MEADVILLE LOMBARD
THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL

# Statement of Educational Effectiveness

Meadville Lombard Theological School educates students in the Unitarian Universalist tradition to serve as religious leaders in congregations and communities. The learning community strives to create an academic and formation experience that prepares our students to lead in the multicultural, pluralistic society and the global realities of the 21st century.

Through our low-residency educational platform, we offer the following degree programs:

**Master of Divinity Degree Program**: a 3-year program that educates future ministers in the Unitarian Universalist tradition, emphasizing "learning by doing". There are currently 74 students enrolled in this program.

**Master of Arts in Religion Degree Program**: a 2-year program for laypersons who seek an interdisciplinary approach to theological reflection, religious education, and ethical action.

**Master of Arts in Leadership Studies**: Introduced approximately 2 years ago, this is an 18-month program for advanced work in the theory and practice of leadership. Designed for lay leaders who work in various fields that benefit from deeper theological knowledge. Concentrations available in Lay Ministry and Social Engagement. There are currently 11 students enrolled in this program. **Dual Degree Program:** Introduced recently, the MDiv/MALS Dual Degree Program is designed to prepare students to lead across the congregational and community challenges of religious life in our multifaith, multiracial, and multicultural world. This dual degree program allows a student to complete the three-year Master of Divinity Program while completing most of the coursework for a second, experiential-based and research focused Master of Arts in Leadership Studies. Following the MDiv portion of the dual degree, students complete an additional year comprised of an immersion internship plus thesis work designed to explore some aspect of ministry more deeply. There are currently 4 students enrolled in this program.

We have objective and subjective quantitative evidence that the Meadville Lombard contextual model of theological education is highly effective. First, the objective measures. To be fellowshipped as an ordained Unitarian Universalist minister, graduates must be approved by the Ministerial Fellowship Committee. The MFC ranks applicants in Categories 1 through 5 with Category 1 indicating qualification with no contingencies and Category 5 indicating no potential in ministry. Since our first class graduated in our new contextual model in 2012, 97% of all Meadville Lombard students have passed the MFC receiving a 1 or 2.

As for subjective evidence, we conducted a survey in the Spring of 2016 of all students who had graduated between 2012 and 2015 in order to gain an assessment of how students regarded their educational model after at least one year of professional service. The central goal of our educational model is developing the artistry of multiracial and crosscultural leadership. To do such work requires specific knowledge, skills, dispositions, and the development of spiritual practices that can sustain the challenges and opportunities of ministerial leadership.

For those who graduated in 2014 and 2015, 87.5% stated that their seminary education was effective in providing for their development in personal and spiritual formation. 87.5% also found that their education was effective in helping them develop and lead effective community partnerships. 90% of students graduating between 2012 and 2015 indicated that their education was effective in helping them develop an aptitude for crosscultural leadership. We are in the process of issuing another survey to assess how students regard their educational experience and will provide results when they are available.

In 2016, 53% of graduates completed the MDiv program in 3 years. That number rose to 70% for 2017 and we have recently implemented a 3-year required course plan to improve the ability of our students to graduate in 3 years.

For the graduating classes of 2012-2016, 82% of graduates are in jobs related to their chosen fields.

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