

Educational Standards for clergies

These Educational Standards are related to the ministries described in Part VI Chapter two of the 2020/2024 Book of Discipline.

Ministry and education – a) UMC has several preaching ministries. Some of them are lay ministries elected by the Charge Conference in the local Church. Others are ministries appointed by the bishop, and some are professional ministries, appointed to and employed by the Church.

The titles of the preaching ministries are: Lay Speakers, § 267; Local Pastors, § 318, and student local pastors, § 318.3, who are licensed to ministry, § 315, in waiting for ordination; Provisional clergy members, § 324, in waiting for Deacon or Elder ordination; Ordained Deacons, § 328, and Elders, § 332; Superintendents §§ 402-403; Bishops § 414. They are all preachers, and all of them hold the ministry of bringing the Gospel of Christ to the Church and the people of the area. They all have the same obligation to preach the Gospel, to explain the Christian Creeds, to offer the Means of Grace to the people, and to teach, explain and defend the doctrines of the UMC. The different preaching ministries are organic coherent and connected to one another so that the first ministry is the condition for the following ministries, the ministry of Elders and Deacons, and the later and last titled ministries are always built on all the previously ministries.

All the ministries are ministries in their own right and authority, and all persons in ministry have the full right to stay in that ministry without progressing to the next level of ministry. The church can elect a person to ministry in one level, but omit electing the same person to another ministry. No person has the right to a specific ministry only because the same person already is in another ministry. All changes or progression in ministry are always depending on the election by the church to the specific ministry. A change in ministry is also possible from Deacon to Elder, or from Elder to Deacon, and these changes are always depending on education, vocation and election by the group of clergies of the conference.

b) The several preaching ministries are prepared for in different education programs or education standards. These education programs are connected and coherent in such a way that education for the first levels of ministries is the condition for the education on the next level of education. A specific category of ministry has a specific program of studies, but seen together and combined, all categories of ministry have one, long, progressive education, where each level of studies is a fully integrated element in the comprehensive education for all the different preaching ministries. Most elements in education on each level will appear again at the next level, but not for repetition of the same. When a subject is coming back in education it is on a developed, advanced and higher level. The comprehensive and combined education is like the pedagogic circle, where the same themes and items are studies, every time on a higher level, building on what was studied at the previously program of education.

c) The Board of Ordained Ministry, § 634.3.c., has the full supervision and censorship/examination of all categories of preaching ministry and the educational programs and standards for the different ministries. In Annual Conferences where possibilities are given for persons to be enrolled in Bible Schools, Colleges or Universities, the obligations of the Board of Ordained Ministries are reduced to overview the content of education given by these institutions, UMC related or not, and require additional studies if the content and the level of academic learning is not satisfaction for the ministry, the person is preparing for.

In Annual Conferences where no UMC related program of studies is not available, the Board of Ordained Ministry has the obligation to give a description and a didactive format of required studies for the ministry, the person is preparing for. If needed the Board of Ordained Ministry can organize an examination, if the person is not connected to an institution of

education, not following the European University standards, the so-called Bologna standard of education with the ECTS credits.

In Europe, where we don't have the function of the University Senate, § 1410.1.-3., to evaluate the content and quality and theological tradition of UMC related universities, and by doing so, determine the standard of pastoral education in the UMC, the Board of Ordained Ministry in each Annual Conference with no UMC related theological institution, has the obligation to do the evaluation and accreditation of the different programs of education and Study Courses, the candidates are enrolled in, and, if needed, require additional education, and if needed, even organize and examine courses for candidates for ordained ministry. Education not following European University standards does not necessarily qualify for ministry in a country where European University standards are criteria for ordination. But when a clergy is ordained, the clergy person have the option to apply for changing membership to another annual conference in the global UMC, and only the ordination and appointment is the criteria.

d) The theological basic subjects, the themes of the courses, are the same in all education programs for preaching ministry. The level is not the same, and progression in all subjects from program to program. The classic theological basic subjects are:

- Old Testament studies.
- New Testament studies.
- Church history studies.
- Christian faith and dogmatic studies.
- Pastoral and praxis studies, including studies of diaconal ministry.

Lay Speakers education is presented in the Educational Standard, § 267.5., and indicate the studies in all the basic theological subjects. The Wesleyan theology is not located to one or two of the basic theological subjects, but part of all the subjects. Textbooks from the Wesleyan tradition is recommended in all subjects.

e) The principal progression in each of basic theological themes are:

- Old Testament: Timeline and different historical epochs. Texts and theology of Exodus. Texts and theology of Exil. Theology of Genesis 1-11. From cult religion of the Tempel to law religion of the Synagogue. Messiah in the OT. Biblical hermeneutics and a variety of hermeneutic traditions. Development of written text, reception history.

- New Testament: Life and story of Jesus. The preaching of Jesus in the four Gospels. The history of the beginning of Christianity as presented in the book of Acts. Exegesis on the biblical languages. The theology of the first church as represented in the letters of the NT. Hermeneutical tradition, the context of the Biblical world. History of written text.

- Church history: Christian antiquity. Main stream of European Christianity. Reformations and confessions in continental Europe, England. Methodist history in England, America and continental Europe. Contemporary church history, Pentecostalism and Ecumenism.

- Christian faith and dogmatic studies. The ecumenical Creeds. The Antioch, Alexandrin and Carthage tradition of theology. Reformation theology. Wesleyan theology from John and Charles to European Methodism. Contemporary theology and ethics. Constructive and eco theology. Scandinavian theology.

- Pastoral theology and praxis studies. Theories behind praxis, e.g. Psychology of religion and faith, Sociology of religion, Homiletic and liturgy. Missiology. Pastoral care and counseling. Deacon ministry. Ecclesiology and church laws in Book of Discipline.

f) The didactic and pedagogic progression in studies have the three classical steps:

- Informative and introduction level. The purpose of studies is to reproduce the knowledge given in the textbooks and the lectures, if lectures are offered, and to analyze and discuss the given knowledge.

- Advanced and developed level. The purpose of studies is to be critical and develop subjective perspectives in analyzes and discussion of the subjects, oral and written, and to build up ability to use theory in the reflection on practical ministry.

- Creative and research level. The purpose of studies is to use the given information to create new knowledge and rational, oral and written.

- Studies at Lay Speaker's and Local Pastor's level are on informative and introduction level. Studies at Provisional Clergy member's level is mostly informative and introduction level AND first try on advanced and developed level. Studies at Ordained Deacon and Elder's level is mostly advanced and developed level and introductive to creative and research level. Doctoral level of theological studies is focused on creative and research level in academic writings.

- Teachers and pastors, who have an advisory or censorship role to students at one study program or another must have education and degrees on a higher level than the students, they are guiding. Teachers at Lay Speaker programs must have education on Bachelor Divinity level or higher. Teachers at study programs for local pastors must have education on Masters Divinity level or higher. Teachers at study program for ordained Deacons and Elders, Superintendents and Bishops require Doctoral degrees or equivalent competences.

g) The level of the different study program for the different preaching ministries can be identified with the European University standards, the so-called Bologna standard of education with the ECTS credits:

- Lay Speaker's education shall be on pre-university level, gymnasium level, folk high school level, no ECTS credits are granted. Some annual conferences offer Lay Speakers training on first year of university studies within the 30 ECTS level.

- Local Pastor's level shall be no lower than 90 ECTS credits, or 1½ years full time studies, or 5 years part time study course combined with appointment to ministry in a local church, § 318. Appointment is important because practical ministry is also education.

- Provisional clergy member's level shall be no lower than Bachelor Divinity 180 ECTS credits, or 3 years full time studies, or Local Pastor's studies combined with upgrade Local Pastor's study course no lower than 90 ECTS credits.

- Deacon and Elder's level shall be no lower than Master Divinity 120 ECTS credits after completed Bachelor Divinity.

h) Diagram with criterions for studies at different levels of preaching ministries:

	Lay Speakers' level	Local Pastors' or ½ Bachelor level	Provisional clergy or Bachelor level	Deacon – Elder Master level
Entry Qualifications	10 years in school	12-13 years in school and Lay Speaker diploma	12-13 years in school include high school, A-levels, college and Lay Speaker diploma	Bachelor degree or 1½ years up-grade local pastors' education 90 ECTS + Local Pastor
Years of studies, fulltime	Part time courses or 1 year Bible folk high school	1½ year or 5 years part time program and appointment local church	3 years	2 years (appointment added)
ECTS for graduation	(30 ECTS)	90 ECTS incl. thesis	180 ECTS incl. thesis	120 ECTS incl. thesis
Academic level in progress: -Intro/Basic level: -Developed level: -Research/creative level:	xxx	xxx x	xxx x	xxx x
Literature per ECTS		50-60 pages	80-90 pages	100-120 pages
Thesis -Pages (1 = 500 words) -ECTS -Literature -Opponent -Examiner -Foot/Endnotes		10-15 pages 5 ECTS 200-400 pages Advisor Advisor	15-30 pages 10 ECTS 500-1000 pages Advisor Advisor Yes	40-80 pages 30 ECTS 2000-3000 Advisor and colleague Advisor and censor Yes
Teachers/advisors: -with Bachelor degrees: -with Master degrees: -PhD students: -with PhD degrees:	x x x	x x x x	xxx x x	(x) xx xxx