

Commissioned Ministry Education Program

To meet the challenge of the new Ordering Document, the Christian Church in the Upper Midwest has developed the following education program for Commissioned Ministers Not Seeking Ordination. The program is known as the CMEP. Below is a description of how the program works including general requirements. .

A. General Information

- (1) There are four areas of study:
 - (1) History
 - (2) Bible
 - (3) Theology
 - (4) Practice of Ministry (worship, preaching, pastoral care, administration, leadership, personal, emotional, and spiritual development)
- (2) The program consists of a three (3) year course of study in the areas above, two courses in each discipline of study.
- (3) The course of study and its subsequent application process will be the traditional academic year, as, for example, September thru June).
- (4) Applications for admission must be submitted no later than August 1 of the academic year the applicant enters course work in the program.
- (5) Costs per course in the new program will necessarily be flexible, but the initial fee per course (not credit hour) for the first year will be set at \$250.
- (6) All fees as determined by the Commission for course work must be paid in advance of a student's enrollment in any course.

B. Specific Course Structure/Requirements

(1) Practice of Ministry

Three semesters of "supervised" ministry. The role of the supervisor will be to guide, teach, and evaluate the student's process of learning the skills and practices needed for effective congregational ministry. This will include such areas as preaching, pastoral care, administration, and overall general leadership.

Each "supervisor" will participate in a training seminar conducted by the Dean or other qualified trainer before any supervision will be undertaken. In addition, there will be

periodic supervisor training sessions for this purpose.

The student will be required to complete three (3) semesters of supervised ministry (which also defines the length of the supervisory role).

Supervisor will consult regularly with the Dean to discuss progress and problems and also meet with the sub-group on Entrance & Assessment to discuss student's progress in the second semester of supervised ministry.

The supervisor will meet with a small group of laity from the church where the student is in supervised ministry to evaluate the student's effectiveness in his or her practice of ministry. A summary of this assessment will be forwarded to the Dean and the Commission's Entrance & Assessment sub-group.

There will be six (6) required retreats (two per year) that will focus on various aspects of the practice of ministry to augment the work being done under supervision. These aspects of ministry will include but not limited to preaching, pastoral care, administration, leadership, self-care, denominational participation, and continuing education. The PC will be responsible for the scheduling and organization of these retreats.

(2) Bible, Church History, and Theology

A. Seminary Course Work

Disciples seminaries (Brite, Phillips, Lexington, and CTS) now offer online course work for people wanting to engage in serious and structured study in the fields of Bible, Church History, and Theology. (Contact seminary for specific program information)

These courses may serve as the primary course requirements for the CMEP. The Dean will work with any student who is accepted into the program and who desires to follow this option for meeting the requirements in this area of the curriculum. Such study may also be done at non-Disciples seminaries so long as the course work matches the program requirements.

B. Course work conducted by the region.

This part of the curriculum will consist of (six) courses (two in each section), with one course taken each semester in the three year program. It is possible that the same text might be used in the two courses within a section. Ex: The same church history text might be used for material that covers the beginnings up to the Reformation and from the Reformation to the modern era. Additional texts might also be incorporated in a semester's study.

Classes will be conducted online using the approved text, but with specific content and structure determined by the class instructor in consultation with the Dean.

Instructors are Disciples clergy in the Upper Midwest Region and other persons qualified and interested in teaching a course of study.

As a general practice students will be required to attend the first and last class session for all courses in person at a location determined to be central to the class and instructor's geographical demographics, The purpose of this first session is to outline course requirements and provide an opportunity for students and instructor to meet one another in the hope that this will strengthen and enhance discussions online. The purpose of the last session is to evaluate the course as a means of improving the experience for the future.

As in all educational settings, students will be expected to participate in all online class sessions and to complete all assignments on time in order to received a passing grade. Any exceptions will need prior approval of the instructor. Course requirements will be appropriate to the nature of the CMEP. .