

UUA Religious Education Credentialing Committee
Meeting Precis
October 8 – 12, 2007
San Antonio, TX

Members Present: Liz Jones – Chair, Sue McGovern, Steve Lynn, Kirk Loadman-Copeland, Gail Forsyth-Vail, Kathryn Warrior, Will Saunders
Ex Officio: Beth Miller, Beth Williams, Paula Welling (Recording Secretary)
Credentialed Observer: Joyce Zaugg

The meeting convened at approximately 9:00 AM on October 8, 2007.

The minutes from the March 2007 meeting were approved. Action items and reports from Liz Jones, Beth Miller, and Beth Williams were reviewed.

A/O-A/R Issues – The committee read and discussed *Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, and Family Life* by Annette Lareau, which explores class-linked parenting styles and illustrates how the parenting style commonly used by middle-class parents provides systemic economic advantages to their children by teaching them how to negotiate for their own advantage within our institutions, which have a middle-class orientation.

Background Checks

The *Criminal Offense Disclosure Form* was reviewed and edited. Legal advice about divulging background check information was reviewed, and the need to have a written policy regarding under what circumstances disclosed information will be shared with employers was discussed.

The *Proposed RECC Rule Changes for Background Checks* were discussed and amended; the amended rule changes were passed by vote. Also passed by vote was the proposal that the RECC delegate authority to approve the agency which performs the background checks to the UUA.

The background check requirement will apply to all RE Credentialing candidates who are not yet credentialed at the time the Rule Change is approved; assuming it is approved by the Board in January, it will apply to candidates for our April meeting.

Candidate Awards

The following candidate was awarded Credentialed Religious Educator – Master’s Level status: Tandy Scheffler.

The following candidates were awarded Credentialed Religious Educator status: Cathy Cartwright, Dana Regan, and Jean Wiant.

The following candidate was awarded Credentialed Religious Educator – Associate’s Level: Connie Dunn.

Environmental Issues – The committee discussed a proposal to use electronic documents rather than paper copies of both the candidate portfolios and the meeting packets. For our April 2008 meeting, we will have a trial of using electronic documents for the meeting packets, with a projector used during the meeting. Candidate portfolios will be sent to all committee members in electronic format, with paper copies available to those who request them.

Forms/Documents: Existing

Creating Your RE Credentialing Portfolio – Proposed modifications to this document were reviewed and discussed. Editing will be done by the RE Credentialing office, and the edited document will be put on the website.

Continuum – The revised version was sent out to candidates currently in the program and received very positive feedback, particularly on how to demonstrate particular competencies and how to distinguish between levels. Final editing will be done by the RE Credentialing office.

Forms/Documents: New

Stages of Formation for Credentialed Religious Educators – This document, an explanation of the functioning of the three levels of Credentialed Religious Educators, was reviewed and will be edited. Once edited, it is intended as an external document.

Taxonomy – For each credentialing level, a two-page background information document was created. These are intended for use by district staff, compensations consultants, and for congregations in discerning which level of Credentialed RE is appropriate for their congregation. They are also appropriate for persons considering entering the program to use in discerning which level of credentialing is appropriate for them. This document is still a work in progress.

Future Meetings

April 1 – 4, 2008, in Boston at the E & P House

The AO/AR selection for this meeting is the “Wilderness Journey” video.

This meeting will include trial of using electronic documents and projection to replace paper documents.

October 27 – 30, 2008, in Albuquerque, NM, at the Hotel Albuquerque at Old Town

This meeting will offer a lunch reception at noon on the 27th, as the LREDA Meeting is ending, instead of Time for Comments. RSVPs will be requested ahead of time.

Mentor’s Role – The committee engaged in a discussion of the role of the mentor in preparing candidates for and coaching them through an evaluative process. This discussion will continue.

Portfolios and Audio-Visual Materials

Further suggestions for the portfolios include: Long descriptions of workshop contents, descriptions of Renaissance Modules, and annotations of books on the Reading Lists are not

needed. Descriptions should support how the candidate integrated the experience. The REC Director will establish word guidelines.

Sample portfolios will be made available on the website as portfolios in the current format become available. Concern was expressed about allowing for diversity of style, and a suggestion made that composite portfolios be created using sections from different individuals so that a variety of styles is represented and no one individual's portfolio becomes normative.

Procedure for Re-entering Program after Withdrawal – the committee decided, by vote, that a candidate who has withdrawn from the RE Credentialing Program may, within a time limit of five years after their withdrawal, re-enter the program by writing a letter to explain why they want to come back and working with the RE Credentialing Director on a plan of completion.

Publicity

GA Workshop: *The Lay Leader's Guide to RE Excellence*

Program Description: *Do you want to attract young families? Retain newcomers? Offer a vibrant youth program? You need professional help! Come and find out how to support the deepening of you religious educator's professional skills, knowledge, and competency in order to strengthen and grow your RE program and your congregation.*

Participants will brainstorm components of a "perfect" RE program, talk about how to assess an RE program and develop an assessment tool based on best practices. Participants will consider the engines of church growth – worship, music, and RE – and assess how those rank in their own congregations. Credentialing will be presented as a way of providing the congregation's RE staff with the tools they need for excellence.

LREDA Professional Day: *Mentoring for Formation*

Program Description: *Why does the RE Credentialing Program require mentoring? What is its role in the formation of religious educators? Explore the crucial role of collegial and peer relations in your professional formation as a religious educator.*

Participants will create a timeline from when they were hired as a DRE to the present, and identify 2 to 3 pivotal relationships in their career. The idea of formation will be introduced, and fleshed out through personal stories. Participants will review the Stages of Formation and Continuum documents. The program will end with a Q & A session, and the Assessment of Outcomes document will be handed out.

LREDA Fall Conference: *Professional Formation as a Spiritual Practice*

Program Description: *parker Palmer speaks of a professional as someone who has "found firm ground on which to stand – the ground of my own identity and integrity of my soul." How do we pursue professional formation, experience success as a religious educator, and stay grounded in this spiritual dimension? This workshop will offer you food for thought and some tools.*

The program will include an orientation to context, personal reflection on a moment of success in staying grounded, the presentation of an assessment tool, a presentation from a panel of professional religious educators, and a conclusion and closing.

Religious Leader Article

An article will be written to update readers on RECC membership – who is coming on and who is leaving.

Reading Lists

Unified Reading List – Since this was based on the original continuum, which has changed, this will need to be modified to conform to the revised continuum. Editing will be completed by December 1, 2007. In future, this will be reviewed for revision and incorporation of new books every two to three years by the office.

Meeting Adjourned at approximately 12:00 noon on October 12, 2007.