (Aspirants with financial need may request a \$1,000 Program Assistance Grant from the Ministerial Credentialing Office to offset the costs related to the career assessment. Please contact the MCO when an assessment has been scheduled so that the MCO can arrange to send the grant directly to the career center);
2. Completed at least one year of theological education;
3. Submitted final evaluations from ~~a field education unit, a CPE/CPSP/CSCPF basic unit or an internship.~~

After gaining Candidate status, **to request an MFC interview candidates must** ~~but before requesting an MFC interview, a Candidate must have:~~

~~Completed a CPE/CPSP/CSCPF unit or an internship, and have sent evaluations to the Ministerial Credentialing Office;~~

€complete the [MFC Appointment Form](#) and send in a \$250 appointment fee at the time the MFC interview is scheduled. (This fee may be waived under extenuating circumstances. Please consult with the Ministerial Credentialing Director for further information.)

The Ministerial Fellowship Committee affirms that the granting of candidacy status permits the Ministerial Credentialing Office to share this information with those institutions and people who are engaged in your ministerial formation.

No motion required.

F. Update to Policy 10 – Length of Aspirant Status

Rationale: When someone is inactive for an extended length of time, it is obvious that their journey has taken other paths. This clarifies status for Aspirants. A recent review reveals about a 4 year average period from applicant to MFC appointment. Rather than specifying length in both Aspirant and Candidacy status, this would simplify and clarify. The current policy 10 specifies that candidacy status is limited to 7 years but does not specify length of aspirant status. Probable renaming of policy.

Policy 10. The length of time in the UUA ministerial formation process from submission of initial inquiry form until making an appointment to see the MFC shall be no more than seven years. Extensions can be granted by the Ministerial Credentialing Director. [MB3]

Motion to approve proposal to update Policy 10- approved, unanimous. (Updated MFC R&P 10/12/21 MAB)

G. PROPOSED CHANGE TO RULE 12 – INTERNSHIPS-approval by Board required

Rationale from Jonipher: It currently says 40 hours per week X 9 months for a full-time internship, which equals 1,440 hours. On the other hand, part-time internships are 15 hours (minimum) a week X 18 months = 1,080 hours, a discrepancy of 440 hours! I suggest we keep PT the same, but lower FT to 30 hours a week to make it consistent. over 1,000 internship hours are more than plenty and would be even more than other denominations.

This change would also need to be incorporated into the Internship Manual.

CWG proposed change to submit to MFC and UUA Board of Trustees:

All Candidates are required to complete satisfactorily a full-time or part time supervised internship. **Interns must complete at least 1000 hours over one to two full congregational years.**

~~Full time internships must be for at least nine months. Part time internships extend over a total of 18 months at a minimum of 20 hours per week. Supervision will be provided by a minister in Full Fellowship. Equivalent experience, e.g., fieldwork placements or supervised ministries, may be considered on a case by case basis.~~

TABLED FOR ADDITIONAL REVIEW

H. MAKE JOINING THE UUMA'S MINISTERIAL FORMATION NETWORK A REQUIREMENT AS PART OF THE FORMATION PROCESS

Rationale: Setting up the expectation early on that collegial relationships and UUMA involvement is part of what a UU minister does. Anecdotal evidence seems to indicate that candidates coming from non-UU seminaries, as well as transfer candidates, would especially benefit. UUMA indicates they have the capacity.

TABLED FOR ADDITIONAL REVIEW

I. TABLED FOR ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATION by the CWG: Modify Internship requirements to read "The Internship Supervisor must be in full fellowship and in covenant with the UUMA." Offline input is welcomed

Transformation Shepherd Updates - Michael Tino

Wider Path Task Force update

- JK, SGM, and Michael T met with Kent Anderson. looking at each candidate to see what they need. More apprenticeship.
- Michael needs additional MFC folx on Task Force:
- Way forward on Widening the Circle – Next steps.
- Widening the Circle next priorities update

