

12 June 2018

Dear UUA Trustees,

On behalf of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee, I am submitting our unanimous recommendations for changes to the MFC Rules. As a Board-appointed committee, changes to the MFC Rules are made by majority vote of the Board. In this case, the Committee is requesting your approval to move Rules 13A and 13B to our Policies, over which the MFC has jurisdiction.

Rule 13 governs Preliminary Fellowship, the period in which ministers receive evaluations from the MFC before it grants Final Fellowship. Rule 13A describes ministerial activities that are eligible for renewal of Preliminary Fellowship, and Rule 13B describes the submissions required of ministers in each renewal period.

Approving this change would allow the MFC to further amend these sections without returning to the Board for approval. We are not significantly altering these sections at this time, but rather the procedures for changing them in the future. Our reasons for moving this Rule sections to our Policies are as follows:

- As entrepreneurial and non-congregational ministries become more common, Preliminary Fellowship must adapt. At this time, the MFC would like more latitude to decide what types of ministerial work are eligible for renewal and what submissions the Committee requires of ministers engaging in such work, rather than pursuing approvals from the Board as new types of ministry emerge.¹
- This change in jurisdiction over Preliminary Fellowship would be consistent with the MFC's current jurisdiction over ministerial candidacy. Because of our greater ability to make policy about the candidacy process, it is an area where the MFC has been more responsive to changes in ministry and ministerial education.
- Since the Board's shift to policy-based governance in 2008, detailed oversight of Committee procedures is no longer a common Board activity. MFC Rules with this level of detail are an artifact of when the Board took a more participatory role in the MFC's deliberations.²

Included is a red-line version of this Rule change, as well as the accompanying Policy changes we are proposing.

These recommendations were made by the MFC prior to the Board's April charge to the MFC, and this request is not intended as a response to that charge. However, this Committee believe this change would allow for a more liberated, expansive, and inclusive approach to recognizing ministries for what they are, which fortuitously aligns with the Board's charge.

¹ This would not change the underlying definitions of ministry found in Rules 6 and 7.

² Until 2012, two members of the UUA Board sat on the MFC as full members and provided quarterly reports to the Board.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick Allen', with a stylized, cursive script.

Nick Allen

Chair, Ministerial Fellowship Committee Process Working Group

cc: Jesse King, Chair of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee
 Michael Lyde, Chair of the MFC Settlement Working Group
 Rev. Sarah Lammert, Executive Secretary of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee
 Rev. Alicia Forde, UUA Professional Development Director

Exhibit 1: MFC Rules changes requiring UUA Board approval

Rules of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee

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 Professional Development Director of the UUA.~~
- ~~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 copy of the agreement or covenant with one's affiliating 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.~~

A. ~~G.~~ Renewal Period

A person has up to three years to establish a ministry that is eligible for renewal of fellowship and submit an application for renewal of fellowship. Once a person begins working in ministry that is eligible for renewal of fellowship, one must submit an application for renewal of fellowship annually. If a person stops working in ministry, the minister may remain in that renewal period for up to three years before either entering Inactive Status or applying for a waiver from the Committee. If a waiver is granted to extend the renewal period, the extension will be for one year.

B. ~~D.~~ Community Minister 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.

C. ~~E.~~ Continuity of Ministry of Preliminary Fellowship

To receive Final Fellowship, a minister must have been granted at least two renewals from the same congregation or organization. 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.

Exhibit 2: MFC Policy changes contingent on approval of Rules changes

Policies of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee

A. Renewal Requirements

Each renewal review must include the following:

1. A self-evaluation
2. An evaluation completed by one's supervisor or supervising committee, e.g. 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, an appointed Ministerial Formation Team may be appointed to serve this function. The Ministerial Formation Team should 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 Ministerial Formation Team must be approved by the Professional Development Director of the UUA.
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 copy of the agreement or covenant with one's affiliating 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.

~~A.~~ B. Ministers in Preliminary Fellowship Serving Non-UU Congregations

Ministers serving a non-UU congregation will be considered to be serving in a community setting and must comply with the requirements of Rule 13.D.

~~B.~~ C. Alternate Renewal Option for Ministers Transferring from Another Denomination

At the discretion of the Professional Development Director, fellowshiped ministers with five (5) or more years of credentialed experience in another denomination may be eligible for renewal of Preliminary Fellowship under an alternate procedure. This option may be used for any number of renewals of Preliminary Fellowship.

These ministers have the option of submitting an application of renewal that includes:

1. A note from a Unitarian Universalist colleague confirming that the minister has been meeting with a Unitarian Universalist collegial group on a regular basis (at least every two months) with at least four other colleagues for the previous year;
2. A 1–2 page written self-reflection on their Unitarian Universalist ministry experience;
3. A submission of a professional development report from the past year and a plan for the upcoming year;
4. A Parish Ministry Cover Page or a Community Minister Cover Page.

Renewal of fellowship will be based on this material submitted.

13. Progress towards Final Fellowship and Ministry Eligible for Renewal

A person in Preliminary Fellowship shall be reviewed approximately every year from the date of hire or call. Final Fellowship will be awarded when three successful renewals of Preliminary Fellowship are completed.

A minister is expected to submit an application for renewal annually. If a minister is not currently working in ministry, that minister may remain in any one renewal period for up to three years. Each renewal period must be based on evaluations covering 10–12 months. If the minister is not working in ministry and is in one renewal period for longer than three years, they must apply to the MFC for a waiver of this policy or request to be placed in Inactive Status; otherwise they will be removed from fellowship.

A. Criteria for Ministry Eligible for Renewal

Ministerial Fellowship Committee will determine whether ministry work is eligible for a renewal of Preliminary Fellowship in consideration of the following:

1. The minister must be engaged in compensated ministerial activity which constitutes fifty-percent or more of a typical work schedule for a renewal period of 10 to 12 consecutive months. The committee will also consider, for review, compensated ministerial activity which constitutes at least twenty-five percent of the typical work schedule (430 hours per year) if the renewal period is at least 24 consecutive months in duration. 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.

~~1~~ 2. The minister's work should comply with MFC Rule 6 ("Definition of a Minister") and MFC Rule 7 ("Definition of Professional Ministry")

~~2~~ 3. If employed in a Unitarian Universalist congregation, the employing or affiliating congregation should recognize the minister's work as professional ministry.

~~3.~~ 4. If employed outside a Unitarian Universalist congregation, the minister's supervisor and/or the community served by the minister should recognize the minister's work as professional ministry. Ministers are strongly advised to consult with the Professional Development Director about whether their work is eligible for renewal of Preliminary Fellowship.