Dedication
Our deepest gratitude to the Teaching Pastors Advisory Group for their wisdom, dedication and guidance in conceptualizing and working through the tedious details to bring to fruition the Teaching Pastors Program.
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Letter from the Dean

July 2014

Dear Teaching Pastor,

Thank you so much for your willingness to work with our students. Your involvement is central to the success of our program. Together, we are changing lives and shaping the future of Unitarian Universalist Ministry.

This handbook is meant to be a resource for you as you work with our students. I hope that it will provide the tools that you need, and answer many of the questions that you may have. And I hope that it serves as a bridge for further connection and conversation as we work together to support our students. Please contact me if you have questions or need support.

Thank you for your service.

Blessings,

Darrick Jackson
Director of Contextual Ministry
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Meadville Lombard Master of Divinity Degree Program
Meadville Lombard offers a unique model for theological education, designed to prepare ministers for our theologically diverse, multicultural, multiracial world. Built into this model is a web of support where students learn the theory and practice of religious leadership and border crossing with and from academics, clergy, community leaders, and each other. Our educational model is based on insights from Engaged Buddhism, Native American traditions, and feminist theory is encapsulated in a maxim by Paul Fitzgerald, “We are more likely to act ourselves into new ways of thinking than think ourselves into new ways of acting.” This model and this maxim help us to inspire leaders who will have the skills to cross borders and change lives in order to change the world.

The M.Div Program is anchored by three Signature Courses: Community Studies, Congregational Studies, and Leadership Studies. These seminars are infused with field-based experiences from the first semester of study and throughout the educational experience. This approach allows students to learn first-hand – and in a variety of contexts – the multiple aspects of ministry as can be experienced in community settings and congregations of all sizes and diversity.

Each student is assigned to a Teaching Pastor who is sometimes a mentor or coach, sometimes a confidant, and most frequently a translator of Unitarian Universalist values-in-action. Teaching Pastors carve out supportive spaces wherein seminarians can grapple with issues in the intersection of theology, pastoral care, social justice and congregational ministry. In addition, each student engages with a congregation-based Lay Committee to add a valuable range of perspectives to the congregational experience.

Congregational Studies Overview
The Congregational Studies Seminar provides a Student Minister with a unique experience to learn about ministry through the lens of real interaction with an actual congregation. Students are expected to be involved in the life of the congregation an average of 20 hours per week. During this process, the student is “learning by doing,” that is, exploring how to enter into the life of a congregation, understand its people and values and, ultimately, learn how to minister to the spiritual and advocacy needs of a congregation (we intend for this year to model the first year of called ministry). Cast in the role of an apprentice, Student Ministers will build on these learning experiences during the Leadership Studies Seminar the following year. Student ministers will be encouraged to learn from observation as well as dialogue with you as Teaching Pastor (TP) and their lay committees. In addition, they will obtain experience through hands-on engagement as it fits and meets their levels of preparation and the needs of the congregation. Student Ministers will explore the on-going functions of congregational life*, such as:

- Preaching
- Worship
- Pastoral care/CPE Integration
- Administration and finances
- Religious Education
- Multicultural Congregations
- Conflict Resolution
- Meaning and purposes of “church”
- Governance/Polity

* all areas of congregational life will be set in the context of a 21st century, multi-racial, multicultural world
While Student Ministers are working 20 hours per week in the Teaching Congregation, they will be simultaneously enrolled in a graduate seminar, taught by members of the Meadville Lombard faculty. Seminars meet weekly and will both frame and drive the learning/reflection agenda of the Student Minister. Each week, students will conduct congregation-based analysis (observing, asking questions, problem-posing, etc.) that helps the Student Minister interpret and integrate theoretical frameworks into the reality of congregational life and its people. These learning activities are intended to engage the student in the on-going programs and projects that unfold over the course of the church year. Working in tandem with the Teaching Pastor, Student Ministers should expect to spend an average of 20 hours per week, exploring the list of topics listed above.

During the Spring semester (February-May), Student Ministers will begin a deliberative, guided process of identifying an aspect of congregational life that might benefit from special attention. We call this a “Focused Initiative.” The planning for this initiative (due in May 2015) will be reporting out on an issue that would move the congregation closer toward the inclusive ideals inherent in progressive liberal religion in general, or specifically within Unitarian Universalism. The initiative is designed to allow your student minister to identify a needed ministry (with a focus on those underserved in the congregation and crossing borders in the ministry), and develop a plan to address these gaps in collaboration with congregational leaders. The plan will be implemented as part of the Intern Minister year through the Leadership Studies course.

Schedule
September-December; February-June

Faculty
The Rev. Dr. Nicole Kirk, Lead Faculty, Shulman Professor of UU History
The Rev. Dr. John Tolley, Affiliated Faculty; former Associate Professor of Arts and Ministry
The Rev. Leslie Takahashi, Affiliated Faculty
The Rev. John Crestwell, Affiliated Faculty
The Rev. Arvid Straude, Affiliated Faculty
(ex officio) The Rev. Darrick Jackson, Director of Contextual Ministry

The Teaching Pastor
The congregation’s minister is considered a “Teaching Pastor” whose purpose is to be a supervisor, mentor, coach, translator, confidant and model for how to be effective in Unitarian Universalist ministry. The Teaching Pastor and Student Minister are expected to meet weekly for approximately one hour. As a supervisor, the Teaching Pastor should help the Student Minister design a schedule of activity that gives insights into diverse roles and expectations of ministry. As a coach, the Teaching Pastor should help the student learn to navigate the interpersonal and group dynamics of congregational life. As a translator, the Teaching Pastor should help the Student Minister learn to listen to and articulate values, mystified assumptions, and other factors that impede effective communication. As a confidant, the
Teaching Pastor ministers to the psychological and spiritual awakenings and growing edges the Student Minister presents. And, as role model, the Teaching Pastor models how to preach, lead worship, educate, negotiate, and generally live into the diverse, and often competing roles a minister must play.

At the outset of the fall term, Teaching Pastors will receive a list of the seminar topics that will guide student learning in the seminar so as to be informed of the trajectory of his/her student’s learning.

Benefits of Serving as a Teaching Pastor
As a Teaching Pastor you join the ranks of your ministerial colleagues that have given their time and expertise over the generations to guide others in their ministerial formation. Our Unitarian Universalist movement benefits from Teaching Pastors’ generous spirit of giving, which ensures the future of liberal religion. Furthermore, ministers speak most glowingly about the joy they experience when journeying with new colleagues as they deepen their own sense of ministry.

All Teaching Pastors are invited to attend the January Learning Convocation. This two-day conference is the only time when the entire student body is in residence in Chicago. An issue relevant to professional ministry – and also speaks across levels of study – frames each Convocation. Special workshops are devoted to the needs of Teaching Pastors around how to best challenge and support their Student Ministers/Intern Ministers. Expenses for attending the Convocation will be mostly covered by Meadville Lombard. We ask Teaching Pastors to help us defray the cost by paying a $125 Travel Equalization. Save the dates: January 5-6, 2016. Expect details in early fall.

Added benefits in serving as a Teaching Pastor include complimentary enrollment in one course per year at Meadville Lombard, participation in the annual Learning Convocation, and the distinguished title of Adjunct Professor of Ministerial Formation that applies to all Teaching Pastors.

Faculty Assumptions
• Students are expected to complete the UUA’s “Learning & Service Agreement” form during the fall of the Congregational Studies Year. Students should use the form to guide their weekly activities. So, for example, if they list a need to “develop more skills in pastoral care,” their schedule of activity should reflect that need. Again, we strongly encourage students to use the internship to address head-on areas of concern and growing edges that are noted in Career Assessment.
• Students will be in a Teaching Congregation after only one full year of seminary study, so in most cases will have less church experience than traditional interns in years past. Consequently, we understand this first year in the church site to be one primarily of observation, reflection and learning. More hands-on engagement, activity and leadership are expected to take place in the student’s second year in the site (e.g., in the Leadership Studies course). We intend the student to be in the mix of congregational life, and if their skills warrant, to take on small leadership roles.
• Having stated that, we also understand that the student’s primary relationship is with you, the Teaching Pastor. We encourage you to set the agenda with the student and if you perceive that your student is ready for deeper engagement, feel free to create that opportunity. All students will be different and bring different life experiences. If you as the student’s primary mentor feel the need to step up with counsel, please do so. If you feel your student may be more advanced and you could step back and allow them greater flexibility, then trust your instincts. The faculty will be available to discuss such dynamics with you when needed, as well as share with you the
curriculum topics your student will be engaging each week through her or his class work here at school.

- Our expectation is that Student Ministers and TPs will meet once a week for a one-hour reflection. Topics should include discussion of the week’s activities, engagement with the curriculum ideas presented in the Meadville Lombard course work of the week, and work on the student’s personal goals as articulated in his or her learning/serving agreement created with you at the beginning of the Congregational Studies year. The subtext of this time will be the student’s evolving appreciation of your ministerial identity and the foundation of your professional authority as she or he perceives the parallels and differences to her or his own growing identity as a minister.

Rhythm of Mentoring and Learning

The Teaching Pastor will be working in conjunction with full-time Meadville Lombard faculty in service to the ministerial formation of the student. The Teaching Pastor should have a general awareness of the Master of Divinity curriculum aims and methods, and should be ready to support student learning as it unfolds. We expect that every student will present a different set of issues and challenges in terms of how their ministerial identity evolves and we encourage the Teaching Pastor to be attuned and ready to respond appropriately.

We do not expect that students will be involved with Teaching Pastors and the congregation when Meadville Lombard is not in session. However you are free to negotiate any post-term involvement between yourselves.

We expect that each Signature Course seminar will bring forth opportunities for robust discussion and discernment on a wide array of topics. Thus, during Congregational Studies Seminar, we expect Teaching Pastors to be available to:

- Meet with student once per week for no less than one hour to consider issues at the heart of congregational life, its theology and practice, and personal connections and challenges.
- Provide opportunity for student minister to devote up to 20 hours per week in the congregational setting.
- Work with the student minister to develop a Learning Service Agreement by October 1.
- Form a Lay Committee by October 1 which will begin to meet with the student on a monthly basis. In consultation with the student, the Committee will complete and submit evaluations that summarize student learning and the relationship between the Committee and student.
- Formally welcome the Student during worship.
- Try to attend January Convocation, January 6-8, 2016.
- Submit evaluation of students’ progress on Learning Service Agreement by May 15.
- With the congregation, formally commission the student minister as intern minister at the conclusion of the Congregational Studies Seminar.
A Fictional Sample Month of a Student Minister’s Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sunday</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>■ 10:00 a.m. Plan music with minister of music for Wednesday vespers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>■ 9:00 a.m. – noon Attend UUMA Chapter Meeting ■ 2:00 p.m. Weekly meeting with TP*</td>
<td>■ 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Church staff meeting ■ 5:15 p.m. Preach Wednesday vespers service</td>
<td>■ 10:00 a.m. Shadow teaching pastor in pre-marital counseling</td>
<td>■ 6:00 p.m. Attend high school group’s overnight</td>
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<tr>
<td>■ 10:00 a.m. Attend middle school RE class</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>■ 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Shadow church administrator</td>
<td>■ 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. Church staff meeting ■ 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Shadow TP in hospital and home visits</td>
<td>■ 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Attend interfaith clergy luncheon ■ 6:00 p.m. Attend Sabbath service at neighboring temple</td>
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<tr>
<td>■ 11:00 a.m. Serve as liturgist at Sunday service</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>■ 2:00 p.m. Weekly meeting with TP ■ 7:00 p.m. Attend church board meeting</td>
<td>■ 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Church staff meeting ■ 7:00 p.m. Attend Finance meeting of Board</td>
<td>■ 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. Meet with student’s lay support committee</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>■ 10:00 a.m. Attend adult RE class on wills and powers of attorney</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>■ 7:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Shadow church sexton</td>
<td>■ 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Church staff meeting</td>
<td>■ 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. Breakfast with Director of RE ■ 1:00 p.m. Attend Juma at local mosque</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ 11:00 a.m. Shadow TP in memorial service interview and preparation ■ 2:00 p.m. Weekly meeting with TP</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td>■ 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Church staff meeting</td>
<td>■ 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. Shadow TP for wedding and memorial service</td>
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<tr>
<td>TP = Teaching Pastor</td>
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The table below represents a month of possible activities for a student in Meadville Lombard’s Congregational Studies Sequence. The activities are truly “fictional,” and would vary widely depending on the opportunities of both the site congregation and its community. However, we hope this might be a visual aid to suggest ways in which the student’s time working in the congregation up to twenty hours per week might be spent.
Here are some “sample” questions that might guide the weekly discussion in the “sample” month above:

**Week One:**
- What is your theology of worship and what is the aesthetic through-line of the service you are preparing for Wednesday?
- What was your impression of the UUMA monthly meeting and how do you see those ministers supporting each other?
- What questions might you have for the couple with whom I will hold a pre-marital counseling session on Friday?
- Was there any portion of your Meadville Lombard class work this week that informed your activities here at church?
- Name one thing you learned about yourself that relates to your personal goals for the year.

**Week Two:**
- What was the topic for the Middle School RE class on Sunday and how was it received by the students?
- What new idea did you learn about church management while shadowing the administrator on Tuesday?
- How did the advisors of the high school group engage the students and their interests on Friday’s overnight?
- Was there any portion of your Meadville Lombard class work this week that informed your activities here at church?
- Name one thing you learned about yourself that relates to your personal goals for the year.

**Week Three:**
- What did your observation in the Worship Committee meeting last week show you about the congregation’s theological diversity?
- Now that you have witnessed some hospital and home pastoral care visits, how would you define “non-anxious presence?”
- How does the support system of the interfaith clergy group differ from that you experienced in the UUMA meeting?
- Name some similarities and differences in the liturgies of the Jewish service you attended and our Sunday morning service.
- How would you critique your performance as liturgist in our worship service last Sunday morning?
- Name one thing you learned about yourself that relates to your personal goals for the year.

**Week Four:**
- How did the work of the Church Board of Trustees and the Finance Committee influence your understanding of ecclesiology?
- What dynamics do you see at work in our weekly staff meetings? Do certain people take on certain roles each week?
• Report to me on your meeting with your Lay Committee? What questions did they have? What observations did they make?
• What is your “theology of fellowship?” Did you see any of it in action during Saturday night’s talent show?
• How is the sexton’s role at the church different from the janitor’s role at a school?
• As you prepare for your breakfast with the Director of Religious Education, how do you understand the role of RE in the church?
• Prepare to name some similarities and differences in the liturgies of the Muslim service you will attend on Friday and our worship.
• Was there any portion of your Meadville Lombard class work this week that informed your activities here at church?
• Name one thing you learned about yourself that relates to your personal goals for the year.

Confidentiality
Officially, Teaching Pastors are considered “adjunct faculty” of Meadville Lombard. As such, we will ask them to evaluate the Student Minister annually; this evaluation will be part of the Signature Course faculty’s deliberations on issues of “appropriate progress” in the course (and toward professional ministry). As concerns about student performance surface, we may contact Teaching Pastors directly for consultation and insight. However, feel free to contact faculty with concerns as you see them. Students will be informed of the evaluative function of Teaching Pastors, and that they are an active part of our deliberations on student formation.

Lay Committee
By October 1, the Teaching Pastor and Student Minister should have identified and selected a group of five members from the congregation/community who will serve in an advisory role for the Student Minister (faculty will coach you through this process). This group should mirror the diversity of the congregation along the lines such as race/ethnicity, age, theological diversity, class, sexual orientation and, (strongly encouraged!) a community minister or someone from the community in which the congregation is located. The Lay Committee should plan to meet with the Student Minister once per month to check-in on the student’s experience, celebrate achievements, identify areas of growth, and provide insight into congregational systems, values, and practices. The Lay Committee is expected to evaluate the Student Minister in May of 2016. A special digital podcast will be available for the first meeting of the Congregational Lay Committee that outlines expectations and ways to support the Student Ministers’ formation process.

In situations where more than one student is assigned to a single Teaching Pastor, the committee should meet simultaneously with all students unless issues of evaluation, privacy or confidentiality are germane. However, Teaching Pastors assigned more than one student should meet individually with each student no less than once per month.

Details about responsibilities and roles are available in the Lay Committee Handbook, which you can find in the Appendix.

Learning Service Agreement
The Learning Service Agreement, due October 1, is designed to be the plan of action by which the student, Congregational Lay Committee, Teaching Pastor, and faculty articulate their vision and
expectations for the outcomes of the learning process. It is a holistic statement of goals and objectives that defines the entire experience. It makes explicit what is to be learned and how, what skills are to be developed and how they are to be measured, and how progress and/or expected outcomes are to be assessed and evaluated.

Because it is an educational tool, the Learning/Service Agreement is fluid in its design. It is a framework within which the student, Teaching Pastor, Congregational Lay Committee and faculty can establish some basic criteria for the site and participation for all the partners involved. Yet within the framework there is room for negotiation, adjustment and change as is deemed appropriate and necessary by the partners involved.

**Goals of the Agreement**
- The relationship shall primarily be one of learning for the student in order to facilitate the student’s development and professional identity.
- Both the Teaching Pastor and student are expected to learn and grow as a result of their relationship.

**Elements of the Agreement**
The Learning/Service Agreement includes, but is not limited to, several essential elements:
- learning goals of the student;
- process (objectives) by which those goals will be achieved;
- basis for assessment and evaluation of the student’s progress.

A **goal** is a quantitative statement of an end result to be accomplished. It is meaningful, understandable, actionable, measurable, and attainable. For example, in the area of site discernment a goal might be: “to gain an understanding of how congregational/organizational agency work is carried out.”

The Learning/Service Agreement contains clear statements of goals for learning and ministerial formation, for the acquisition and appropriation of knowledge and skills, for personal growth and spiritual development, and for reflection and integration.

An **objective** is often defined as a strategy that is developed to accomplish a goal. Well-written objectives are observable and measurable and give direction to the “how to” of achieving a goal.

For example, objectives for the above goal in the area of discernment might be:
- To observe different staff meetings.
- To attend Board of Directors meetings.
- Read minutes of Board meetings and know the mission statement and what projects are currently underway.

A plan for implementation of the goals is then developed. It is possible that more than one goal will be identified in each area.
General Guidelines for Writing the Learning/Service Agreement

- The process of developing a Learning/Service Agreement moves from the general to the specific. That is, goals are developed from the areas identified in the covenant in which the student will work, objectives formulated, and then a plan created.

- Goals and objectives should be consistent with the level of leadership which is also identified through the Learning/Service Agreement.

- Evaluate the usefulness of an objective for a goal by asking questions such as: is it meaningful? Understandable? Actionable? Measurable? Attainable? If answers to these questions are not forthcoming, either the objective needs more work or the goal needs to be redefined.

- The Learning/Service Agreement should attend to challenges raised by faculty evaluations, Career Assessment, and the Regional Sub-Committee on Candidacy.

- The Learning/Service Agreement is a resource for interaction between the student, Teaching Pastor and faculty. It is the role of these partners to discuss, negotiate, and give approval.

- The Learning/Service Agreement should be signed and dated by the student, the Teaching Pastor and posted by the student to LiveText.

- The Learning/Service Agreement is an organic document that can be revised in consultation with the Teaching Pastor.

Learning/Service Agreement Forms are included in the UUA Internship Manual, and can be found in the Appendix.

Theological Reflections
Weekly Supervisory Meeting

The weekly meeting is an important part of the learning and development of the student minister. Here are some suggestions for planning and preparation, adapted from Northern Seminary’s Internship and Supervisor Information:

- Make a commitment to meet at a specific time and place each week.
- Plan to meet for at least one hour. Meetings longer than two hours will be unproductive.
- Prepare an agenda of issues and items for discussion. The agenda items should be of value to ensure a meaningful experience for you and the student. Items to include in the agenda are:
  - Professional development topics
  - Difficult circumstances which may have occurred that week
  - Evaluation of the student’s progress
  - Theological reflection
- Negotiate the agenda. The student may have a report or a pressing situation which needs to be discussed. Settle on an agenda that meets the needs of both the student and the supervisor.
- Take a few moments for casual conversation as this can provide an effective transition to the discussion of supervisory issues.
- Devote most of the time to discussion of issues related to the student’s learning. Before ending the meeting, summarize the discussion, check on unresolved matters which need to be resolved, and list items for future consideration.
• Make brief notes after the meeting. An issue may have arisen that will need to be dealt with in a subsequent meeting. The student’s behavior in the meeting, both verbal and non-verbal, may need to be noted for reflection or for future discussion. Notes will help in recalling the context from which these issues emerged.

Reflections: Linking Theory and Praxis
Learning requires more than experience, and so one cannot assume that student involvement in the community automatically yields learning. Harvesting academic and/or field education requires purposeful and intentional efforts. This harvesting process is often referred to as “reflection” in service-learning literature. Reflection is the process by which students think critically about their site experiences using an array of reflection techniques.

Role of Reflection
Reflection has been called the “hyphen” that links theory and praxis in field education. It provides the time and opportunity for students and faculty to grow and evolve as a result of their experiences. Reflection is the most effective forum for students to link what they learn in the classroom with what transpires in the community environment, and vice versa. In other words, reflection is the intentional consideration of the experience in light of a particular learning objective. Reflection also provides the opportunity to practice and enhance one’s capacity for critical thinking. Lastly, reflection can function as a means to celebrate oneself and the accomplishments of a site experience.

Reflection can also provide a channel for professional development. While reflection may not necessarily make someone more knowledgeable, it can certainly help someone reach a better understanding and make connections more clearly. Furthermore, reflection can be a way for students to associate in different ways with the larger community and make crucial observations, analyses and connections. Reflection also helps students step away from the proverbial “ivory tower” syndrome and engage with their communities and to think more clearly about some of their beliefs.

Assumptions and Definitions
Theological reflection involves scrutinizing ones motives and assumptions of action. This in turn pushes students and faculty to look beyond the action itself and to investigate the accuracy and validity of their assumptions and motives. This disciplined approach helps students make sense of their ministry by examining their faith in light of their actions.

Theological reflection means many different things to different people. In this context it means:
• Focusing on what one believes and how one lives out that belief.
• Presenting questions about where the Sacred and Holy is present in one’s life and the implications of that Presence.
• Bringing the narratives of the Sacred and Holy along with the narratives of human experiences in order to discern the values and principles out of which we live our lives and express our ministries.
• Facilitating the assessment of the experience.

• Calling upon historical, psychological, sociological, and theological resources to understand the human social condition and to discern the power, action, and will of the Sacred and Holy in the world and in the student’s ministerial identity.

• Examining one’s faith in the context of experience and experience in the context of faith – what are the implications of this sustained faith and the consequences on one’s spiritual practices?

Teaching Pastors will engage students around the following kinds of questions, which will be addressed concurrently by faculty in Signature courses:

• Where, how, and when do you see hope most alive in this community? your own life and ministry?
• Where, how, and when is love alive in this community? your own life and ministry?
• Where, how, when, and what is holy in this community? your own life and ministry?
• Where, how, and when do you see brokenness in this community? your own life and ministry?
• Where, how, and when do you see faith most active in this community? your own life and ministry?
• Where, how, and when does worship happen in this community? your own life and ministry?
• What do we believe? Whom do we serve? To whom are we accountable?

A list of possible topics for reflection is included in the Appendix.

**Focused Initiative**

The Student Minister will focus attention on an issue that would move the congregation closer toward the inclusive ideals inherent in progressive liberal religion in general, or specifically within Unitarian Universalism. After the initial plan is defined, articulated and confirmed to be of value, Student Ministers will present their thoughts in a formal 20-minute presentation to the Congregational Lay Committee, Teaching Pastor and the Congregational Studies faculty by mid-May 2016.

The plan should include a detailed description and assessment of a problem or issue the Teaching Congregation believes needs to be addressed. This document becomes the blueprint for an independent project, what we call a “focused initiative,” that is implemented during the Leadership Studies year. Ultimately, the initiative should be co-designed in conjunction with the Teaching Pastor, Lay Committee and other significant groups in the church (e.g., if it has a social justice focus, the Social Justice Council might be consulted).

Faculty are very clear about the expectation that Student Ministers NEGOTIATE the Focused Initiative with the aspirations and needs of the Teaching Congregation. During the Spring semester, Student Ministers should engage Teaching Pastor and lay leadership in a deliberate, thoughtful process of “appreciative inquiry” as to the hopes of dreams of the congregation as well as the short and long-range goals of the Teaching Pastor for his/her congregation.

**Goals of the Initiative**

In choosing an initiative, the Student Minister should discern if the initiative is doable within the framework of weekly hours, the culture of the congregation, and is respectful of the professional relationship with the Teaching Pastor. Once healthy boundaries are defined, the initiative should also:

• Build on the skills and strengths of the Student Minister and the resources in and outside the congregation;
• Meet the learning needs of the Student Minister and the congregation;
• Move the congregation toward crossing a “cultural border,” affecting change that allows a previously marginalized group an opportunity to participate fully and have a sense of ownership in congregational/community life;
• Encourage the congregation to engage with the world beyond its own walls;
• Engage a collaborative form of leadership; and
• Speak to the greater aims of the Student Minister’s faith tradition.

Scope of the Initiative
One of the complicating factors at the beginning of any initiative that hopes to bring about paradigmatic shifts are issues of “scope,” meaning, how deep and broad should the aims of this particular initiative be? The following questions may be useful in framing relevant factors:

• How does the initiative touch your vision of what Unitarian Universalism or your faith tradition can be? What specifically needs to happen during the initiative that will bring about the change (in thought, behavior, aspirations, etc.) you wish to see?
• Are there phases or stages in your initiative that help you carve out/share your goals and outcomes? Do any of those phases seem more exciting or relevant to your hopes and dreams for the initiative?
• Does the initiative require new learning for you? For the congregation? If so, how much “new learning” is reasonable for you to take on?
• Does the initiative involve on-going activities that can be conducted throughout the Leadership Studies year? If so, what can be reasonably accomplished in the course of your Internship, especially given the cultural attributes of the Teaching Congregation (i.e., willingness to risk, history of doing similar work, availability of staff and volunteer workers to commit to the task, etc.)?
• Barring some unforeseen circumstance that captures the energy of the congregation, is implementation possible between September and May of the Leadership studies year? How does this initiative flow into existing congregational programming?
• How will the design sustain itself given the resources that are available (especially after you leave the congregation)?

Sample Initiatives
We thought it might be useful to provide a few examples of initiatives that would be reasonable in scope, doable, and carry rich opportunities for growth for the Student Minister and the Teaching Congregation:

• Implementing a focus on young adults in a congregation that has a primarily elderly population. A wide range of activities could be included that help the congregation understand the emerging generation and the interconnections between their desires and those of older members. Activities might include a multi-age group that discusses the congregation’s boundary-crossing history on race, gender, class and/or sexual orientation, or, perhaps a cross-generational group of volunteers who work with a local public school to develop a culturally-sensitive math/science tutoring program for neighborhood children.
• Starting a small group ministry program as a way to create a multigenerational structure. The approach includes preaching on the importance of connection and community, designing publicity for the program, advertising and recruiting participants, recruiting and training
facilitators, supporting facilitators during implementation and providing an evaluation process, establishing an on-going committee to support the groups, for the first round of groups.

- Creating an arts-based environmental justice initiative that builds multi-generational/multicultural awareness of environmental racism inside the congregation while introducing Unitarian Universalism or the values of your faith to communities unaware of a tradition and commitment to the interconnected web of life.
- Helping a congregation focus on transgender issues through preaching, adult education, personal advocacy, education of the pastoral care structures within the congregation, and individual conversations with people one-on-one. The intern also shepherds a direct action by obtaining approval to establish a gender-free bathroom in the congregation and also a local community center.

Evaluation and Assessment

Students take this course on a pass/fail basis. Passing entails:

- Active participation in every aspect of the course and completion of all reading and writing assignments;
- Completion of the requisite 20 hours per week of work associated with the congregational worksite, including a weekly meeting of the Student Minister and Teaching Pastor (note: travel to and from the congregation is not included in the 20 hours);
- Engagement in ministerial formation as a mutual process, that is, showing a disposition of humility, charity, honesty and diligence, and a willingness to witness to and support the growing process of self and peers;
- Ability to work amicably with the Teaching Pastor, observing guides for accountability and collegiality as suggested in the UUMA Guidelines for Professional Conduct;
- Submission of all documents required by faculty and Teaching Pastors;
- All other requirements as agreed upon with your Teaching Pastor, Director of Contextual Ministries, and course faculty.

The learning during Congregational Studies is both academic and formational. It is possible for a student to successfully complete the “academic” work of the course and fail aspects of ministerial formation during the class.

Faculty ask Teaching Pastors to check-in on the Student Minister’s performance at the end of the Fall term and, again, at the end of the spring semester. All Student Ministers are expected to bring growing edges to the work of becoming a professional minister. Teaching Pastors are asked to monitor formational challenges as they unfold, and notify the Team Leader (Dr. Kirk) if an area of concern is worthy of note, especially around matters of mental/physical health, boundary issues, or other dispositions that represent challenges to professional ministry. Faculty will formally evaluate students based on both their academic work during weekly Dialogue Triads, Saturday Seminars and convocations and also the degree to which the student’s formation is successfully engaged. Teaching Pastors and the Congregational Lay Committee evaluate the culmination of the year in a formal process that begins in April 2016 using the UUA’s evaluation form which is in the UUA Internship Manual, and included in the appendix of this handbook. This evaluation serves as the student’s mid-term evaluation for the MFC.

When all evaluations are submitted, the Congregational Studies faculty writes a narrative evaluation of the student’s performance that is shared with the Student Minister and Teaching Pastor. Course faculty will then recommend to the full Meadville Lombard faculty the names of students who have
successfully completed both the academic and formational aspects of the course; these students are eligible to enroll in Leadership Studies.

**Looking towards Leadership Studies**

During the Leadership Studies Year, the Student Minister becomes the **Intern Minister**. In that role, they will build on insights gained and lessons learned during the Congregational Studies year. The Intern Minister will continue on-going reflections with the Lay Committee, Teaching Pastor, classmates, and faculty. The focus shifts, however, from observation and meaning-making toward expressions of leadership. Still present in the congregation an average of 20 hours per week, the Intern Minister is expected to continue and deepen levels of ministry to the congregation. The Leadership Studies internship will run September-December, 2015; February-May 15, 2016

**Policies, Procedures and Legal Issues**

**Compensation Guideline**

Meadville Lombard recognize that not all congregations have the financial wherewithal to compensate students for their parish work. We do encourage, but do not require, congregations to provide other types of financial assistance (i.e. mileage, preaching fee) to their interns. Internships that require a move for a student should seriously consider providing financial support for their student. *Teaching Pastors should initiate a compensation conversation with their student no later than the Spring before the start of the internship.*

This guideline only pertains to Meadville Lombard’s part time internships. It is not a reflection of a new denominational understanding of internship compensation, but a reflection of the needs of our students and our program.

Not requiring compensation supports Meadville Lombard’s innovative formation process by allowing students to be placed in a variety of differently-sized congregations with differing financial means and with Teaching Pastors who have diverse skills. Students learn from each other’s experiences and reflections, a process that is all the richer when that variety and diversity is included.

Internships in our program function more like a practicum. The work in the congregation serves to deepen and integrate the lessons students are learning in the accompanying Signature Course. As such, the internship is more of an extension of the classroom than an independent learning experience as found in other seminary internship programs.

On a practical level, one of the reasons students select our program is the ability to complete their education without having to move. This means that they need to be able to complete their internship within commuting distance, which becomes difficult if financial expectations are made of the teaching congregations.

**Travel and Expense Guidelines**

As you plan your travel to Meadville for January Convocation, please follow these guidelines for travel and expenses:

**Travel**

- Air travel must be reserved at least 14 days in advance at the lowest rates possible.
- Reimbursement for airline travel purchased with less than 14 days advance booking must be approved by the Director of Contextual Ministry.
• Every effort should be made to use low cost transportation. Use of public transportation is encouraged.
• Personal car usage is reimbursable at the current IRS rate. Reimbursement will be made at the lower of the mileage reimbursement rate or airfare. Parking expenses will also be reimbursed.
• Parking tickets or fines for traffic violations are not reimbursable expenses.

Reimbursements
• Original receipts need to be returned to the Office Administrator within two weeks of the event. Reimbursements submitted after two weeks will be approved by the Director of Contextual Ministry on a case by case basis.
• If receipt includes people not covered by these guidelines, please break down expenses by who is covered and who is not.
• Receipts not properly notated will result in a delay in reimbursements.

**Equal Employment Opportunity Policy**
Meadville Lombard Theological School is an equal opportunity employer. It is the policy of the School that employment shall be based on individual merit, qualification and competence and to treat all job applicants and employees in a fair and non-discriminatory manner without regard to race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, physical or mental disability, marital status, sex, affectional orientation, age or any other basis protected by law. This applies to the recruiting, hiring, training, compensation and promotion of all persons in every job classification. Additionally, it has always been our policy that all employees should be able to enjoy a work environment free from all forms of discrimination or harassment, and any conduct contrary to this policy is prohibited. Any employee who violates this policy shall be subject to immediate discipline, up to, and including, discharge. The Vice President for Finance and Administration is our equal employment opportunity officer and is available to answer any question or deal with any problem you may have with regard to our equal employment opportunity policy.

**Unlawful Harassment**
The School is committed to providing a workplace free of sexual harassment, as well as harassment based on such factors as an individual’s sex, race, color, religion, ethnicity, national origin or ancestry, age, marital status, affectional orientation, physical or mental disability or any other legally-protected characteristic. The School’s anti-harassment policy applies to all persons employed by the School and prohibits unlawful harassment by any employee or supervisor. The School will not tolerate harassment of employees by faculty, supervisors or coworkers. The School will also protect employees from harassment by officers, students, or constituents of the School.

For purposes of this policy, sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome or unwanted advances, requests for sexual favors or any other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature when submission to or rejection of this conduct by an individual is used as a factor in decisions affecting hiring, evaluation, retention, promotion or other aspects of employment; or this conduct substantially interferes with an individual’s employment, or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. Prohibited harassment includes, but is not limited to the following behavior:

1. Verbal conduct such as epithets, pervasive or repeated demands or threats, derogatory jokes or comments, slurs, or unwanted sexual advances, invitations or;
2. Visual conduct such as derogatory and/or sexually-oriented posters, electronic material, photography, cartoons, drawings or gestures;
3. Physical conduct such as assault, unwanted touching, blocking normal movement or interference with work;
4. Threats and demands to submit to sexual requests in order to keep your job or avoid some other loss, and offers of employment benefits in return for sexual favors; and
5. Retaliation for having reported or threatened to report harassment.

EOP Complaint Procedure
MLTS Employee Handbook – Adopted June 4, 2005 Revised February 2008
If you believe that the School’s equal opportunity policy has been violated or that you have been harassed, it is your responsibility to provide a written complaint to your supervisor, who will be responsible for investigating the matter. If the alleged harasser is the supervisor, the employee should report the facts to the Vice President for Finance and Administration who will undertake an investigation. Your complaint should include details of the incident or incidents, names of the individuals involved and names of any witnesses. Supervisors will refer all harassment complaints to the Vice President for Finance and Administration. If the Vice President for Finance and Administration is unavailable or is the source of the complaint, you should report the problem to the President of the School. The School will promptly investigate the equal employment opportunity complaint or harassment allegations. The School expects your full cooperation and truthfulness during any investigation. All such complaints and all investigations of complaints will be kept confidential to the extent possible and consistent with the School’s need to conduct an appropriate investigation.
If the School determines that an equal employment opportunity policy violation or unlawful harassment has occurred, appropriate remedial action will be taken in accordance with the circumstances involved. Any employee determined by the School to be responsible for unlawful harassment will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination. With regard to harassment by non-employees, any appropriate corrective action will be taken after investigation by the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees.

A School representative will advise all parties concerned of the results of the investigation. The School will not retaliate against you for filing a complaint and will not knowingly tolerate or permit retaliation by management, employees or co-workers. Any person found to have retaliated against another individual for reporting an equal employment opportunity policy violation or harassment will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

The School encourages all employees to report any violations of its equal employment opportunity policy and any incidents of harassment forbidden by this policy immediately so that complaints can be quickly and fairly resolved. You should also be aware that the Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the Illinois Department of Human Rights (IDHR) investigate and prosecute complaints of prohibited harassment in employment. If you think you have been harassed or that you have been retaliated against for resisting or complaining, you may file a complaint with the appropriate agency. The nearest IDHR office is listed in the telephone book and may be contacted by phone at (312) 814-6200.
Support
For questions about Teaching Pastor recruitment, selection and matching, student evaluation and assessment, contact:

Rev. Darrick Jackson
Director of Contextual Ministry
Meadville Lombard Theological School
610 S. Michigan Ave, Chicago, IL 60605
312-546-6482
djackson@meadville.edu

For questions about Seminar assignments, including scope and type of learning activities, for both students and Teaching Pastors and Lay Committees, contact:

Rev. Dr. Nicole Kirk
Shulman Professor of UU History
312-546-6481
nkirk@meadville.edu
Glossary of Meadville Terms

Affiliated Faculty – Faculty with multi-year teaching responsibilities and renewable contracts.

Contextual Ministry – Contextual ministry aka field education is a practical learning approach to ministry in which seminarian’s/participants are exposed to varied aspects of learning in approved/structured contexts that integrate praxis and theory – experiential learning and classroom or site environment. Contextual ministry provides an opportunity for reflection on the theology of practice of ministry during the participants’ ministerial formation.

Dialogue Triads – Three-person student groups enrolled in Signature Courses that process and synthesize weekly assignments about their learning sites.

Discernment – Listening to the sacred for clarity about a question or issue.

Focused Initiative – A participant-observer research and action project that moves the congregation closer to the inclusive ideals inherent in progressive liberal religion in general, and specifically within Unitarian Universalism.

Formation – Developing the skills and temperament for ministry.

Intensive Courses – Courses where research and writing occur throughout the semester and in-person class time is concentrated within a week or a weekend.

Jaminars – Weekly faculty-generated teaching podcast for students

Learning Community – A community of people who covenant to learn with and from each other.

Learning Convocations (January and August) – Residential portion of the Signature Courses wherein students engage with the “big ideas” and challenges of ministry and Signature Course content.

Low Residency – Students have low residency in Chicago, but full residency in the world. Students come to Chicago four times a year, and connect with students and faculty throughout the year, to share and explore what they’re leaning in their local context

Podcasts – Digital audio or video files that can be downloaded and used on portable devices. Signature Course faculty use podcasts for the weekly Jaminars responses.

Populi – The web-based Student and classroom management software where class assignments, feedback and formational evaluations are uploaded and archived for historical purposes

Rotation – A practical field experience that is paired with a traditional classroom course for the purpose of deeper learning.

Signature Courses – The anchor of the M.Div program. These three multicredit courses (Community Studies, Congregational Studies, and Leadership Studies) provide students the opportunity to integrate their academic learning with fieldwork in community and congregational settings.
Teaching Pastor – An experienced minister assigned to students at the beginning of their matriculation who remains with the student until completion. The pastor serves as a mentor, coach and supervisor who helps the student grapple with ministerial formation through theological reflections.

Teaching Team – Group of Full-time and Affiliated faculty who bring their expertise together to co-teach our signature courses.
Appendix

Helpful Links
- UUA Internship Manual
- Lay Committee Handbook
- Learning and Service Agreement
- Internship Evaluation

Helpful Forms and Resources
Suggestions for Reflection

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Suggestions for Reflection
Adapted from Northern Seminary’s Internship Supervisor Information manual

Listed below are some suggested topics which may be discussed during weekly sessions with your supervisee. These are only suggested topics and should not supersede immediate concerns of ministry in your situation.

1. **Initiating:** Are you able to take the lead to solve problems and develop relationships?

2. **Theologize:** Are you able to find the theological themes inherent in and appropriate to your experiences? What is your personal theology? What are the theological presuppositions inherent in your actions? Do they match your personal theology?

3. **Investments:** Are you aware of the emotional and personal investments which persons have caused in ideas or memories? Are you able to consider these when working with persons for whatever reason?

4. **Power Structures:** Can you recognize formal and informal structures, and the powers inherent in them? Are you able to be a change agent?

5. **Conflict:** Are you aware of elements of conflict? Do you have methods for creatively dealing with conflict? How do you handle anger of persons to whom you minister?

6. **Time Management:** How well are you able to be in charge of your time, schedule, energy, and resources?

7. **Self-Identity:** How are you integrating your ministerial identity with your self-identity?

8. **Resistance:** What is the cause of your resistances to people and ideas? What is the reality associated with it? What actions are needed to bring it under conscious control?

9. **Defensiveness:** Are you aware of your defense mechanisms? Why are they used? Do any need to be eliminated? How can you minimize their negative effects?

10. **Personal Strengths:** What are your personal strengths?

11. **Definition of Issues:** Can you define the issue or issues in given situations? Are you able to articulate the issues in language that is appropriate to the nature of issues as well as in theological language?

12. **Ability to Focus:** How are you able to focus attention and efforts on issues which need attention without diffusion of energies?

13. **Functioning in Non-Structured Role Situation:** Are you conscious of when you move from functioning in a professional role to a personal role (friend, husband, wife, etc.)? How do you function at different levels of intimacy? When you are in a non-structured role, are you able to understand what is happening and feeling comfortable in it?

14. **Spiritual Integration:** How does your personal spiritual life connect with your vocational life?
15. **Ability to Risk:** How do you deal with risk? What are the natures of the risks and what will you take risks for?

16. **Ability to Reveal:** When do you reveal self to others? How may it be done appropriately? If revealing is a problem, what defenses are being used? Why are you afraid to become vulnerable?

17. **Relation to Change:** How are you able to be a change agent without being iconoclastic? How are you able to cope with change?

18. **Handling Failure:** How do you respond to failure?

19. **Personal Integrity:** Are you a person of your word? Do you live a principle-centered life or do your principles shift according to the current situation?

20. **Personal faith commitment:** Do you have an active and dynamic faith? Is your faith real? Are you able to share your faith in appropriate ways?

21. **Personal spiritual discipline:** Do you have an active spiritual life? In what spiritual practices do you engage?

22. **Trustworthiness:** Can you be trusted to carry out responsibilities without constant supervision? Are you dependable in completing tasks and assignments? Do you keep confidences?

23. **Honesty and openness in relationships:** Do you relate to others in genuine ways? Are you able to reveal yourself to others in appropriate ways? Do you value the worth of other people?

24. **Flexibility:** Are you flexible in dealing with your own life and the lives of others around you? Are you flexible to the point of having no firm convictions? Are you rigid and unbending? Can you be spontaneous?

25. **Ability to relate with warmth and interest:** Do you communicate to others that you are interested in them as persons and not just as objects of your ministry?

26. **Sensitivity to the gifts of others:** Do you need to be the center of attention or can you truly find joy in the gifts of other people? Does your sensitivity to the gifts and abilities of others mean that you find little worth in your own gifts and abilities?

27. **Self-discipline:** Are you a disciplined person in the good sense of the word? Are you punctual in completing your tasks? Do you value the time of other people? Are you able to provide personal initiative for your ministry or must you be prodded and reminded by others? Are you able to exercise appropriate control of yourself, your emotions, your use of time, money management, etc?

28. **Criticism:** Are you able to give constructive feedback to others? How do you respond to constructive criticism? How do you respond when others criticize you harshly?

29. **Listening:** Do you listen to others with your ears, your eyes, and your heart? Do you talk too much or do you spend your listening time shaping your own responses while others are talking to you?

30. **Decision-making skills:** Do you make decisions easily? Do you rely on other people to make decisions so that you will not have to take responsibility for the outcomes of those decisions? Are you too quick to make decisions without considering all of the consequences of your decisions?
31. **Stress:** How do you react to stress in your life? Do you work well under pressure? If so, what effect does this have on your other relationships? How does the presence of stress manifest itself in your life?

32. **Conflict:** Can you identify various forms of conflict? Do you know different ways of confronting and dealing with conflict? What is your personal style of conflict management? Do you enjoy conflict? Do you avoid conflict?

33. **Anger:** How do you handle the anger of others? Do you recognize the presence of anger in your own life? What kinds of people or situations cause you to become angry? How do you deal with your anger?

34. **Self-awareness:** How open are you with yourself about your strengths and weaknesses, your likes and dislikes, the way your past has influenced the way you behave in the present?

35. **Self-concept:** How do you view and value yourself? Are you able to receive the affirmation of others without discounting their compliments, or are you always seeking praise from others?

36. **Encouragement:** Are you able to offer words of encouragement to others in appropriate ways? Are you too critical? Do you offer empty words of praise?

37. **Collegiality:** Do you work well with others? Do you always need to be in control? Do you share in group processes or do you tend to be passive in group situations?

38. **Sensitivity to diversity:** Are you open to the diversity among other peoples and beliefs? Are you aware of areas where you need to broaden your understanding of cultures and perspectives different from your own?

39. **Personal care:** Do you take good care of yourself - emotionally, physically, and spiritually? Do you have an appropriate self-esteem? Are you well-groomed and neatly dressed?

40. **Sense of humor:** Are you able to use humor effectively in relating to others? Do you laugh with others or at others? Are you able to laugh at yourself?

41. **Authority:** Do you have a healthy sense of personal authority? How do you react to those in authority over you? Does the gender, race, age, socio-economic background of the person in authority affect the way you respond?

42. **Sexuality:** Are you comfortable with your own sexuality? How well do you relate with persons of the opposite gender? How do you relate with persons of the same gender?

43. **Leadership skills:** Do you have an understanding of the various styles of leadership? Do you provide leadership that is manipulative, controlling, passive, aggressive, etc.? Are you able to enlist and motivate others to assist you in ministry?

44. **Organizational skills:** Are you able to plan your ministry and implement your plans easily? Are you able to prioritize your work, giving appropriate attention to important matters and not getting caught up in minutia? Are you able to delegate tasks to others, equipping them to do the necessary work, trusting them to do what you asked, and accepting their work even if it is accomplished in a different manner than you would have?

45. **Caring skills:** Are you able to provide care for others in a variety of contexts such as: crisis intervention, hospital visitation, grief ministry, marriage counseling, social ministry, pastoral care, and counseling?
46. **Worship leadership skills:** Can you plan and lead meaningful worship experiences?

47. **Teaching skills:** Are you able to teach others utilizing a variety of teaching methodologies based on the various learning styles?

48. **Integration of theory and practice:** Are you able to put together the things you have learned in the classroom and through reading with the practice of ministry with real people?

49. **Communication skills:** Are you able to communicate effectively with others through verbal and written means? Are you able to articulate ideas on a variety of levels so that people of differing ages and backgrounds might understand you on their own levels?

50. **Understanding of structures:** Do you understand the formal and informal power structures at work in your place of ministry? Are you able to work within these structures?

Source: Pyle, William T. and Mary Alice Seals, Experiencing Ministry Supervision