

BOARD OF ORDAINED MINISTRY GUIDELINES FOR EVALUATION OF EDUCATIONAL TRANSCRIPTS

BOM Responsibility for Evaluation of Transcripts (¶ 635.2d, e):

d) – To receive annual reports on the progress made by each ministerial student enrolled in a theological school and to record credit for work satisfactorily completed.

e) – It shall require a transcript of credits from each applicant before recognizing any of the applicant's educational claims. In case of doubt, the board may submit a transcript to the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry for evaluation.

Evaluation of Transcripts from Undergraduate Schools

1. While undergraduate education is not required for local pastors in the Course of Study, associate membership does require 60 semester hours of undergraduate education and provisional membership normally requires a BA or BS degree from a college or university that has regional accreditation.
2. Regional accreditation granted by the following associations of schools, colleges and universities is recognized by the University Senate of The United Methodist Church:

MSA	Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools
NWCCU	Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities
NCA	North Central Association of Colleges and Schools
NEASC	New England Association of Schools and Colleges
SACS	Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
WASC	Western Association of Schools and Colleges
3. Undergraduate education taken at schools, colleges or universities that do not have regional accreditation may not be applied to the educational requirements for associate or provisional membership in the annual conference. Exceptions may be made for students who attend a University Senate approved seminary (¶ 324.4) or for international students whose educational credentials are evaluated by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry.
4. Requests for GBHEM evaluation of undergraduate transcripts should be sent to the Course of Study Registrar, cosregistrar@gbhem.org, by the Bishop, District Superintendent, District Committee on Ordained Ministry, or an officer of the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry.
5. Candidates wishing to have their educational credentials evaluated by GBHEM should make their request through the office of the Bishop, Superintendent, District Committee or Board of Ordained Ministry.
6. Those pursuing deacon's or elder's orders via provisional membership must have completed a bachelor's degree from a college or university recognized by the University Senate. The Board of Ordained Ministry may except the student from this requirement under these conditions, listed ¶ 324.3: (1) the student has been prevented from pursuit of the normal course of baccalaureate education, (2) the student is a member of a group whose cultural practices and training enhance insight and skills for effective ministry not available through conventional formal education, or (3) the student graduate with a bachelor's degree or equivalent from a college not recognized by the University Senate and has completed one half of the studies of the master of divinity or equivalent first professional degree in a school of theology listed by the University Senate.

Evaluation of Transcripts from Theological Schools listed by University Senate

1. Check to make sure seminary is on the list of University Senate-approved seminaries found on the GBHEM website.
2. Check to make sure the seminary was on the list of approved schools at the time a student was in attendance.
3. If there is a question whether or not the school was on the list of approved schools at the time the student was enrolled, contact the Division of Ordained Ministry for further information.
4. If the student is seeking ordination as an elder, check to make sure the student has an M.Div. or an equivalent degree.
5. If the student is seeking ordination as a deacon or an elder, check to make sure the basic graduate theological studies listed in ¶ 324.4 of the Discipline have been completed. (See guidelines for BGTS evaluation.)
6. If the student is seeking ordination as a deacon, check to see if the student has earned a master's degree in a subject of specialization, such as theology, social work, public health, etc.
7. For students seeking ordination as a deacon who began candidacy at age 35 or older but have not completed a master's degree: check to make sure that the student has completed, in addition to the Basic Graduate Theological Studies, the courses for United Methodist certification in specialized ministry (or has earned professional certification from another recognized certifying body). Note: professional ministry certification is not the same as receiving a certificate of studies. Students over age 35 may of course also complete their educational requirements by the master's degree route.
8. Requests for GBHEM evaluation of theological school transcripts for students seeking ordination as an elder should be sent to the Course of Study Registrar, cosregistrar@gbhem.org, by the Bishop, District Superintendent, District Committee on Ordained Ministry, or an officer of the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry. Requests for GBHEM evaluation of transcripts for students seeking deacon's orders should be sent to deacons@gbhem.org by the Bishop, District Superintendent, District Committee on Ordained Ministry, or an officer of the conference Board of Ordained Ministry.
9. Candidates wishing to have their educational credentials evaluated by GBHEM should make their request through the office of the Bishop, Superintendent, District Committee or Board of Ordained Ministry.

Evaluation of Transcripts from Theological Schools not listed by the University Senate

1. Copies of all transcripts for students seeking ordination as an elder from schools not listed by the University Senate should be sent to the Division of Ordained Ministry Course of Study Registrar, cosregistrar@gbhem.org, to determine what additional education is required for completion of the Course of Study, the Advanced Course of Study (¶ 324.6) or the equivalent of an M.Div. (¶ 335.3b).
2. It is the responsibility of the Division of Ordained Ministry to *prescribe* the Course of Study and the Advanced Course of Study for local pastors and those seeking ordination through this alternate route to full conference membership under ¶ 324.6 of the Discipline.
3. Copies of all transcripts for students seeking ordination as a deacon from schools not listed by the University Senate should be sent to the Division of Ordained Ministry Office of Deacon Ministry Support, deacons@gbhem.org. Note that while a master's degree from a school not listed by the University Senate is acceptable, the Basic Graduate Theological Studies must be completed at a school listed by the University Senate.

Evaluation of Transcripts by GBHEM Division of Ordained Ministry

1. GBHEM will accept copies of transcripts for evaluation to determine what education may be applied to the undergraduate and graduate theological education required for conference membership and ordination in The United Methodist Church.
2. All transcripts for those seeking ordination as an elder are to be submitted to the Course of Study Registrar, cosregistrar@gbhem.org, as an attachment to an email or by surface mail, P.O. Box 340007, Nashville, TN 37203-0007. All transcripts for those seeking ordination as a deacon should be submitted to the Office of Deacon Ministry Support, deacons@gbhem.org, as an attachment to an email or by surface mail to P.O. Box 340007, Nashville, TN 37203-0007. Evaluations of transcripts will be done by the staff of the Division of Ordained Ministry according to policies established by GBHEM and a report will be sent to the annual conference representative requesting an evaluation to be placed in the candidates file.
3. The evaluation of undergraduate credit, credit from schools outside of the United States or credit for some institutions not listed by the University Senate may require further consultation with the conference Board of Ordained Ministry.
4. A letter or email communication affirming the support of the Board of Ordained Ministry may be required for the application of undergraduate education or educational requirements outside of the purview of the University Senate to the Course of Study or the Advanced Course of Study programs.
5. In the evaluation of educational credentials for credit in the Advanced Course of Study, courses that may be applied to the basic graduate theological studies (BGTS) listed in ¶ 324.4 of the Discipline are given priority. Additional elective courses will then be added to the curriculum in order to fulfill the 32 semester hours of credit required for completion of the program.

Conference Requirements that Exceed the Requirements of the COS/ACOS Programs

1. Although standards for the Course of Study and the Advanced Course of Study are prescribed by the Division of Ordained Ministry, annual conferences have the authority to require additional education for candidates seeking associate, provisional and full conference membership.
2. When additional education that goes beyond the requirements of the Course of Study and the Advanced Course of Study programs, is required by an annual conference, such additional education should be required of all candidates and not just for some, and this additional education should be approved as a policy of the annual conference and not simply be a policy of the conference Board of Ordained Ministry.