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Concerning the Apprentice Track to Ordination in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Mid-America

II.C.2. Educational Requirements.

There are two educational tracks in preparation for Ordination: an Apprentice Track (AT) and a Seminary Track (ST).

Those in the Apprentice Track will demonstrate competency in the 16 Areas of Ministerial Practice by completing a program of study of at least 250 contact hours approved by the Region in which they are under care.¹

Those in the Seminary Track will demonstrate competency in the 16 Areas of Ministerial Practice by securing a Master of Divinity degree or its equivalent from a theological school accredited by the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada or its equivalent

Candidates for Ordination are encouraged to follow the seminary track, unless they determine, in consultation with their Region, that their economic, vocational, or familial circumstances make the apprentice track more appropriate.²

*From: Theological Foundation and Policies and Criteria for the
Ordering of Ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Amendment 1.0, 9/30/2009, pp. 19-20.*

3 As with the closing paragraph above, we note from *A Handbook for working with*
4 *Candidates or Ordination, Fall, 2010* [found in the *Mid-America Guide for Ordination*]:

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6 *The other dimension looks at THE CANDIDATE'S LIFE CIRCUMSTANCES*
7 *(cultural, economic, linguistic, vocational, and familial). This assessment will help the*
8 *Commission on Ministry determine the best educational and formational options for*
9 *nurturing the candidate towards readiness for ordination whether in the seminary track or*
10 *the apprentice track. (Guide, page 19)*

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12 *Are there factors that affect the balance between what the candidate would invest*
13 *in preparation and the number of years that will be spent in ministry after ordination?*
14 *(Guide, page 26)*

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16 The process for Ordination in the Mid-America Region is contained in the *GUIDE FOR*
17 *ORDINATION & COMMISSIONING IN THE MID-AMERICA REGION OF THE*
18 *CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)*. The Guide can be found online at
19 <https://www.mid-america-disciples.org/s/Guide-for-Ordination-erby.pdf>. The steps and
20 process is clearly explained in the Guidebook.



- 21 Regardless of the educational track chosen, the church expects the individuals it approves
22 for ordination to demonstrate competency in the following areas of ministerial practice, as
23 found in the GCOM document [Theological Foundations and Policies and Criteria for the](#)
24 [Ordering of Ministry of the Christian Church](#).

Biblical Knowledge: Be rooted and grounded in scripture and able to interpret and apply the scriptures in ways that are appropriate to original and contemporary contexts.

Church Administration and Planning: Be able to practice the principles of good administration, planning and implementing short- and long-range goals to enhance Congregational life in collaboration with teams and committees.

Communication: Be an effective communicator and be able to facilitate effective communication within and on behalf of the church.

Cross Cultural and Anti-Racism Experience: Be sensitive to the different manifestations of racism and prejudice in the culture and be committed to confronting and overcoming them.

Ecumenism: Exhibit a commitment to working with other Christians and denominations and with other faiths in programs of common witness and service, and to articulating the vision of the ecumenical and global church as a starting place for mission.

Education and Leader Development: Know the foundations of Christian education and the principles of leader development. Show competency in teaching children, youth, and adults, including lay leaders and staff.

Ethics: Be able to help parishioners think critically about the relationship of their faith to issues of justice, ethics and morality

Evangelism: Be able to motivate Congregational members to share their faith through word and action.

Mission of the Church in the World: Be able to understand and articulate the centrality of the call to mission given by Jesus Christ and the prophets. Be able to empower congregations to engage in mission from our doorsteps to the ends of the earth.

Pastoral Care: Be able to engage other persons with empathy and assess situations and relationships with the compassion of Christ, with sensitivity to culture and context. Be able to convey the healing power of God to those who suffer.

Proclamation of the Word: Know the practice and theory of Christian preaching. Be able to proclaim the Word of God, share the Good News of Jesus Christ, and help Congregational members apply their faith to daily life.



Spiritual Development: Establish and maintain spiritual disciplines that lead to personal growth and help others develop a rich spiritual life.

Stewardship: Be able to develop and encourage healthy stewards who recognize and share generously God’s abundant gifts for all creation.

Theology: Be able to articulate a coherent view of God’s nature and activity in relation to the Christian tradition, to critically engage human situations from a perspective of faith, and to help persons recognize the theological issues in their daily lives.

Understanding Heritage: Have knowledge of and appreciation for the history and thought of Christianity and of the history, structure, practices and ethos of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Worship: Know the purpose and elements of Christian worship. Have the ability to plan and lead meaningful worship by working with the worship team, musicians, and Congregational members.”

*From: Theological Foundations and Policies and Criteria for the
Ordering of Ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Amendment 1.0, 9/30/2009, pp. 19-21.*

25 PLEASE NOTE: It is recommended that coursework be taken from The Center for
26 Ministry & Lay Education at [Phillips Theological Seminary](#).

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28 If approved in advance by RCOM Staff, and the RCOM Educational Consultant,
29 coursework may be taken from an accredited seminary, college, or university. Other
30 programs of study may be approved, after thorough review of course content by RCOM
31 Staff and the Education Consultant.

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33 ¹ Currently, CMLT hours are measured in continuing education hours or what some would
34 term contact hours. The 30 hours granted are measured only on interactions with the
35 instructor in instructor led activities. These activities include lectures, discussion, instructor
36 hosted gathering times, times with assignments (not including assigned reading). Students
37 spend significantly more time immersed in a full course of study and activities than those
38 directly led by an instructor (a total of 50-80 hours per course).

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40 It is typical practice to understand 10 CE hours equal to 1 Continuing Education Unit, or
41 CEU, which is more comparable to 1 academic credit hour. Therefore, this would make
42 each CMLT course equivalent to 3 CEU hours or 3 credit hours. (30 units/10=3 credit
43 hours). (See link below, [The Continuing Education Unit-How to Calculate CEUs –](#)
44 [IACET. www.iacet.org](#))



45 However, CMLT uses the more stringent guideline of a semester hour being based on 15
46 hours of contact per credit, which would mean each CMLT course would be closer to 2
47 credit hours. (30 units/15=2 credit hours)

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49 *The total Certificate in Pastoral Ministry awards students 630 continuing education units.
50 Using either formula it would award $630/10=63$ or $630/15=42$ semester hours. A Masters
51 of Divinity at Phillips is currently 82 semester hours.

52 (For more information,

53 contact https://www.iacet.org/default/assets/File/pdfs/CEU%20Article_6_22_10.pdf)

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57 ¹Pending receiving: Note on Source for 250 Contact Hours from Leslie LeSieur.

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59 ²Page 19 from the **2010 Handbook for Ordination** includes one additional circumstance
60 for consideration in determining best educational options for candidates. “**Cultural**” was
61 not included in the 2009 document, *Theological Foundations/Policies and Criterial for the*
62 *Ordering of Ministry of the CC(DOC)*.