

[Updated Summer 2022]

## ***COURSE OF STUDY STUDENT MANUAL***

*Policies that govern the Course of Study appear in this document. Students should keep this manual available for their information.*

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Education for our clergy and laity is at the heart of our United Methodist identity and is consistent with John Wesley's deep commitments to education. Our deep commitments are evident in the hundreds of schools, from kindergartens to major universities, United Methodists have founded and support around the globe. Some estimates are that there are well more than 1,000 schools around the world currently serving students that owe their founding and unique identity to United Methodism! In the United States we have nearly 120 institutions of higher learning and several remarkable secondary schools.

Devotional study of scripture is needed for personal growth but is not adequate for interpreting the faith to one's people. Twenty-first century life and culture are not the same as first century life and culture. We need to learn the truths expressed in the scripture and the first century in order to learn how to present them in twenty-first century understanding. That task of learning is broader than Bible study alone. Accordingly, courses in Biblical studies, spiritual formation, discipleship, church history, theology, administration, mission, and preaching, among others, are part of the Course of Study School.

Just as John Wesley aimed at Christian perfection (perfect love) so pastors need to aim at excellence in equipping themselves for ministry with their people, so their people may be equipped for Christian living. The Course of Study (COS) is one means toward that goal. The church and the directors expect the pastors to share this journey of commitment to learning.

**The Indiana Extension Course of Study School** serves the more than three-hundred-and-fifty (350) UMC congregations in Indiana which are served by licensed local pastors. The school is an extension school of Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston, Illinois. The Course of Study is crucial to their preparation for ministry. These pastors serve almost one-third of the congregations in our state. Students meet at the University of Indianapolis over eight Saturdays during the year – three in the fall in-person semester, three in the spring in-person

semester and two in the summer hybrid semester. Classes are offered in Bible, Theology and church history, evangelism, administration, pastoral care, discipleship, worship, mission and ethics.

## **II. THE COURSE OF STUDY SCHOOL MISSION.**

The mission of the License to Preach School and the Course of Study School is to provide part-time local pastors with a sound introduction to subject areas included in seminary curricula that prepare persons for pastoral ministry.

The *Local Pastor* track to pastoral ministry in the United Methodist Church addresses the educational needs of local pastors, many of whom are part-time, having other vocational careers. The *Local Pastor* track includes the License to Preach School that precedes and qualifies a person to attend the Course of Study School, usually after appointment to a church. Its minimal educational prerequisite is a high school or equivalent level education. By contrast, the *Ordination* track requires college and seminary education. The *Local Pastor* track provides theological education that is adapted to the needs and circumstances of local pastors.

The curriculum of the License and Course of Study Schools provides “**Foundational**” courses in *Bible, Theological Heritage, (theology and church history)*. “**Functional**” courses – *Congregational Life (pastoral care, mission, evangelism) and Pastoral Identity courses (ethics, leadership, preaching, worship, church polity)* develop pastoral understanding and skills for ministry. Seminary curricula typically include courses in these four areas. The COS provides local pastors with a seminary type educational curriculum.

The United Methodist Church requires its local pastors to complete a five (5) year course of study. Local pastors in full-time appointments annually complete a full year in one of the residential Course of Study Schools in order to be eligible for reappointment the following year (BOD para 318.2, 319.3).

In the Indiana Extension School, part-time local pastors annually complete at least two classes (one-half the full-time residential requirement) in order to be eligible for reappointment (BOD para. 318.2). The other vocations of a part-time local pastor may make it difficult, if not impossible, for them to attend a residential school. The weekend Indiana Extension Course of Study school enables such two-career pastors to fulfill their ministerial education requirement in at most ten years. The part-time local pastor must complete the Course of Study in twelve years. (BOD Para. 318.)

The Course of Study School seeks to introduce local pastors to the methods and content of the various subjects so that they will have some knowledge of such subjects that exceeds a passing acquaintance with them.

The Indiana Extension Course of Study School also provides opportunities for Ministers of Other Denominations to meet the Indiana Conference Board of Ordained Ministry requirement for courses in United Methodist history, theology and polity. The school has the opportunity to acquaint these pastors with United Methodist traditions and beliefs so that they may then better serve their United Methodist congregations.

### **III. COURSE OF STUDY RATIONALE**

The Course of Study addresses the needs of local pastors to understand their own religious experience and to understand the experience of the church [tradition]. It contributes to understanding the scriptures by profiting from the church's interpretation of scripture and from biblical scholars. Pastors need to understand religious beliefs in a coherent theology, and ways to make scripture and tradition come alive in personal experience. Pastors should rightly present the gospel message to their people. That message needs to be understood in the context of the church's experience, learning to avoid pitfalls on the one hand, and on the other hand, how to speak and live the message of God's love for each person.

### **IV. COURSE OF STUDY AUTHORIZATION**

The Indiana Course of Study School is an Extension School of the Garrett-Evangelical School of Theology Course of Study School. Each Course of Study School in the United Methodist Church operates under the authority of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry of the Church and its subsidiary, the Division of Ordained Ministry. Within the Division the Section of Elders and Local Pastors approves the Course of Study schools and prescribes the Course of Study and its requirements and regulations. (See the Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church [BOD] 2016, Para.1421.3d)

#### **I. THE DIRECTOR**

The Director leads the Indiana Extension COS School for part-time local pastors in the Indiana Annual Conference (and for other conferences that send pastors to the school). The director is responsible for maintaining the academic and fiscal integrity of the Extension COS. The director is accountable to the Director of the Regional COS at Garrett Evangelical Seminary and reports to the Extension COS

Board of Managers and is a non-voting member of the Board of Ordained Ministry.

## **II. THE ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**

The Administrative Assistant works in cooperation with the Director. Together they provide administrative oversight for the School. The Administrative Assistant provides communication among program participants (students, faculty, board of managers, conference staff and Local Pastor's Fellowship).

## **III. THE FACULTY**

The men and women who teach in the Course of Study have academic credentials as well as practical experience in the subject areas that they teach. They come primarily from the Indiana annual conference. Most hold clergy credentials and have served as pastors of local churches. Some may have served as or currently are faculty members at colleges, universities or seminaries.

## **IV. REGISTRATION**

Applicants for admission to the Course of Study School must complete certification and License to Preach requirements of the United Methodist Church to be eligible for enrollment in the Course of Study. Applicants should complete the online registration. (available at <https://www.inumc.org/ministerial-services/clergy-leadership-development/education/course-of-study/>) A request for registration is sent to the Local Pastor Registrar and the applicants Conference Superintendent for approval. The syllabus for courses will be on the website.

## **V. TUITION AND OTHER EXPENSES**

The tuition expenses are set by the Board of Managers upon the recommendation of the director. For each student that registers, there shall be a tuition collected along with a small non-refundable administrative fee. Cost is shown on the Course of Study webpage. Payment of full tuition is due at the time of registration. Some local churches assist the pastor in paying the tuition. Students are responsible for the purchase of textbooks or other resources as well as for any personal or incidental expenses.

A local pastor may receive financial help from the Ministry Education Fund once per year. Also grants from the annual conference or denomination may be available. If this is needed or desired please ask the Administrator of Ministerial Services for information.

For students who withdraw (see the Withdrawal and Attendance policies below) *after* two weeks prior to the first day of class, *no* tuition refund will be granted. Exceptions to this for reasons such as family or medical emergencies shall be determined on a case by case basis by the director. In all instances the administrative fee is not refunded.

## **VI. ATTENDANCE**

Attendance at each class session, and online work when applicable, is required. If an unavoidable absence occurs, the student shall notify the director and the instructor in advance of the absence or very soon after if advanced notice is not possible due to the nature of the absence. A course is 20 contact hours. According to the General Board of Education and Ministry a student may miss 20% or four contact hours and still pass. Any more than this results in failing the course.

For in-person terms: Missed contact hours may need to be made up by additional assigned work. Absence for 20%, or four contact hours, in the first session means an automatic withdrawal from the course. (See above for tuition refund policy.)

For the hybrid term: Missed contact hours may need to be made up by additional assigned work. A student may not miss more than 20% of the total face to face and online work. The hybrid term is an initial face to face Saturday session of 6 hours followed by online work for typically 6 weeks followed by a final 6 hour face to face session on Saturday. Absence for 20%, or four contact hours, in the first session means an automatic withdrawal from the course. (See above for tuition refund policy.)

## **VII. WITHDRAWAL**

Withdrawal from a Course of Study class must be requested in writing to the director no later than 1:00 P.M. of the first Saturday of classes. An email stating this intention is acceptable. Attendance by the student in the class after 1:00 P.M. means that the student remains registered in the course and shall receive a grade, not a withdrawal. Instructors shall report class attendance after 1:00 P.M. on that Saturday to the Director on a form provided as a final enrollment roster.

Ministry events or choices (weddings, funerals, hospital visits, etc.) shall not be considered as valid reasons for withdrawal. Other reasons necessitating withdrawal after 1:00 p.m. on the first Saturday, such as family or medical emergencies, shall be determined on a case by case basis by the director.

## **VIII. GRADE POLICY**

All grades are to be assigned by the instructor. Grades are expressed in letter grade as follows:

- A or A- Superior to Excellent student performance.
- B + B or B - Good to very good student performance.
- C + C or C - Average student performance.
- D + D or D - Student performance is below an academic quality.
- F Student Fails. Student performance does not attain a passing level in meeting course objectives or failed to submit required work, had unexcused absences totaling over 20% of the course, or used the material of others rather than submitting their own (plagiarism).

## **IX. INCOMPLETE GRADE**

An incomplete grade is assigned under the following conditions:

1. An “incomplete” grade may be assigned to a student who is unable to submit assigned material to the instructor of a course by the deadline of that class, at the discretion of the instructor. In assigning an “incomplete” the instructor shall specify on the grade form the grade of “I” (incomplete) and a description of what remains to be received for completion of the course along with a deadline for the submission of that work but no later than 40 days after the incomplete was assigned. This deadline shall be arranged between the student and instructor with the instructor having the final say.
2. No later than forty (40) days after the end of the term when the incomplete was assigned, the student shall submit to the instructor the requisite material that was specified by the instructor.
3. Within 14 days after the student submits required material the instructor shall submit a grade. This grade replaces the “Incomplete” that was previously assigned.
4. If work is not completed the student shall receive a grade of “F” [fail] in the place of any “incomplete” grades that remain outstanding.

## **X. CLASS PREPARATION AND STUDY**

Study habits are important. Clergy should have good study habits. Persons who have had college or university experience should have developed good study habits. Persons who have not had such experience should pay special attention to observing good study habits. One rule that students in college learn is the “twofer” one. One should study two hours outside of class for each hour in class.

It frequently helps to read text material twice. The first reading is to see the general ideas and progress of the author's thinking, the issue that is taken up, the thesis and conclusions that the author reaches. Then read it again to see and to evaluate the author's argument and reasons for whatever thesis/conclusion is claimed. Then ask: is the thesis justified? Is something important omitted? Is the argument sound and convincing? Are there other solutions to the issue? Are such conclusions better than those of the author?

It may be helpful to make notes. For example, outline the text by writing one sentence that summarizes a paragraph or a section. Pay attention to topic sentences in paragraphs and note the concluding sentence, often transitional, in a paragraph.

## **XI. POLICIES GUIDING STUDENT WRITING AND RESEARCH**

As a rule of thumb the Chicago Manual of Style shall be followed in writing papers however an instructor may choose to use a different writing style for their course.

An excellent resource is the Purdue Online Writing Lab (AKA: the Purdue OWL). This provides tools for writing a paper and instructions in several different writing styles such as The Chicago Manual of Style (CMS or Turabian); The Modern Language Association (MLA); and American Psychological Association (APA). It also provides resources on writing in general as well as how to do research and how to avoid plagiarism (taking someone else's ideas or words and not giving them credit or passing them off as one's own work).

Visit the Purdue OWL here:

[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue\\_owl.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html)

### **Best Practices for writing:**

Students must do their own work, not submit the work of others as their own. To submit the work of someone else as the student's own work is dishonest and a form of stealing - stealing the intellectual property and writing skill of a source and claiming that it is your own. It also defeats the purpose of a course and education in general since the student does not learn either the subject matter at hand or the skill in organizing ideas and expressing them in writing. In addition, of course, it is unfair to those who correctly absorb the subject matter and write their own papers for credit in a course.

It is normal, indeed expected, that one consult relevant sources on a topic when

preparing a paper for a course. The way that the student uses those sources, however, becomes crucial. The student should read, absorb the subject matter, but then organize the ideas and material in the student's own way. One should not simply follow a series of ideas – the thinking – of the source.

One can quote from a source, of course, but then that quoting must be exact, not changing a word or so here and there. The rule is: **three consecutive words or more** constitutes a quote. A quotation from a source must be indicated as a quotation (enclosed in quotation marks) and the exact source of the quotation must be given so that the reader can go to that source and find it without difficulty. Quoting from a text requires quotation marks before and after the quote and the source (including page numbers) must be clearly identified at the end of each usage. Generally quotations should not be more than a sentence or two in length.

The student should state the ideas and material in the student's own words and structure of sentences. A student writer should not use the sentence structure of the source, merely changing some words in the text. Such a practice does not constitute one's own work but uses the work of others. Such practice is plagiarism, the chief academic sin.

The student should be scrupulous in identifying the work of others in writing a paper. Honesty and personal integrity demand it. It is better to over-document one's sources than to under-document them and leave doubt in the mind of the reader as to the use of sources.

In order to be fair to the students who do their own work and fairly earn a good or superior grade, other students should not be allowed to cheapen the value of a good grade by unfairly receiving a better grade than the student earns, especially if the student employs some form of cheating and/or plagiarism.

The appearance of plagiarism in a paper is unacceptable. An assignment may have to be redone or may simply be rejected. An "F" grade in a course is warranted, especially in egregious or repeated instances of plagiarism. Students are encouraged to work with their instructors on expectations for written work and to use one of the writing resources and style manuals identified.

#### Writing Resources and Style Manuals:

The Purdue OWL site at: [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue\\_owl.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html) Is a wonderful resource for many aspects of writing and research.

The Indiana Extension Course of Study uses Chicago Manual of Style citation method (either in-text or footnote style). Instructors may choose for their students to use another method. A list of citation styles and examples is available here: [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/resources.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/resources.html)

Resources to recognize and avoid plagiarism:

These are links to some websites that may help you to cite appropriately and use your own words more.

<https://writing.wisc.edu/handbook/assignments/quoting/sources/>

[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/teacher\\_and\\_tutor\\_resources/preventing\\_plagiarism/index.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/teacher_and_tutor_resources/preventing_plagiarism/index.html)

## **XII. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY**

The Indiana Extension Course of Study requires that all material submitted by a student in fulfilling academic requirements must be the original work of the student. Violations of academic integrity include any action by a student indicating lack of integrity in academic ethics. Violations include, but are not limited to, cheating and plagiarism (see above).

Cheating includes seeking, acquiring, receiving or passing on information about the content of an examination prior to its authorized release or during its administration. Cheating also includes seeking, using, giving or obtaining unauthorized assistance in any academic assignment or examination.

Plagiarism is the act of presenting the published or unpublished words or ideas of another, including online resources, as if it were one's own work. A writer's work should be regarded as his or her own property. Any person who knowingly (whether intentionally or unintentionally) uses a writer's distinctive work without proper acknowledgement is guilty of plagiarism. A student found guilty of a violation of the academic integrity policy, after a review of the case, may be subject to one or more of the following actions:

- warning
- probation
- a reduced or failing grade for the assignment or the course

- suspension for the remainder of the course
- expulsion from the Course of Study
- notification of one or more persons, organizations, or committees:
  - Student’s Conference/District Superintendent
  - Student’s District Committee on Ordained Ministry
  - The Regional COS director
  - The General Board of Higher Education and Ministry

Decisions relating to the above consequences shall be decided by the instructor and the director of the Extension COS, and be based on the following factors, including but not limited to:

- Severity of the offence: What percentage of the assignment was plagiarized?
- Previous instances of plagiarism
- Intent: In as much as can be determined how well did the student understand she or he was plagiarizing?

### **XIII. POLICIES ON HARASSMENT**

The Administrative Policies for the Course of Study Schools are clear that there is zero tolerance for sexual or racial harassment. The following is found in the “Policies and Guidelines for Course of Study Schools” (2021, section V.).

“Students, faculty and employees of the Course of Study come under the jurisdiction of their own annual conference policies on” sexual and racial “harassment. While the person is at the Course of Study School, however, the following policy shall also apply.”

The policies continue, “The course of study school is committed by Christian faith to justice for all persons and does not tolerate any behavior, verbal or physical, by any person associated with the school, which constitutes” either sexual harassment or racial harassment “against any other person associated with the school. Any person in the COS community who believes that he or she has been subjected to” sexual or racial “harassment should immediately report the situation to the Director of the Course of Study School. When reporting a complaint, the individual should be prepared to furnish accurate information (i.e. date, name, and facts). All such complaints will be treated in a confidential manner to the extent feasible, while permitting the school to investigate the complaint thoroughly and to take appropriate action.”

The General Board of Higher Education and Ministry in the COS manual defines

**racial harassment** as “ Any conduct directed against a person with the effect of insulting, degrading or abusing him/her because of his/her racial background.”

The COS manual states **sexual harassment** is “Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, as a term or condition of an individual’s employment or academic standing; or,
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or academic standing decisions affecting such an individual; or,
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual’s work or study performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or studying environment.”

The policy provides for procedures to be followed in an investigation and for an appeal process.

“The school will investigate all complaints. If it is determined after an investigation, that a member of the school community has violated this policy, he or she will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including suspension or termination from the school. In addition, a full report will be made to that person’s annual conference or judicatory body.”

Sexual harassment is wrong because it violates the integrity of the other person as well as the perpetrator’s, whether it is from a superior to a subordinate or the reverse or among peers. The Course of Study holds its faculty and students responsible to avoid such behavior. In the case of an offense by a United Methodist clergy person, the provisions of the *Book of Discipline* [2016 edition] (Para. 161 section J; Para. 2702 and Para.2715-18,) shall be invoked.