

**Ministerial Fellowship Committee
Rules and Policies**

With Selections from UUA Bylaws

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1. THE RULES

These Rules are promulgated, and all rules previously promulgated are hereby rescinded and revoked, by authority of ARTICLE VII, Section 7.6 and ARTICLE XI of the Bylaws of the Unitarian Universalist Association. A copy of said ARTICLE VII, Section 7.6 and ARTICLE XI, is printed in this booklet. In these Rules, the word "society" refers to a church or fellowship.

2. COMMITTEE'S JURISDICTION

The Ministerial Fellowship Committee shall have jurisdiction over Ministerial Fellowship with the Unitarian Universalist Association and over the approved list of ministers published in the Unitarian Universalist Directory and elsewhere with authority to make any changes as hereinafter provided. Ministerial Fellowship is granted for parish ministry, the ministry of religious education, and community ministry, and these Rules shall apply to all ministers who are in Ministerial Fellowship with the Association.

3. EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

The Director of the Ministry and Professional Leadership Staff Group shall be the Executive Secretary of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee, but shall not be a voting member of the Committee. He/she shall have charge of the correspondence and the custody of the Committee's records and files, which shall be kept confidential as provided in said Bylaws. Upon request and by prior arrangement, information about a minister from the files of the Committee shall be shared with that minister except for psychological evaluations and information transmitted in confidence. The Executive Secretary shall keep a complete and accurate list of ministers who have, and who have had, Ministerial Fellowship, and such other books and documents as may be necessary or convenient to maintain complete and adequate records.

4. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

There shall be an Executive Committee consisting of the MFC Chair, MFC members appointed by the Chair, and, as non-voting members, the MFC Executive Secretary, Professional Development Director, and the Ministerial Credentialing Director. The Executive Committee shall meet before each full MFC meeting to review the MFC agenda, and make recommendations to the MFC concerning business items.

5. MEETINGS

The Committee shall meet at such times and places as it shall determine. Special meetings may be called by the Chair or by the Executive Secretary. Five members shall constitute a quorum.

6. CATEGORIES OF MINISTRY

For the purposes of the Rules, the term "Ministry" applies to those persons whose work is theologically grounded, whose work expresses Unitarian Universalist values and principles and whose self and contextual understanding are as a professional religious leader.

Within professional ministry, those persons qualified to perform ministerial, administrative, teaching pastoral and prophetic functions shall be differentiated by the application of these skills and experience to a specific area or context.

Community Ministers

Ministers qualified for and applying their skill and experience to the community setting in such capacities as counseling, chaplaincy, social justice, education in religious studies, and other ministries as the Ministerial Fellowship Committee may recognize, shall be categorized and referred to as "Community Ministers".

Ministers of Religious Education

Ministers qualified for and applying their skill and experience to parish educational settings related to religious growth and development in a congregation which is a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association shall be categorized and referred to as "Ministers of Religious Education".

Parish Ministers

Ministers qualified for and applying their skill and experience in a congregation which is a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association shall be categorized and referred to as "Parish Ministers".

Amended September 1997

7. MINISTRY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Replaced by Rule 6, September 1997

8. COMMUNITY MINISTRY

Replaced by Rule 6, September 1997

9. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Application for membership in the Ministerial Fellowship shall be submitted to the Committee following the process outlined in the Preparatory Stages listed in the MFC Policies. Before an application is filed, the applicant shall be furnished a copy of the Rules of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee, and as part of his/her application, he/she shall agree in writing to be bound by said Rules and amendments thereof. Upon the recommendation of Ministry and Professional Leadership, persons deemed to be very unsuitable for the Unitarian Universalist ministry will by vote of the Executive Committee be ineligible to receive financial aid or to appear before the full Committee.

INTERVIEW

No applicant shall receive Ministerial Fellowship unless he/she has been interviewed at least once by the Ministerial Fellowship Committee.

Amended December 2005

DECISION CATEGORIES

Category I

Qualified for our ministry with no contingencies other than the normal ones (i.e., satisfactory completion of degree, internship, CPE) and those the Committee considers relatively minor.

Category II

Qualified for our ministry provided major contingencies are met satisfactorily.

Category III

Encouraging progress for our ministry, but with issues to be addressed, either academic, personal, or in institutional understanding, so that the MFC wants to see the candidate again. If specific work has been outlined, it must be completed before a return visit.

Category IV

Considerable doubt as to whether the candidate meets the general qualifications (Rule 10) for our ministry. The MFC would caution the candidate that it views success as doubtful in the ministry.

Category V

The MFC sees, at this time, no potential for the candidate in our ministry, and discourages the candidate from further preparation. Following the interview the candidate will be informed by the Committee of its decision. Candidates receiving either a Category I or a Category II for Preliminary Fellowship shall be required to satisfy all contingencies within three years of the Committee's decision. Failure to do so will result in nullifying the original decision.

REPEAT INTERVIEWS

Applications to appear before the Committee from candidates who have previously received a Category IV or V shall be reviewed by the Executive Committee. In cases where the Executive Committee does not favor the candidate's return appearance, that potential appearance shall not be scheduled until and unless the MFC agrees to it, which it is not obliged to do.

10. GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS

All applicants must be college graduates or have had an equivalent education; have completed a clinical pastoral education program and an internship, or the equivalent; have completed the required reading; have undergone an approved career assessment program; be able to demonstrate an understanding of and experience with UU congregational life based on at least two years active involvement; must have a strong motivation and good potential for our ministry; must be sponsored by a member society; and must have a balanced and healthy personality, a capacity for self-understanding, a concern for others, intellectual ability, and ministerial leadership skills. The Committee will further require that the applicant be well informed on the history and development of Unitarianism and Universalism, familiar with the Bylaws of the Unitarian Universalist Association, and fully committed to the purpose and objectives of the Association. An applicant for the Ministry shall also have a Master of Divinity degree or its equivalent from a theological school approved by the Committee, or have had an equivalent educational experience. In examining every applicant's qualifications, the Committee

may consider any evidence which it deems relevant to assessing them and may reject any application.

11. INTERNSHIPS

All Candidates are required to complete satisfactorily a full-time or part time supervised internship. Full-time internships must be for at least six months. Part-time internships extend over a total of 18 months at a minimum of 15 hours per week. Supervision will be provided by a minister in Full and Final Fellowship. Equivalent experience, e.g. fieldwork placements or supervised ministries may be considered on a case by case basis. Internships play a crucial role in ministerial formation, thus:

A. The MFC expects a candidate applying for Preliminary Fellowship to demonstrate their abilities in the full range of ministerial competencies, defined jointly by the MFC and the UUMA as Pastoral Work, Prophetic Outreach, Teaching, Practical Arts and Worship. An internship shall therefore be designed to enhance existing and needed skills within these broad competencies.

B. Lay leaders must evaluate and affirm the ministerial roles of a candidate during an internship. The internship supervision shall therefore include a majority lay committee of five or more persons.

C. An internship is not only about development of skills. The internship shall therefore be designed to enhance the intern's ability to reflect on the theological and ethical bases from which these skills arise.

D. An internship is an opportunity to grow into the identity and role of a minister. Therefore the internship shall include evaluations from the intern, supervising minister, and lay committee, which are shared and which shall accompany other application documents to the Ministerial Fellowship Committee. Such evaluations shall emphasize reflections on areas of change and growth during the internship. Interns are required to develop a written learning agreement with their supervisors and lay committees before, or at the beginning of, any internship.

12. FIELD PLACEMENTS AND STUDENT MINISTRIES

A student fieldwork assignment is a supervised part-time placement in a church. It shall not be for more than three years.

While the Ministerial Fellowship Committee may, at its discretion, grant equivalency for forms of church experience other than internship, it is not to be expected that fewer than two years of field education of 15-20 hours per week (excluding CPE) would be considered equivalent. A two-year field education program constitutes an appropriate equivalency to internships, to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

A student ministry is unsupervised ministerial service in a church by a student carrying an academic load. It shall not continue beyond completion of a student's degree program, nor for more than four years.

13. CLINICAL PASTORAL EDUCATION EQUIVALENCY

Candidates requesting alternative programs to CPE shall submit a detailed explanation of the suggested alternative program which the Committee will examine against the following criteria:

A. The program should be such that it will:

1. provide an opportunity to develop ministerial role identity;
2. promote growth in self-understanding;
3. increase competence in interaction with others;
4. help the candidate utilize methods of self-evaluation; and
5. include didactics, peer review, and practical counseling.

B. The time requirement shall be equivalent to a CPE program (approximately 400 hours total involvement).

C. The program must provide evaluation by the supervisor and the candidate based on CPE evaluation models.

If the Committee is satisfied that the proposed program meets the above criteria, it may grant the candidate permission to substitute it for the CPE program.

14. RULES APPLICABLE TO SETTLED MINISTERS NOT IN FELLOWSHIP

If a minister without Ministerial Fellowship is settled in a society, he/she shall not be entitled to Ministerial Fellowship without first complying with the Rules of the Committee in the same manner as if he/she had not been a settled minister.

15. PRELIMINARY FELLOWSHIP

A. PRELIMINARY FELLOWSHIP: When the Committee determines that an applicant is qualified for Ministerial Fellowship, the Committee shall grant him/her Preliminary Fellowship. A person in Full Preliminary Fellowship shall be reviewed approximately every twelve months from the date of settlement, or at any other time deemed necessary by the Committee. Following any review, Preliminary Fellowship may be renewed, revoked, or continued in present status. The Committee reserves the right not to deal with renewal materials of Ministry and Professional Leadership Staff Group by the specified deadline. No person in Preliminary Fellowship shall remain in any one renewal period for more than three years without a waiver from the Committee for continuing education, family circumstances, or other significant cause.

Ministers in Preliminary Fellowship are required to arrange for the establishment of a Committee on Ministry, including members of a parish. Ministers primarily employed by an institution or government agency would include appropriate representation from that institution or agency. This committee is responsible for completing MFC evaluations as required.

Ministerial Fellowship is a privilege and not a right, and the Committee's refusal to grant or decision to revoke Preliminary Fellowship shall not be subject to appeal. If Preliminary Fellowship has been revoked, a person may re-apply for Fellowship.

B. RETURN INTERVIEW: Ministers in Preliminary Fellowship who demonstrate problems that raise questions about their suitability for the UU ministry may be asked to return for a further interview with the Committee. Significant problems may be one or more of the following:

1. Ongoing, persistent difficulty in securing a placement. Criteria are:

a. Any minister in Preliminary Fellowship whose name has been sent to no fewer than eighteen societies in a two-year period, but has yet to have a pre-candidating interview.

b. Any minister in Preliminary Fellowship who, in the judgment of the Settlement Director, displays inappropriate or counterproductive behavior toward the settlement process.

2. Continuing problems of personality and conflict with parishes or communities served.

3. Evaluations for renewal which evoke issues of significant concern.

C. IMPLEMENTATION

1. Ministerial Settlement Director may refer to the Executive Secretary of the Committee the name of any minister in Preliminary Fellowship who has had "ongoing, persistent difficulty in securing settlement."

2. The Executive Secretary may inform the Committee of ministers in Preliminary Fellowship who are or have been in conflict with their parish and whose re-entry into the settlement process may not be in the best interest of the UUA and/or our ministry.

3. The Executive Secretary or any member of the Committee may recommend that a minister in Preliminary Fellowship be asked to meet with the Committee when his/her evaluations for renewal demonstrate significant concern about the suitability for the UU ministry.

D. PROCEDURES FOR MEETING WITH MINISTERS IN PRELIMINARY FELLOWSHIP

1. Before the Committee considers requiring a minister in Preliminary Fellowship to return for a further interview, it shall give him/her 30 days notice. The minister may submit any relevant material prior to the Committee's decision.

2. If the Committee deems that the evidence warrants a review of the minister's Preliminary Fellowship, it will vote to ask the minister to meet with the Committee at the next most convenient meeting. Expenses for the minister's travel will be borne by the Committee.

3. Following the appointment with the Committee, the minister will be informed of the decision of the Committee as to whether he/she will be continued in Preliminary Fellowship and/or any contingencies have been voted before the minister can be further recommended for settlement.

E. CANDIDATE ENTRY INTO SETTLEMENT PROCESS

1. A candidate who has received Preliminary Fellowship is entitled to seek ministerial settlement.

2. Ministry and Professional Leadership may review a contingency for the purpose of expediting a candidate's entry into the settlement process, but shall delay for Committee decision reports involving significant problems.

F. MENTORSHIPS

Every minister in Preliminary Fellowship is required to be in a mentor relationship with a Unitarian Universalist minister in Final Fellowship.

G. TERMINATION OF PRELIMINARY FELLOWSHIP

At such time as the Committee may take under advisement the termination of a minister's Preliminary Fellowship, the Executive Secretary of the Committee shall advise the minister that he/she has three possible courses of action to pursue:

1. The minister may write, telephone, or visit with the Executive Secretary concerning extenuating circumstances which might bear upon the Committee's decision, a report of this to be brought to the Committee by the Executive Secretary.

2. The minister may, upon request, come before the Committee personally prior to its action concerning his/her Preliminary Fellowship.

3. The minister may, upon request, ask a colleague in Full Fellowship to appear before the Committee either together with him/her or in his/her behalf.

Failure of the minister to respond affirmatively to any of the above alternative privileges will be taken as meaning that he/she has no wish to press for a consideration of extenuating circumstances and the Committee will proceed with its consideration. The granting of any request for funds to so appear before the Committee shall be left to the discretion of Ministry and Professional Leadership.

16. FINAL FELLOWSHIP

To qualify for Final Fellowship, an applicant must have had Preliminary Fellowship and been in active service in the ministry, as defined by the Rules, for at least 36 months. If the Committee determines that the requirement for active service has been fulfilled, the applicant may be granted Final Fellowship.

17. SETTLEMENT RESTRICTIONS

Interim ministers, ministers-on-loan, already settled new congregation organizers, and

stated supply ministers (ministers filling a pulpit in a society that is in the search process) shall be subject to the same restrictions as stated for student interns (see policies on internships) regarding acceptance of a call to be the settled minister where they have served in one of the above capacities in the previous three years.

Extension ministers may accept a call to the society which they have been serving.

Ministerial Settlement Representatives may not accept a call to be the settled minister of any society with which they are having contact in the district they are serving.

For any given professional vacancy, a minister who has visited a congregation in any professional capacity after the most recently settled minister has announced his or her resignation to the congregation shall not be recommended to that congregation by Ministry and Professional Leadership for twelve months following the visit.

Any minister currently settled in a parish seeking to fill another ministerial position on its staff, or any minister who is a member of a congregation but not actively serving there, may accept a call to that position only if Ministry and Professional Leadership has not submitted a recommended list of candidates to that congregation.

Failure to adhere to the above restrictions may constitute grounds for termination of Ministerial Fellowship.

Amended November 2006

18. FULL FELLOWSHIP

Ministers in Ministerial Fellowship shall hold Full Fellowship or Associate Fellowship as provided below. Full Fellowship shall be reserved for ministers who have and continue to have Preliminary or Final Fellowship granted by the Committee and who serve and continue to serve - except when prevented by retirement, disability, or illness - in full-time active service. Full-time active service shall be defined as engagement 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 Full Fellowship.

To qualify as active service in ministry, a position must:

- 1) require the use of traditional ministerial skills, such as pastoral counseling, worship and preaching, religious education, social witness and advocacy, and institutional leadership.
- 2) have as its central purpose service to persons or the transformation of society.
- 3) maintain ties with and receive endorsement by one or more of the following: a UUA member congregation, authorized District body, UUA Associate Member organization, or

the UUA. Endorsement includes a pledge of continuing relationship and support and affirmation that the work is recognized by the endorsing body as a ministry.

In addition, the minister must be a member of a UUA member society and maintain active involvement in a UUA member society.

Every three years, a minister in Full Fellowship who does not serve in a UU-related institution shall be required to demonstrate continued interest in retaining that status by giving evidence of active involvement in denominational district, local society, and collegial activities. The status of ministers who fail to demonstrate such interest in response to a letter of inquiry from the Committee may be changed to Associate Fellowship.

19. ASSOCIATE FELLOWSHIP

Any minister holding Preliminary or Final Fellowship who in the judgment of the Committee ceases so to serve shall be in Associate Fellowship. However, during any time when a minister is seeking an appointment for such full-time active service, his/her name may remain on the list of those in Full Fellowship for such period as the Committee deems reasonable. Ministers in Associate Fellowship and their families will not ordinarily be eligible for financial aid administered through Ministry and Professional Leadership until the needs of ministers in Full Fellowship have been met. A minister holding Associate Fellowship may be transferred to Full Fellowship upon application and upon satisfying the Committee that he/she has secured an appointment for full-time active service as defined by the Rules. The action of the Committee in making or denying such transfers shall not be subject to appeal.

Every three years a minister in Associate Fellowship shall be required to demonstrate continued interest in retaining that status by giving evidence of active involvement in denominational, district, local society and collegial activities. As evidence of continued involvement, ministers in Associate status who wish to retain their Fellowship credential will be assessed a fee in an amount to be determined by the Committee. The fee shall be paid along with the minister's application for renewal. The status of those ministers who fail to respond within 60 days to a letter of inquiry from the Committee asking for evidence of Associate activities as noted above and/or who fail to pay the required fee will be acted on under Rule 25(B) at the next meeting of the Committee.

20. TRANSFER CANDIDATES

The Committee shall determine whether or not to grant Preliminary Fellowship to a transfer candidate based on that candidate's completed application.

Transfer candidates shall be subject to a thorough review of their present and/or past denominational, associational or judicatorial standing to ensure that all appropriate information has been shared with Ministry and Professional Leadership and the Committee, and that no pertinent information has been withheld. Candidates will be required to sign an authorization form, either before or immediately after their interview with the Committee, permitting Ministry and Professional Leadership to conduct such a

review. If Ministry and Professional Leadership later learns of detrimental information previously undisclosed, the Committee will be notified and may recall the candidate or deny Preliminary Fellowship until resolution is achieved. The transfer candidate may be required to do an internship, supervised ministry or CPE as determined by the Committee.

Amended September 1997, April 2005

20A. CANDIDATES FOR PLURAL STANDING

The Committee shall determine whether or not to grant Fellowship to a candidate who at that time has standing with one, or more, other denomination(s), association(s) and/or judicatory (ies) based on that candidate's completed application, and upon consideration of whether or not such plural standing would further the affirmative action, ecumenical, interfaith or other goals of the Association.

Candidates for plural standing shall be subject to a thorough review of the candidate's present and/or past denominational, associational or judicatorial standing(s) to ensure that all appropriate information has been shared with MPL and the Committee, and that no pertinent information has been withheld. Candidates will be required to sign an authorization form, either before or immediately after their interview with the Committee, permitting the Ministry and Professional Leadership to conduct such a review. If Ministry and Professional Leadership later learns of detrimental information previously undisclosed, the Committee will be notified and may recall the candidate or deny, terminate or suspend Preliminary Fellowship until satisfactory research is conducted.

A candidate for plural standing if the Committee so determines, may be required to do an internship, supervised ministry or CPE, as determined by the Committee.

Adopted December 1997

21. AFFILIATED STATUS

Deleted April 2006

22. LIST OF MINISTERS

The Committee shall maintain lists of ministers who are in Full Fellowship and Associate Fellowship. The Committee shall determine all matters, form and content pertaining to the lists of ministers in Ministerial Fellowship with the Unitarian Universalist Association and determine when and in what manner said lists or any of them shall be published.

Amended November 2006

23. RETURNING TO ACTIVE MINISTRY

Ministers who have had no recent ministerial experience, but who wish to have their names submitted to societies or for other professional positions, must make application to

Ministry and Professional Leadership for consultation in developing a program designed to give the applicant experience in necessary ministerial skills. The Committee must be satisfied that such a program has been entered into by said minister before his/her name shall be submitted to societies or for other professional positions.

24. SPECIAL REVIEW PROCEDURES

The Executive Secretary shall whenever he/she believes it necessary, present to the Committee the situation of any minister whose overall record seems to indicate that his/her continued recommendation for positions in societies or other institutions by Ministry and Professional Leadership is not justified. The Committee shall itself study each situation thoroughly or appoint a subcommittee, which may include some persons who are not members of the Committee, to make such a study. During the study of such situation by the committee or subcommittee, the committee or subcommittee shall meet with the minister in question if the minister so requests. Any subcommittee shall report to the full committee with its recommendations. The Committee shall determine what action shall be taken by Ministry and Professional Leadership.

25. CRITERIA FOR TERMINATION OF FINAL FELLOWSHIP

The status of Fellowship of a minister in the Unitarian Universalist Association may be terminated upon occurrence of any of these circumstances:

(A) When the Committee is unable to locate the address of a minister for two consecutive years, the Committee shall make a record in summary form of its efforts to locate such person. Reinstatement may be made by the Committee upon location of a current address within a reasonable period of time.

(B) When a minister who has been in Associate Fellowship for a period of three years or more fails to provide evidence of continued denominational involvement within sixty days of the Committee's letter of inquiry.

(C) When a minister's performance and/or behavior in a society or in any other professional position is found by the Committee to be conduct unbecoming a minister or for other specified cause.

(D) When a minister accepts settlement in a position for which he/she has not been certified by the Ministerial Fellowship Committee.

26. PROCEDURES FOR TERMINATION OF FINAL FELLOWSHIP

The Committee shall institute proceedings to determine whether a minister's Fellowship status shall be terminated upon the receipt of information from any identified source which indicates the probability that one or more of the criteria for termination exists.

A. Rights of the Minister. The final fellowship of a minister may be suspended or terminated by the Ministerial Fellowship Committee for unbecoming conduct or other specified cause after notice and opportunity for a hearing before the Committee at which the minister shall have the right to be represented by counsel, to introduce evidence, to

have any relevant and material evidence in the possession of the Association produced, and to cross-examine and rebut adverse evidence.

B. Rights of the Committee. The Committee shall also have the right to be represented by counsel, to introduce evidence, to have any relevant and material evidence in the possession of the minister produced, and to cross-examine and rebut adverse evidence.

C. Expenses. All expenses involved in the travel, appearance, and representation of the minister charged and of the witnesses called in the minister's defense shall be borne by that minister.

D. Notice of Charges and Hearing. Except with respect to Rule 25 (A) and (B), upon a finding of probable cause the Committee shall notify the minister in writing of the charges which have been brought, the date and place when a hearing shall be held, the minister's rights and the procedures which will be followed. Such notification shall be sent by certified mail and shall be postmarked not less than one month prior to the scheduled date of the hearing.

E. Response. Within fourteen (14) days of the notice, the minister must advise the Committee whether or not s/he intends to appear at the hearing, whether or not s/he intends to be represented by an attorney and his/her identity, and the minister's response to the charges.

F. Exchange of Documents. Prior to the hearing, the minister and the Committee shall arrange for the mutual exchange of documents and a list of anticipated witnesses.

G. Criminal Proceedings. In the event that criminal charges are pending against the minister, the Executive Committee may suspend all or part of its investigation until the conclusion of the criminal adjudication. A court transcript/record may be used in lieu of or in addition to an investigative committee report.

H. Hearing Procedures.

1. Hearing Panel. The hearing may be conducted by the Committee itself, with or without the assistance of counsel, or the Committee may appoint a Board of Inquiry to consist of three members, who need not be members of the Committee - for example, a member, an attorney-at-law, and one other person. When appointed, one of the three shall be designated as Chair by the Ministerial Fellowship Committee.

2. Confidentiality. At the beginning of the hearing, rules of confidentiality will be established and emphasized, and they will be reiterated at the end. All individuals - including Committee members, the person being heard and the support person and/or counsel - must respect all rules of confidentiality.

3. Record. The Board of Inquiry may determine if it wants a stenographic record at its own cost. If either party wants a stenographic record, it should notify the other three days

before the hearings so that it can decide whether to (a) have its own stenographic record made, or (b) negotiate with the other party to share such. Each party shall pay the cost of the transcript. If either or both parties obtain a stenographic record, a copy shall also be obtained and paid for by the Ministerial Fellowship Committee.

4. Procedures. The proceedings shall be conducted in such manner as the Committee or its Board of Inquiry shall determine within the limitations set forth above. The Committee or its Board of Inquiry shall have the authority to make any rulings on the conduct of the proceedings, including any rulings deemed necessary or appropriate to ensure that the hearings are conducted in an expeditious manner with due regard for the age and circumstances of the witnesses.

5. Recommendations of Board of Inquiry. If the proceedings are conducted by a Board of Inquiry appointed by the Committee, any findings of the Board of Inquiry together with the stenographic records and such reports as the Board of Inquiry may file shall be submitted to the Committee with its recommendations for decision. The Chair of the Board of Inquiry shall be responsible for submitting this material and it shall be sent to the Committee not later than one calendar month from the date of the last day of the hearing.

6. Access to Information All material sent to the Committee by the Board of Inquiry shall be open to inspection by the minister charged and/or a second person of the charged minister's choice.

7. Determination. The Committee, either at the conclusion of its own hearing, or upon receipt of the finding, etc., from a Board of Inquiry, shall determine whether or not the minister's status shall be terminated and shall enter in the record of the case the reasons for its decision and an order disposing of the case. Should the minister's Fellowship in the UUA not be terminated, the Committee may impose conditions and/or restrictions as it deems appropriate. Such decision shall be made at the next scheduled meeting of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee. Written notice of the decision containing the reasons thereof shall be sent by the Committee's Executive Secretary to the minister charged within seven days of the date of the decision.

8. Additional Proceedings. The Committee, at any time prior to the renderings of its decision, or prior to a final decision by the Review Panel in the event of appeal by the minister charged, shall have the power to reopen the proceedings to consider newly discovered evidence. In that event, the minister shall be notified in writing that the proceedings to terminate Fellowship have been reopened.

I. Administrative Suspension. Upon recommendation of the Executive Secretary, the Executive Committee may approve the suspension of a minister's fellowship until their status is reviewed by the MFC.

27. APPEALS

In all cases involving termination of Fellowship, except those arising under Rule 25(A)

and (B), the minister charged shall have the right of appeal and the following procedures shall be followed:

Any minister holding Final Fellowship who's Fellowship has been terminated may appeal to the Ministerial Fellowship Board of Review within thirty (30) calendar days. A minister who appeals as aforesaid agrees by so doing to abide by the Bylaws of the Association pertaining to the Ministerial Fellowship Board of Review, and agrees that the final disposition of his/her appeal by said Board shall be binding upon him/her and that neither he/she nor his/her legal representatives shall have any further recourse whatsoever in any proceeding within the Unitarian Universalist Association.

When an appeal is timely filed, the minister's status shall be that of "suspension from Ministerial Fellowship" until his/her case is finally disposed of, and during such suspension the minister's name shall not appear on lists of those in Ministerial Fellowship, and the minister shall not be recommended by Ministry and Professional Leadership. However, financial rights existing at the time of suspension, including any right to receive pension or insurance payments which are dependent upon Ministerial Fellowship, shall not be affected during the period of suspension.

Such an appeal shall be filed with the Secretary of the Ministerial Fellowship Board of Review within thirty (30) calendar days of the decision of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee and in such form as said Board by its rules shall prescribe. If such an appeal is not filed in accordance with rules of the Board of Review, the minister whose Fellowship status has been terminated agrees that the decision of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee shall be final and binding upon him/her and that neither he/she nor his/her legal representative shall have any further recourse whatsoever in any proceeding within the Unitarian Universalist Association.

If action by the Committee is affirmed, modified, or reversed upon appeal, the Committee shall take such action and make such entries on its records as required by any decision or order entered in the appeal proceedings.

28. RE-ADMISSION

The Committee shall have authority to re-admit a minister to membership in Ministerial Fellowship. An application on such form as the Committee shall determine shall be filed, said application to include in any event a brief statement of the reasons for termination of Fellowship status, and the reasons for re-admission which the applicant believes should be considered. The decision on an application for re-admission shall not be subject to appeal. Ordinarily an applicant for re-admission will be required to comply with Rules 13 and 14, but the Committee may modify or waive any of said requirements.

29. EARLY RETIREMENT

A minister who elects early retirement (after age 55 but before age 65) and later seeks resettlement in a permanent full-time ministry as defined in Rule 17, shall not be eligible for further service benefits beyond those already earned prior to retirement.

30. CONVICTION DISCLOSURE

Ministers in Fellowship with the Unitarian Universalist Association shall inform the Ministerial Fellowship Committee of all criminal convictions that occur subsequent to December 31, 1989, except for minor traffic violations and those convictions which by law they need not disclose.

Applicants for Fellowship with the Unitarian Universalist Association shall inform the Ministerial Fellowship Committee of all criminal convictions except for minor traffic violations and those convictions which by law they need not disclose. Such disclosure is required for Ministerial Fellowship.

31. COOPERATING WITH THE COMMITTEE

It is expected that all candidates for Fellowship and all ministers in Fellowship will cooperate with the Committee at all times. This includes responses to requests for information, provision of requested documentation, and attendance at meetings with the Committee. Non-compliance may be deemed conduct unbecoming a minister.

Rules adopted by the UUA Board of Trustees April 1980; and amendments adopted June 1980, October 1980, April 1981, January 1983, January 1984, January 1986, October 1986, January 1989, April 1989, October 1989, January 1991, April 1991, January 1992, October 1993, June 1994, September 1994 and April 2005.

UUA BYLAWS & MINISTERIAL FELLOWSHIP

ARTICLE VII COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Section 7.6. Ministerial Fellowship Committee.

The Ministerial Fellowship Committee shall consist of fourteen members as follows:

- (a) six members who are not ministers appointed by the Board;
- (b) six members who are ministers in full and final fellowship with the Association, with at least one from each category of ministry including community ministry, appointed by the Board; and
- (c) two members appointed by the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association.

Two members of the committee, and only two, shall be trustees. The committee shall have jurisdiction over ministerial fellowship with the Association as provided in Article XI hereof. The Board of Trustees shall designate a person who is not a member of the committee to be its Executive Secretary and keep its records.

ARTICLE XI MINISTRY

Section C-11.1. Ministerial Fellowship.

Each member society has the exclusive right to call and ordain its own minister or ministers, but the Association has the exclusive right to admit ministers to ministerial fellowship with the Association. Fellowship may be for the purposes of parish, religious education and/or community ministry as determined by action of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee. No minister shall be required to subscribe to any particular creed, belief, or interpretation of religion in order to obtain and hold fellowship.

Section 11.2. Ministerial Fellowship Committee.

The Ministerial Fellowship Committee shall have exclusive jurisdiction over ministerial fellowship except as otherwise provided herein. It shall make rules governing ministerial fellowship, subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees.

Section 11.3. Admission to Fellowship.

A minister may be admitted to fellowship by the Ministerial Fellowship Committee, upon complying with the requirements of these Bylaws and the rules of the committee. A minister who is admitted to fellowship shall be admitted to preliminary fellowship for a probationary period of three years, and may thereafter be admitted to final fellowship. Three years as an accredited director of religious education may be considered as satisfying the time requirement for granting of final fellowship as minister of religious education.

Section 11.4. Classes of Ministerial Fellowship.

The Ministerial Fellowship Committee shall adopt rules related to classes of ministerial fellowship which shall include full and associate fellowship.

- (a) Ministers in full fellowship are those admitted to fellowship who are:
 - (1) engaged in full-time active ministerial service;
 - (2) actively seeking positions in such service and have recently so served; and

- (3) retired from such service by reason of advanced age or illness.
- (b) Ministers in associate fellowship are those in fellowship who are not currently in full fellowship.

The Ministerial Fellowship Committee may also with the approval of the Board of Trustees make rules pertaining to the status of, and recognition by the Association of, lay preachers and the granting of licenses to them.

Section 11.5. Fellowship Records.

The Executive Secretary of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee shall maintain up-to-date records of all ministers in fellowship with the Association. Such records shall be available only to members of the committee, persons designated by the Committee, and, in cases of appeals, the Ministerial Fellowship Board of Review.

Section 11.6. Suspension or Termination of Fellowship.

The fellowship of a minister may be suspended or terminated by the Ministerial Fellowship Committee for unbecoming conduct or other specified cause. Final fellowship may be suspended or terminated only after notice and opportunity for a hearing before the Committee at which the minister shall have the right to be represented by counsel, to introduce evidence, to have any relevant and material evidence in the possession of the Association produced, and to cross-examine and rebut adverse evidence.

Section 11.7. Reinstatement in Fellowship.

The Ministerial Fellowship Committee may reinstate in or readmit to fellowship a minister who has previously resigned from fellowship or whose fellowship has been suspended or terminated.

Section 11.8. Appeal.

A minister in final ministerial fellowship whose fellowship is terminated may appeal the determination of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee to the Ministerial Fellowship Board of Review. The Ministerial Fellowship Board of Review shall have exclusive jurisdiction to hear and decide such appeals. No other appeal shall be allowed from any decision of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee.

Section 11.9. Procedure on Appeal.

An appeal to the Ministerial Fellowship Board of Review shall be heard by a panel of the Board selected as provided in its rules. The panel hearing an appeal shall not try the case de novo but shall only review the record made before the Ministerial Fellowship Committee, except that the Board of Review by rules may permit the introduction of newly discovered evidence. These Bylaws and the rules of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee shall be binding upon the panel. The panel shall uphold the decision of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee if it can be sustained by a reasonable view of the record. The panel may set aside the decision of the Fellowship Committee only where necessary to correct or prevent manifest injustice. The panel may remand the case in whole or in part to the Committee or take such other action as may be just. The decision of the panel, which shall be the decision of the Board, shall set forth its finding

and conclusions and shall be served upon the affected minister and the Ministerial Fellowship Committee. The decision shall be entered in the fellowship records and shall be final and binding upon all parties. No appeal shall be allowed from the decision of the Board of Review. The Ministerial Fellowship Board of Review shall make rules to carry out the intent of this section.

ARTICLE V COMMITTEES OF THE ASSOCIATION

Section 5.11. Ministerial Fellowship Board of Review.

- (a) Members. The Ministerial Fellowship Board of Review shall consist of eight members as follows:
 - (1) Four members who are ministers, each of whom at the time of election is in final ministerial fellowship with the Association and has held such fellowship continuously for the preceding seven years; and
 - (2) Four members who are not ministers, each of whom at the time of election is a member of a certified member society and has been a member of one or more such societies for not less than three years as an officer or a member of the governing bodies of one or more such societies.
- (b) Election and Term. One member of the Board of Review who is a minister and one who is not shall be elected at each regular General Assembly held in an odd-numbered year and shall serve for terms of eight years and until their successors are elected and qualified.
- (c) Qualifications. No member of the Board of Review shall during the term of office be a member of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee or hold any salaried position in the Association.
- (d) Removal. A member of the Board of Review may be removed without hearing by the vote of six other members.

Section 5.5. Vacancies.

A vacancy created by the death, disqualification, resignation, or removal of a member of a committee of the Association shall be filled by the Board of Trustees until the next regular General Assembly at which an election can be held. The vacancy shall then be filled by election for the balance of the unexpired term, if any.

POLICIES OF THE MINISTERIAL FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

1. SCHEDULING OF INTERVIEWS

Persons seeking Fellowship in the Unitarian Universalist Association will be scheduled for interviews with the Ministerial Fellowship Committee according to the following prioritized categories.

Categories for Scheduling Interviews:

- A. Students enrolled in a theological school or candidates within one year of graduation who are doing internships.
- B. Candidates who have previously received a Category III.
- C. Graduates (over one year) from UU or other theological schools coming before the MFC for Preliminary Fellowship.
- D. Ministers previously in Fellowship wishing to be re-instated.
- E. Candidates for transfer and Plural Fellowship who meet affirmative action intentions appropriate to the UUA and determined by the MFC.
- F. All other transfer and Plural Fellowship candidates.
- G. Candidates whose interviews were canceled after the penalty deadline.
- H. Those who previously received a Category IV or V decision by the MFC. Scheduling in this category requires MFC Executive Committee approval.

Interviews must be requested in writing at least 10 months prior to preferred interview date. Request deadlines are:

Meeting Request / Deadline

- MARCH/APRIL** (Chicago), June 1, (previous year)
- SEPTEMBER** (Boston), November 1, (previous year)
- DECEMBER** (Berkeley), February 1, (same year)

Candidates should be approximately two-thirds of the way through their preparation for ministry at the time of their MFC interview. Final evaluations of either Clinical Pastoral Education or the internship must be available by the time of the interview, with CPE preferred.

In order to balance the number of interviews at any one meeting, appointments will be made in consultation with, and at the final discretion of, the Ministerial Credentialing Director. The preliminary schedule will be determined and confirmations mailed ten months prior to each meeting.

Five months prior to each meeting, a materials checklist and a reconfirmation form will be mailed to each Candidate. A candidate canceling his or her appointment less than four months before the meeting will lose priority (except in emergency) and will be put on the waiting list for a future appointment. Notification of appointment dates will be made at least six weeks before the Committee meeting.

Candidates who fail to submit all materials to the Ministerial Credentialing Office by the deadline (approximately six weeks prior to the Committee meeting), or who have not completed the required reading by then, may have their appointments canceled.

Persons in Categories D through H may request (in writing) to be placed on the Waiting List. A person will be placed on the Waiting List only after all required materials have been received.

Candidates on the Waiting List will be confirmed for appointments according to the following procedure:

If fewer than 16 priority requests are received ten months prior to any meeting, candidates from the Waiting List will be confirmed, up to a total of sixteen candidates.

If a confirmed appointment is canceled prior to two weeks before the MFC meeting, persons on the Waiting List will be called to fill canceled appointments slots.

Persons on the Waiting List will be scheduled according to the priority list above, and at the discretion of the Ministerial Credentialing Director. The order in which a person is added to the Waiting List will be taken into account.

A person may request the city of his or her interview and may decline an inconvenient appointment without penalty.

Candidates in Categories D through H may be required by the Ministerial Credentialing Director to obtain approval for scheduling from the Executive Committee.

Adopted May 1983

Amended September 1984, February 1990, May 1990, February 1991, April 2005

2. MENTORSHIPS

All settled ministers in Preliminary Fellowship are required to have mentors, whom they may choose themselves. The mentee shall discuss matters of professional concern with his/her mentor for at least half an hour monthly during the church year, in person whenever practical. The mentor shall receive all completed forms for renewal of

Preliminary Fellowship, but may not be called upon for evaluations or for information about the mentee. Every year, along with other forms for renewal of Preliminary Fellowship, the mentee shall arrange for his/her mentor to certify the existence of the mentor relationship to Ministry and Professional Leadership. The mentor shall be in Final Fellowship, although this Rule may be waived as necessary.

Adopted November 1989

3. RESPONSE TO A COMPLAINT

The Committee Chair and Executive Secretary shall have the power between them to initiate the early steps on their own in response to a complaint of unprofessional conduct by one of our ministers. This shall include contacting the minister charged and, if deemed necessary, appointing an investigative committee.

Adopted November 1987

4. NOTIFICATION OF TERMINATION OF FELLOWSHIP

The Committee shall inform all ministers and congregations, by letter, of cases of fellowship termination when (C) or (D) of Rule 25 apply.

In the event that a minister voluntarily resigns from Fellowship during the pendency of a complaint, the record of the MFC shall reflect the resignation with a statement describing the stage of the investigation. For example, the statement shall read: Resigned (complaint pending); Resigned (after probable cause finding on pending complaint); or Resigned (during hearing on pending complaint).

All terminations of fellowship shall be reported in The World.

Adopted February 1991, amended September 1993

5. SCHOLARSHIP AID FOR CATEGORY IV AND V

Candidates who receive a Category IV or V decision shall not be eligible for scholarship aid from the Ministry and Professional Leadership Staff Group.

Adopted May 1986

6. TRAVEL EXPENSES FOR CANDIDATES

It will be the candidate's responsibility to pay transportation and other expenses incurred in meeting with the Committee. If a candidate has special accessibility needs, the MFC will cover any additional expenses necessary for candidate to appear before the Committee.

Amended September 2004

7. REMOVAL OF CANDIDATE FILES

Any candidate file which has been inactive for seven (7) years may be destroyed by the Ministry and Professional Leadership Staff Group.

8. CANDIDATE PARTICIPATION IN UU SOCIETIES

In considering candidates for the ministry, attention will be given to the degree of participation which they have had in one or more of our societies. Candidates are expected to maintain active participation, and prior to appearing before the Committee, letters of reference describing the extent of their participation shall be sent to the Committee.

9. LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

Up to six letters of recommendation are required, one each, from:

- (1) The candidate's faculty member or advisor at theological school if candidate is enrolled in or a recent graduate of a theological school.
- (2) a Unitarian Universalist minister other than one's internship supervisor
- (3) anyone of the candidate's choice who has known him or her for at least six years, and
- (4) anyone of the candidate's choice.
- (5) A religious educator.

One of these letters must satisfy the policy requirement of describing the extent of participation in a Unitarian Universalist congregation.

Adopted February 1991, amended April 2005

10. CONTINGENCIES AND REQUIREMENTS

The Ministerial Credentialing Director shall determine whether a contingency or requirement has been completed satisfactorily.

Adopted February 1991

11. INTERNSHIPS

Candidates, supervisors, and intern committees must use the evaluation forms provided or alternative forms which provide an equally broad range of information. Evaluative letters may also be included. [Note: If the internship has been completed, communication documenting the candidate's work in religious education is required by the Rules.]

When the Ministerial Fellowship Committee grants a Candidate Preliminary Fellowship, the Candidate is expected to have developed a competency to serve in any of the specialties of ministry. Internships must be created with this in mind. Interns are required to develop a written learning and service agreement with their supervisors and intern committees before, or at the beginning of, any internship. Internship learning and service agreements must be approved by a staff member at the Ministerial and Professional Leadership Staff Group at the UUA.

Candidates are strongly discouraged from undertaking internships in their home congregations or current places of employment, and must seek a waiver of this policy from the MFC when considering such an internship.

A person engaged in a ministerial student internship, ministerial student field work placement, contract ministry, or summer student ministry, shall not be eligible for settlement in any professional position in the society in which he/she has been engaged for a period of three years following the conclusion of any of those placements or any subsequent employment in that society. These conditions shall be clearly stated to the church that engages a candidate. Failure on the part of the candidate to adhere to this policy shall be grounds for withholding Fellowship by the Ministerial Fellowship Committee.

Guidelines for Offsite Supervised Internship Sites

In situations where on-site supervision is impossible, the following guidelines must be met:

- a. That the offsite supervisor and intern meet face to face weekly
- b. That the offsite supervisor be supervising only one intern at a time
- c. That the offsite supervisor must be in full and final fellowship
- d. That the offsite supervisor preferably not be a District Staff member
- e. That the supervisor and intern be in consultation with the Internship Clearinghouse Coordinator in design of the Learning/Service Agreement.

Adopted February 1991, amended, April 2005

12. NOTIFICATION OF POLICIES

All rules and policies shall be in effect when they have been communicated to the parties directly involved. Communication shall be made through the Religious Leader and the UUA website.

Adopted February 1991, amended April 2005

13. PREPARATORY STAGES

The following outline describes the stages of preparation for UU ministry and some of the policies and procedures associated with each stage.

A. APPLICANT STATUS

Applicants are those who have:

1. Contacted the Ministerial Credentialing Office or a Regional Subcommittee on Candidacy (RSCC) office indicating intent to pursue fellowship as a UU minister. The local RSCC office will maintain a record of applicants.

B. ASPIRANT STATUS

A person in Aspirant Status has submitted the following forms to the RSCC office:

1. Initial Inquiry Form (RSCC-1)
2. Interview Forms- from a UU minister and a UUA Field Staff member or designee (RSCC-2)
3. Essay on ministerial aspirations and relevant biography (1-2 pages) in which they say something about who they are and the ministry they feel called to do.
4. Transfer/Plural Standing Form (if applicable) (MFC-7)
5. Evidence of acceptance to a theological school or another approved program, or graduation from theological school.

C. CANDIDATE STATUS

In addition to 1 through 5 above, a Candidate has also:

6. Completed an approved career assessment program and released the report to the RSCC, Ministerial Credentialing Office and the MFC. (The report should be mailed to the RSCC only.)
7. Completed at least one year of theological education;
8. Agreed in writing to abide by the Rules and Policies of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee and
9. Agreed in writing to defer accepting any ministerial position other than internships and student ministries unless approved by the Ministerial Credentialing Director. Violation of this policy shall render the candidate ineligible for an interview with the Ministerial Fellowship Committee or Ministerial Fellowship for four years from the commencement of the position.
10. Been interviewed and approved for Candidate Status by the RSCC. Persons who entered the process prior to July 1, 1999, and see the MFC prior to December 31, 2006, are not required to be interviewed by an RSCC. An interview is, however, recommended. Those who have not seen the MFC by December 31, 2006 will be required to have an RSCC interview before coming before the MFC.

Amended, September 2004, January 2005

14. COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

1. Initiation of Reviews and Investigations.

Investigations of ministers for unprofessional/unbecoming conduct or other violation(s) of the rules of Fellowship shall be initiated by a complaint or in unusual circumstances by a vote of the Executive Committee of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee ("Committee").

2. Complaints.

Complaints involving alleged unprofessional/unbecoming conduct of a minister or other violation of the rules of Fellowship shall be reviewed by the Ministerial Fellowship Committee. Complaints should be from a person or persons with first-hand knowledge of the circumstances. Complaints about the general suitability of a minister should be

brought by the congregational, institutional, or agency board with whom the minister works. Except in cases involving children, the Committee will not generally act upon complaints by persons who were not directly involved in the circumstances covered by the complaint. Complaints must be in writing and signed by the complainant or Board and shall contain a brief statement of the facts upon which the complaint is based. If necessary, the Executive Secretary will assist the complainant in reducing the complaint to writing.

When information not in the form of a written complaint concerning possible unprofessional/unbecoming conduct of a minister comes to the attention of the MFC or its Executive Secretary, the Executive Secretary may, as Director of the Ministry and Professional Leadership, intervene directly with the minister involved or refer the information to the UUMA or to the District Executive, as deemed appropriate. The MFC will become involved in such a situation absent formal complaint if a District Executive or the UUMA Exec. recommends that further action be taken by the MFC, or as provided in the MFC Rules and Policies and UUA Bylaws.

3. Timeliness and Stale Matters.

Complaints should be received by the Committee or its Executive Secretary within a reasonable time period following the circumstances giving rise to the complaint. Unless the Executive Secretary or the Committee determines otherwise for good cause, the Committee will not entertain any complaint which arises out of acts or omissions occurring more than six years prior to the date of the complaint and when there has been no repetition of that conduct during the six years preceding the complaint. Good cause shall include, but not be limited to, complaints involving abuse of children or particularly egregious behaviors.

4. Cooperation.

At any time, the Committee or its designees may decide to meet with the minister to share both its concern and to explore ways to deal with the problem. Failure of the minister against whom the complaint has been made to comply with the requests of the Executive Secretary, the Committee, or its designees at any stage of the procedures, including the investigation, hearing and resolution of the complaint may be grounds for action under MFC Rule 25.

5. Notifications.

As soon as appropriate after receipt of a complaint, the Committee will notify the minister. With the initial notification, the Committee will request a written statement of the minister's position on the allegations in the complaint. Such statement of position should be received within ten (10) days of the minister's receipt of the Committee's notice of complaint, unless an extension is granted by the Executive Secretary for good cause.

5 (a) Concurrent Criminal Charges.

A. In the event that criminal charges are pending against the minister arising out of the same facts involved in the complaint filed with the MFC,

the minister may request that his/her participation in the investigation, including the statement of position required by paragraph 5, etc., be suspended until the completion of the criminal trial or other judicial process. Unless there are extraordinary circumstances, such suspension shall not include the time necessary to appeal a conviction.

B. A court transcript/record may be used in lieu of or in addition to an investigative committee report. (Adopted September 1993)

6. Screening of Complaints.

All complaints and the minister's written response thereto shall be reviewed by the Executive Secretary in consultation with the Executive Committee to determine what, if any, further action should be taken. The Executive Secretary may determine that further proceedings are not warranted. Any determination shall be reviewed and approved by the Executive Committee.

7. Resolutions.

In consultation with the Executive Committee, the Executive Secretary may explore with the minister the possibility of a voluntary resolution of the issues, including, but not limited to, letter of admonition, reprimand, suspension, counseling, or resignation, etc., at any time during the processing of the complaint. The Executive Committee shall recommend any such recommendation to the full Committee for its action.

Written confirmation of a voluntary resolution agreement shall be sent to the minister within 14 days. A copy will be placed in the minister's file. Additional copies may be sent to other persons or institutional representatives as deemed appropriate by the MFC.

Amended February 1997

8. Complaint Investigations.

The type of investigation required by a complaint will depend upon the alleged circumstances and the type of additional information required.

A. In consultation with the Executive Committee, the Executive Secretary shall determine the type and scope of investigation required. If deemed necessary, the MFC Chair and the Executive Secretary may appoint an investigative committee. The investigative committee shall be comprised of one or more members of the Committee or other suitable Unitarian Universalists.

B. In consultation with the MFC Chair and the Executive Secretary, the appointed investigators will investigate the facts and circumstances related to the alleged misconduct, including, but not limited to, interviews with the complainant(s) and the minister. The investigators may request any documents or written information which will assist in the investigation.

C. The appointed investigators will file a report and all information collected, including any tape recordings, transcripts, and/or statements, etc., with the Executive Secretary promptly after the conclusion of the investigation.

D. If appropriate, tape recordings may be transcribed and a copy of each witness' transcript or a summary thereof forwarded to the witness for review and signature.

9. Review of Record.

The MFC Chair and the Executive Secretary should review the record. If it is determined that additional information is required, the investigators and/or the Executive Secretary may obtain the additional information.

10. Determination of Probable Cause.

Once the record is complete, the Executive Committee shall determine whether or not there is probable cause to believe that the minister has engaged in unprofessional/unbecoming conduct or other conduct in violation of Rule 25 of the MFC Rules.

A. Finding of No Probable Cause. If it is determined that probable cause does not exist, the Executive Secretary shall so notify the minister, complainant, and other interested parties. The determination of no probable cause made by the Executive Committee may be appealed by the complainant to the full Committee. The appeal should be written and contain a review of the reasons why the no cause determination should be overturned and must be received within two (2) weeks of the receipt of notice of the no cause determination. As soon as an appeal is received, the Executive Secretary should give notice to the minister involved and the minister may file a response.

B. Finding of Probable Cause. If it is determined that probable cause exists, the Executive Secretary shall so notify the minister, complainant, and other interested parties and schedule a hearing before the Committee.

11. Hearings.

The hearing before the Committee shall follow the guidelines set forth in Rule 26 of the MFC Rules.

GUIDELINES FOR THE INVESTIGATION OF COMPLAINTS

It is the goal of the Committee to ensure the prompt investigation and resolution of complaints which allege that a minister's conduct fails to adhere to the standards required for Fellowship. Because the type of investigation or resolution required will depend upon the nature of the complaint and the type of additional information required, the MFC Chair and the Executive Secretary are empowered, under the Committee's procedures, to initiate an investigation and to appoint an investigative committee.

The following are guidelines which are to be used by the investigative committee in conducting its investigation.

1. In consultation with the Executive Secretary and the MFC Chair, it is the responsibility of the investigative committee to develop a full and complete record of the facts and circumstances surrounding the complaint and any other relevant information which may be useful to the Committee in its deliberations.
2. Each individual appointed to an investigative committee is expected to maintain neutrality and an open mind throughout the investigation. All information obtained through the investigation must be held in the strictest confidence. Investigators should make every effort to ensure that they conduct themselves as neutral fact-finders, mindful of the need to protect the reputation of all participants at each stage of the process.
3. In consultation with the Executive Secretary and the MFC Chair, the investigative committee should determine what, if any, additional information is required to assist the Committee in its deliberations and the most efficient method for obtaining that information.
4. If it is determined that personal interviews would be appropriate, the appointed investigators will interview the complainant, the minister against whom the complaint has been made, and as many other witnesses with knowledge of the issues or circumstances raised by the complaint, including representatives of the church Board, the District Executive, and any other persons deemed relevant by the investigators, as appropriate and necessary. Interviews may be tape recorded and a transcript from the tape recording may be prepared.

The investigative committee may also request the letters, position statements, materials or other documents which might assist it and the Committee and its designees in responding to the complaint and resolving the issue.

5. The tapes, notes, and any other information gathered by the investigative committee should be transmitted to the Executive Secretary as soon as possible following the completion of the interviews and any other investigation.

Adopted February 1992

14 A. CONDITION OF SUSPENSION OF MINISTER FROM FELLOWSHIP

A minister who has been suspended from Fellowship shall not during such suspension identify herself or himself, or hold herself or himself out, as a Unitarian Universalist Minister, and shall not serve a Unitarian Universalist congregation in any capacity. Such suspended minister, with prior permission of the Executive Secretary of the MFC, may do supply preaching and, in appropriate circumstances, rites of passage.

Adopted May, 1998

15. COMMUNITY MINISTRY

(The policies adopted when Community Ministry was added as a category of ministry served transitional needs. They were dropped November 1996.)

16. MINISTERS IN FINAL FELLOWSHIP SERVING COMMUNITY IN MINISTRIES

(Ministers credentialed in Final Fellowship in the Parish or RE track(s) on or before October 1, 1992, but who are in Community Ministries, are eligible for additional credentialing in Final Fellowship in the Community Ministry track by applying to the MFC. This policy expired on June 30, 1997.)

17. MINISTERS IN PRELIMINARY FELLOWSHIP SERVING IN COMMUNITY MINISTRIES

Dropped November 1996

18. PROCEDURES FOR COMPLAINTS AGAINST CANDIDATES

1. Complaints and Notification. Complaints about candidates should be directed to, and initially handled by, the Ministerial Credentialing Director. As soon as appropriate after receipt of a complaint, the Ministerial Credentialing Director will notify the candidate. With the initial notification, a request should be made to the candidate to provide a written statement of the candidate's position on the allegations in the complaint within ten (10) days of receipt of the notice of complaint.

2. Investigation. The Ministerial Credentialing Director will review the complaint to define the problem and conduct an investigation. The investigation will generally include consultation with all involved parties (candidate, Ministry and Professional Leadership staff, complainant(s), theological school, supervisor, etc.) and review of any additional information, including the student's file, etc. The Ministerial Credentialing Director will prepare a written report of his/her findings and recommendations for the Executive Committee of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee.

3. Resolutions. The Ministerial Credentialing Director may explore with the student the possibility of a voluntary resolution of the issues, including, but not limited to, letter of reprimand, suspension, counseling, or removal from candidate status, etc. at any time during the processing of the complaint. Any such resolution must be mutually agreeable and shall be communicated to the Executive Committee of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee for approval.

4. Recommendations. The Ministerial Credentialing Director shall make a recommendation to the Executive Committee of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee that:

- a) a mutually agreeable resolution be adopted;
- b) no further action is necessary; or
- c) possible removal from candidate status.

A copy of the Ministerial Credentialing Director's recommendation shall be sent to the candidate.

5. Consideration of Recommendation. If removal from candidate status is recommended, the candidate must be notified at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee's Executive Committee at which the Ministerial Credentialing Director's recommendation will be considered. The candidate should be advised of his/her right to request a meeting with the Executive Committee and to bring a support person. All costs and expenses involved in the travel and appearance of the candidate and his/her support person shall be borne by the candidate. The meeting with the Executive Committee shall be for the purpose of providing the candidate with an opportunity to provide any additional facts of mitigating circumstances regarding his/her candidate status.

6. Determination of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall consider all relevant information, including the complaint, the candidate's file, written documents, the recommendation of the Ministerial Credentialing Director, and if requested, the meeting with the candidate. The Executive Committee may determine to accept a mutually agreeable resolution, or to take no further action. If the Executive Committee decides to remove a candidate from candidate status, such decision shall be based on a determination that the continuation of the candidate's status is not in the best interests of the Association or its ministry.

7. Notification of the Decision of the Executive Committee. The decision of the Executive Committee shall be communicated as soon as possible to the candidate.

8. Readmission to Candidate Status. A candidate whose candidate status is removed may, upon furnishing appropriate evidence that the concern no longer exists, apply to the Executive Committee for readmission to candidate status.

Adopted November 1992

19. MINISTER'S FILES

Ministers may request a photocopy of their file at a cost which covers staff time and copying.

Adopted April 1994

20. CANDIDATES RECEIVING IVs and Vs

A candidate who receives a V will be removed from candidate status, and a candidate who receives a IV will be kept in candidate status for a maximum of 3 years.

Adopted November 1994

21. PROCEDURES FOR RE-ADMISSION

1. A minister seeking re-admission shall submit a Re-admission Application on the approved form.
2. Upon receipt of such application the MFC shall notify the appropriate officer(s) of the congregation(s) affected, any original complainant(s), and appropriate field staff that such application has been received. The MFC will receive their comments.
3. The MFC shall review such application and determine whether or not to readmit the minister to Fellowship, or to require further consideration of the application subject to conditions which the MFC shall prescribe.
4. If the application is determined to require further consideration the applicant may be required to obtain a professional rehabilitation assessment at an institution designated by the MFC. Such assessment shall evaluate the applicant's potential for rehabilitation, and if rehabilitation is determined by the MFC to be a possibility, the institution shall design and submit to the MFC a proposed rehabilitation plan. The applicant shall pay the costs of such assessment and of the design of a proposed rehabilitation plan, and shall, prior to the commencement of the assessment, execute a release by which the assessment and the rehabilitation plan shall be the sole property of the MFC. The minister shall receive a copy of the assessment and of the rehabilitation plan.
5. The MFC shall review such assessment and the proposed rehabilitation plan, and shall determine whether or not to further consider the application for re-admission. If the MFC determines not to further consider the application, it shall so advise the applicant.
6. If the MFC determines to review further application it shall design or approve a rehabilitation plan which may include, but not be limited to, psychotherapy, supervised field experience, making amends, or further assessment.
7. Upon the applicant's successful completion of a rehabilitation plan the MFC shall determine whether or not to readmit the applicant to Ministerial Fellowship. If re-admission is granted, a re-entry plan and/or conditions shall be designated by the MFC in conjunction with the Ministry and Professional Leadership.

Adopted May 1996, amended December 1998

22. POLICY FOR IMPLEMENTING SPECIAL REVIEW PROCEDURES

A recommendation to withhold a minister from settlement will be communicated to the minister along with the reasons for the recommendation. The minister may submit a written response or request an interview with an appropriate subcommittee of the MFC before the decision is made by the MFC. Such a response or request must be made within 21 days of the date of the notification of the recommendation. (SEE RULE 24)

Adopted November 1996

23. CREDENTIALING

The Ministerial Fellowship Committee credentials candidates based on our evaluation of a candidate's ability to serve in North America.

24. POLICY ON DIVIDED OPINION

In a decision, if the Full Committee wishes to reverse an Executive Committee or Working Group recommendation, a final decision will not be made until the full committee has reviewed all the written information that was available to the recommending group. If the information included a personal interview, the full committee may, at its option, conduct a repeat interview.

There shall be an option of a majority and a minority report from the Executive Committee or Working Group when the Executive Committee or Working Group decisions are not unanimous.

Adopted September 1999

25. POLICY ON MFC RECORDS

The MFC records are to be used only for MFC duties as set forth in the UUA bylaws.

Adopted, May 2001

26. POLICY ON WAIVERS OF RULE 17

In support of affirmative action, the MFC will look favorably upon waiver requests of Rule 17 in cases of appointed representatives of UUA anti-racism anti-oppression multi-cultural programs. Such waivers can be granted by the Executive Committee.

In further support of affirmative action, the MFC moves to waive for two years (January 1, 2004-December 31, 2005) the requirements of the first paragraph of Rule 17 for ministers of color/historically marginalized groups serving as interim MRE's, interim ministers and interim assistant ministers."

Adopted December 2001, amended December 2003, expires December 2007

27. POLICY ON MINISTERS IN FINAL FELLOWSHIP SERVING NON-UU CONGREGATIONS

Ministers in final fellowship serving non-UU congregations who fulfill the requirements of Rule 18 may be considered to be in full fellowship.

28. POLICY ON MINISTERS IN PRELIMINARY FELLOWSHIP SERVING NON-UU CONGREGATIONS

Parish ministers or MREs serving a non-UU congregation may not receive renewals in parish or RE. They may, however, receive renewals in community ministry provided they fulfill the requirements of Rule 18.

Adopted December 2001

29. POLICY REQUIRING THAT WAIVERS MUST BE CONSIDERED AT AN MFC MEETING PRIOR TO INTERVIEW

All candidates who wish to request a waiver of the CPE and /or internship requirement must arrange to have the waiver request considered at the meeting held in advance of their MFC interview.

Adopted December 2003

30. POLICY ON NON-DISCRIMINATION

The MFC declares and affirms its special responsibility to value all persons without regard to race, color, gender, disability, affectional or sexual orientation, family structure, age, ethnicity or national origin in making its credentialing decisions.

Adopted December 2003

31. POLICY ON WAIVERS FOR CPE EQUIVALENCY AND INTERNSHIPS

Waiver requests must include at least two letters of recommendation that address work in a previous ministerial role and grounding in UU congregational life. In addition, where applicable, please include recent ministerial employment evaluations, and any certificates noting professional licenses, current membership and good standing in a relevant professional organization.

Adopted December 2003

32. POLICY ON THERAPY RECOMMENDATIONS

When the MFC and RSCCs make recommendations for psychotherapy, they should not specify what type of professionals to use.

Adopted February 2001

33. CATEGORIES OF AFFILIATED STATUS

Deleted November 2006

34. FINAL FELLOWSHIP

Final Fellowship shall be granted after a minister in Preliminary Fellowship submits to the MFC three successful annual “renewals” of at-least half time compensated work in any ministry. In order for any renewal to be granted, a minister must be in a mentor relationship with a minister in final fellowship within the specialty in which the minister is working. Final Fellowship will be awarded when three successful renewals of Preliminary Fellowship are completed. When renewals are submitted for three years in a particular specialty of ministry, the minister will be granted “Final Fellowship with a Specialty in...” These renewal submissions need not be in three successive years. Final Fellowship may be awarded without reference to any specialty when three renewals have been completed for years involving different specialties.

Ministers seeking Final Fellowship in two specialties at the same time must not only submit renewals for half-time compensated work in each specialty, but must also have a mentor in final fellowship for both specialties. The MFC is willing to consider mentors outside the ordained UU ministry for ministers seeking final fellowship in any specialty. In such cases, this mentorship would have to be in addition to an existing mentorship involving a UU minister in final fellowship, and must be approved by the Settlement Working Group.

Adopted April 2005

35. INTERNSHIP SEEKER STATUS

All interns must minimally be in aspirant status in order for the MFC to recognize an internship as potentially meeting MFC requirements.

Adopted December 2004

36. CANDIDATE FILE REVIEW

The Ministerial Credentialing Director will provide to the Ministerial Fellowship Committee a written review of the material in the candidate's file prior to the candidate's interview. The review will be written by the Ministerial Credentialing Director in mutual agreement with the candidate, whenever possible. If not possible, that fact will be noted in the written review.

Adopted December 2004

37. POLICY ON FIRST RENEWALS UNDER MINISTERIAL SPECIALTIES

Ministers who are in preliminary fellowship who have not yet received their first renewal may opt to proceed under the new system, by indicating such in their first renewal application.

Adopted September 2005

38. POLICY ON MINISTERIAL SPECIALTIES AND MENTORING

Ministers in Final Fellowship in a category of ministry are hereby deemed to have a specialty in that category of ministry and are eligible to be a mentor for ministers seeking recognition in that specialty.

Adopted September 2005

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