

Commissioned Lay Minister Program

Mentor Responsibilities

Revised February, 2019

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The success of the Commissioned Lay Ministry Program includes a combination of study, practice, and reflection and depends heavily on the relationship between Candidate and Mentor. There are some standard requirements that all CLM Candidates must complete, listed below.

Because CLM Candidates usually specialize in only one or two areas of ministry, they will work with their Mentor to develop a specialized or focused learning-serving plan to meet their training needs.

Overview of Educational Programming

Before being eligible for commissioning, each Candidate must:

- Complete the CLM Required Reading List (Mentor and Candidate should indicate when an “alternative learning experience as appropriate” has been substituted.)
- In partnership with the Mentor, develop and successfully follow an individualized learning/serving plan

The council also strongly recommends that the Candidate seek out regional trainings, webinars and leadership schools as they are available.

Working with the Mentor

It is expected that the educational/training component of the program be a matter of mutual decision and design on the part of Candidate and Mentor. The training program is meant to include both academic components (readings, workshops, webinars etc...) and experiential ones, where the Candidate has the opportunity to experience various aspects of church leadership under the guidance and feedback of the Mentor. We suggest that Mentors take into careful consideration the Candidate’s intended form of service in planning the training program with the Candidate.

A Candidate who is most interested in pastoral care, for example, might have very different learning needs than a Candidate interested in performing rites of passage, or in leading adult education. Candidates who feel called to a few specific forms of service are often most successful. However, it is perfectly acceptable for Candidates to generalize, and explore all areas of congregational leadership. This general Candidate is perhaps more common in lay led congregations, where the CLM might be expected to provide guidance in a variety of areas, than it is when the CLM expects to serve in a church with professional religious leadership. In the latter case, the Candidate usually focuses on specific areas of interest or need.

All CLMs offer a public representation of Unitarian Universalist leadership; therefore, whatever a Candidate’s ambitions, the program should include a grounding in Unitarian Universalist identity, and practice in the presentation of that identity, whether in worship

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or other settings. We provide a required reading list that covers basic areas of general competence.

The CLM Council can, upon request, make available to Mentors and Candidates a copy of the *Lay Ministry Training Curriculum* developed by the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta. While this curriculum was intended to be used in a group setting, we believe that new mentors might find it helpful as a structure for discussing the basic competencies. We also appreciate that this curriculum has one entire module devoted to helping CLMs discern their call, and another on the work that a CLM can do in order to reconcile their call with the vision, desires, expectations and responsibilities of professional ministers within and outside of their own congregation.

In addition to the general categories of competence outlined by the required reading and the *Lay Ministry Training Curriculum*, we expect the Mentor and the CLM Candidate to develop additional learning experiences focusing on the Candidate's area(s) of specialty. In the past, these experiences have included workshops, leadership school, auditing seminary courses, and/or Clinical Pastoral Education. We consider the CLM mentoring to be based on a clinical model; in others words, ideally, a lot of the Candidate's learning will come from reflecting with the Mentor on successful and unsuccessful leadership experiences within the home congregation.

We strongly urge that Mentors consider a Candidate's learning style as they help plan the training program. Some of our Candidates come to us with graduate educations and a great deal of academic knowledge; some of our Candidates are interested in the program precisely because their gifts suggest leadership that doesn't require a seminary-level educational experience.

Because of the highly individualized nature of the CLM study program, we encourage Mentors with questions to contact the Council. We are happy to put Mentors in touch with other experienced Mentors and offer quarterly Mentor Learning Circles to facilitate these discussions.

Completing the educational program

The duration of the educational component of your program is up to the CLM Candidate, the Mentor, the supervising minister, and the congregation. Most CLM Candidates take approximately two years to complete their training. Once Candidate and Mentor feel that the Candidate has successfully completed the training program, the Candidate will need to contact their CLM liaison to schedule a Commissioning Interview with the CLM Council and submit their commissioning portfolio.

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Mentor's Reference Evaluation for Commissioning

Please evaluate your mentee on the following attributes in the space below to the best of your ability. Please return to the Central East Region, bcasebolt@uaa.org.

What have you observed and/or discussed regarding the candidate's:

1. Interest in and ability to relate to people of all ages
2. Commitment to local congregation and to Unitarian Universalism
3. Ability to listen to others' points of view and to take them into consideration
4. Ability to express ideas clearly
5. Ability to take initiative and to bring others along with enthusiasm.
6. How well has the candidate used their training period?
7. What skills should the candidate be sure to continue to develop in the future?

CLM Candidate's Name: _____

Mentor's Name: _____

Mentor's Contact Info: _____