

MISSION STATEMENT

Rooted in the Wesleyan tradition and committed to inspiring passion for ministry in diverse Christian bodies, Saint Paul School of Theology educates leaders to make disciples for Jesus Christ, renew the church, and transform the world.

The purpose of the Advanced Course of Study for Ordained Ministry is to provide a curriculum which will enable a Local Pastor to meet the educational requirements for full conference membership and ordination as an elder.

A Local Pastor may apply for admissions through Saint Paul School of Theology located in either Kansas City, Missouri, or Saint Paul School of Theology at Oklahoma City University. Both locations offer the same course schedule which may be found at www.spst.edu/registrar.

PURPOSE OF ADVANCED COURSE OF STUDY

The Advanced Course of Study (ACOS) is a curriculum that enables a Local Pastor to meet the educational requirements for probationary membership, full conference membership, and ordination as an elder in The United Methodist Church. It consists of 32 credit hours of graduate theological study or its equivalent as determined by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. These shall include the areas of evangelism and United Methodist history, doctrine and polity.

Local Pastors who complete the requirements of the Course of Study may continue their preparation for conference membership and ordination as an elder through an Advanced Course of Study program. The 2008 Discipline requires that Local Pastors who seek ordination through advanced studies:

- Be at least forty years of age
- Complete a bachelor's degree from a college or university recognized by the University Senate, or in some instances, for missional purposes, a minimum of sixty (60) credit hours of a Bachelor of Arts credit (see paragraph 324.3 for complete information)
- Complete the five (5) year Course of Study, of which no more than 4 courses may be taken by correspondence or Internet
- Complete thirty-two (32) credit hours of graduate theological study or its equivalent as determined by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. These shall include the areas of evangelism and United Methodist history, doctrine, and polity (paragraph 324.6)

Local Pastors need to complete a total of thirty (32) credit hours of graduate theological studies or its equivalent as determined by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry in order to qualify for probationary and full membership.

GUIDELINES FROM THE GENERAL BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND MINISTRY

A minimum of 6 credit hours in United Methodist history, doctrine and polity are required for Advanced Course of Study. All other specific course requirements listed in the *Book of Discipline* are met in the basic five (5) year Course of Study.

The Advanced Courses chosen will not duplicate those included in the basic five (5) year curriculum.

Advanced Courses selected shall include both foundational and functional studies appropriate to each candidate.

Foundational Courses include:

Biblical Study
Church History

Church and Society
Theology

Functional Courses include:

Advanced Work in Counseling
Evangelism
Teaching

Church Administration
Preaching
Worship

GUIDELINES FROM THE GENERAL BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND MINISTRY (cont.)

Advanced Course of Study students shall be encouraged to enroll in the Master of Divinity curriculum courses.

Each student shall have courses approved and recorded by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry.

Graduate studies not taken in a theological school, which parallel courses offered for advanced studies, may be approved by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry to a maximum of nine (9) credit hours. Such studies must have been taken within the last ten (10) years.

One basic unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) may be recognized as the equivalent of 6 credit hours in the Advanced Course of Study curriculum.

A candidate may request that work completed at a recognized school of theology be evaluated by the Division of Ordained Ministry for transfer to the Course of Study curriculum. The request for this evaluation should come from the annual conference Board of Ordained Ministry, and grade reports or transcripts must be supplied.

No credit is recognized in the Course of Study for work completed on the undergraduate level unless the Board of Ordained Ministry requests that an exception be made. However, some graduate studies in counseling, business, and education may be applied to the Course of Study, as well as a basic unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE).

Division of Ordained Ministry policy allows for up to three courses from a regionally accredited graduate program to be applied to the Advanced Course of Study. Graduate transcripts must be sent to the Division of Ordained Ministry for evaluation before such credit may be granted.

SCHOLARSHIP

The Division of Ordained Ministry provides a grant of \$200.00 per credit hour for each required 2 credit hour or 3 credit hour course (or equivalent) from Ministerial Education Funds for persons taking Advanced Course of Study, Certification Studies, and Deacon Studies (Basic Graduate Theological Studies–BGTS).

This program of financial assistance is designed to assist persons seeking certification in a specialized ministry area, deacon candidates, full-time or part-time Local Pastors who have completed the course of study, associate members of an annual conference, and ordained ministers transferring in from other denominations. The requirements for receiving this grant are located at www.gbhem.org.

For questions regarding this scholarship information please contact Division of Ordained Ministry, Education Team Coordinator at PO Box 340007, Nashville, TN 37203-0007, (615) 340-7375, fax: (615) 340-7377 or Email: certification@gbhem.org.

CONTACT INFORMATION

To participate in the Advanced Course of Study curriculum, interested students must complete an application for admissions which they may receive from the Admissions Office. Once admitted, students will be classified as Non-Degree seeking students in the Advanced Course of Study.

To receive an application for admissions for Advanced Course of Study, contact the Admissions Office at 800.825.0378 or admiss@spst.edu.

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