

**UUA Religious Education Credentialing Committee**  
**Meeting Precipis**  
**February 14-17, 2005**  
**Madison, WI**

Members Present: Liz Jones – Chair, Gail Forsyth-Vail, Kirk Loadman-Copeland, Steve Lynn, Sue McGovern, Betty Jo Middleton, Kathryn Warrior. Ex Officio: David Hubner, Beth Williams. Recorder – Gwen McCutcheon. Credentialed Observer: Betsy Darr.

The meeting was opened at approximately 8:15 am on Monday, February 14.

The minutes from the October meeting were approved reviewed. Because of some unclarity in some sections of the minutes, further review and approval will take place via e-mail after the meeting. The action items list from the October meeting was reviewed.

**Report from the Director of Ministry and Professional Leadership** – David reported that support for the program from UUA Board and administration is deep and long. David is currently spending much effort in getting the various professional groups together for conversation and collaboration. He reported on The Responsible Staffing guide which will be coming out from UUA at GA. This includes recommendations to congregations on screening staff and to UUA credentialing bodies on screening applicants, participants, and those holding credentials.

**Report from the RE Credentialing Director** – Beth reported the following statistics about the program: There are currently 47 active participants in the program: 20 are seeking Masters Level, 20 are seeking Credentialed Level, and 7 are seeking Associate Level. Of the 20 seeking Credentialed Level status, 1 has already received Associate Level. Since the last meeting, 1 participant has been put on hold and 2 participants have withdrawn. There have been about 6 inquiries since the last meeting. Beth reviewed her accomplishments beyond the Action Items List: facilitated a LREDA Fall Conference workshop on Entering the RE Credentialing Program and a workshop on using a small-groups method for creating a portfolio entry from the learnings from the conference; worked with the UUA Board to help refine proposed UUA Bylaw changes that will be put on the GA 2005 Agenda to substitute “Credentialed Religious Educators – Masters Level” for Accredited DRE’s as those who are automatically eligible to represent the congregation in which they serve at General Assembly plenary sessions; worked with the UUA Board and staff on developing a response to a request from the Canadian Unitarian Counsel to make an exception to the separation agreement and admit religious educators serving Canadian congregations to the RE Credentialing program; on Gina Ruvido’s resignation, hired A’ashia Short, first as temporary and then permanent RE Credentialing Assistant.

**Report from the RECC Chair** – Liz indicated that she has written reports for the UUA Board and an article for The Religious Leader on the things the RECC is doing to be as open and transparent as possible in committee process.

**RE Credentialing Program Plan and Competency Subjects** – Beth presented a proposed revision to the RE Credentialing Program Plan. The revision was undertaken to update the plan with more current information about the program and to clarify some of the program requirements at the three different levels. In reviewing the proposed changes, the RECC made additional refinements and modifications, most notably in the area of category competencies.

**Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression** – Gail presented her perspective as chair of LREDA Integrity Team and gave a report of recent team activity and what is planned for the future, including LREDA Fall Conference 2006 with keynote speaker Bill Jones, author of *Is God a White Racist?* Discussion of possibilities for accountability relationship with RECC continued from last meeting. RECC members commit to undertaking readings from *Soul Work*, Marjorie Bowens-Wheatley, ed., for discussion at future meetings.

**Reading Lists Review** – Betty Jo and Sue presented the work they did on annotation of the book lists. This work will continue after meeting. Also to move forward after meeting is working with AO/AR specialist to evaluate lists with intent to increase diversity of authors of all book subjects, not just AO/AR. Additions/modifications to lists: for Credentialed and Masters levels, move *Soul Work* to required rather than optional category, add *Welcoming Children with Special Needs: A Guidebook for Faith Communities* by Sally Patton to all levels in the Congregational Resources and Introductory Works (required) section; add *A Many Colored Kingdom* by Elizabeth Conde-Frazier, S. Steve Kang and Gary A. Parrett to Credentialed and Masters level lists (optional in “Religion and Religious Education – the Social Dimension” category).

### **Small Group Work**

**RE Credentialing Workshop Planning** – Workshop for Large Church Conference was planned. Planning for Professional Days and GA workshops begun.

**Review of RE Credentialing Program Communications/Publicity Strategy** – Many of the proposed actions are taking place. Possible upcoming actions include: milestones and possibly an article in the UU World; article in Interconnections; materials packet for compensation consultants; adapting brochures into flyers for UUA Congregational mailing; reaching out to young adults through Young Adult list serv.

**RE Credentialing Program Policies** – Beth’s draft from October was re-ordered to increase clarity by Gail and Sue and begun to be reviewed by the RECC. The review process will take place over multiple meetings. The Rules, which were developed in October, will be submitted to the UUA Board for its April meeting for its approval.

### **Small Group Work**

**“Eye-catching” Brochure** – Beth, Sue, Gail and Betsy worked on the refinement of a proposal from Gail on an eye-catching brochure that introduces the RE Credentialing program. This will be implemented by the RE Credentialing office.

**Teaching Methods Equivalency proposal** – Kathryn, Steve and Betty Jo worked on a draft of a sample proposal for the Teaching Methods graduate course equivalency.

**Learning Theories Equivalency proposal** – Kirk and Liz worked on a draft of a sample proposal for the Learning Theories graduate course equivalency.

**Mentoring Process** – Mentors are now requested to contact RE Credentialing Director or LREDA Committee on Mentoring Chair if a mentee has not contacted her/his mentor for more than 2 consecutive months, once relationship has started. To be worked on this period in consultation with LREDA Committee on Mentoring Chair, guide to having a LREDA mentor, and a survey for mentors to determine what trends within RE Credentialing they are noticing.

**Conviction Disclosure** – The RECC and RE Credentialing program will likely be effected by the recommendations from the Responsible Staffing guidelines to take effect June 2005. In the meantime, a proposal to require applicants/participants/credentialed religious educators to submit a Criminal History Report at regular intervals will be submitted for legal review. In addition to this proposal, further exploration with legal counsel to be undertaken regarding possible requirement credentialed religious educators to be members of a UU church (including CLF) or whether individual waivers might be possible.

**Equivalency Evaluation** – The following participant had a requirement equivalency evaluated and approved: Beth Casebolt – Equivalency for at least 2 years paid work as a Religious Educator in at least a Half-time Position.

**Candidate Awards** - The following candidates were awarded Credentialed Religious Educator status: Dawn Star Borchelt, Connie Goodbread, Thomas Pistole, Greta Porter.

**Open Meeting** – In the interest of UUA committee transparency, the RECC prepared for having Thursday morning as an Open Meeting. Unfortunately no one availed themselves of this opportunity. Another Time for Comments will be held on the last morning of the October 2005 meeting.

**Meeting Locations** – The fall 2005 meeting will take place October 17-21 in Philadelphia (pre-LREDA Fall Conference.) After much discussion, the RECC decided that, as an experiment, the meeting for winter 2006 will be changed to a time period in late March (March 26-31) rather than mid February and to a Boston, MA location (Eliot & Pickett House) rather than Madison, WI. Several issues precipitated this move: Madison in February is not always accessible to those with mobility challenges; a mid-February meeting creates a 4-month interval between the fall and winter meetings (that includes a major holiday period), and an 8-month interval between the winter and fall meetings - pushing the winter meeting back to late March will create more of a balanced scheduling, and give RECC members more time to evaluate candidate materials and candidates more quality time to create them; although the University of Wisconsin-Extension meeting and lodging facilities are very reasonably priced, airfares tend to be less so, since Madison is not an airline hub; preceding the Meadville Lombard Winter Institute with an RECC meeting is attracting a smaller number of candidates in scheduling their RECC interview evaluations than had been hoped. In spite of the welcoming environment of UW-Extension and enjoyment of Madison, it seemed prudent

to try a different time frame and venue. It is possible that the location of the winter meeting will vary in the future.

**Academic Equivalency Sample Proposals:** The following sample proposals for graduate course requirements were presented: Learning Theories – Liz Jones and Kirk Loadman-Copeland; UU RE History and Philosophy – Gail Forsyth-Vail and Betty Jo Middleton; Teaching Methods – Steve Lynn, Betty Jo Middleton, and Kathryn Warrior. After further refinements have been made, these samples will be incorporated into the RE Credentialing Equivalencies document in order to give program participants more direction in submitting equivalency requests.

**Forms/Process:** Endorsement and Recommendation forms will be reorganized in ways that are helpful to the RECC in its candidate evaluation. Candidates must now formally request a meeting with the RECC, and do so at least 1 year before meeting. This will make it easier for the RE Credentialing office to manage the scheduling of interviews for meetings. A form will be developed for this request. For the future: competency (self) ranking tool for candidates; a candidate profile information form that will include request for a brief bio and a description of the context of candidate's professional work (for example, description of the congregation – demographics, challenges, etc). This will help the RECC to get to know the candidate, and increase its contextual understanding of the candidate. Also for the future, a survey of credentialed religious educators to determine outcomes of religious education credentialing in order to facilitate program evaluation by the RECC.

**Credentialed Observer's Report** - Betsy presented a verbal report to the RECC. A written report will follow.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 pm on February 17, 2005.