

Practice in Ministry and Mission

**STUDENT PASTOR  
PROGRAM  
HANDBOOK**

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# SECTION ONE

## A Word of Welcome

The faculty and staff of Wesley Theological Seminary welcome you as students or learning partners in the Student Pastor Program. Theological education is one of the most important tasks of the church. This is how its future pastoral leaders are prepared and trained to answer their call to mission and ministry. At Wesley Theological Seminary this preparation and training is twofold:

**There is a rigorous course of academic learning.** Areas of study include biblical interpretation, history of Christianity, historical and systematic theology, philosophy of religion, Christian ethics, sociology and politics, world religions and ecumenics, preaching and worship, pastoral care and counseling, congregational life and mission, religion and the arts, and integrated theological studies.

**There is also a practical dimension.** Students at Wesley Seminary apply their academic learning through a process of action and reflection. The purpose of this practical dimension is not only to gain pastoral experience, but also to provide a better interaction between their academic course work and the Christian life. The deepest truths of the Christian faith are learned best when the teachings of Christ are followed and not merely studied.

As Student Pastors, you are preparing to answer the call to give your professional life to the church. The time you spend in your placement is as much a part of your call as the work you will do once you have graduated. It will be graced by God's presence and shaped by God's guidance.

As Teaching Congregations, you are helping to train the next generation of pastoral leaders of the church. Many of you also provide leadership for your church, but these men and women have been called by God to exercise the particular ministries of Word, Sacrament, and Order. How they fulfill that call will depend in large measure on how you help them during these formative years. We regard this as a sacred trust at Wesley Seminary, and we are heartened that you have agreed to join with us as partners in the task.

The more you engage with your Student Pastor, the more you will find the Student Pastor Program to be beneficial for your own ministry and mission as a congregation.

The Student Pastor Program does not just form the student in ministry. We hope it will help with the forming of Christian disciples in the congregation as a whole. Christian formation does not take place without leaders in discipleship -- members of the congregation who know what it means to walk with Christ in the world, and are able to show others the way. Small group ministry is an excellent step in the formation of faithful disciples and identification of strong leaders.

You will also have the benefit of enriched ideas and expanded opportunities for ministry and mission. All too often our congregational planning and strategizing is reactive rather than proactive. We respond to immediate needs and interests rather than set our agenda according to the teachings of Jesus Christ. Having a Student Pastor in your congregation week by week will bring fresh perspectives to your existing programs and stretch your members to new ways of reaching out into the world. This may not always be a comfortable exercise, but it will prove salutary and invigorating for your life and work as a congregation.

## A Word about Support

A significant reality of being a congregation pastored by someone who is also a student is that your pastor is not available to you full time. This can prove difficult at times. The years of study will be challenging for both you and your pastor. Being and further becoming the Body of Christ requires a mutual sharing of gifts. Your pastor has been charged with sharing his/her gifts with you. One of the key gifts that a congregation can give to a student pastor is support. The demands placed on a student pastor are multiple. Especially during the first year of study the challenges to maintain a healthy balance among studies, pastoral responsibility, and family will seem daunting. Your support is not only helpful but necessary.

### Ways to Be Supportive of the Student Pastor

Support is more than a handshake, housing, salary, or exchanging a few positive words on the way out the door after Sunday Service. Support means taking the time to nurture and be in ministry to the Student Pastor. The relationship between the church and the Student Pastor will deepen through a process of intentional and affirming support. It takes time to begin and honor such a process, but the results for the ministry of the church make it worth it. Following are some suggestions as how the Learning Partners might provide support for the Student Pastor:

#### Clergyperson

- Remember the Student Pastor holds an important office of the church, but is also a human being.
- Be sure the Student Pastor is able to find time for herself/himself and family. Make sure a regular Sabbath day is set aside for rest and recreation.
- Interpret the ministry of the Student Pastor to the larger congregation and invite its support and affirmation. Remember that the Student Pastor is also a *student*.
- Share with the student the church's perspective on specific issues of pastoral ministry such as pastoral calls, preaching, Bible Study, youth work, social witness ministry, and so forth.
- Clergy are on call 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. You may take care not to invite the Student Pastor to *another* meeting.
- Encourage the Student Pastor to take time to get away from church and school for a breather.
- Find ways to assume some of the Student Pastor's administrative load in the church.
- Be sure the Student Pastor gets adequate vacation time away from work.
- Celebrate joys and accomplishments together.
- Show understanding, identify strengths, recognize growth, and share ministry.
- Let the Student Pastor know how much you appreciate her/him.

#### The Spouse

- Do not refer to the Student Pastor's loved one as "the pastor's spouse," rather introduce the spouse by name.
- Convey criticism directly to the Student Pastor, not by the way of the spouse.
- Remember the Student Pastor's spouse is an individual with her/his particular gifts and interests.
- Invite the Student Pastor's spouse to participate in the life of the church, instead of simply expecting it.
- Remember that the spouse may be pursuing a career of her/his own and may not always be present to the church.
- Remember to provide some space for the Student Pastor and her/his spouse.
- If there are children, treat them like normal children; do not set unreal expectations for them.
- Be sure the Student Pastor has time for her/his spouse and their children.
- Remember the clergy family's occasions and be sure they have time for them.

# SECTION TWO

## Overview of Student Pastor Program

The purpose of the Student Pastor Program (SPP) at Wesley Theological Seminary is to provide integrative education for students pursuing a theological degree and serving in a local church. The program involves a partnership between the Annual Conference (or other denominational authority), the local church and the seminary. Student Pastors normally attend classes three days each week, and complete the Master of Divinity degree in three or four years. Some take longer than four years, while some are able to complete the M.Div in only three. The congregational setting is an integral part of the total learning context of the Student Pastor. Student Pastors are given an opportunity in the church context to relate academic studies to the practice of ministry.

For United Methodists, the seminary works closely with the Conference Cabinets, which select the parishes and appoint the students. Housing and salary usually are included in the appointment. Medical insurance is strongly recommended.

The Student Pastor forms a Learning Partnership composed of a clergy learning partner, a lay learning partner, and the Student Pastor. The Learning Partnership is the link between student, church and seminary and is responsible for the formation of learning goals and evaluation. The program usually begins with an In-Service Workshop and orientation offered toward the end of the summer for the entire Learning Partnership.

The student selects the clergy learning partner, in consultation with the PMM office at the seminary. The clergy learning partner does not have to be a student's district superintendent or candidacy mentor. In fact, anyone fully ordained to Word and Sacrament from any denomination might well serve in this capacity. Neighboring clergy and retired clergy are often selected. The lay learning partner can be any member of the congregation.

The lay learning partner does not have to be the chairperson of any committee within the congregation, though the lay learning partner should serve as a member of Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) or Pastor Parish Relations Committee (PPRC) or equivalent.

Students on a four-year track for the M.Div. take an average of 20 hours per year. Students on a three-year track for the M.Div. take an average of 27 hours per year

Courses each semester are taken on three consecutive days, thus minimizing travel. Students may stay in dormitory commuter rooms their two nights on campus. There is a daily fee for these rooms.

Student Pastors meet together weekly in the first year and bi-weekly for the second year in a small SPP seminar, which meets the Seminary's Practice in Ministry and Mission requirements. Assignments and class discussion focus in the first year on worship and preaching; in the second year students use a case study method to workshop on situations of ministry. A grade of Pass/Fail is given for 1 credit hour for each semester. Students must complete all four seminars to receive SPP credit.

Assignments in many classes are adaptable to the parish situation of the student.

This program especially is undergirded with prayer, since the congregations, seminarians, and the seminary enter into a covenant to support one another through prayer.

# Areas of Responsibility

In order to help shed light on a number of questions that might arise concerning the area of responsibility to be assumed by each of the Student Pastor Program participants, this section will provide some working answers. **The answers are not intended as final, but they are being offered to facilitate a better understanding of the nature of the partnership that exists between the Seminary, the local church and the Annual Conference or denominational authority.** Any of the participants should not hesitate to enlarge the scope of understanding of the Student Pastor Program, especially in terms of the areas of responsibility and mutual accountability. It is worth note that to ensure effective and healthy ministry the District Superintendent or other Denominational Authority is included within the circle of confidentiality regarding the student's experiences within SPP, including all written evaluations.

## 1. What is the Responsibility of the Local Church?

- To commit itself to be a setting for ministry with a Student Pastor, and to become a teaching congregation.
- To form a learning partner group with the pastor and to meet regularly with the student pastor.
- To encourage and support the Student Pastor to spend adequate time on the seminary campus and in class preparation.
- To enable the Student Pastor to relate academic work to the life of the parish.
- To pray regularly for the student pastor, Annual Conference or church connection, and the seminary.
- To encourage the student to set aside a regular Sabbath day for rest and recreation.
- To evaluate the student pastor's ministry once yearly for the seminary.

## 2. What is the Responsibility of the Clergy and Lay Learning Partners?

- To meet monthly with the Student Pastor to assist him/her in reflecting upon the practice of ministry.
- To provide regular support and affirmation of the Student Pastor.
- To be an interpreter of the program to the local church and Annual Conference.
- To share in the on-campus Student Pastor Program orientation events.
- To develop learning goals and evaluate the Student Pastor's ministry once yearly for the seminary and the cabinet.

## 3. What is the Responsibility of the Student Pastor?

- To complete the working covenant and learning agreement.
- In consultation with the PMM Office, to select a clergy learning partner.
- To spend adequate time in courses and in preparation for a solid academic experience.
- To serve the local church both faithfully and effectively.
- To relate theory and practice in the context of the congregational setting.
- To bring together the reality of the local church and the seminary in the educational process.
- To meet with the learning partners monthly.
- To engage in a yearly evaluation.
- To participate weekly (year I) or biweekly (year II) in the Student Pastor Reflection group for four semesters.
- To provide a copy of the yearly evaluation and the student's transcript to the D.S. (or denominational authority) at the end of each academic year.
- To regularly take a Sabbath day of rest.

4. What is the Responsibility of the Seminary?

- To provide a solid academic learning environment.
- To provide linkage between the parish, seminary students and Annual Conferences.
- To evaluate the Student Pastor's ministry once yearly for the seminary.
- To pray regularly for student pastors and all the participants in the Student Pastor Program.
- To provide a reflection group emphasizing small church ministry and providing regular feedback for Student Pastors.

5. What is the Responsibility of the Appointment Cabinet (or other denominational authority, as applicable)?

- To provide student churches for the Student Pastor Program.
- To protect a certain number of pastoral appointments for the program.
- To appoint a Student Pastor for three years to a charge unless under extraordinary circumstances the student needs moving.
- To designate one of the cabinet members as the liaison person between the seminary and the cabinet.
- To work with the Student Pastor, the local church, and the seminary to assure program effectiveness.

# WESLEY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY STUDENT PASTOR PROGRAM WORKING COVENANT

STUDENT: \_\_\_\_\_

CHARGE: \_\_\_\_\_

The Student Pastor Program is a partnership between Wesley Theological Seminary, the student, the local church, the Clergy and the Lay Learning Partners, and the Annual Conference or denominational authority. Summarized below are the responsibilities of each of the partners. As each enters into this covenantal agreement, each makes a commitment to fulfill their responsibilities. Each is also encouraged to initiate dialogue with the other partners when, in their judgment, it would be helpful. It is worth note that to ensure effective and healthy ministry the District Superintendent or other Denominational Authority is included within the circle of confidentiality regarding the student's experiences within SPP, including all written evaluations.

## Responsibilities of the Seminary:

- To provide a solid academic learning environment.
- To provide linkage between the parish, seminary students and Annual Conferences.
- To evaluate the Student Pastor's ministry once yearly for the seminary.
- To pray regularly for student pastors and all the participants in the Student Pastor Program.
- To provide a reflection group emphasizing small church ministry and providing regular feedback for Student Pastors.

## Responsibilities of the Local Church:

- To commit itself to be a setting for ministry with a student pastor, and to become a teaching congregation.
- To form a learning partner group with the pastor and to meet regularly with the student pastor.
- To encourage and support the pastor to spend adequate time on the seminary campus and in class preparation.
- To enable the student pastor to relate academic work to the life of the parish.
- To pray regularly for the student pastor, Annual Conference or church connection, and the seminary.
- To meet regularly with the student pastor for feedback.
- To encourage the student to set aside a regular Sabbath day for rest and recreation.
- To evaluate the student pastor's ministry once yearly for the seminary.

## Responsibilities of the Appointment Cabinet (or other deominational authority as applicable)

- To provide student churches for the Student Pastor Program.
- To protect a certain number of pastoral appointments for the program.
- To appoint a student pastor for three years to a charge unless under extraordinary circumstances he or she needs moving.
- To designate one of the cabinet members as the liaison person between the seminary and the cabinet.
- To work with the student pastor, the local church, and the seminary to assure program effectiveness.

\* The signed covenant should be submitted by the beginning of the Fall semester. The student has the responsibility to provide copies of the signed covenant to each of the people making the agreement.

Responsibilities of the Student Pastor:

- To complete the learning agreement and working covenant.
- In consultation with the PMM office, to select a clergy learning partner
- To spend adequate time in courses and in preparation for a solid academic experience.
- To serve the local church both faithfully and effectively.
- To relate theory and practice in the context of the congregational setting.
- To bring together the reality of the local church and the seminary in the educational process.
- To meet with the learning partners monthly.
- To engage in a yearly evaluation.
- To participate weekly (year I) or bi-weekly (year II) in the Student Pastor Reflection group for four semesters.
- To provide a copy of the yearly evaluation and the student's transcript to the D.S. at the end of each academic year.
- To regularly take a Sabbath day of rest.

Responsibilities of the Clergy Learning Partner and the Lay Learning Partner:

- To meet monthly with the student pastor to assist him/her in reflecting upon the practice of ministry.
- To provide regular support and affirmation of the student.
- To be an interpreter of the program to the local church and denominational connection.
- To share in the on-campus Student Pastor Program orientation events.
- To develop learning goals and evaluate the student pastor's ministry once yearly for the seminary and the cabinet.

We agree to fulfill our part of the Student Pastor Program covenant:

\_\_\_\_\_

Student

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Chair, Pastor Parish Relations Committee

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Clergy Learning Partner

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

District Superintendent / Denominational Authority

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Seminary Representative

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Lay Learning Partner

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

Terms of Employment (as negotiated by DS with the Church):

Salary \_\_\_\_\_ Housing (Parsonage) \_\_\_\_\_

Medical Insurance \_\_\_\_\_ Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

# SECTION THREE

## Some Principles of Pastoral Leadership

### Pastor and People

In recent years the research into congregational life and mission has pointed the church in some new directions. One of the most significant of these pointers is the need for clergy and laity to share the pastoral leadership of their congregations. There are many reasons for this, but two in particular merit our attention:

**Pastoral leadership cannot be separated from congregations or communities of faith.** Pastors cannot function without being grounded in the life and work of the people of God. Leadership requires a collaborative relationship between pastor and congregation.

**Congregations and communities of faith depend on pastoral leadership.** At any given time, the mission and ministry of the church is always governed by the relationship and interaction of congregations and their leaders, both clergy and lay.

### Lay Pastoral Leadership

Pastoral leadership is by no means limited to the clergy. In one sense, of course, this is obvious. Congregations that are vitally involved in mission and ministry invariably have outstanding lay leadership. Moreover, throughout the history of the church there have been many groups of Christians, even entire denominations that have thrived without ordained clergy.

It is equally clear, however, that God continues to grace women and men with particular gifts as pastoral leaders, and most denominations of the church continue to ordain these persons to the ministries of the church after careful examination and rigorous training.

### Fresh Understandings

In training pastoral leaders of the church, therefore, the central focus must be to maximize the gifts and graces of clergy and laity alike in pastoral leadership. Instead of training theological students to function as professional experts in the church, thereby relegating the laity to the status of amateur Christians, they should rather be prepared to share pastoral leadership with those laypersons who possess similar gifts and graces, but who have not received the particular call to ordained ministry. The question to be asked is "How can we work together as the Body of Christ?"

We should not forget that all ordained clergy began their Christian service as laypersons. Moreover, many laypersons with particular gifts have made the commitment to diaconal ministry and other forms of full-time service. But the great majority of laypersons with gifts of pastoral leadership are church members who serve Christ faithfully in their homes, communities, and places of work.

The leadership potential of these persons is all too often disregarded or discounted. The pressing question for the church, therefore, is how to acknowledge and equip such persons for pastoral leadership. And the pressing question for schools such as Wesley Theological Seminary is how to prepare the clergy of the future to accept these laypersons as colleagues in pastoral leadership so that neither role is diminished, but both are enhanced in service of the coming reign of God.

## Pastoral Power

The question comes down to one of pastoral power. This is a phrase that requires careful definition. There are so many abuses of power in the world today, to say nothing of the church, that we are rightly suspicious of granting power to anyone. But these suspicions are now impeding the mission and ministry of many congregations in the U.S.A. The late Orlando Costas described our dilemma as that of "a clergy-dominated church with a laity-dominated clergy," and his words still ring true. Clearly this is the sort of power struggle we want to avoid.

By contrast, pastoral power, properly so-called, is the influence of pastoral leadership in shaping people's lives. In congregations of the church, this means shaping their lives according to the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth. It does not mean dictating to them, nor does it mean applying legalistic guidelines. But it does mean an intentional pastoring of people, leading them toward the vision and the hope of the gospel -- gently, firmly, and lovingly. Those who exercise true pastoral power simply show their fellow Christians the way, and give them a hand.

In a word, the exercise of pastoral power means leadership ***by example and mutual accountability.***

## Shared Pastoral Power

The idea of sharing such a power can be disturbing for clergy and laity alike. The idea becomes even more disturbing in a culture such as ours, in which the concept of personal autonomy is so widespread and the notion of leadership so mistrusted.

We should remember, however, that everyone who is ordained was affirmed in that call by the whole *laos* of the church. Moreover, when pastoral power is lodged so overwhelmingly with the clergy, the result is that most church members are not pastored at all. Those with problems often receive undue care and attention, while the majority, including the most faithful, rarely have the benefit of hands-on, down-to-earth guidance in the rough and tumble of Christian living in the world.

In other words, if congregations are to be effectively pastored, the pastoral power of the church cannot reside with the clergy alone. If church members are to be formed as Christian disciples -- a task that is now of some urgency -- then pastoral leadership must be shared between the clergy and those laypersons who emerge from the ranks of congregations as indigenous leaders in discipleship.

# SECTION FOUR

## The Learning Partnership

The Learning Partnership consists of the Student Pastor, the Clergy Learning Partner, and one Lay Learning Partner from the congregation or charge. In some instances there may be more than one layperson, as in multiple-point pastoral charges.

### Purpose of the Partnership

The Partnership meets monthly and formalizes the relationship between the congregation and the Student Pastor. It defines the nature of the shared ministry among everyone involved, and also oversees the Student Pastor's learning processes.

The Learning Partnership embodies shared pastoral leadership and shared pastoral power. The relationships and agreements developed by the Learning Partners are characterized by mutuality, responsibility, and accountability.

The Learning Partnership also links the Student Pastor and the Teaching congregation in a mutually beneficial relationship. Student Pastors offer many diverse gifts, abilities, and experiences to ongoing and emergent ministries. They can identify learning areas and goals that build upon their previous experience and education.

Reciprocally, each congregation has needs to which the Student Pastor can effectively contribute, and the various ministry settings have much to teach the Student Pastor about the effective practice of ministry. In this partnership, laity, clergy, and students are mutually interconnected as they seek to respond to God's call to servant leadership. Together all are "the body of Christ and individually members of it" (1 Cor. 12:27). Each member of the partnership has her or his distinctive role.

## Mutuality, Responsibility, Accountability

The need for mutuality, responsibility, and accountability is apparent when one examines the daily, multiple, and frequently overwhelming demands of pastoral leadership. No one individual can attend to everyone's needs. Student Pastors, like all pastors, must make choices among the possibilities and needs crying for attention in congregations and communities. Thus, the **mutuality** of shared ministry is an essential part of effective pastoral leadership.

After careful discernment of their gifts in relation to the multiple ministerial needs, the Student Pastors make decisions about what they will do and assume **responsibility** for their commitments. As a part of the Learning Partnership, the Student Pastors then establish learning goals and take responsibility for pursuing them. In other words, they take the initiative for their own learning. The intention is to develop life-long patterns of thoughtful decision-making and continuous education.

**Accountability** involves periodic assessment of commitments and learning goals. Are we doing what we agreed to do? What are the outcomes? On what basis and by whom will those outcomes be assessed? What subsequent action or learning is suggested? In conjunction with their learning goals and in conversation with their Learning Partners, the Student Pastors identify feedback mechanisms and evaluative criteria. The emphasis is not on mistakes or blame but on a realistic account of what occurred. The objective is ongoing improvement and learning. Once again, the intention is to develop self-directed, healthy, and helpful patterns that continue throughout the Student Pastor's ministry.

**Responsible, mutual and accountable** ministry implies constant communication and negotiation with the various people involved. In the short run, this may seem time-consuming, laborious, and distracting. In the long run, a shared approach to ministry honors and extends the gifts and contributions of many far beyond what one person could direct or accomplish individually.

## Responsibilities of the Learning Partnership

- Form a **Learning Agreement** in which the Student Pastor formulates his or her particular learning goals. Student Pastors are encouraged to exercise creativity in exploring areas that need development or hold special interest. The Learning Agreement must be approved by the SPP faculty.
- Complete an evaluation at the end of each year. The **Evaluation Process** will utilize forms provided for this purpose as well as the Student Pastor's own learning goals.
- Discuss theological and practical issues that arise in the practice of ministry and mission.
- Mutual negotiation about how the Student Pastor will spend his or her time in the congregation.

## Formation of the Partnership

Learning Partners should be:

- Willing to give their time and learn with the Student Pastor.
- Supporting and caring persons.
- Supportive of the SPP objectives stated in the handbook.
- Willing to meet with the Partnership each month.

*The purpose of the partnership is to discuss the progress being made in the congregation, and to share in a process of evaluation.*

*It is the Student Pastor's responsibility to schedule and convene these meetings. The dates should be established early in the fall semester.*

# Overview

The Learning Partners will give particular attention to four areas of responsibility. Effectively fulfilling these responsibilities will require the learning partners to remain open to a process of mutual growth in faith and action. The learning partners are encouraged to cultivate certain gifts in each area of responsibility to facilitate the ministry of the student pastor and the deepening faith of the local charge. Below are some guidelines for the cultivation of gifts:

1. Learning agreement building
  - a. A clear understanding and commitment to the Church's mission at the local, denominational, societal, and global levels;
  - b. Openness to the student's gifts and vision for ministry;
  - c. Desire to set realistic learning goals with the Student Pastor;
  - d. Willingness to develop a mutually agreeable Learning Agreement that includes pastoral skills development, church mission development, and the Student Pastor's educational needs;
  - e. Open to be vulnerable, supportive, and accountable.
2. Feedback
  - a. Willingness to share directly in the Student Pastor's ministry through dialogue;
  - b. Wish to focus on the objective dimensions of a Student Pastor's ministry;
  - c. Open to honestly sharing constructive opinions;
  - d. Desire to learn from the teaching church process;
  - e. Willingness to be loving in the task of equipping the Student Pastor for ministry and leadership in the church.
3. Evaluation
  - a. Openness to give insight to the Student Pastor concerning strengths and weaknesses;
  - b. Willingness to challenge the wider congregation to be faithful to the learning agreement's mission goals;
  - c. Desire to listen;
  - d. Ability to help the church arrive at responsible decisions in light of its teaching function.
4. Support
  - a. Sensitive to the multiple demands upon the Student Pastor;
  - b. Open to interpret the Student Pastor Program to the congregation;
  - c. Desire to build and honor trust relationships;
  - d. Willingness to enlist the laity in the ministry and mission of the church in light of the stated purposes in the learning agreement.

# SECTION FIVE

## The Learning Agreement & Evaluations

The first task of the Learning Partnership is to draw up the **Learning Agreement**. The Learning Agreement focuses on the Student Pastor's particular learning goals, which should take into account his or her previous experience, particular gifts, and the needs of the congregation.

### Developing the Learning Agreement

The Learning Partnership, including the Student Pastor, develop the Learning Agreement together. The Agreement should include focused statements (3-4) that reflect both what the Student Pastor wants to learn and the opportunities to do so in the appointment. It should be stated in such a way that it is clear what the student wants to be able to do as a result of the learning.

This is **not** a job description. Rather, it outlines specific areas in which the Student Pastor desires increased understanding, knowledge, experience, or skill. Learning goals extend the Student Pastor's previous education, experience or abilities. Each learning goal should begin: "I will be able to ... after ..." or "I will learn.....after....." and identify:

- How the Student Pastor intends to accomplish the learning goal.
- What will the Student Pastor do to achieve the goal?
- Who are the other people to be involved?
- What additional resources are required?
- When will each element occur?

Each learning goal should also describe how it will be evaluated. For example:

- Are there observable measures?
- What kind of self-report will be there?
- What kind of feedback will be there from others?
- How will assessment be made of progress toward more subjective, internal or qualitative learnings?

For each learning goal, the Learning Partnership might also anticipate encountering a roadblock or impediment to achieving that goal.

- Name that roadblock or impediment that might make it difficult to actually achieve this goal.
- Then, anticipating this potential difficulty, indicate what you can plan to do to overcome or at least address this impediment in order to be productive in pursuing your learning goal.

# Approval of the Agreement

Once the Learning Agreement is drafted it must be approved by the SPP faculty.

Learning Agreements follow a prescribed outline which allows for some flexibility as can be seen in the example below. It is important to have a clearly stated **goal** with **measurable**, or observable objectives. The agreement should be regarded as flexible, and **subject to revision as needed**. There should be at least one revision at the beginning of each year.

The agreement should also include an element of **mutual support**. The Learning Agreement should focus on the obligations of pastoral leadership. In this way, the monthly meetings provide an opportunity for a genuinely mutual interaction with the Student Pastor included as a colleague in ministry and mission.

## Example of a Learning Agreement

**Goal #1:** I will be able to initiate and organize a team of laity for a worship ministry.

**Objective:** Planning special worship experience throughout the church liturgical year, i.e. Advent, Christmas, Pentecost, others as identified.

**Method:**

- Recruit choir leaders, lay leader, lay speakers
- Recruit members of the worshipping body who are interested
- Meet regularly, discuss and plan a calendar of events for worship with an identified lay coordinator for each event
- Work with each coordinator to cooperatively plan a meaningful worship experience
- Create a file for each event to record and save resources

**Evaluation:**

- Feedback from learning partners
- Meet after each event to critique and evaluate
- Solicit feedback from congregation

**Goal #2:** I will be able to discuss and communicate religious/theological concepts with confidence when teaching adult learners.

**Objective:** To teach a minimum of two classes each year at my church appointment

**Method:**

- I will teach The Purpose Driven Life study guide this fall
- I will teach another short term class in the spring/summer
- Investigate and seek training from conferences and/or other sources

**Evaluation:**

- Completion of available training
- Completion of the studies
- Use learning partners
- Feedback from participants

**Goal #3:** I will be able to develop specific skills and habits for pastoral care with a variety of people.

**Objective:** To learn the specific habits/skills to be an effective listener and a compassionate shepherd to the congregation

**Method:**

I will meet or visit with:

- Each member household as able for the purpose of getting to know them and hear their story
- Anyone who is in crisis
- Potential new members
- Members who are sick and shut in
- Members who are in the hospital

I will create a compact journal to carry that will contain:

- A copy of the membership directory
- A checklist of reminders or a script for each type of visit to use as a guide
- A variety of prayers/scriptures to give/leave with a person in a crisis situation
- A small checklist of local agencies/contact persons to aid in networking/connecting persons in crisis to various local resources
- Other appropriate resources as discovered

**Evaluation:**

Feedback from learning partners

Lists of visits and meetings attended

Journal as described

**Goal #4:** I will improve my ability to develop my ability to teach Bible.

**Objective:** To create and lead a youth group in a six week session on what it means to be a disciple of Jesus in a Baptist context.

**Method:**

Research existing bible study programs for youth

Consult with Christian Education Director as to the bible needs of congregation's youth

Establish a six week lesson plan

Develop a lesson plan for each week

Develop materials for students

Establish a learning environment

Determine a methodology conducive to youth

Assemble material resources for teaching each lesson plan.

**Evaluation:**

Ask Christian Education leader to review the bible study course (prior to leading)

Develop an evaluation questionnaire for the students to complete, to include suggestions for improvement

Submit personal evaluation of the bible study

Review process and course with Learning Partners

**The Learning Partners agree to:**

- Meet informally monthly with the Student Pastor to review progress toward goals and to provide feedback
- Support the Student Pastor through prayer
- Solicit prayer and encouragement for the Student Pastor from the congregation
- Keep the congregation informed about learning partner activities and various methods through which the congregation can be involved as a teaching congregation
- Pray for the ministries and the people of the church

Signed:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Pastor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Learning Partners

## Year-End Evaluation

Through practice in theological reflection on their pastoral experiences, Student Pastors become increasingly adept at integrating the theology and the practice of ministry and mission. In this way, Student Pastors learn the discipline of consistent theological reflection and thereby center their ministry on Jesus Christ.

To bring this into focus, each Student Pastor engages with his or her Learning Partnerships at the end of each year in a comprehensive evaluation of his or her SPP experience. The Learning Partnerships (Student Pastor, Clergy Learning Partner and Lay Learning Partner) complete an evaluation individually. These evaluations are then discussed together at the concluding Learning Partnership meeting of each year. The consultation is intended to affirm the Student Pastor's growth and learning as well as clarifying areas of future learning.

Each evaluation should include the name of the Student Pastor, name of Church, names and signatures of all Learning Partners and the period of time which is covered in the evaluation. Signed copies should be given to the Student Pastor who brings them to colloquy for discussion. The faculty leaders then turn them in to the PMM Office. Once housed in the PMM office, these evaluations are not sent outside of Wesley except at the explicit request to do so by the student whose evaluations they are. Students are strongly encouraged, though, to share these evaluations themselves with their district superintendents or with others in their denomination who share responsibility for their formation and deployment in ministry.

The Year-end Student Evaluation and Student Self-Evaluation Forms are included in Section Eight of this handbook.

# SECTION SIX

## Intercultural Immersion Handbook Excerpt

The Practice in Ministry and Mission Office prepared this handbook to assist students in fulfilling their Intercultural Immersion requirement. Assistance in identifying an appropriate experience for you and guidance in the process are yours for the asking.

The Handbook contains the following sections:

- Intercultural Immersion in the Wesley Curriculum
- Goals of the Intercultural Immersion experience
- Immersion Design Standards
- Immersion Experience Guidelines
- Immersion Placement Process
- Immersion Application
- Waiver forms (you will need to only turn in the appropriate form)
- Medical Information for Immersion Trips
- Immersion Certification
- 

Please read all information carefully and follow the guidelines provided. When submitting your application, submit ALL pages (including waiver forms and medical information) with the exception of the **Immersion Certificate** page. This form is to be turned in at the Immersion Debriefing Session.

For further information, contact:

Nick Works  
Room K-112  
202-885-8604 – phone  
[nworks@wesleyseminary.edu](mailto:nworks@wesleyseminary.edu)

# Intercultural Immersion in the Wesley Curriculum

The mission of Wesley Theological Seminary (WTS) is to “equip persons for Christian ministry and leadership in the church and the world, to advance theological scholarship, and to model a prophetic voice in the public square.” In its Mission Statement, the Seminary affirms an education commitment that:

- Seeks to “ground learning in the scripture and traditions that provide the church’s identity in the gospel, and to prepare students for the practice of ministry. Therefore, every part of the curriculum is theological in character, and practically related to the church’s life. The educational process is designed to bring classroom and field learning into complementary relationship”;
- “Embraces a renewed global vision of ministry, as we learn from the experiences of Christians in other lands. We are open to dialogue with all the world’s varied communities, and welcome cooperation with all who work for peace and justice.”
- Is to “equip the whole people of God for the work of ministry.”

It is in light of these commitments that the Seminary has designed the PMM requirements of the Master’s Degree curriculum to include an Intercultural Immersion experience. The immersion requirement is seen as integral to an educational process which addresses the mission of the church in the world and which prepares persons for church leadership.

## Goals of the Intercultural Immersion Experience

Participants in immersion experiences will be able to:

- Demonstrate a familiarity with another culture, and models of ministry within that cultural context through sharing in their ministry settings;
- Articulate self-knowledge in a new cultural context, especially to relate beliefs and attendant patterns of action and interaction rooted in stereotypes of persons and cultures;
- Identify the systemic issues that interconnect the global and local contexts for ministry;
- Demonstrate intercultural theological understanding on justice issues;
- Articulate a vision of the church inclusive of social and personal transformation;
- Integrate learnings from other seminary courses and insights from the PMM or SPP setting with the immersion experience;
- Connect the generative power of the gospel message with its expressions in other cultures; and
- Incorporate into ministry a broadened view of what it means to be human and Christian.

# Immersion Design Standards

## Premise

An immersion experience is designed to promote intercultural knowledge that enlarges a student's universe of human discourse. Immersion experiences focus on the particularity of a cultural group while at once exposing both common and separate constructions of social reality.

Immersion requires a definition of culture. For Wesley Theological Seminary immersion experiences, culture is defined as: **1)** a socially established structure of meaning through which people interpret their experience and generate behavior; **2)** a context in which belief, behavior, ritual processes, social events, institutions and political discourses can be intelligently reported; and **3)** the product of a human group to be grasped in its particularity and in terms of global processes of interconnection and change.

Wesley Theological Seminary immersion programs take place in an intercultural context either internationally or within the United States. All students are required to participate in an orientation prior to the immersion experience and a debriefing shortly after the immersion period. The orientation and debriefing sessions are led by Wesley Theological Seminary faculty.

## Design Content

Immersion experiences will enable students to understand another way of life from the perspective of the host community. They are designed to facilitate a process of learning from people that will extend the students' gifts for ministry and enrich the lives of those with whom they will minister in the future.

By the end of an immersion, students will be able to provide an adequate description of the "other" cultural group that includes an articulation of aspects of the consistent thought and behavior of the host cultural community.

Hence, each immersion is designed to include dialogue with hosts and experiential learning around a cultural inventory that consists of:

- **Economic life:** What are the characteristics of the system of production, distribution and consumption? What patterns of ownership, capital, resources and decision making are identifiable? Who owns? Who controls? Who pays? How does the economy produce group solidarity? How does it produce social conflict? What is the relationship between the local and global economy?
- **Social life:** What are the patterns of social relationship and the demographic characteristics of the immersion context? Do people relate to each other in terms of race, class, ethnicity, age group, sex group, and so forth? What is the basis for inclusion/exclusion in social groups? What are the dominant social problems? What general outlook on life is held by different social groups?
- **Cultural life:** What are the predominant values of the cultural group? What cultural themes manifest the group's consistent pattern of thought and behavior? Who influences the system of meaning out of which people live? What cultural knowledge are people using to generate behavior in their environment and organize a meaningful self-identity?
- **Political life:** What is the relationship between political life and the system of beliefs constitutive of the local culture? How do people relate culture as a structure of meaning through which people construe their experiences and politics as the context in which such

structures unfold? What is the nature of political leadership? Who has a voice and decision-making power? What roles do religion, the media and/or popular culture have on political life?

- Religious life: What is the predominant religious expression within the local group? Are categories of thought religious or secular? How does religion give expression to the cultural group's ultimate concerns? Are religious beliefs and practices supported by the larger social community? What religious symbols play a role in the construction of group and self-identity (e.g. local mosque, Our Lady of Guadalupe, a holy place)?

## Immersion Experience Guidelines

The Immersion experience constitutes the third element in fulfilling the requirements in the contextual education program. Participation in an approved Immersion experience in an intercultural context, either internationally or in the United States is assigned 2 credit hours.

1. Students will engage in an Immersion experience led by Wesley faculty or an educational provider approved by the PMM & Immersion Committee (see current "Immersion Brochure" for upcoming opportunities). Students normally will engage in these experiences in groups of two or more. Wesley faculty may accompany selected Immersions.

**\*Please note that all trips are subject to cancellation.\***

2. Students will work with existing Learning Partners to develop a plan for sharing within their congregation the experiences and reflections that may have grown out of the Immersion.
3. Students will live in the context of the Immersion among members of the culture being experienced.
4. Each Student will prepare his or her Immersion Application and submit it with required signatures to the PMM office for approval. Coordination and monitoring of experiences will occur through the PMM Office. Students must also file a Waiver of Liability Form and submit the required medical form with the PMM Office.
5. Immersion Orientation sessions will be offered at least twice each semester.
6. Immersion Debriefing sessions: For Students who participated in a **non-Wesley faculty led Immersion** will be offered each semester for all who have completed their Immersion experience during the previous semester. For Students who participated in a **Wesley faculty led Immersion** will be conducted by the faculty Immersion leader in the semester following the Immersion experience.
7. Students should register for MM-350 in the semester closest to the Immersion dates and no more than one year prior to the expected Immersion departure date. The Student must commit to an orientation session and must complete all tasks as assigned on the Blackboard site, by the PMM Office, or by their Trip Leader before leaving for the Immersion.

**Note:** *If the Student is unable to participate in the Immersion as planned and registered for, he or she must contact the PMM Office immediately to be removed from the Immersion trip roster and must also complete an Extension of Time Request form, to be submitted to the Dean's Office, which will grant an "NR" grade for the MM-350 course. If the Immersion is not completed within a year of this extension, the Student will be required to re-register for MM-350 and attend a new orientation session before participating in an Immersion.*

8. At the conclusion of the Immersion experience, each Student will complete a two-part assignment: (**\*\*A guideline for these assignments follows below**)
  - I. Develop a five page integrative paper which addresses the theological issues and implications for ministry experienced on the Immersion. This is to be a clear

theologically focused paper connecting the Immersion experience with current theological studies, ministry experience and one's personal experience of being a cultural person.

- II. The creation of a quality project on the Immersion experience which will be shared with their SPP Congregation. This project could be in various formats and venues: e.g., a Power Point presentation to a church group; a short series of classes for a Christian education class; a comprehensive talk directed to a specific group interested in the Immersion culture; or the creation of a full worship service.

**9. All Immersion assignments are due no later than 30 days upon the completion of the Immersion.**

- Wesley Faculty led Immersions: Students will submit the two-part assignment for review and grading to the faculty member who led the Immersion.
- Non-Wesley faculty led Immersion: Students will submit the two-part assignment for review and grading to the PMM Office.

10. Grading will be on a Pass/Fail basis. Immersion leaders will assess each Student's experience and indicate to the PMM Office whether or not the Student fully participated in the experience offered. Grading elements also include participation in both the orientation and debriefing sessions and the integrative paper and project.

11. In addition to paying tuition for the number of credit hours requested, Students will pay for travel, sponsor program costs, and other expenses related to the Immersion. A range of cost options characterize the opportunities featured in the "Immersion Brochure" that indicates the various opportunities currently available.

## **Questions to promote the writing of an Integrative Immersion Reflection Paper**

**Introductory Comment:** Your integrative paper is to be a theological reflection upon your immersion experience. **It is not** a summary of what happened. **It is not** a journal of the day to day events. **It is,** however, a well thought out reflection upon your experience within a specific cultural context, a context which includes the people, places, events, environment, and interactions with individuals and groups. It includes your own grappling with disorientations, conflicts, and struggles with what you “heard, saw, and touched”. It is a reflection of your encounter with yourself within a different culture. The following questions are offered as stimuli to your own questioning of your experience:

- Where was God in the experience? Where was God for others in the culture?
- What biblical stories or images come to mind?
- What theological themes were prominent in your immersion experience? e.g.

Sin	Evil	Forgiveness
Redemption	Reconciliation	Joy
Despair	Transformation	Abandonment
Being	Doing	Faith
Works	Justification	Sanctification
- What church traditions connected with your immersion experiences?
- How did your experience come into conflict with your faith?
- What beliefs that you hold were reflected in the culture?
- What values that you hold were challenged by your encounter with this culture?
- What values that you hold were supported by your encounter with this culture?
- What might God want you to learn from this experience for your own growth as a cultural person, and for your preparation for ministry?

Resource: *Reflecting with God* by Abigail Johnson, The Alban Institute, 2004.

### **Project Proposal Guidelines**

**Your project should:** help you explore an expanded understanding of the church and the world. Now you have returned home from your Immersion experience and you have experienced a new dimension of the corporate shared world. This is a Communications project, intended to communicate what God is doing in the world. You have been exposed to another culture’s story, and you are now its steward. How will you share it? Reflect theologically on how what you have experienced can be important to others.

When creating your project, think of the community in which you will present it. Questions to guide you include:

- What does the experience I have had mean to the people I am presenting to?
- How is my experience able to be a means of grace for those I am presenting to?
- How is my project a means of grace for those who I am representing in my project?
- How am I honoring those who hosted me in my Immersion?

Your project should:

- make connections
- show interpretive work
- show spiritual work
- explore a sense of who we are as Church even across different places and/or cultures

## Immersion Placement Process-Fulfilling the Immersion Requirement

**PLEASE NOTE:** *M.Div. Students for whom the Intercultural Immersion is required for degree conferral and who have completed 24 credit hours will be given first priority for Immersions. Students who sign up for an immersion sooner will be given priority over those who sign up later. M.Div. Students who have not completed 24 credit hours should seek permission from the PMM Office to participate in an Intercultural Immersion. M.Div. students who have not yet completed the immersion requirement and are nearing the end of their degree program will be given special consideration for meeting this requirement among the immersion possibilities being offered, but this does not include special privilege for any particular immersion. **On the day designated for initial deposits as indicated on Immersion Agreement Forms, the enrollment will open to non M.Div. students as delineated below and as administered by the trip leader and PMM Office.** Following Wesley M.Div. students, matriculating students who are enrolled in other degree programs at Wesley will then be given priority along with Students from the Washington Theological Consortium and other academic institutions with which WTS has a reciprocal relationship. Students taking the immersion course for credit will be given priority over students taking the immersion course as an audit.*

1. Indicate your interest in a particular Immersion by communicating with the Immersion Coordinator before you start the process.
2. Complete and submit the Immersion Application (found on the following pages below) along with the appropriate Waiver of Liability Form and Medical Information to the PMM Office. For January Immersions, submit the application no later than **November 1<sup>st</sup>**; for Summer Immersions, submit no later than **March 15<sup>th</sup>** (or nearest school days after). Keep the "Immersion Certification" page and have it signed by your Immersion leader.  
**NOTE:** *You must pre-register for MM-350 PMM: Intercultural Immersion no later than the registration period preceding the dates of the Immersion.*
3. The appropriate signatures are to be secured **prior to** submitting the application form to the PMM Office. Applications are not to be accepted without these signatures. **If you are not currently in PMM**, you only need the signature of your Wesley Seminary Academic Advisor. In the event that your Academic Advisor is on sabbatical, the signature of his/her replacement is required. **If you are in PMM**, you only need the signature of both learning partners (clergy and lay partners); you are not required to have the signature of your academic advisor. The PMM Office will sign the application only after a completed application has been submitted.
4. Prior to approval, consultation may be initiated with the applicant on the selection and/or scheduling of the Immersion or any other aspect of the application. You may check with the PMM Office at any time regarding the status of your application.  
**NOTE:** *The Seminary will not credit Immersion experiences entered into prior to or without an approved application on file with the PMM Office.*
5. **All costs for the Immersion experience (including tuition, program fees, etc.) are the Student's responsibility.** For Immersion experiences sponsored by Wesley faculty or co-sponsored with WTS, payment is made to the Seminary's Business Office and will be credited to your Student account. For all other Immersions, make required payments directly to the sponsor/provider, or as directed by the PMM office.
6. Students will be expected to meet all requirements for participation as specified by the Immersion setting sponsor. These include: securing passports and visas as necessary; following recommended health precautions; and completion of the course, itinerary or schedule of activities as agreed.  
**NOTE:** *International students who select an Immersion outside of the United States must see the Registrar three months prior to the Immersion to ensure completion of visa paperwork.*
7. Submit the Immersion Certification form to the PMM Office no later than the completion of Debriefing.

***Intercultural Immersion Application***  
***Wesley Theological Seminary***  
***Practice in Ministry and Mission Program***

Complete the form and submit to the PM&M Office. For January immersions, submit no later than **November 1<sup>st</sup>** (or nearest school day after the date); for Summer immersions, submit no later than **March 15<sup>th</sup>** (or nearest school day after the date). **\*Please note that all trips are subject to cancellation. Additionally, some trips may have an earlier application deadline.**

**Don't forget to register for MM-350 PM&M: Intercultural Immersion**

**Name:**

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**Address:**

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**Email:**

**Phone:**

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**Degree Program:**

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**Anticipated Number of Credit  
Hours at Date of Immersion:**

**Anticipated  
Graduation Date:**

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**Intended Immersion and Term:**

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**Why is this intercultural experience appropriate for you and your future ministry?**

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**What do you hope to learn through this experience?**

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**How have you been in conversation with others about this experience? If you are currently in a PMM placement, how have you involved your Learning Partners in planning for this experience? What potential for this Immersion have you discovered through this communal conversation?**

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**How do you imagine you might share this experience with your current ministry setting, whether your PMM placement or other setting?**

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## **SIGNATURE PAGE**

### **INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. All students are required to sign this form.
2. If you **are not** currently in a PMM Colloquy, you only need the signature of your Wesley Seminary Academic Advisor; you are not required to have the signature of the PMM Learning Partnership.
3. If you **are** in a PMM Colloquy, you only need the signature of both learning partners (clergy and lay partners); you are not required to have the signature of your academic advisor.
4. The PMM Office will sign and approve the application only after a completed application has been submitted.

### **Student Signature**

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Academic Advisor Signature (if not in PMM Placement)**

Academic Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Learning Partner Signatures (if currently in PMM Placement)**

Clergy Partner: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Lay Learning Partner: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Practice in Ministry and Mission Signature (to be signed upon receipt of completed application)**

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Nick Works, Assistant Director

## ***Intercultural Immersion Waiver Forms***

### ***INSTRUCTIONS:***

***On the following pages, there are two versions of the waiver forms of which one is to be submitted with your application. Complete the appropriate waiver form, depending on whether or not you are participating in a Domestic Immersion or International Immersion. Please be sure to attach the appropriate waiver form to your application.***

# Wesley Theological Seminary Domestic Immersion Waiver

This form is intended to be signed by all students, guests, and other non-employees participating in Intercultural Immersion trips.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Intercultural Immersion)

## RELEASED AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY, ASSUMPTION OF RISK AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby acknowledge that I have voluntarily elected to participate in the following immersion trip \_\_\_\_\_ to be held in and around (location) \_\_\_\_\_, from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_. **In consideration for being permitted by Wesley Theological Seminary to participate in this Intercultural Immersion, I hereby acknowledge and agree to the following:**

**ELECTIVE PARTICIPATION:** I acknowledge that my participation is elective and voluntary in accordance with the seminary's course requirement for Intercultural Immersions.

**RULES AND REQUIREMENTS:** I agree to conduct myself in accordance with seminary policies and procedures, including the *Covenant of Professional Ethics and Behavior* and the *Sexual Harassment Policy*. I further agree to abide by all the rules and requirements of the Immersion. I acknowledge that Wesley Theological Seminary has the right to terminate my participation in the Immersion if it is determined that my conduct is detrimental to the best interest of the group, my conduct violates any rule of the Immersion, or for any other reason in the seminary's discretion.

**INFORMED CONSENT:** I have been informed of and I understand the various aspects of the Immersion, including the dangers, hazards, and risks inherent in the Immersion, including but not limited to transportation to and from Wesley Theological Seminary via private vehicle, common carrier participation in the Immersion, overnight accommodations, weather conditions, conditions of equipment, facility conditions, negligent first aid operations or procedures, and in any independent research or activities I undertake as an adjunct to the Immersion. I understand that as a participant in the Immersion I could sustain serious personal injuries, illness, property damage, or even death as a consequence of not only the Seminary's actions or inactions, but also the actions, inactions, negligence or fault of others. I further understand and agree that any injury, illness, property damage, disability or death that I may sustain by any means is my sole responsibility except for those occurrences due to the Seminary's negligence or intentional acts.

**RELEASE AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY:** I, on behalf of myself, my personal representatives, heirs, executors, administrators, agents and assigns, **HEREBY RELEASE, WAIVER, DISCHARGE, AND COVENANT NOT TO SUE** Wesley Theological Seminary, it's governing board of directors, officers, employees, agents, volunteers, and any students (hereinafter referred to as "Releasees") for any and all liability, including any and all claims, demands, causes of action (known or unknown), suits, or judgments of any and every kind (including attorneys' fees), arising from any injury, property damage or death that I may suffer as a result of my participation in the Immersion, **REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THE INJURY, DAMAGE OR DEATH IS CAUSED BY THE RELEASEES, UNLESS THE INJURY DAMAGE OR DEATH IS CAUSED BY THE RELEASEES' NEGLIGENCE OR INTENTIONAL ACTS, AND REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THE INJURY DAMAGE OR DEATH OCCURS WHILE IN, ON, UPON, OR IN TRANSIT TO OR FROM THE PREMISES WHERE THE IMMERSION OR ANY ADJUNCT TO THE IMMERSION,**

**OCCURS OR IS BEING CONDUCTED.** I further agree that the Releasees are not in any way responsible for any injury or damage that I sustain as a result of my own negligent acts.

**ASSUMPTION OF RISK:** I understand that there are potential dangers incidental to my participation in the Immersion, some of which may be dangerous and which may expose me to the risk of personal injuries, property damage, or even death. I understand that there are potential risks as a consequence of, but not limited to: participation in this Immersion, travel to and from \_\_\_\_\_ via private vehicles, common carriers, and/or Seminary owned vehicles, weather conditions, overnight accommodations, facility conditions, equipment conditions, first aid operations or procedures of Releasees, and other risks that are unknown at this time. **I KNOWINGLY AND VOLUNTARILY ASSUME ALL SUCH RISKS, BOTH KNOWN AND UNKNOWN, EVEN IF ARISING FROM THE ACTS OF THE RELEASEES, UNLESS THEY ARISE FROM THE RELEASEES' INTENTIONAL OR NEGLIGENT ACTS,** and assume full responsibility for my participation in the Program.

**INDEMNITY:** I, on behalf of myself, my personal representatives, heirs, executors, administrators, agents, and assigns, agree to hold harmless, defend and indemnify the Releasee from any and all liability, including any and all claims, demands, causes of action (known or unknown), suits, or judgments of any and every kind (including attorneys' fees), arising from any injury, property damage or death that I may suffer as a result of my participation in the Immersion, **REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THE INJURY, DAMAGE OR DEATH IS CAUSED BY THE RELEASEES OR OTHERWISE, UNLESS THE INJURY DAMAGE OR DEATH IS CAUSED BY THE RELEASEES' NEGLIGENCE OR INTENTIONAL ACTS.**

**CERTIFICATION OF FITNESS TO PARTICIPATE:** I attest that I am physically and mentally fit to participate in the Immersion and that I do not have any medical record of history that could be aggravated by my participation in this particular Immersion.

**MEDICAL CONSENT:** I understand and agree that Releasees may not have medical personnel available at the location of the Immersion. In the event of any medical emergency, I (*initial*) do \_\_\_\_\_ do not \_\_\_\_\_ authorize and consent to any x-ray examination, anesthetic, medical, dental or surgical diagnosis or treatment, and hospital care that the Seminary personnel deem necessary for my safety and protection. I understand and agree that Releasees assume no responsibility for any injury or damage which might arise out of or in connection with such authorized emergency medical treatment. I understand and agree that I am responsible for my individual medical insurance.

**CHOICE OF LAW:** I hereby agree that this Agreement shall be construed in accordance with the laws of the District of Columbia.

**SEVERABILITY:** If any term or provision of this Agreement shall be held illegal, unenforceable, or in conflict with any law governing this Agreement the validity of the remaining portions shall not be affected thereby.

**(INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK)**

**I HAVE READ THIS AGREEMENT AND FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS TERMS. I AM AWARE THAT THIS AGREEMENT INCLUDES A RELEASE AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY, AN ASSUMPTION OF RISK, AND AN AGREEMENT TO INDEMNIFY THE RELEASEES. I UNDERSTAND I HAVE GIVEN UP SUBSTANTIAL RIGHTS BY SIGNING THIS AGREEMENT, AND SIGN IT FREELY AND VOLUNTARILY WITHOUT ANY INDUCEMENT. BY MY SIGNATURE I REPRESENT THAT I AM AT LEAST EIGHTEEN YEARS OF AGE.**

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Signature of Participant

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Date

Adopted 6/2006

Revised 7/2012

# Wesley Theological Seminary International Immersion Waiver

This form is intended to be signed by all students, guests, and other non-employees participating in Intercultural Immersion trips.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Intercultural Immersion)

## RELEASE AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY, ASSUMPTION OF RISK AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby acknowledge that I have voluntarily elected to participate in the following immersion trip \_\_\_\_\_ to be held in and around (location) \_\_\_\_\_, from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_. **In consideration for being permitted by Wesley Theological Seminary to participate in this Intercultural Immersion, I hereby acknowledge and agree to the following:**

**ELECTIVE PARTICIPATION:** I acknowledge that my participation is elective and voluntary in accordance with the Seminary's course requirement for Intercultural Immersions.

**RULES AND REQUIREMENTS:** I agree to conduct myself in accordance with seminary policies and procedures, including the *Covenant of Professional Ethics and Behavior*, and the *Sexual Harassment Policy*. I further agree to abide by all the rules and requirements of the Immersion. I acknowledge that Wesley Theological Seminary has the right to terminate my participation in the Immersion if it is determined that my conduct is detrimental to the best interests of the group, my conduct violates any rule of the Immersion, or for any other reason in the Seminary's discretion.

I understand that in the event my participation in the Program is terminated for violating any rule of the Program, I will be solely responsible for the cost of return travel. I further understand and agree that the Seminary is not responsible for any injury or damage that I sustain if I travel independently or am otherwise separated or absent from Seminary sponsored activities. I acknowledge that I am solely responsible for any legal problems I encounter with any foreign nationals or government and the Seminary is not responsible for providing any assistance under those circumstances.

**INFORMED CONSENT:** I have been informed of and I understand the various aspects of the Program, including but not limited to the fact that the Program will be held in and around \_\_\_\_\_ (location). I understand that travel outside the United States is considered dangerous and I accept the risks of such travel. I have received and reviewed the travel itinerary from the Immersion and understand the risks involved in traveling to, within and from \_\_\_\_\_, including but not limited to foreign political, legal, social, and economic conditions, language barriers, safety hazards, crime, disease, consumption of food, civil unrest or hostilities, terrorism, war, natural disasters and weather conditions, and negligent first aid operations or medical treatment. I further understand that serious injuries could occur during my participation in the Program and that as a Participant I could sustain personal injuries, property damage, or even death as a consequence of participating in this Immersion, local transportation to and from various activities, international travel to and from \_\_\_\_\_ (Immersion location).

I understand that serious injuries could occur during participation in this Program and that as a Participant, I could sustain serious personal injuries, illness, property damage, or even death as a consequence of not only the Seminary's actions or inactions, but the actions, inactions,

negligence or fault of others and that there may be other risks not known to me or not reasonably foreseeable at this time. I further understand and agree that any injury, illness, property damage, disability, or death that I may sustain by any means is my sole responsibility except for those occurrences due to the Seminary's negligence or intentional acts.

**RELEASE AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY:** I, on behalf of myself, my personal representatives, heirs, executors, administrators, agents, and assigns, **HEREBY RELEASE, WAIVE, DISCHARGE, AND COVENANT NOT TO SUE** Wesley Theological Seminary, its governing board, directors, officers, employees, agents, volunteers and any students (hereinafter referred to as "Releasees") for any and all liability, including any and all claims, demands, causes of action (known or unknown), suits, or judgments of any and every kind (including attorneys' fees), arising from any injury, property damage or death that I may suffer as a result of my participation in the Immersion, **REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THE INJURY, DAMAGE OR DEATH IS CAUSED BY THE RELEASEES' NEGLIGENCE OR INTENTIONAL ACTS, AND REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THE INJURY DAMAGE OR DEATH OCCURS WHILE IN, ON, UPON, OR IN TRANSIT TO OR FROM THE PREMISES WHERE THE IMMERSION OR ANY ADJUNCT TO THE IMMERSION, OCCURS OR IS BEING CONDUCTED.** I further agree that the Releasees are not in any way responsible for any injury or damage that I sustain as a result of my own negligent acts.

**ASSUMPTION OF RISK:** I understand that there are potential dangers incidental to my participation in the Program, some of which may be dangerous and which may expose me to the risk of personal injuries, property damage, or even death. I understand that these potential risks include, but are not limited to: travel to and from \_\_\_\_\_, local transportation within the Immersion location, including but not limited to foreign political, legal, social, and economic conditions, language barriers, safety hazards, crime, disease, consumption of food, civil unrest or hostilities, terrorism, war, natural disasters and weather conditions, negligent first aid operations or medical treatment, and other risks that are unknown at this time. **I KNOWINGLY AND VOUNTARILY ASSUME ALL SUCH RISKS, BOTH KNOWN AND UNKNOWN, EVEN IF ARISING FROM THE ACTS OF THE RELEASEES, UNLESS THEY ARISE FROM THE RELEASEES' INTENTIONAL OR NEGLIGENT ACTS,** and assume full responsibility for my participation in the Program.

**INDEMNITY:** I, on behalf of myself, my personal representatives, heirs, executors, administrators, agents, and assigns, agree to hold harmless, defend and indemnify the Releasees from any and all liability, including any and all claims, demands, causes of action (known or unknown), suits, or judgments of any and every kind (including attorneys' fees), arising from any injury, property damage or death that I may suffer as a result of my participation in the Immersion, **REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THE INJURY, DAMAGE OR DEATH IS CAUSED BY THE RELEASEES OR OTHERWISE, UNLESS THE INJURY DAMAGE OR DEATH IS CAUSED BY THE RELEASEES' NEGLIGENCE OR INTENTIONAL ACTS.**

**PESONAL BELONGINGS:** I understand and acknowledge that the Seminary is not responsible for the loss of any personal belongings or property that I sustain during my participation in the Immersion including but not limited to the loss of credit cards, cash, luggage, and other items.

**MEDICAL CONSENT:** I understand and agree that Releasees do not have medical personnel available at the location of the Program. In the event of any medical emergency, I (*initial*) do \_\_\_\_\_ do not \_\_\_\_\_ authorize and consent to any x-ray examination, anesthetic, medical, dental, or surgical diagnosis or treatment, and hospital care that the Seminary personnel deem necessary for my safety and protection. I understand and agree that Releasees assume no responsibility for any injury or damage which might arise out of or in connection with such authorized emergency medical treatment.

**CHOICE OF LAW:** I hereby agree that this Agreement shall be construed in accordance with the laws of the District of Columbia.

**SEVERABILITY:** If any term or provision of this Agreement shall be held illegal, unenforceable, or in conflict with any law governing this Agreement the validity of the remaining portions shall not be affected thereby.

**I HAVE READ THIS AGREEMENT AND FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS TERMS. I AM AWARE THAT THIS AGREEMENT INCLUDES A RELEASE AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY, AN ASSUMPTION OF RISK, AND AN AGREEMENT TO INDEMNIFY THE RELEAASEES. I UNDERSTAND I HAVE GIVEN UP SUBSTANTIAL RIGHTS BY SIGNING THIS AGREEMENT, AND SIGN IT FREELY AND VOLUNTARILY WITHOUT ANY INDUCEMENT.**

**BY MY SIGNATURE I REPRESENT THAT I AM AT LEAST EIGHTEEN YEARS OF AGE OR, IF NOT, THAT I HAVE SECURED BELOW THE SIGNATURE OF MY PARENT OR GUARDIAN AS WELL AS MY OWN.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Adopted 6/2006

Revised 7/2012

## ***Medical Information for Immersion Trips***

### **Student General Information: (please print)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Care Physician: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Emergency Contact Information**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relation: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Medical Information**

Are you presently being treated for an injury or sickness or taking any form of medication for any reason?  Yes  No. If yes, please explain and list medications:

\_\_\_\_\_

Are you allergic to any type of medication?  Yes  No. If yes, please list:

\_\_\_\_\_

Please list all allergies:

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you require a special diet?  Yes  No. If yes, please explain:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you or (have you ever had) any of the following? Circle and explain below:

Seizure Disorders

Asthma

Heart Murmur

Hay Fever

Kidney Disease

Diabetes

---

Do you have any allergies other than medical? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No. If yes, please explain:

---

Do you have any physical handicaps or illnesses which would prevent you from participating in normal rigorous activities? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No. If yes, please explain:

---

### Medical Treatment Authorization

I understand this form will be used to judge medical attention given to me in the event of an emergency and I authorize the calling of a doctor for the providing of necessary medical services.

I agree to notify the Wesley Theological Seminary representative in the event of any health changes, which would restrict my participation in any normal activities before and during this trip.

Print Name:

---

Signature:

---

Name of Health Insurance Company:

---

Insurance Company contact number:

---

Policy Number:

---

**Note:** This information is intended exclusively for the use of the immersion trip leader and will be shared only with those who might need to administer medical care. Your immersion leader has been instructed to destroy this information at the conclusion of your immersion experience.

# ***Intercultural Immersion Certification***

**NOTE: RETAIN THIS CERTIFICATE AND TAKE IT WITH YOU FOR A SIGNATURE AT THE CONCLUSION OF YOUR IMMERSION**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Intercultural Immersion attended: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of Participation: \_\_\_\_\_

This form is submitted to certify completion of the above immersion experience and the Debriefing Seminar.

## **SIGNATURES**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Immersion Sponsor or Representative Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Debriefing Seminar Faculty Date

## **COMMENTS ABOUT STUDENTS' PARTICIPATION (OPTIONAL):**

To be completed by Immersion Leader as needed:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please submit this form to the PM&M Office no later than the completion of the Debriefing Seminar that follows the completion of your Immersion experience.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Received by: Date

# SECTION SEVEN

## Wesley Theological Seminary Covenants & Policies

### Covenant of Professional Ethics and Behavior Wesley Theological Seminary

Wesley Theological Seminary, rooted in Christian tradition, recognizes that theological education involves a diverse formation as well as academic formation. It is important that students recognize that the seminary holds certain legitimate expectations that students will act with integrity toward self and community. We expect the Covenant of Professional Ethics and Behavior to be honored in practice and in intent. Readiness for ministry will be gauged by faithfulness to this covenant.

#### **INSTITUTIONAL COVENANT**

The seminary covenants to welcome students as valued members of the community and treat them with respect, dignity, fairness and equity. The seminary also covenants to promote a safe and healthy environment, to promote a climate that nourishes professional, spiritual, personal, and emotional development, and to provide support services or referrals for assistance with personal issues and academic advancement.

**Recognizing that we are creatures of our Creator called to live in community with God and one another, we commit to live in covenanted relationship. Each student affirms and commits himself or herself to the following:**

#### **THE COVENANT OF STEWARDSHIP**

I will be a faithful steward of and fully accountable for funds, property, and human resources related to my study and ministry. I will be respectful of the time and energies of faculty, staff, and administration, and other students.

- **Use of Property**

I will use seminary property (computers, dormitories, classrooms, etc.) only for its intended purpose. I will do my best to make sure that property is respected and that maintenance needs are reported promptly. I will report situations that threaten the safety and well-being of the community.

- **Financial Accountability**

I will act responsibly in incurring indebtedness, considering my potential for employment and my family and personal commitments. I will be responsible in meeting my financial obligations, including prompt payment of tuition and fees.

- **Timeliness**

I will submit course work on time and take course attendance requirements seriously. Regular attendance in classes and timeliness in submitting work is a matter of respect and courtesy to faculty members and fellow students. When a deadline cannot be met, I must negotiate in advance with either the professor or the Dean as specified in their course syllabus and the Wesley Theological Seminary Catalog.

- **Special Needs**

I will take responsibility to negotiate with the seminary about my special needs in accordance with seminary policy. Such conditions might include learning disabilities, family emergencies, physical limitations and severe illness. I will not undertake on my own the remedy of special needs of others in the community, including extended counseling, financial support, or inappropriate academic assistance.

**THE COVENANT OF SELF-CARE**

I will manage my personal life in a healthful fashion and seek consultations with appropriately qualified persons for my personal problems or conflicts when necessary. I remain accountable for honoring the duty of spiritual growth, self-improvement, intellectual openness, and physical well-being.

**THE COVENANT OF DIGNITY AND INCLUSIVENESS**

I affirm that all persons at Wesley Theological Seminary should be treated with respect regardless of their race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, marital status, political belief, national origin, physical and mental disabilities, age or any other human condition.

I will respect each person’s integrity, values, conscience, spirituality, and theology and will protect the welfare of all persons, considering the impact of my words and actions on those around me. I will be respectful in criticizing students, faculty, and staff, and I will be truthful and honest in relating to others.

Further, I have read and affirm the Commitment to Diversity and the Disabilities Statement & Procedures as stated in the Student Handbook.

**THE COVENANT OF ACADEMIC HONESTY**

I recognize that all forms of academic dishonesty are detrimental to my integrity and to the community. I recognize that infractions of this covenant may lead to a review of my status in the community. I recognize that professors have authority to determine whether computers will be used for exams.

I have read and affirm the Policy on Dishonesty as stated in the Student Handbook.

**THE COVENANT OF NO-HARASSMENT**

I will seek collegial relationships with colleagues, faculty and staff. I affirm Wesley Theological Seminary’s commitment to creating and maintaining a community in which students, faculty and staff can work together in an atmosphere free of all forms of harassment and threats (verbal, visual, physical, and sexual) as stated in the Sexual Harassment Policy in the Student Handbook.

Each student upon matriculation at Wesley Theological Seminary is requested to subscribe to the covenant adopted by the faculty and the administrative council. This signed document is to be kept with the student’s permanent file in the office of the Registrar.

I have read and understood the covenant of Professional Ethics and Behaviors of the Wesley Theological Seminary. I agree to be accountable to it in my preparation for ministry.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- OR -

I understand that these are the principles that govern Wesley Theological Seminary, but I am unwilling to sign this Covenant for the following reasons:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Disabilities Statement & Procedures Wesley Theological Seminary

Wesley Theological Seminary is committed to providing equal access to Seminary educational programs for all qualified students with learning, physical, medical, or psychological disabilities. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the D.C. Human Rights Act prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities. Specifically, these laws require the Seminary to provide reasonable accommodation for qualified individuals with a disability to ensure their equal access and participation in Seminary programs.

Once admitted to Wesley, students needing accommodations are encouraged to communicate with the Associate Dean for Community Life. Students should submit to the Office of Community Life relevant, current documentation from a qualified professional, which will be evaluated by a consultant with a degree in special education.

All documentation should include the following information:

- The presenting problem and relevant history,
- test scores and discussion of results, if relevant,
- a diagnosis with rationale,
- a description of the disability, including duration and severity,
- substantial medication side effects, if any,
- information on substantial disability-based limitations and how they relate to the educational environment, and
- suggested educational accommodations with rationale for recommendations.

The Associate Dean reserves the right to request additional documentation, if needed. All costs for testing are the responsibility of the student. Students should check with their health insurance companies to see what testing costs, if any, are covered.

Students must return testing documentation as early as possible, preferably by June 30 for fall admission, and by November 30 for January admission. Later submission of documentation may result in a delay of accommodation implementation.

Based on the consultant's evaluation, the Associate Dean will recommend accommodations in a letter to the student.

After attending at least one of each of his or her classes, the student must fill out a notification form, listing the professors she or he wishes to notify about the student's learning disability; the academic advisor should also be included. This form is available from the Associate Dean's Office and must be filled out every semester. Once the student has authorized such a release, the Associate Dean notifies faculty identified by the student of the student's need for accommodations.

Information and records about student disabilities are treated as confidential information under applicable federal and state laws, as well as Seminary policies, and are only provided to individuals on a need-to-know basis when authorized by the student.

A faculty member's first notification of a student's need for accommodation normally comes in the form of a letter from the Associate Dean's Office verifying that the student has appropriate documentation of a disability and that accommodations may be necessary. Occasionally, a student will come directly to a faculty member and request accommodations. If a student requests accommodations directly from a faculty member and no letter of verification has been sent by the Associate Dean, it is the faculty member's responsibility both to inform the student that services are available and to refer the student to the appropriate office to begin the process of verification of a disability and the subsequent notification of faculty. Accommodations should not be provided without a letter from the Associate Dean. Faculty is encouraged to consult with the Associate Dean if there are questions regarding accommodation issues.

Except in cases of minor accommodations, such as sitting in the front of the classroom, faculty should not provide accommodations without verification from the Associate Dean. To provide accommodations without verification, or to refuse to provide accommodations recommended by the Associate Dean's Office, exposes a faculty member and the Seminary to legal liabilities.

Students should meet with their professors early in the semester to discuss possible accommodations once the Associate Dean's Office has verified the student's disability. Students should schedule an appointment with the Associate Dean after 30 hours of course work to discuss the student's progress and accommodations.

# Sexual Harassment Policy

## Wesley Theological Seminary

### **I. PROHIBITION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Wesley Theological Seminary, a graduate theological school of the United Methodist Church, has adopted a statement of mission, which gives expression to the Seminary's understanding of its purpose, its commitments and its approach to embodying those commitments. The current Mission Statement reads "the mission of Wesley Theological Seminary is to equip persons for Christian ministry and leadership in the church and the world, to advance theological scholarship, and to model a prophetic voice in the public square."

In support of this mission, Wesley Theological Seminary is committed to creating and maintaining a community in which administrators, faculty, staff and students can work, study and live together in an atmosphere free of all forms of discrimination, harassment, exploitation, or intimidation. Specifically, all persons associated with the Seminary should be aware that the Seminary condemns harassment of any kind including sexual harassment or harassment predicated on race, ethnicity, disability, age, gender, or sexual orientation. Such behavior is an affront to God and to human dignity, is prohibited both by law and by existing Seminary policies, and cannot be permitted within the community. It is the intention and responsibility of the Seminary to take whatever action may be needed to prevent and correct behavior which is contrary to this policy and to work positively to ensure an environment and a process which upholds the requirements of basic human justice.

As set forth in this policy, sexual harassment is prohibited by the Seminary. Grievance procedures are available for any individual who believes that he or she has been subject to sexual harassment as listed in the Student Handbook. The Seminary will investigate fully any such grievance, and will take prompt corrective action if a determination is made that sexual harassment has occurred.

#### **Sexual Harassment is Illegal**

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, and the federal regulations adopted under that act, prohibit sexual harassment in the employment setting. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment, in any educational programs and activities of educational institutions that receive federal funding. Students and employees are covered by Title IX. Sexual harassment is also prohibited by the District of Columbia Human Rights Act.

#### **What Constitutes Sexual Harassment?**

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, when (1) submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of an individual's employment or academic standing; (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for employment decisions or for academic evaluation, grades, or advancement, or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or academic environment. Conduct that occurs in the process of selection for employment or for admission to an academic program is covered by this policy, as well as conduct directed toward Seminary students, faculty or staff members.

Sexual harassment includes any unwanted sexual attention:

- Visual conduct such as staring, leering, or making sexual gestures;
- Verbal conduct such as sex-oriented teasing or joking, making sexually demeaning comments, using sexual epithets, slurs or nicknames, whistling or catcalls, and repeated and unwelcome comments about another's appearance or clothing;
- Discussion of one's own sexual problems or experiences, or questions about another's sexual experience;
- Repeated unwanted asking for dates;
- Inappropriate touching, such as caresses, attempts to kiss or fondle, and any other physical conduct offensive to another;
- Pressure for sex; and
- Display or transmission (electronic or otherwise) of obscene or sexually-oriented objects, photographs, or messages.

Sexual harassment does not refer to occasional compliments of a socially acceptable nature or consensual personal and social relationships without employment or academic effect. It refers to behavior which is not welcome and which is personally intimidating, hostile or offensive.

### **II. POLICY REGARDING CONSENSUAL "ROMANTIC" RELATIONSHIPS**

Wesley Theological Seminary does not prohibit consensual romantic relationships, except in the circumstances outlined below. However, such relationships can present a number of difficulties which should be carefully considered. For example, it is not always possible to tell when a relationship is truly welcome, and all members of the Wesley community must be aware of the possibility that a relationship they thought was consensual was not. Further, it may prove uncomfortable if a relationship ends and both parties are still members of the community.

While the development of romantic relationships between genuinely consenting adults can obviously be a positive event in appropriate circumstances, faculty and administrators, as individuals in authority, must recognize that the imbalance of power between themselves and students renders mutuality of consent in relationships with students problematic and raises potential conflicts of interest. Further, when the authority and power inherent in administrative and faculty relationships to students is abused, whether overtly, implicitly, or through misinterpretation, there is potentially great damage to individual students, to the persons complained of, and to the educational climate of the institution. For these reasons, Wesley Theological Seminary prohibits romantic or amorous relationships between faculty and students, and between administrators and students. For the same reasons, Wesley Theological Seminary also prohibits romantic or amorous relationships between students and learning partners, and between students and parishioners in the Practice in Ministry and Mission sites. Likewise, the Seminary prohibits romantic or amorous relationships between supervisors and those whom they supervise.

### **III. PROCEDURES FOR SUBMITTING AND INVESTIGATING GRIEVANCES BROUGHT UNDER THIS POLICY**

The Seminary has established procedures for submitting and investigating grievances by any member of the Wesley community who believes himself or herself to have been injured by a violation of the Seminary's Commitment to Diversity, including its policy against workplace or learning environment harassment. The procedures for submitting and investigating grievances are set forth in the Faculty, Staff, and Student Manuals. In the student Manual, please refer to the Procedures for Submitting and Investigating Grievances in the Student Handbook.

If you believe that you are the subject of sexual harassment, please do not assume that the Seminary faculty or administration is aware of what is happening. If harassment continues after you have asked someone to stop or if you feel uncomfortable talking to that person directly, you should follow the grievance procedures established by the Seminary. Complaints of harassment will be investigated promptly. Investigations will be conducted with discretion, and confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible, consistent with the needs of the investigation. If prohibited or unlawful harassment is found to have occurred, prompt corrective action will be taken.

No one will be retaliated against for making a sexual harassment complaint in good faith even if no determination is made that harassment has occurred. However, anyone who knowingly makes a false claim or knowingly provides false information in the course of an investigation will be subject to disciplinary action. Anyone who retaliates against someone for making a harassment complaint or providing information during a harassment investigation will also be subject to disciplinary action.

### **IV. POLICY DISSEMINATION/EDUCATION**

Educational programs need to be developed and carried out to prevent or reduce the incidents of sexual harassment. Appropriate support for the victims and offenders should be provided by the Seminary. This policy shall be printed in all Seminary policy manuals (Faculty, Staff, and Student); publicized initially in the community with articles and policy announcements; reviewed annually with all supervisory personnel and all persons in leadership positions; reviewed specifically with all persons entering the Seminary as new employees, both faculty and staff; specifically referenced in new student and Practice of Ministry and Mission orientations; and explained thoroughly in all counseling situations in which the provisions of the policy have been invoked. The Office of the President shall be responsible for the implementation and dissemination of this policy.

## Commitment to Diversity

### Wesley Theological Seminary

The mission of Wesley Theological Seminary is to prepare persons for Christian ministry, to foster theological scholarship, and to provide leadership on issues facing the church and the world. Our aim is to nourish a critical understanding of Christian faith, cultivate disciplined spiritual lives, and promote a just and compassionate engagement in the mission of the church to the world.

Wesley is a representative community of persons in the church, accountable, as all Christian communities are, to the intention of God that all may be one. Wesley affirms its identity as a community that intentionally seeks to include persons of both sexes and various national and ethnic backgrounds, ages, and special conditions as Board members, administrators, faculty, staff, and students. Wesley's Commitment to Diversity is to be lived out in our admission of students; hiring of faculty, staff and administration; and selection of members of the Board of Governors (Board); and in our life together as a community.

Wesley Theological Seminary is an equal opportunity employer and educational environment. No person who meets our admission requirements will be denied admission or be subjected to discrimination in recruitment or educational policies, scholarship and loan programs, or other Seminary administered programs on the basis of perceived race, color, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expressions, familial status, family responsibilities, genetic information, disability, or political affiliation. We are working toward the realization of a barrier-free environment with adequate facilities and assistance for persons with disabilities.

# **SECTION EIGHT**

## **Year – End Evaluation Forms**

PLEASE CHECK WHETHER YOU ARE:

Clergy Mentor \_\_\_\_\_

Lay Person/Staff Member \_\_\_\_\_

Wesley Theological Seminary  
Practice in Ministry and Mission  
Year-end Student Evaluation

Name of Student Intern: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Clergy/Administrator Partner: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Lay Partner/Staff Member: \_\_\_\_\_

Name/Address of Teaching Site: \_\_\_\_\_

Term/Dates of Internship: \_\_\_\_\_

This form is provided to assist the Learning Partnership in rendering constructive and helpful observations of the student intern. All of us need to see ourselves, as much as possible, as others see us. This is particularly for the person who is called to the public vocation of ordained or consecrated ministry. The perspectives and views the Learning Partners provide in this document will be among the most important a Wesley student will receive prior to graduation. Your help is requested specifically and solely to assist this intern in his/her growth in Christian ministry. You provide both lay and clergy perspectives in this document; perspectives which this student may never receive if you do not provide them now.

Please be forthright in your work. Seek to phrase your comments in ways which will enable the student to hear them. Students long for honest, helpful observations and comments.

This form will not fail a student or cost them ordination or employment. School and church officials use information from many different sources in making decisions on a student's progress in school and ministry. If there is an item of concern not covered in this form, feel free to communicate it in writing to the school with a copy to the student.

Confidentiality: This form is retained in the files of the Practice in Ministry and Mission Office. No one other than the staff of the Practice in Ministry and Mission Office and designated Wesley Seminary Faculty have access to this document, unless a student waives confidentiality. This material belongs to the intern and is used by the Seminary to assess student growth and counsel students regarding their growth in ministry. **This evaluation is also used to fulfill denominational recommendations for ordained ministry.** This form must be individually completed; signed by the entire learning partnership; and be signed by the student. The student should see that the completed and signed evaluation is forwarded directly to their colloquy leaders by the due date located on their syllabus.

## PART I

**On a scale of 1 – 5 please assess the student on the following areas of ministry. Please circle your choice on each item.**

- 1 = Very effective**
- 2 = Effective**
- 3 = Growth area**
- 4 = Lacks ability in this area**
- 5 = Don't know**

### **1. Mission of the Church**

Takes seriously the mission and vision of the church.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

Demonstrates ability and sensitivity to think ecumenically and globally considering the church in the larger community.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

Engages in mission and evangelism by encouraging the church to invite others into Christian discipleship.

1 2 3 4 5

Invites the church to take seriously the needs of homeless, hungry, lower income persons and those in poverty & prison.

1 2 3 4 5

Is sensitive and understands the denominational traditions and practices in the field education setting.

1 2 3 4 5

**Additional Comments:**

---

---

**Suggestions for Development and Improvement:**

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---

**Examples of Growth:**

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**2. Administration**

Uses time well and appropriately prioritizes duties.

1 2 3 4 5

Works well within committees and other small group teams.

1 2 3 4 5

Completes required tasks in a timely manner.

1 2 3 4 5

Is a good listener.

1 2 3 4 5

Balances and manages the demands experienced:

Working in high-stress situations:

1 2 3 4 5

Working under time pressure with irregular schedules:

1 2 3 4 5

Responding to needs (reacting to emergencies):

1 2 3 4 5

Possesses qualities of adaptability, flexibility, and the ability to function in the face of uncertainty.

1 2 3 4 5

**Additional Comments:**

---

---

**Suggestions for Development and Improvement:**

---

---

**Examples of Growth:**

---

---

**3. Leadership**

Understands his/her role and its functions within the church as defined in student's Learning Agreement.

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

Demonstrates initiative appropriate to the field ministry context (self-motivated, creative, anticipatory).

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

Uses appropriate language.

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

Honors confidentiality.

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

Dresses appropriately for both the task and context.

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

Engages relationships with ministerial staff appropriately.

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

Engages relationships with lay leaders appropriately.

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

Understands and manages conflict in a constructive manner.

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

Respects and honors all persons.

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

Is punctual and prepared.

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

Acts with compassion and is able to speak the truth in love.

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

Thinks critically – both about the practices of the church and about the world in which the church finds itself – and *shows potential* to be an agent of transformation in both.

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

Demonstrates an integration of integrity, authenticity, and the practices of faith in life and ministry.

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

**Additional Comments:**

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**Suggestions for Development and Improvement:**

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---

**Examples of Growth:**

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**4. Worship Leadership**

To your knowledge has the student completed a worship course at seminary? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

The student is an effective worship leader.

1            2            3            4            5

Demonstrates authenticity in worship leadership.

1            2            3            4            5

Organizes and plans worship services with skill and care.

1            2            3            4            5

Shows promise for an ability to read Scripture, the arts, and the great texts of the Christian tradition with attentiveness, humility, and a lively imagination.

1            2            3            4            5

Has the student completed a preaching course? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

Student is an effective preacher.

1            2            3            4            5

Student preaches the gospel with clarity.

1            2            3            4            5

Student preaches the gospel with power and reverence.

1            2            3            4            5

**Additional Comments:**

---

---

**Suggestions for Development and Improvement:**

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**Examples of Growth:**

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**5. Teaching**

Encourages those in the church to grow in and practice their faith (i.e. small group formation).

1            2            3            4            5

Demonstrates competence in basic theology, biblical studies, and Christian practices.

1            2            3            4            5

Demonstrates a comprehensive spiritual knowledge needed to perform the primary tasks of ministry.

1            2            3            4            5

Thinks theologically in a way that is both faithful to the tradition and responsive to the challenges of our time.

1            2            3            4            5

Teaches the gospel with clarity.

1            2            3            4            5

Teaches the gospel with power and reverence.

1            2            3            4            5

**Additional Comments:**

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**Suggestions for Development and Improvement:**

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**Examples of Growth:**

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### **6. Spiritual Formation and Self-Care**

Demonstrates a commitment to living a life ordered toward holiness, justice, peace and reconciliation.

1            2            3            4            5

Evidences a commitment to personal prayer, Bible Study and reading for spiritual growth.

1            2            3            4            5

Observes a Sabbath for personal renewal.

1            2            3            4            5

Is open to receiving spiritual direction from others.

1            2            3            4            5

Models and communicates healthy life-styles (spiritual, physical, and emotional) for strengthening individual and family health).

1            2            3            4            5

**Additional Comments:**

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**Suggestions for Development and Improvement:**

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**Examples of Growth:**

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### **7. Pastoral Care**

Is effective in the ministries of caring (including hospital and home visitations, funerals, contacting homebound persons, etc.).

1            2            3            4            5

Demonstrates appropriate pastoral presence (boundaries, empathy, accessibility).

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

Enables and partners with the laity in the caring ministry of the church.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

**Additional Comments:**

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**Suggestions for Development and Improvement:**

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**Examples of Growth:**

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### **8. Vocational Clarity**

Maintains openness to vocational discernment within the church and the world.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

Is pursuing appropriate steps in vocational discernment within the church and in the world.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

**Additional Comments:**

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**Suggestions for Development and Improvement:**

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**Examples of Growth:**

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## **PART II**

1. How do you evaluate the intern's sense of "call to ministry" at this point in his/her journey?

2. How effective was the intern in accomplishing his or her learning goals as outlined in the Learning Agreement?

3. What happened in the life of the intern at the level of personal faith?

4. Comment on the intern's preparedness for the realistic demands of ministry taking into account family considerations (as appropriate).

5. Describe the nature and quality of the intern's relationships.

with you:

with the staff:

with members of the congregation/agency:

6. How would you describe the intern's general temperament/disposition as s/he has been experienced in your congregation/agency (e.g. angry, nervous, confident, casual, careless, serious, joyful, flexible, controlling, adaptive to change, warm, etc.)?

7. How would you describe his/her level of maturity (Include ability of intern for self-awareness and self-criticism.)?

8. Describe the intern's ability to integrate theory and practice, theology and ministry.

9. How would you describe his/her personal work habits (e.g. appearance, punctuality, self-discipline, ability to establish realistic work objectives, tact, time management, etc.)?

10. Please summarize what you perceive to be the intern's greatest strengths for ministry.

11. Please identify and comment on areas in which the intern needs further growth. What new insights, knowledge, or skills does s/he need to develop in preparation for further ministry?

12. What specifically should this student be working on in the next year?

13. Comments on any areas not covered already?

### PART III

#### Student Intern's Response

(To be completed by the Intern after reviewing Parts I and II)

(To be signed by student and Learning Partners)

Check one:

- I have read my partners' assessment and agree that it is a fair evaluation of me and my PMM ministry experience.
- I have read my partners' assessment and agree with the evaluation with the following exceptions or additions:

#### Partnership Signatures

**Student Signature:**

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**Clergy Learning Partner**

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**Lay Learning Partner**

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**Date:**

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**The Practice in Ministry and Mission staff thanks you for the time and serious consideration you have given to this evaluation.**

**Wesley Theological Seminary  
Practice in Ministry and Mission  
Year-end Student Self- Evaluation**

**Name of Student Intern:**

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**Name of Clergy/Administrator Mentor:**

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**Name of Lay Partner/Staff Partner:**

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**Name/Address of Teaching Site:**

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**Term/Dates of Internship:**

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This form is provided to assist the student intern in self-evaluation. Student interns should complete this form and then discuss it with their learning partners along with the learning partners' own evaluations of the student intern. Try to be forthright in your self evaluation—neither overly humble nor haughty. This form and the evaluation process are primarily for your own learning and formation in ministry.

Confidentiality: This form is retained in the files of the Practice in Ministry and Mission Office. No one other than the staff of the Practice in Ministry and Mission Office and designated Wesley Seminary Faculty have access to this document, unless a student waives confidentiality. This material belongs to the intern and is used by the Seminary to assess student growth and counsel students regarding their growth in ministry. **This evaluation is also used to fulfill denominational recommendations for ordained ministry.** This form must be individually completed; signed by the entire learning partnership; and be signed by the student. The student should see that the completed and signed evaluation *forms are all* forwarded directly to their colloquy leaders by the due date located on their syllabus.

**PART I**

**On a scale of 1 – 5 please assess yourself on the following areas of ministry. Please circle your choice on each item.**

- 1 = Very effective**
- 2 = Effective**
- 3 = Growth area**
- 4 = Lacks ability in this area**
- 5 = Don't know**

**1. Mission of the Church**

I take seriously the mission and vision of the church.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

I demonstrate an ability and sensitivity to think ecumenically and globally considering the church in the larger community.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

I engage in mission and evangelism by encouraging the church to invite others into Christian discipleship.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

I invite the church to take seriously the needs of homeless, hungry, lower income persons and those in poverty & prison.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

I am sensitive to and understand the denominational traditions and practices in the field education setting.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

**Additional Comments:**

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**Suggestions for Development and Improvement:**

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**Examples of Growth:**

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**2. Administration**

I use time well and appropriately prioritize duties.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

I work well within committees and other small group teams.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

I complete required tasks in a timely manner.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

I feel that I am a good listener.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

I can balance and manage the demands experienced:

Working in high-stress situations:

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

Working under time pressure with irregular schedules:

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

Responding to needs (reacting to emergencies):

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

I possess qualities of adaptability, flexibility, and the ability to function in the face of uncertainty.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

**Additional Comments:**

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**Suggestions for Development and Improvement:**

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**Examples of Growth:**

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### 3. Leadership

I understand my role and its functions within the church as defined in the Learning Agreement.

1            2            3            4            5

I demonstrate initiative appropriate to the field ministry context (self-motivated, creative, anticipatory).

1            2            3            4            5

I use appropriate language.

1            2            3            4            5

I honor confidentiality.

1            2            3            4            5

I dress appropriately for both the task and context.

1            2            3            4            5

I engage relationships with ministerial staff appropriately.

1            2            3            4            5

I engage relationships with lay leaders appropriately.

1            2            3            4            5

I understand and manage conflict in a constructive manner.

1            2            3            4            5

I respect and honor all persons.

1            2            3            4            5

I am punctual and prepared.

1            2            3            4            5

I act with compassion and am able to speak the truth in love.

1            2            3            4            5

I think critically – both about the practices of the church and about the world in which the church finds itself – and *I show potential* to be an agent of transformation in both.

1            2            3            4            5

I demonstrate an integration of integrity, authenticity, and the practices of faith in life and ministry.

1            2            3            4            5

**Additional Comments:**

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**Suggestions for Development and Improvement:**

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**Examples of Growth:**

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#### 4. Worship Leadership

Have you completed a worship course at seminary? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

Please evaluate yourself on the following aspects of leading worship \_\_\_\_

Effectiveness as a worship leader.

1            2            3            4            5

Authenticity in worship leadership.

1            2            3            4            5

Ability to organize and plan worship services with skill and care.

1            2            3            4            5

Promising ability to read Scripture, the arts, and the great texts of the Christian tradition with attentiveness, humility, and a lively imagination.

1            2            3            4            5

Have you completed a preaching course? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

Please evaluate yourself on the following aspects of preaching

Effectiveness as a preacher.

1            2            3            4            5

Preaching the gospel with clarity.

1            2            3            4            5

Preaching the gospel with power and reverence.

1            2            3            4            5

#### Additional Comments:

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#### Suggestions for Development and Improvement:

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#### Examples of Growth:

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#### 5. Teaching

I encourage those in the church to grow in and practice their faith (i.e. small group formation).

1            2            3            4            5

I demonstrate competence in basic theology, biblical studies, and Christian practices.

1            2            3            4            5

I demonstrate a comprehensive spiritual knowledge needed to perform the primary tasks of ministry.

1            2            3            4            5

I think theologically in a way that is both faithful to the tradition and responsive to the challenges of our time.

1            2            3            4            5

I teach the gospel with clarity.

1            2            3            4            5

I teach the gospel with power and reverence.

1            2            3            4            5

**Additional Comments:**

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**Suggestions for Development and Improvement:**

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**Examples of Growth:**

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## **6. Spiritual Formation and Self-Care**

I have and show a commitment to living a life ordered toward holiness, justice, peace and reconciliation.

1            2            3            4            5

I have and show a commitment to personal prayer, Bible Study and reading for spiritual growth.

1            2            3            4            5

I observe a Sabbath for personal renewal.

1            2            3            4            5

I am open to receiving spiritual direction from others.

1            2            3            4            5

I model and communicate healthy life-styles (spiritual, physical, and emotional) for strengthening individual and family health.

1            2            3            4            5

**Additional Comments:**

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**Suggestions for Development and Improvement:**

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**Examples of Growth:**

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## **7. Pastoral Care**

I am effective in the ministries of caring (including hospital and home visitations, funerals, contacting homebound persons, etc.).

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

I demonstrate appropriate pastoral presence (boundaries, empathy, accessibility).

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

I enable and have partnered with the laity in the caring ministry of the church.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

**Additional Comments:**

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**Suggestions for Development and Improvement:**

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**Examples of Growth:**

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**8. Vocational Clarity**

I maintain openness to vocational discernment within the church and the world.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

I am pursuing appropriate steps in vocational discernment within the church and in the world.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

**Additional Comments:**

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**Suggestions for Development and Improvement:**

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**Examples of Growth:**

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## PART II

1. How do you evaluate your sense of “*call to ministry*” at this point in your journey?

2. How effective were you in accomplishing your learning goals as outlined in the Learning Agreement?

3. What happened in your life at the level of *personal faith*?

4. Comment on your *preparedness* for the realistic demands of ministry taking into account family considerations (as appropriate).

5. Describe the nature and quality of your *relationships*.

with your learning partners:

with the staff:

with members of the congregation/agency:

**6. General temperament/disposition**

- a. How would you describe your *general temperament/disposition* in your congregation/agency setting (e.g. angry, nervous, confident, causal, careless, serious, joyful, flexible, controlling, adaptive to change, warm, etc.)?

- b. Do you think you are perceived this way by others? If not, how do you think you are perceived?

**7. How would you describe your level of *maturity* (Include ability for self-awareness and self-criticism.)?**

**8. Describe your ability to *integrate theory and practice, theology and ministry.***

**9. How would you describe your *personal work habits* (e.g. appearance, punctuality, self-discipline, to establish realistic work objectives, tact, time management, etc.)?**

**10. Please summarize what you perceive to be your greatest *strengths* for ministry.**

**11. Please identify and comment on areas in which you feel you need further *growth*. What new insights, knowledge, or skills do you need to develop in preparation for further ministry?**

12. What specifically should you be working on in the next year?

13. Comments on any areas not covered already?

### PART III

#### **Learning Partner's Response**

(To be completed by the Learning Partners after reviewing Parts I & II)

(To be signed by student and both Learning Partners)

#### **For the Clergy Learning Partner**

Check one:

- I have read the intern's self-assessment and agree that it is a fair self-evaluation
- I have read the intern's self-assessment and agree with the self-evaluation with the following exceptions or additions:

**Clergy Learning Partner Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

## For the Lay Learning Partner

Check *one*:

- I have read the intern's self-assessment and agree that it is a fair self-evaluation
- I have read the intern's self-assessment and agree with the self-evaluation with the following exceptions or additions:

**Lay Learning Partner** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date**\_\_\_\_\_

**Student Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date**\_\_\_\_\_

**The Practice in Ministry and Mission staff thanks you for the time and serious consideration you have given to this evaluation.**