

# Supervised Ministry and Vocational Planning Handbook (2022-2023)



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## *Degree Requirements*

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Supervised Ministry is a vital part of theological education during which students are given the opportunity to integrate theory and the practice of ministry, explore vocation, experience leadership in the church and the world, and develop ministerial identity and competencies. Students are strongly encouraged to consider engaging in interracial, interfaith, and intercultural internships to explore diverse ministry settings and approaches pushing beyond pastoral and educational roles.

For information concerning all internships, students should consult the supervised ministry website. The supervised ministry website can be found under Academics at [www.upsem.edu](http://www.upsem.edu) To access the student checklist, the registration process and other supervised ministry information, go to [www.upsem.edu/academics/internship-vocational-planning/](http://www.upsem.edu/academics/internship-vocational-planning/)

Students are required to engage in either a parish or non-parish internship. This requirement can be met in a part-time (200 hours per term) fall-spring sequence or in a full-time (400 hours per term) in Charlotte Spring II or in Richmond summer for ten weeks. M.Div. students may also fulfill the requirement by participating in a Student-in-Ministry year.

All internships must take place in a single ministry setting and must be approved by the instructor. All internships are conducted in a minimum time frame of ten weeks. While not required, students may take a Church-in-the World course that focuses on community engagement, evangelism or interfaith in a contextual setting.

In parish internships, students experience and develop the full range of ministerial activities and roles such as preaching, teaching, pastoral care, community engagement, and administration. During the internship most of the time, students engage in ministerial activities on site. Part of the time, students are required to participate in course assignments such as reading, peer reflection, and assessment. In non-parish internships, students engage in the life of the agency while teaching Christian heritage and faith. Students are strongly encouraged to take courses such as biblical studies, theology, Intro to pastoral care, preaching and worship before engaging in supervised ministry.

The instructor assesses and approves internship site/supervisor and provides an orientation for supervisors annually. Students who are already serving churches as paid staff members are permitted to engage in supervised ministry in their congregations of employment. Students cannot serve internships in their home congregations.

### **M.A.C.E. DEGREE**

Students are required to take 6 credit hours of supervised ministry in either a parish or non-parish setting. The internship must have a Christian educational ministry focus. Any supervised ministry course taken beyond the required 6 credit hours will count as a general elective. Prior credit students must consult with the director of the M.A.C.E. degree program and the supervised ministry instructor concerning supervised ministry requirements.

### **M.A.P.T. DEGREE**

Students interested in completing 3 credit hours, or 6 credit hours, of field-based learning toward their degree program requirements should consult with the director of the M.A.P.T. program and the supervised ministry instructor.

#### **M.DIV. Degree**

Students are required to take 6 credit hours of supervised ministry in either a parish or non-parish setting. Students must consult with their judicatory concerning their supervised ministry requirements, regarding parish internships. No more than 15 credit hours can be earned in supervised ministry. Any supervised ministry course taken beyond the required 6 credit hours will count as a general elective.

#### **M.DIV./M.A.C.E. DEGREE**

Students are required to take 6 credit hours of supervised ministry in either a parish or non-parish setting, and an additional 6 credit hours in a setting with a specific Christian educational focus. Students are required to do their internships in two separate settings. No more than 15 credit hours may be earned in supervised ministry. Any supervised ministry course taken beyond the 6 credit hours will count as a general elective.

#### **SUPERVISED MINISTRY OPTIONS**

##### **1) Student-in-Ministry (SIM)**

In a SIM year, M.Div. students learn and serve in an approved ministry setting for 12 months on a full-time basis and cannot take any other courses. Successful completion of a SIM year earns 12 credit hours in supervised ministry. International students are not eligible to participate in the SIM year due to visa restrictions.

##### **2) Richmond Summer Supervised Ministry**

During the Richmond summer (June-August) supervised ministry course, students learn and serve full-time in an approved setting for ten weeks (400 hours). Students cannot take any other courses during the summer term for they take this course as an intensive course. Successful completion of the summer supervised ministry course earns 6 credit hours.

##### **3) Charlotte Spring II Term Supervised Ministry**

During the Charlotte Spring II (April-June) supervised ministry course, students learn and serve full time at an approved setting for ten weeks (400 hours). Students cannot take any other courses during this term, for they take this course as an intensive course. Successful completion of an intensive supervised ministry course earns 6 credit hours.

##### **4) Richmond Academic Year Supervised Ministry**

In an academic year supervised ministry course, students learn and serve in an approved setting during the fall and spring terms (400 hours: 200 hours per term). This course begins with the fall term and ends with the consecutive spring term. Successful completion of these courses earn 6 credit hours.

##### **5) Charlotte Academic Year Supervised Ministry**

In an academic year supervised ministry course, students learn and serve in an approved setting during the fall and spring terms (400 hours: 200 hours per term). This course begins with the fall term and ends with the consecutive spring term. Successful completion of these courses earns 6 credit hours.

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## *Registration Process and Policy*

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### **Qualification and Prerequisites for Supervised Ministry:**

To qualify for an internship through the Supervised Ministry Office, a student must:

1. Complete the first-level consultation at their earliest convenience.
2. Have successfully completed the equivalent of one academic year, ordinarily 7 classes.
3. Consult with the judicatory representative concerning denominational internship requirements.
4. Discuss the proposed internship with the supervised ministry instructor.
5. Have the supervisor submit a site application.
6. Submit the internship request form.
7. Register for the course in SONIS.

### **Home Church Policy:**

You cannot do an internship in your home church. "Home church" means a church 1) where you grew up or 2) have been a lay member no more than two years before entering UPSem.

### **Employment at an Internship Site:**

Students may serve as an intern at the site where they are employed.

### **Registering for an Internship:**

All internship documents must be submitted prior to the registration. The instructor must have time to assess an internship site and conduct the appropriate supervisor orientation.

### **Cross Registration:**

Students are required to consult first with the supervised ministry instructor of the campus where they are enrolled. Due to the contextual nature of supervised ministry, cross-registrations will be evaluated by both instructors on a case-by-case basis.

### **Transfer Credit:**

In assessing the transferability of credits earned at other institutions, the instructor, in consultation with the Registrar's Office and Academic Dean, will examine only official transcripts. (The full policy can be found in the UPSem academic catalog).

### **Prior Credit:**

Prior supervised ministry credit needs to be assessed at matriculation and is subject to the supervised ministry instructor's approval in consultation with the degree program director.

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## *Clinical Pastoral Education Information*

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Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) is a supervised ministry experience that is offered by ACPE accredited hospitals and institutions across the country. While CPE is not a degree requirement, CPE is required by many judicatories and can count as supervised ministry credit. Students can take CPE at any time but are strongly encouraged to take CPE after taking Intro to Pastoral Care.

**Degree Retirements:**

Students taking only CPE as supervised ministry credits must consult with the instructor and their judicatory. If students choose to take CPE as their only supervised ministry requirement, the Supervised Ministry and Vocational Planning Office (SMVPO) requires a letter from the judicatory confirming that CPE is acceptable as the ordination requirement without an additional parish internship. MACE students are not eligible to take CPE.

**CPE Credit Policy:**

Students who choose to take CPE during Charlotte Spring II and Richmond summer terms, cannot take any other courses. Students who complete a full unit of CPE during the Charlotte Spring II, the Richmond summer terms, or during the academic year earn 6 credit hours in supervised ministry or general electives.

**CPE Sites:**

To identify an accredited CPE program, go to the ACPE directory, <https://profile.acpe.edu/accreditedcpedirectory>

Students must seek the instructor's approval once they have selected the CPE site.

**Application Process:**

Once students have the site identified, they must participate in ACPE application process by providing answers to the essay questions, references and other requirements. Students are responsible to complete the CPE program's admission process before registering for the seminary's CPE courses.

**CPE Tuition:**

The seminary will subsidize tuition charges assessed by CPE agencies to students taking the first unit of CPE. It is the student's responsibility to pay the seminary tuition for the six credit hours. Prior to registration, students must consult with the instructor.

To process the tuition payment, follow the instructions below:

- Submit the letter of acceptance and the tuition invoice.
- Seminary's business office pays the tuition directly to the CPE provider.
- The application fee paid by the students will not be refunded unless it is a part of the tuition.

**Course Registration & Participation:**

Students must register for CPE 100 (and 101) on SONIS pending the instructor's authorization. The appropriate term designation will be determined by the instructor. Students fully participate in CPE program requirements on site only. The seminary doesn't offer any instructional resources.

**Academic Credits:**

To receive academic credit, students are required:

- To send the official final evaluation for review to the instructor within 20 days of completion of CPE.
- Students will schedule an interview with the instructor to review the final evaluation.
- Upon completion of the interview, the instructor will give a pass or fail grade for six credit hours.

**CPE Late and Drop Fees:**

SMVPO is not responsible for any late fee charged by the CPE institution. If the student chooses to drop the CPE course, the student is responsible to refund the seminary any tuition fees incurred.

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## *Supervisor Information*

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**Supervisor Commitments:**

Supervisors are important partners in the covenant relationship between student, congregation or agency, and the seminary.

Each supervisor commits to:

1. Submit the site application to the supervised ministry instructor directly. The required internship hours are a total of 200 hours/term or 400 hours for the intensive courses. A total of 16 hours, but no fewer than 11 hours per week must be completed at the setting or in direct ministry on site. The remaining 5 hours per week may include preparation for the class participation. For Charlotte Spring II and Richmond Summer (400 hours/10 weeks): a minimum of 35 hours per week on site.
2. Complete a required supervisor orientation as a prerequisite for mentoring an intern. Orientations are generally held before the start of the term and may also be available online.
3. Assist the intern in identifying members of the mentoring team. Most will be members of the congregation.
4. Establish and honor regularly scheduled supervisory times with the intern and meet with the intern once a week for at least an hour.
5. Provide the learning covenant, in-process and final assessment.

**Supervision Policy:**

A supervisor must not be a spouse or other relative of the intern, nor the student's home church pastor. Site supervisors must serve at the internship site. If approved by the supervised ministry instructor, an off-site supervisor may serve as the intern's supervisor. Supervisors are required to inform the instructor of prolonged absences, sabbatical plans or retirement.

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## *Mentoring Team Information*

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All congregational internships settings are required to provide 3 or 4 mentors who will be available to meet with the intern on a regular basis for feedback and support.

**Mentoring Team Requirements:**

- The supervisor is not a participant in the mentoring team meetings but should ensure that mentoring team members understand their responsibilities.
- Mentoring team responsibilities are: ministry reflection, prayer, support, feedback, and vocational discernment, as well as writing a mentoring team assessment report as a part of final assessment.
- The intern sets and communicates the agenda for each meeting.
- The mentoring team meeting should occur 2 or 3 times per term.
- Mentoring team feedback: attach a one-two page (maximum) statement from your mentoring team that includes their:
  - Assessment of the mentoring relationship
  - Assessment of student's strengths and professional development needs
  - Self-assessment of their work as a mentoring team

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### *Additional Supervised Ministry Courses*

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In addition to parish, non-parish, and CPE internships, students can engage in additional supervised ministry courses such as:

1. CITW 199 Community Engagement, Interfaith, Evangelism. Students are encouraged to take the church in the world-course as an elective.
2. Directed Study addressing a supervised ministry issue requiring permission of the academic dean.
3. PCUSA Intercultural Internship: The Intercultural internship provides students with the opportunity to engage in cross-cultural experiences which may include a focus on social justice and the ministry of reconciliation

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### *Internship Policies for all Covenant Partners*

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**Stipend:**

Negotiate the stipend with the student and with appropriate church/agency leadership. Encourage congregations to offer a stipend to interns. As a guideline, \$3500 is recommended (but not required) for a Spring II, summer, or academic year internship.

**Sexual Misconduct:**

Union Presbyterian Seminary regards a supportive community and a high quality of life as essential to its character as an educational institution preparing students for service in the Christian church in the world. In keeping with that character, the SMVPO office is committed to an environment in which students and supervisors pursue their work in supervised ministry in an atmosphere free from sexual



misconduct. Some forms of sexual misconduct are prohibited by state and federal law. All forms of sexual misconduct violate the Christian vision which informs the purposes of the school and supervised ministry program and are incompatible with the church's moral standards for both its members and its professional leaders. (The full policy can be found in the UPSem academic catalog.)

**Concerns and Change in Terms or Termination of Internships:**

If any covenant partner has concerns about some aspect of the internship that has not been successfully resolved that partner should contact the supervised ministry instructor immediately.

If the termination is due to the student's personal reason or performance issues, the student will not be permitted to continue the course at an alternate setting. The student must restart the internship at a different setting in a new term. Partial credit is not granted for terminated placements.

To terminate a supervised ministry internship—regardless of who originates the request—the following steps must be taken:

1. The student, the supervisor, and the supervised ministry instructor discuss the issues. A mutual decision is reached regarding termination, if possible. If termination is agreed upon, arrangements for severance pay or other financial considerations are made.
2. The student has an exit interview with the supervised ministry instructor following the termination.
3. If a mutual decision regarding termination is not achieved, the supervised ministry instructor will determine the next steps, culminating in the termination of the internship.

**Documentation Responsibility & Extensions:**

Students and site supervisors are responsible for meeting all internship deadlines. Important dates are published in the course syllabus. Students are responsible for requesting an extension for any work due to SMVPO if a deadline cannot be met.

**Course Overlap Verification:**

Students planning to enroll in supervised ministry (parish, non-parish/agency, or CPE) must be aware of the faculty policy which states that no student may be enrolled in a course that meets at the same time as any other course. Students have the right to know all required course meeting times and supervised ministry courses prior to the beginning of a course to ensure that there will be no overlap in required meeting times of either a course on campus or a supervised ministry course. This includes but is not limited to hospital or institutional orientations.

**Files and Records:**

The SMVPO maintains a file of each student's final assessment of supervised ministry courses for five years upon their graduation. Student records are always protected and stored in secured files. After five years the documents are shredded.

SMVPO protects the student's right to authorize the release of supervised ministry assessments to Committees on Preparation for Ministry or denominational judicatories. The students must provide a written request for release with a signature to SMVPO. Information in student files is available to appropriate instructors and staff members at UPSem for purposes deemed legitimate by the instructor if permissible by FERPA.

All information will be treated in a confidential manner by all parties. SMVPO recognizes that other principles may at times supersede the need for confidentiality, and in such cases will be informed by legal and denominational rules and regulations.

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## *Vocational Discernment and Planning*

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### **Discernment Process:**

All students are strongly encouraged to consult with the director of supervised ministry and vocational planning upon matriculation as they discern their vocational call. PC(USA) students need to plan to take the Bible Content Exam and the senior ordinations exams in consultation with their CPM (committee on preparation for ministry) liaison to fulfill the ordination requirements. Students enrolled in the Master of Divinity degree who intend to become ordained ministers are responsible to engage in the process of seeking ordination through their respective denominations. It is the student's responsibility to initiate the consultation with the director of supervised ministry and vocational planning. Presbyterian students who are not under the care of a presbytery are strongly encouraged to begin the inquiry process in their first year.

### **Vocational Resources:**

SMVPO provides the following resources to all students:

1. A series of seminars and orientations are held throughout each year to assist students preparing to take the PC(USA) ordination exams. Other seminars including the *First Steps First Call* or *Fiscal Fitness* workshop, offered by the regional representative from the PC(USA) Board of Pensions, are available each year.
2. All students are invited to participate in annual vocational planning seminars. These seminars introduce students to denominational resources and processes and orient students to the valuable resources available at the SMVPO website:  
[www.upsem.edu/academics/internship-vocationalplanning/vocational-planning-2/vocational-planning-resources/](http://www.upsem.edu/academics/internship-vocationalplanning/vocational-planning-2/vocational-planning-resources/)
3. All students are invited to check ministry opportunities at our website:  
[www.upsem.edu/academics/internships-vocationalplanning/ministry-opportunities/](http://www.upsem.edu/academics/internships-vocationalplanning/ministry-opportunities/)
4. Each year, from January through May, SMVPO publishes Senior Profiles on its website. Senior Profiles are password protected to maintain each student's privacy. All graduates are encouraged to participate. To access the senior profile form, go to the website:  
[www.upsem.edu/academics/internships-vocational-planning/vocationalplanning](http://www.upsem.edu/academics/internships-vocational-planning/vocationalplanning)
5. SMVPO offers individual consultations to all students wishing to discuss the call process and vocational discernment, call negotiations, or a review of profiles, resumes, or PIFs.
6. SMVPO offers online reverse matching services through the PC(USA) Leadership Connection upon request.
7. SMVPO offers spiritual formation opportunities such as spiritual direction and various spiritual practices in group settings.

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## *Placement Information & Forms*

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The seminary is committed to provide vocational planning assistance to all students. SMVPO assists final level students in their post-graduate placement discernment process upon request. Students may utilize the senior profile form in searching for their first call. The graduate placement status form allows the seminary to fulfill its placement reporting requirements.

### **Vocational Planning Forms:**

1. Senior Profile Form: serves internally as well as externally as a referral tool for all students.
2. Graduate Placement Status Form: serves as the data basis for the graduates' placement reports.

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## *PC(USA) Ordination Resources*

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Union Presbyterian Seminary is committed to assisting PC(USA) students seeking ordination. Instructors discuss the call and discernment process with first level students during the first level consultations. Students are encouraged to maintain a close relationship with their CPM (committee on preparation for ministry) liaison to fulfill as many ordination requirements as possible while earning their degrees.

### **UPSem provides PC(USA) students with the following resources:**

1. Ordination Exams seminar with denominational staff annually.
2. Candidacy and Call Process seminar with denominational staff annually.
3. Ordination Exam review sessions or materials offered by the Biblical Studies, Theology & Ethics, and Practical Theology faculty for each exam cycle coordinated through SMVPO.
4. Enrollment in the PC(USA) Senior Ordination Exam Review Blackboard course.
5. PIF (personal ministry form) Writing and MIF (ministry information form) Reading Seminars.
6. The Board of Pension "First Call First Steps" seminar annually.

### **PC(USA) Senior Ordination Exam Website Resource Links:**

1. Senior Ordination Exams Description  
<https://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/prep4min/senior-ordination-exams/>
2. Senior Ordination Exams Registration and Schedule  
<https://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/prep4min/registrationauthorization-take-senior-ordination-examinations>
3. Senior Ordination Exams Handbook June 2021 3.1  
<https://pcusa.org/resource/handbook-ordination-examinations/>
4. Senior Ordination Exams Online Training Tools  
<https://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/prep4min/online-trainigs/>

5. Equip Training Course (Moodle Environment)

<https://equip.pcusa.org/enrol/index.php?id=302>

6. Senior Ordination Exams Korean Resources

<https://pcusa.org/browse/resources-resource/language/korean/>

7. Senior Ordination Exams Spanish Resources

<https://www.pcusa.org/browse/resources-resource/language/spanish/>

8. Senior Ordination Exams FAQ

<https://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries-prepr4min/frequently-asked-questions/>