



HIGHER EDUCATION & MINISTRY

General Board of Higher Education and Ministry

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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In Decisions 1343 and 1344, the Judicial Council emphasized the disciplinary requirement for the Board of Ordained Ministry (BOM) “to examine all applicants as to their fitness for the ordained ministry and to make full inquiry as to the fitness of the candidates...” (*emphasis supplied by Judicial Council*) (§635.2h). The Judicial Council has not changed or added disciplinary language or requirements to the candidacy, licensing, and ordination process. These Decisions emphasize that BOM’s are not at liberty to disregard qualifications for licensed and ordained ministry; they do not change established requirements in the *Book of Discipline*.

To that end, the *Book of Discipline* paragraphs that list questions for all candidates (§310.1d, §324.9, §330.5, and §335a) as well as the paragraphs listed in Decisions 1343 and 1344 (§304.2, §305, §306, and §310) provide the BOM with disciplinary requirements for questions and qualifications upon which candidates are to be evaluated. If the BOM follows these standards and asks these questions, then additional questions are not required to supplement the examination and credentialing process.

Many tools and resources are available for BOM’s to use as they evaluate candidates for ministry. Resources include (this list is not necessarily exhaustive):

- Background/Credit Checks
- Behavioral Health Guidelines (posted at www.bomlibrary.org)
- Bible Study/Sermon
- Disciplinary Questions (Candidacy – §310; Provisional Membership – §324; Full Connection Deacon – §330; and Full Connection Elder – §335)
- Fruitfulness Project (for provisional members applying for full connection)
- Interviews
- Medical Report Form
- Ministerial Assessment (Psychological) Report (including the Personal Data Inventory – PDI)
- Notarized statement detailing convictions and written accusations of sexual misconduct or child abuse (§310.2, §324.12)
- Personal References
- Supervisory Reports
- Transcripts

The Judicial Council has listed other possible sources of information available “to accomplish its investigative responsibility, ranging from evaluating written exams, conducting personal interviews, to reading social media postings of candidates” (Decision 1344).

By using disciplinary questions and other resources listed above, the BOM has adequate tools and resources to provide a consistent examination for all candidates and to determine if candidates have met the established criteria for licensed and ordained ministry (§635.2h). Upon the BOM’s evaluation of candidates, the BOM has the authority to determine if candidates have met the criteria for licensed or ordained ministry, and to make a “recommendation concerning: (1) student local pastors; (2) certified candidates for ordination as deacons; and (3) certified candidates for ordination as elders” (§635.2j).