RELIGIOUS EDUCATION RESOURCE GUIDE FOR MINISTERIAL INTERNS

The readings, experiences, and training opportunities described below are ideas and
suggestions for developing your learning/serving agreement with your intern site. After determining
your growth needs in religious education and setting realistic goals for what you can accomplish
during your internship, select learning opportunities from each of the categories below that will enable
you to achieve those goals. Draw also from the educational resources of your intern setting,
community, and UUA district staff and programs.

Human Development and Faith Development

Publications

- *Junior High Ministry*, Wayne Rice.
- *No Ladder to the Sky: Education and Morality*, Gabriel Moran. Disturbed by hierarchical framing of morality, Moran proposes an education process that leads to moral integrity that is bodily and communal.
- *Portrait of Youth Ministry*, Maria Harris. Harris explores issues confronting adolescents in U.S. culture and suggests ways the whole church can engage in ministry “for and with and by young people.”

Experiences

- Young Children (3 to 5 years). Observe one child for at least one full session, from entering
to leaving the building. Record observations. Reflect on and draw inferences about the
nature of the child’s experiences of the church that day. Will s/he look forward to next
Sunday? Why?
- Elementary (6 to 11 years). Interview one lower and one upper elementary teacher about how
the religious education programs they are using relate to the children’s developmental
characteristics.
- Junior High/Senior High (12 to 18 years). Interview a female and a male of the same age,
selecting questions from James Fowler’s “Faith Development Interview Guide” in his *Stages of Faith* (p 310).
Philosophy of Religious Education

Publications

- Christian Religious Education: Sharing Our Story and Vision, Thomas H. Groome. Groome, a Catholic educator, provides a rich resource of theory and praxis, easily translatable to the Unitarian Universalist principles and lifespan religious education.
- Educating in Faith: Maps and Visions, Mary C. Boys. Offers overview of religious education development in North America. Includes summaries of major theories as well as new directions for religious education.
- Philosophy-Making for Unitarian Universalist Religious Growth and Learning, Elizabeth Anastos and David Marshak (UUA).
- Religious Education as a Second Language, Gabriel Moran. Moran uses four words to describe religious education—international, interreligious, intergenerational and interinstitutional—challenging us to develop ministries that transcend parochial boundaries.
- Teaching From the Heart: Theology and Educational Method, Mary Elizabeth Moore.

Renaissance Program

The UUA’s Renaissance Program, a leadership development program for lay leaders in religious education, is also appropriate for ministerial candidates. It’s eight 15-hour workshops are entitled Training Teachers, Curriculum Planning, Administration of R.E. Programs, Philosophy of Religious Education, Ministry With Youth, Worship for All Ages, Unitarian Universalist History, and Unitarian Universalist Identity. Participation in Renaissance workshops gives ministerial candidates experiences in religious education praxis and access to current theories in the field, but is not a substitute for graduate level courses. The learning will serve you well if you are asked to initiate or give direction to educational programs in a congregation or a community agency. See the UU WORLD or the REACH Packet for workshop locations and dates, or contact your local religious educator, district office, or the UUA Religious Education Department’s Renaissance Office.

Experience

- Co-lead a study-discussion group for three to six sessions with Philosophy-Making for Unitarian Universalist Religious Growth and Learning. Guide participants through a developing process to define their religious philosophy, formulate goals, and implement a plan for lifespan religious education.
Training Opportunities

- Take the UUA Renaissance workshop, “Developing A Philosophy of Religious Education”.
- Attend cluster, district and continental workshops and conferences.

Curriculum

Publications

- *Fashion Me a People: Curriculum in the Church*, Maria Harris. For Harris, curriculum is more than instructional resources; it is the entire course of a congregation’s life, the creative and educational powers used to “fashion a people.”
- *The REACH (Religious Education Action Clearing House) Packet*. Contains program aids, curriculum supplements, worship resources, and reviews of new materials. Published three times a year and sent to all Unitarian Universalist congregations, addressed to the R.E. Coordinator.
- *Teaching and the Religious Imagination: The Theology of Teaching*, Maria Harris. A work about education, but also of incarnational and creational theology. Harris argues for the oppressed, forgotten people who are empowered when curriculum is changed to include them.
- *UUA Audio-Visual Loan Library Catalog*. A free annotated listing of audio-visual resources for education, worship, and community outreach available to congregations for an annual fee.
- *UUA Bookstore Catalog*. A free, annual, annotated listing of educational programs, books, pamphlets, and other church resources sold through the UUA Bookstore.

Curriculum Programs

Select one of the following program guides from each age level. Then refer to the experiences on p.___ for suggestions of ways to engage directly with the program’s content and process.

- Preschool (3 to 5 years)

- Elementary (6 to 11 years)
  *God Images*, grades 5-6 by Mary Ann Moore (Self published). Read the Introduction and six session plans.
  *Travel in Time: Unitarian Universalism for Grades 5 and 6*, Lois Ecklund (UUA). Read the Introduction and six session plans.
• Junior and Senior High (12 to 18 years)

*In Our Hands: Peace and Social Justice* (UUA). Jr. high by B. Andrews, R. Branch, V. Lane, and H. Rosen; Sr. high by E. Hunting, V. Lane, and H. Rosen. Read the Introduction and three session plans in each program.

*Messages in Music: Unitarian Universalism for Junior High,* Elizabeth Strong (UUA). Read the Introduction and six session plans—three from the first half, three from the second half of the program.

*Stereotypes, Sexuality and Gender,* Jr. high, Tracey Robinson-Harris and Ritch Savin-Williams (UUA). Read the Introduction and six session plans.

*About Sexual Abuse: A Program for Teens and Young Adults,* Fred and Betty Ward (UUA). Read the program guide.


*On the Path: Spirituality for Youth and Adults,* by W. Arnason et al. (UUA). Read the Introduction and three units.

• Adults

Adult religious education programs aim to meet developing needs of persons as they enter, explore and become committed to Unitarian Universalism over several years. Select three programs to study from among those listed below or in the UUA Bookstore Catalog.


*Being a UU Parent.* Makanah Morriss, David MacPherson (UUA).

*Parents as Resident Theologians.* (UUA) and *Parents as Social Justice Educators.* Roberta and Christopher Nelson (UUA).


*How Open the Door?* Afro-Americans’ Experience in Unitarian Universalism. Mark Morrison-Reed (UUA). A startling glimpse into our history.

*Building Your Own Theology III,* Richard S. Gilbert. (UUA). Presents case studies to explore ethical decision-making in its many dimensions.

Experiences

• Review the universal life questions listed by goal and subject in Rosen’s *Religious Education and Our Ultimate Commitment,* pp. 132-149, noting those of the age group you have chosen to observe. Discuss with group leaders or the religious educator the overall program goals and goals of sessions you will observe. During observation, analyze the degree of congruence between goals implemented in the sessions and Rosen’s list for that age level.
• In consultation with the religious educator and course leaders, choose two programs between preschool to senior-high age levels to first observe and then participate as leader or co-leader for two or more sessions each. Before visiting or assisting in a program, study its philosophy, goals, age-level characteristics, and the session plans in which you are participating. Discuss the goals, process, and method with program’s leaders, and clarify your responsibilities. Ask the leaders to meet with you after each session to give you feedback on your participation.

• Participate as a member of an adult program offered in your congregation. Discuss the program’s goals and process with the religious education coordinator, analyzing together how well goals were met, the effectiveness of the process and the leadership style.

• Lead or co-lead one of the adult programs listed here or in the UUA Bookstore Catalog. In choosing a program, analyze the needs of your anticipated group. Upon completion, involve participants in evaluating the program’s effectiveness in meeting its stated goals and the meaning it had for them.

• In a community based setting, take advantage of opportunities to design and lead group meetings and educational sessions with children, youth, and adults. Ask your supervisor, intern committee, and/or other appropriate persons to evaluate the sessions for content and process, and your leadership.

Training Opportunities

• Take the training programs for Our Whole Lives. Contact your district Religious Education Committee or district office for dates and locations.

• Explore teacher-training sessions at the church with which you are associated or a district-sponsored leadership training conference. Note the goals and leadership styles used. Are the content and process congruent with the goals? How or why? What was most and least effective in the session?

• Negotiate with appropriate persons to participate as a co-leader or part of a leadership team for a leadership training conference. Design an evaluation instrument based on your goals for the experience and ask your intern committee and other persons to be evaluators of the conference and your leadership skills.

• Take these UUA Renaissance workshops: “Curriculum Planning for the Local Society,” which provides practical experience in planning curriculum for an institution and “Ministry with Youth,” an orientation for working with youth.

Worship with Children and Intergenerational Groups

Publications


• Conversations with Children, Edith F. Hunter. Initiating religious discussions with five- to eight-year olds, a valuable worship or classroom resource.


• Seasons of Hope, Circles of Love: Eight Intergenerational Celebrations, Judith Fisher and Jane McKeel (UUA).
Experiences

- Observe children’s and/or youth worship in church, conference or camp settings. Discuss goals, format and techniques with the worship leaders.
- Design and conduct worship for children and/or youth, and obtain evaluative feedback from teachers, leaders, your supervisor and your intern committee.
- Practice speaking and storytelling skills for this form of worship.
- Work with lay and professional leaders in designing and conducting one or more intergenerational worship services.
- Work with a worship committee to plan and conduct intergenerational celebrations.
- Assist a group of youth in preparing a special service for children in the church school or other institution, or an intergenerational component for a Sunday service.
- Consider and discuss with the children’s program staff and/or the religious educator the significance of ritual and tradition, as well as the power of music and song in worship with children.
- Read Worshipping Together With Questioning Minds. Examine Fahs’ theories in light of what you believe is appropriate and initiate a discussion on worship theory and practice with persons who lead children’s worship.

Training Opportunities

- Participate in skill-building workshops, such as storytelling, music and song, use of rituals and symbols.
- Take the UUA Renaissance workshop, “Worship For All Ages,” which is a practical approach to children’s and intergenerational worship leadership.

Team Development: Working with Volunteers and Staff

Publications

- How to Mobilize Church Volunteers, Marlene Wilson.
- Liberating Leadership: Practical Styles in Pastoral Ministry, Bernard Swain.
- Theory in Practice: Increasing Professional Effectiveness, Chris Argyris and Donald A. Schon.

Experiences

- Informed by reading or workshops in team dynamics and leadership styles, meet with the R.E. Committee regularly, analyzing the leadership style of the chair and the participation patterns of the group. How congruent with UU principles are the styles and patterns you observe? How might group participation and productivity be improved?
- Read How to Mobilize Church Volunteers and compare it to the practices for recruitment, training, supervision, and reward in your setting. What practices recommended by Wilson are there? What is missing? What recommendations can you give to your setting’s leaders?
- Facilitate an enrichment session with committee chairs that will assist them in their work.
- Co-design, co-facilitate or work with a committee to plan a board or committee retreat.
- Attend a board or committee retreat. What are the goals and what was done to achieve them? How do you evaluate the program’s design, leadership and results? What have you learned?
• Discuss with area R.E. leaders techniques of recruiting, training, supervising, and rewarding volunteers. What has been effective? Ineffective?

• Become familiar with services of the district Religious Education and Youth/Adult Committees. Participate in one or more events appropriate to your learning goals.

**Training Opportunities**

• Take the UUA Renaissance workshops, “Administration of R.E. Programs,” “Training Teachers,” and “Ministry with Youth.”

• Participate in a District Leadership School.

• Take workshops in volunteer management and team development.

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