

**Ministerial Fellowship Committee
Rules**

With Selections from UUA Bylaws

PROPOSED RULE CHANGES

As of December 17, 2007

Please note: The MFC has passed the following rule and UUA Bylaw changes and requests the Board of Trustees and UUA General Assembly to consider them.

This document contains the rules and Bylaws as we would like them to look after passage.

1. THE RULES

These Rules are promulgated by authority of ARTICLE VII, Section 7.6 and ARTICLE XI of the Bylaws of the Unitarian Universalist Association. A copy of ARTICLE VII, Section 7.6 and ARTICLE XI, is printed in this booklet. In these Rules, the word "society" refers to a church or fellowship. All rules previously promulgated are hereby rescinded and revoked.

2. COMMITTEE'S JURISDICTION

The Ministerial Fellowship Committee ("MFC" or "Committee") has jurisdiction over Ministerial Fellowship with the Unitarian Universalist Association ("UUA") and promulgates rules, policies and procedures from time to time. These Rules apply to all ministers who are in Ministerial Fellowship with the Association. The MFC also has jurisdiction over the approved list of ministers making any changes to the list as provided in these rules and may determine when and in what manner this list shall be published.

Comment [k1]: This language is from Rule 20 in the current version of the Rules.

3. EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

The Director of the Ministry and Professional Leadership Staff Group is the Executive Secretary of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee, but is not a voting member of the Committee. The Executive Secretary has charge of the correspondence and the custody of the Committee's records and files, which shall be kept confidential as provided in the Bylaws. Upon request and agreement, information about a minister from the files of the Committee shall be shared with that minister except for information transmitted in confidence or otherwise deemed confidential by the MFC. The Executive Secretary shall keep a complete and accurate list of ministers who have, and who have had, Ministerial Fellowship, and such other books and documents as may be necessary or convenient to maintain complete and adequate records.

4. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The MFC's Executive Committee consists of the MFC Chair, MFC members appointed by the Chair, and, as non-voting members, the MFC Executive Secretary, UUA Ministerial Development Director, and the UUA Ministerial Credentialing Director.

5. MEETINGS

The Committee shall meet at such times and places as it shall determine. Special meetings may be called by the Chair or by the Executive Secretary. Five voting members constitute a quorum.

6. DEFINITION OF MINISTER

For the purposes of these Rules, the term "Minister" applies to those persons whose work is theologically grounded, whose work expresses Unitarian Universalist values and principles, whose self and contextual understanding are as a professional religious leader, and who has been granted fellowship by the MFC.

Types of ministry in which fellowshipped ministers engage include:

Community Ministers

Ministers qualified for and applying their skill and experience to the community setting in such capacities as counseling, chaplaincy, social justice, education in religious studies, and other ministries as the Ministerial Fellowship Committee may recognize, shall be categorized and referred to as "Community Ministers".

Ministers of Religious Education

Ministers qualified for and applying their skill and experience to educational settings related to religious growth and development in one or more congregation(s) that is or are members of the Unitarian Universalist Association shall be categorized and referred to as "Ministers of Religious Education."

Parish Ministers

Ministers qualified for and applying their skill and experience in one or more congregation that is or are members of the Unitarian Universalist Association shall be categorized and referred to as "Parish Ministers".

7. DEFINITION OF PROFESSIONAL MINISTRY

To qualify as active service in ministry, a position must:

- 1) Require the use of traditional ministerial skills, such as pastoral counseling, worship and preaching, religious education, social witness and advocacy, and institutional leadership.
- 2) Have as its central purpose service to persons or the transformation of society.

In addition, the minister must be a member of, and maintain active involvement in, a UUA member society.

A minister who does not serve in a UU related institution shall be required to demonstrate continued interest in retaining that status by giving evidence of active involvement in denominational district, local society, and collegial activities.

8. APPLICATION FOR CANDIDACY FOR MINISTERIAL FELLOWSHIP

An application for Ministerial Fellowship shall be submitted to the Committee following the process outlined in the Preparatory Stages listed in MFC Policy #___

As part of the application, the candidate must agree in writing to be bound by the rules, policies and procedures of the MFC. In examining each candidate's qualifications, the Committee may consider any evidence which it deems relevant to assess the candidate and may reject any application. Upon the recommendation of Ministry and Professional Leadership Staff Group, persons who are unsuitable for Ministerial Fellowship will by vote of the Executive Committee be ineligible to receive financial aid or to appear before the full Committee.

A. BACKGROUND CHECKS

All candidates for ministry are required to undergo a background check before being permitted to interview with the Committee. Candidates are responsible for paying for the background check from an agency approved by the MFC and have the reports sent directly to the Committee. All reports will become property of the UUA. The MFC reserves the right to contact references, supervisors, and other individuals from any source to clarify information supplied in the candidate's packet or to obtain further information about the candidate's suitability for ministry.

9. INTERVIEW PROCEDURE

No applicant shall receive Ministerial Fellowship without being interviewed at least once by the Ministerial Fellowship Committee.

Following the interview the candidate will be informed by the Committee of its decision. Candidates receiving either a Category I or a Category II for Preliminary Fellowship shall be required to satisfy all contingencies within three years of the Committee's decision. Failure to do so will result in nullifying the original decision.

DECISION CATEGORIES

Category I

Qualified for Unitarian Universalist ministry with no contingencies other than satisfactory completion of degree, internship, and Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE).

Category II

Qualified for Unitarian Universalist ministry provided specific contingencies are met satisfactorily.

Category III

Encouraging progress for Unitarian Universalist ministry, but with issues to be addressed, (i.e., academic, personal, institutional understanding, etc.) so that the MFC requires a return visit. If specific work has been outlined, it must be completed before a return visit.

Category IV

Considerable doubt as to whether the candidate meets the general qualifications for Unitarian Universalist ministry.

Category V

The MFC sees no potential for the candidate in Unitarian Universalist ministry, and discourages the candidate from further preparation.

RETURN INTERVIEWS

Applications to appear before the Committee from candidates who have previously received a Category IV or V shall be reviewed and approved by the Executive Committee at its discretion.

10. GRANTING OF FELLOWSHIP

Ministerial Fellowship is a privilege and not a right. Committee decisions regarding Preliminary Fellowship shall not be subject to appeal. If Preliminary Fellowship has been terminated, a person may re-apply for Ministerial Fellowship. In appropriate circumstances the MFC may meet with a minister upon request of the minister regarding fellowship status.

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), 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; 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.

12. INTERNSHIPS

All Candidates are required to complete satisfactorily a full-time or part time supervised internship. 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 Final Fellowship. Equivalent experience, e.g., fieldwork placements or supervised ministries, may be considered on a case by case basis.

Internships play a crucial role in ministerial formation, thus:

A. The MFC expects a candidate applying for Preliminary Fellowship to demonstrate abilities in the full range of ministerial competencies, defined jointly by the MFC and the UUMA as Pastoral Work, Prophetic Outreach, Teaching, Practical Arts and Worship. An internship shall therefore be designed to enhance existing and needed skills within these broad competencies.

B. Lay leaders must evaluate and affirm the ministerial roles of a candidate during an internship. The internship committee shall therefore include a majority lay committee of five or more persons.

C. An internship is not only about development of skills. The internship shall therefore be designed to enhance the intern's ability to reflect on the theological and ethical bases from which these skills arise.

D. An internship is an opportunity to grow into the identity and role of a minister. Therefore the internship shall include evaluations from the intern, supervising minister, and lay committee, which are shared and which shall accompany other application documents to the MFC. Such evaluations shall emphasize reflections on areas of change and growth during the internship. Interns are required to develop a written learning agreement with their supervisors and lay committees before, or at the beginning of, any internship.

13. PRELIMINARY FELLOWSHIP

When the Committee determines that the candidate is qualified to pursue Ministerial Fellowship, the Committee shall grant the candidate Preliminary Fellowship status.

A. RENEWAL OF FELLOWSHIP

A person in Preliminary Fellowship shall be reviewed approximately every year from the date of hire or call. To be eligible for review, the minister must be engaged in compensated ministerial activities which constitute fifty-percent or more of a typical work schedule. This requirement may, at the Committee's discretion, be waived when it determines that the ministerial service is substantial enough to warrant eligibility for review.

B. RENEWAL REQUIREMENTS

Each renewal review must include the following:

1. A self-evaluation
2. An evaluation completed by one's supervisor or supervising committee (i.e. Board of Trustees, supervising minister, supervisor, etc. In ministries where one does not have a supervisor, a supervisory committee or relationship must be established for the purpose of evaluation.)
3. An evaluation from one's Committee on Ministry. For community-based ministers, all Committees on Ministry must include members of a congregation and appropriate representation from the institution or agency being served by the minister. If the minister is not employed by an institution or agency, then composition of the Committee on Ministry must be approved by the Ministerial Development Director.
4. A professional development plan
5. A form completed by the minister's mentor confirming that the minister is in a mentoring relationship.
6. A letter from a congregation stating that the minister has affiliated with that congregation (community ministers only.)

Following any review, Preliminary Fellowship may be renewed, continued in present status, terminated or a determination made to move the candidate to Final Fellowship.

C. RENEWAL PERIOD

No person in Preliminary Fellowship shall remain in any one renewal period for more than three years without a waiver from the Committee.

D. COMMUNITY MINISTRY RENEWALS

All ministers serving community settings must during Preliminary Fellowship receive affiliation with a UUA or CUC member congregation. Affiliation involves a formal connection to a congregation and recognition of the community minister as performing a ministry. Affiliation should include a vote of the Board and having a covenanted relationship with the congregation's minister(s), if there is one.

E. INTERIM MINISTRY

For purposes of renewal of Preliminary Fellowship, only one interim ministry, whether for one or two years, can be counted for such renewal. Where, however, the minister has been accepted into the Accredited Interim Ministry training program and is making expected progress toward completion, each year of interim ministry may be counted.

14. INACTIVE FELLOWSHIP STATUS

Any minister holding Preliminary Fellowship, who in the judgment of the Committee ceases to work as a minister, shall be moved to Inactive Fellowship Status. The decision of the Committee to move a minister to Inactive Fellowship Status shall not be subject to appeal. A minister may apply to the Committee to be removed from Inactive Fellowship Status.

Ministers in Inactive Fellowship Status and their families will not ordinarily be eligible for financial aid administered through Ministry and Professional Leadership until the needs of ministers in Fellowship have been met.

Every year ministers in Inactive Fellowship Status who wish to retain their Preliminary Fellowship credential must pay a fee of \$25 and keep the MFC informed of current contact information. Ministers who fail to respond within 60 days to a letter of inquiry from the Committee or who fail to pay the required fee will be removed from Preliminary Fellowship by a vote of the MFC.

15. ENTRY INTO PROFESSIONAL MINISTRY

A. Only a candidate who has received Preliminary Fellowship is entitled to represent himself as a fellowshipped UU minister and to access the UUA's settlement system.

B. All ministers in Preliminary Fellowship must meet all requirements and general qualifications of professional ministry, as well as any additional requirements established by the MFC, which shall include, but are not limited to:

- Being in a mentored relationship with a UU minister in Final Fellowship who is serving or has served in the same type of ministry;
- Being actively involved in a UU congregation;
- Undergoing annual review;
- Maintaining contact with the UUA Ministerial and Professional Leadership Staff Group; and
- Demonstrating continued growth and satisfactory progress toward Final Fellowship.

16. TERMINATION OF PRELIMINARY FELLOWSHIP

A. GROUNDS FOR REMOVAL FROM PRELIMINARY FELLOWSHIP

Ministers in Preliminary Fellowship who demonstrate significant problems that raise questions about their suitability for the UU ministry may have their fellowship terminated by vote of the MFC.

Significant problems include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Inappropriate or counterproductive behavior toward the settlement process as determined by the Transitions Director.
2. Inability or difficulties establishing and/or maintaining successful relationships without conflict with parishes or communities served.
3. Evaluations for renewal that raise issues of concern, including failure to make satisfactory progress towards Final Fellowship.
4. Failure to receive satisfactory renewals on a timely basis.
5. Any other reason(s) or problem(s) deemed significant by the MFC.

B. PROCEDURES FOR REMOVING MINISTERS FROM PRELIMINARY FELLOWSHIP

When warranted the staff of Ministry and Professional Leadership Staff Group may handle situations that arise concerning a minister's performance.

If the Executive Committee deems that evidence warrants a review of the minister's Preliminary Fellowship, it will ask the minister to meet with the Executive Committee for a Fellowship Review at the next most convenient meeting. The Executive Committee shall give the minister a minimum of 30 days notice. The minister may submit any relevant material prior to the Executive Committee's decision. The minister must be accompanied by a Good Offices person of the UUMA, who must be a minister in Final Fellowship. Expenses for both ministers' travel will be borne by the MFC.

Following the Fellowship Review with the Executive Committee, the minister will be informed of the decision of the Executive Committee as to whether the minister will be

continued in Preliminary Fellowship and/or any contingencies that have been voted before the minister can continue in Fellowship.

A recommendation by the Executive Committee to terminate a minister's preliminary fellowship will be referred to the full Committee for a vote.

If the Executive Committee establishes contingencies or makes requests of the minister, the minister's failure to satisfactorily fulfill the contingencies and/or requests shall constitute grounds for termination of Preliminary Fellowship.

17. GRANTING OF FINAL FELLOWSHIP

To be granted Final Fellowship, a minister must have been in Preliminary Fellowship for at least three years, received three satisfactory renewals, and be deemed by the Committee to be an appropriate candidate for Final Fellowship.

18. SETTLEMENT RESTRICTIONS FOR MINISTERS SERVING CONGREGATIONS

In order to ensure an equitable settlement process for congregations and ministers in transition, policies, procedures and restrictions have been developed by the Ministry and Professional Leadership Staff Group and are administered by the Transitions Director. Failure to adhere to the policies, procedures and restrictions governing the settlement process, including, but not limited to, the restrictions described below may constitute grounds for termination of Ministerial Fellowship.

A. THREE YEAR RULE

A minister is not eligible for settlement in a congregation for a least three years following previous engagement in a professional capacity in that congregation. This includes but is not limited to interns, field-education students, interims, contract ministers, Ministerial Settlement Representatives, religious educators, etc. Waivers may be granted by application to the MFC.

B. PROFESSIONAL ENGAGEMENT RULE

For any given professional vacancy, a minister who has visited a congregation in any professional capacity after the most recently settled minister has announced his or her resignation to the congregation shall not be recommended to that congregation by Ministry and Professional Leadership for twelve months following the visit.

C. INSIDE CANDIDATE RULE

Any minister who is either employed by or a member of a congregation seeking to fill another ministerial position on staff may not accept a call for that position once the Transitions Director has submitted a list of potential candidates to that congregation.

19. CANDIDATES SEEKING TRANSFER OR PLURAL STANDING

The Committee shall determine whether or not to grant Preliminary Fellowship to a transfer candidate based on a review of that candidate's completed application and any other information discovered during the review conducted by the Ministry and Professional Leadership staff on behalf of the MFC.

Transfer candidates, or those seeking plural standing, shall be subject to a thorough review of their present and/or past denominational, associational or adjudicatory standing to ensure that all appropriate information has been shared with Ministry and Professional Leadership and the Committee, and that no pertinent information has been withheld. Candidates will be required to sign an authorization form, either before or immediately after their interview with the Committee, permitting Ministry and Professional Leadership to conduct such a review. If Ministry and Professional Leadership later learns of detrimental information previously undisclosed, the Committee will be notified and may recall the candidate or deny Preliminary Fellowship until the matter is resolved.

The MFC may require that transfer or plural standing candidates fulfill certain contingencies and/or requests, which may include, but are not limited to, an internship, supervised ministry or CPE as determined by the Committee.

20. COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Complaints or issues regarding a minister's conduct or performance may be raised by the MFC at any time through the initiation of a Fellowship Review.

Any individual wishing to file a complaint against a minister must contact the Director for Congregational Services. Complaints must be in writing and contain first hand knowledge or experience. At the "intake" stage, the Director for Congregational Services hears the complaint, provides information on the process, responds to questions from the complainant and conducts an assessment of the complaint to determine whether the complaint should be referred on to the MFC.

The Director for Congregational Services has the discretion to refer matters not suitable for adjudication by the Ministerial Fellowship Committee (MFC) to other resources such as District Staff, Ministry and Professional Leadership staff, Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association (UUMA) or Good Offices, etc.

When the Committee receives a complaint about ministerial conduct or receives concerns regarding a minister's competency the Committee shall take appropriate corrective action which may include a process of redress which can range from no action, specific professional development assignments, a period of probation or, in cases involving serious misconduct or incompetence, termination of Fellowship.

If the concerns of the Committee cannot or have not been addressed through specified assignments and/or a probationary period, then the Committee will recommend the minister be removed from Fellowship.

21. PROCEDURES FOR REVIEW OF FINAL FELLOWSHIP

The Committee may call for a Fellowship Review on its own motion or upon the receipt of a complaint regarding a minister's conduct or competence. Action may be taken by the Ministerial Fellowship Committee regarding a minister's Final Fellowship status for unbecoming conduct, incompetence or other specified cause after notice and opportunity for a Fellowship Review before the Committee.

A. The MFC shall give the minister notice and an opportunity to be heard before the MFC. The minister may submit any relevant material to the Committee and will be given copies of any documents upon which the Committee may rely. The minister will be invited to meet with the Executive Committee of the MFC and is expected to be accompanied by a UUMA Good Offices person in Final Fellowship. The Executive Committee may determine that no further action is warranted, may propose to the full Committee a mutually agreed upon course of redress, or may determine that further investigation and a full Committee Fellowship Review is warranted.

B. If a full Committee Fellowship Review is called for the Executive Committee will assign an investigative team from within the Committee's membership, or individuals charged by the Committee, to be in contact with complainants and other individuals the team deems relevant. Information gathered by the investigative team will be shared with the Committee and with the minister.

C. A written notice shall be sent to the minister outlining the reasons for the Fellowship Review, all information gathered from the investigation that will be considered at the Fellowship Review, the date and location of the Fellowship Review, and the procedures which will be followed. Such notification shall be postmarked not less than one month prior to the scheduled date of the Review.

D. All expenses involved in the travel and appearance of the minister and the minister's Good Offices person will be borne by the Committee.

E. A written response to the contents of the investigation including the name of the minister's Good Offices person and any additional material the minister intends to submit for consideration is required within 14 days of receipt of the notice referred to in 21C. If a minister fails to appear at a Fellowship review, the Review will proceed in the minister's absence.

F. In the event that criminal charges are pending against the minister, the Executive Committee may suspend all or part of the investigation until the conclusion of the criminal adjudication. A court transcript/record may be used in lieu of or in addition to an investigative committee report. Ministers should cooperate with the MFC in providing access to any transcript or record. A termination of Final Fellowship may be based in whole or in part on the court transcript/record without any further evidence.

G. Upon recommendation of the Executive Secretary, the Executive Committee may administratively suspend a minister's fellowship until, and while, a minister's status is

being reviewed by the MFC. A minister will be expected to abide by any such suspension and any other conditions or requirements imposed by the MFC during any investigation or deliberation by the Committee.

22. PROBATION

The MFC may require or impose conditions, requirements or contingencies on a minister in Final Fellowship during a period of probation.

In addition to any specific requirements imposed on the minister, all ministers on probation shall be required to be evaluated annually and have evaluations submitted to the MFC. The Committee will require a self-evaluation and evaluations from the minister's committee on ministry and governing board or supervisor addressing the specific concerns of the Committee. The minister will also be required to have a formal mentoring relationship and a developmental plan. All requirements must be documented annually and submitted to the Committee for annual review. The length of the probationary period shall not exceed three years without a waiver being granted by the Committee. If the minister is not engaged in an active ministry during the probation period then the minister will be moved to Inactive Fellowship Status until such time that the minister reenters active ministry at which point the probation will be reinstated.

23. ADMINISTRATIVE HOLD

When a minister experiences conflict or a difficult parting with a congregation or other institution, UUA Ministry and Professional Leadership Staff Group (MPL) may ask that minister to participate in a process of assessment. MPL has the right to place the minister on hold from settlement until the assessment process has been concluded. If at any time the minister wishes to contest being placed on hold for settlement and/or recommendation for ministerial positions, the minister has the right to request a Fellowship Review before the Ministerial Fellowship Committee.

24. CRITERIA FOR TERMINATION OF FINAL FELLOWSHIP

The status of Final Fellowship of a minister in the Unitarian Universalist Association may be terminated upon occurrence of any of these circumstances:

(A) When the Committee is unable to maintain contact with a minister for two consecutive years, the Committee shall make a record in summary form of its efforts to maintain such contact. Reinstatement may be made by the Committee upon petition of the minister.

(B) When a minister's performance and/or behavior is found by the Committee to be conduct unbecoming a minister, incompetence, or for other specified cause. Incompetence includes, but is not limited to, a pattern of conflicted ministries and/or inability to maintain positive congregational or community relationships.

(C) When the minister has not satisfactorily completed probation or addressed the concerns previously identified by the Committee during a Fellowship Review.

25. APPEALS

In all cases involving termination of Final Fellowship, except those arising under Rule 24(A) the minister may appeal the decision and the following procedures shall be followed:

Appeals to the Board of Review must be made within thirty (30) calendar days of notice of the MFC's decision terminating a minister's Final Fellowship. A minister who appeals to the Board of Review agrees to abide by the Bylaws of the Association and the Board of Review's requests and rules, policies and procedures. The minister also agrees that the final disposition of the appeal by the Board shall be binding upon the minister and that the minister shall have no further recourse to any proceeding or review within the Unitarian Universalist Association.

If such an appeal is not filed in accordance with rules of the Board of Review, the minister whose Fellowship status has been terminated agrees that the decision of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee shall be final and binding.

When an appeal is timely filed, the minister's status shall be that of "suspension from Ministerial Fellowship" until his/her case is finally disposed of, and during the suspension the minister's name shall not appear on lists of those in Ministerial Fellowship, and the minister shall not be recommended for settlement by Ministry and Professional Leadership. However, financial rights existing at the time of suspension, including any right to receive pension or insurance payments which are dependent upon Ministerial Fellowship, shall not be affected during the period of suspension.

If action by the Committee is affirmed, modified, or reversed upon appeal, the Ministerial Fellowship Committee shall take such action and make such entries on its records as required by any decision or order entered in the appeal proceedings.

26. RE-ADMISSION

The Committee shall have authority to re-admit a minister to Ministerial Fellowship. An application in a form as the Committee shall determine shall be filed. The application shall include, but not be limited to, a brief statement of the reasons for termination of Fellowship status, and the reasons for the consideration of re-admission which the applicant believes should be considered. Readmission may be contingent on satisfying certain requirements or conditions. Compliance with any requirements or conditions set by the MFC shall constitute some evidence of satisfactory progress, but is not necessarily a sufficient basis for re-admission and shall not limit in anyway the right of the MFC to make the readmission decision notwithstanding such compliance. The decision on an application for re-admission shall not be subject to appeal.

27. CONVICTION DISCLOSURES AND FALSE REPRESENTATION

Ministers in Fellowship and applicants applying for Fellowship shall inform the Ministerial Fellowship Committee of any of the following incidents immediately:

- Any criminal arrest and/or conviction that occur except for violations that are classified as infractions, such as speeding tickets and other violations that cannot result in incarceration. Arrests and convictions related to substance use must be reported.
- Any complaint of abuse and/or neglect of a child or any other person brought against the minister.
- Any complaint of domestic violence, harassment or request for a restraining order brought against the minister.

Failure to disclose any convictions or complaints immediately to the MFC may result in removal of Fellowship or rejection of any application.

If at any time the Committee determines that Fellowship was granted based on misleading, or false representation(s), fraud or omission of any information, the MFC has the right to remove a minister from Fellowship.

28. COOPERATING WITH THE COMMITTEE

It is expected that all candidates for Fellowship and all ministers in Fellowship will cooperate with the Committee at all times. This includes, but is not limited to, responses to requests for information, provision of requested documentation, attendance at meetings with the Committee, and compliance with any remediation and/or probation requirements. Non-compliance may be grounds for termination of Fellowship.

UUA BYLAWS & MINISTERIAL FELLOWSHIP

ARTICLE VII COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Section 7.6. Ministerial Fellowship Committee.

The Ministerial Fellowship Committee shall consist of fourteen members as follows:

- (a) Six members who are not ministers appointed by the Board;
- (b) Six members who are ministers in ~~[full and]~~ final fellowship with the Association, with at least one from each category of ministry including community ministry, appointed by the Board; and
- (c) Two members appointed by the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association.

Two members of the committee, and only two, shall be trustees. The committee shall have jurisdiction over ministerial fellowship with the Association as provided in Article XI hereof. The Board of Trustees shall designate a person who is not a member of the committee to be its Executive Secretary and keep its records.

ARTICLE XI MINISTRY

Section C-11.1. Ministerial Fellowship.

Each member society has the exclusive right to call and ordain its own minister or ministers, but the Association has the exclusive right to admit ministers to ministerial fellowship with the Association. Fellowship may be for the purposes of parish, religious education and/or community ministry as determined by action of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee. No minister shall be required to subscribe to any particular creed, belief, or interpretation of religion in order to obtain and hold fellowship.

Section 11.2. Ministerial Fellowship Committee.

The Ministerial Fellowship Committee shall have exclusive jurisdiction over ministerial fellowship except as otherwise provided ~~herein~~ *in these bylaws*. It shall make rules governing ministerial fellowship, subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees.

Section 11.3. Admission to Fellowship.

A minister may be admitted to fellowship by the Ministerial Fellowship Committee, upon complying with the requirements of these Bylaws and the rules, *policies, procedures and requests* of the Committee. A minister who is admitted to fellowship shall be admitted to preliminary fellowship for a ~~probationary~~ period of *at least three years, be evaluated in ministry*, and may thereafter be admitted to final fellowship. ~~Three years as an accredited director of religious education may be considered as satisfying the time requirement for granting of final fellowship as minister of religious education.~~

Section 11.4. ~~Classes of Ministerial Fellowship.~~

~~The Ministerial Fellowship Committee shall adopt rules related to classes of ministerial fellowship which shall include [full and associate fellowship.]~~

- ~~(a) Ministers in full fellowship are those admitted to fellowship who are:
— (1) engaged in full time active ministerial service of *at least half time*;~~

- ~~— (2) actively seeking positions in such service and have recently so served; and~~
- ~~— (3) retired from such service by reason of advanced age or illness.~~
- ~~(b) Ministers in associate fellowship are those in fellowship who are not currently in full fellowship.~~

The Ministerial Fellowship Committee may also with the approval of the Board of Trustees make rules pertaining to the status of, and recognition by the Association of, lay preachers and the granting of licenses to them.]

Section 11.5. Fellowship Records.

The Executive Secretary of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee shall maintain up-to-date records of all ministers in fellowship with the Association. ~~Such~~ *These* records shall be available only to members of the committee, persons designated by the Committee, and, in cases of appeals, the Board of Review.

Section 11.6. ~~Suspension or~~ Termination of Fellowship and Suspension Pending Termination.

The fellowship of a minister may be ~~suspended or~~ terminated by the Ministerial Fellowship Committee for unbecoming conduct, *incompetence* or other specified cause. Final fellowship may be suspended or terminated only after notice *by the Committee* and opportunity for a ~~hearing~~ *Fellowship Review* before the Committee. ~~at which the minister and the Committee shall have the right to be represented by counsel, to introduce evidence, to have any relevant and material evidence in the possession of the Association produced, and to cross-examine and rebut adverse evidence.~~ *During an investigation or the pending of a complaint, the Ministerial Fellowship Committee may suspend a minister until a final determination can be made on the minister's fellowship status.*

Section 11.7. Reinstatement in to Fellowship.

The Ministerial Fellowship Committee may reinstate in or readmit to fellowship a minister who has previously resigned from fellowship or whose fellowship has been suspended or terminated.

Section 11.8. Appeal.

A minister in final ministerial fellowship whose fellowship is terminated may appeal the determination of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee to the Board of Review. The Board of Review shall have exclusive jurisdiction to hear and decide such appeals. No other appeal shall be allowed from any decision of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee.

Section 11.9. Procedure on Appeal. An appeal to the Board of Review shall be heard by a panel of the Board selected as provided in its rules. The panel hearing an appeal shall not try the case de novo but shall only review the record made before the Ministerial Fellowship Committee, except that the Board of Review by rules may permit the introduction of newly discovered evidence. These Bylaws and the rules of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee shall be binding upon the panel. The panel shall uphold the

decision of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee if it can be sustained by a reasonable view of the record. The panel may set aside the decision of the Fellowship Committee only where necessary to correct or prevent manifest injustice. The panel may remand the case in whole or in part to the Committee or take such other action as may be just. The decision of the panel, which shall be the decision of the Board, shall set forth its finding and conclusions and shall be served upon the affected minister and the Ministerial Fellowship Committee. The decision shall be entered in the fellowship records and shall be final and binding upon all parties. No appeal shall be allowed from the decision of the Board of Review. The Board of Review shall make rules to carry out the intent of this section.