

COURSE OF STUDY

Frequently Asked Questions

WHAT IF I HAVE A M.DIV. OR AM WORKING ON ONE?

If you are a licensed local pastor who has earned a masters of divinity (M.Div.) from an approved seminary, or are in that process, you are not required to complete the Course of Study.

WHAT IS THE TIMELINE FOR COMPLETION OF COURSE OF STUDY?

All licensed local pastors who do not have a M.Div., or are in the process of completing a M.Div., are required to attend Course of Study (COS) classes every year. There are twenty classes that must be successfully completed in order to fulfill the General Board of Higher Education requirements. Within twelve months after being licensed, each local pastor should be registered for his/her first Course of Study classes.

Part-time Local Pastors: For **part-time local** pastors, the expectation is that a minimum of two classes will be taken every year, with a twelve year limit for completion of all courses. This plan provides two “flex” years, which should be saved for emergency situations that might make attending class difficult or impossible. Your district Committee on Ministry (dCOM) will be keeping track of your progress and your work will be recorded on Pathways/UMCares Plus.

Full-time Local Pastors: If you are a **full-time** local pastor, the expectation is that a minimum of four classes will be taken every year through a seminary-based Course of Study program, with an eight year limit for completion of all courses. This plan provides three “flex” years, which should be saved for emergency situations. Your progress will be tracked by your dCOM and my office on Pathways/UMCares Plus. United Theological Seminary and Duke Divinity School both offer week-long courses on-site. See the GBHEM website for more detailed information (<http://www.gbhem.org/education/licensing-and-course-study>).

WHEN DO I START?

The Kentucky Conference allows each licensed local pastor to wait until the calendar year following attendance at licensing school before starting COS. You don't have to wait, but it is an option intended to give you time to get comfortable with your appointment before attending school. In other words, if you attend License for Ministry School in June 2017 and are then appointed, you should be signed up for your first COS courses by December of 2017 and should have completed two courses (if you're part-time) or four courses (if you're full-time) by December of 2018.

IS THERE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE?

The Kentucky Conference provides Ministerial Education Fund (MEF) grants for those who attend COS. For a breakdown of how monies are distributed, go to <http://www.kyumc.org/mefscholarshipinfo> and scroll down to the section for Local Pastors.

WHERE DO I FIND SCHOOLS AND CLASS SCHEDULES?

When you are ready to register for classes, go to <http://www.kyumc.org/courseofstudy>. This web page lists the schools most commonly attended by members of the Kentucky Conference. In most cases, registration forms are available to complete online or to download and send in by mail.

HOW DO I REGISTER?

The process varies from school to school. Some registrations are completed online and others, like the ALPS-MTH courses, have registration forms that need to be downloaded, filled out and sent to your district superintendent, along with a check for your deposit. In those cases, the DS will forward the form and check to my office. I will indicate how much the conference will pay toward your tuition, sign your form and send it all to the school registrar. The conference will pay its portion upon your successful completion of the class.

WHAT IF I DON'T PASS THE CLASS?

If you receive a failing grade for a COS class, the conference will not contribute to the tuition for that class and you will be responsible for full payment to the school. In addition, the entire cost of the next course you take will be your financial responsibility. If you successfully complete that course, the MEF funds will be granted for subsequent classes. Any course that is not completed successfully must be repeated until a passing grade is earned.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE FOR A REGISTRATION FORM TO MAKE ITS WAY TO THE SCHOOL?

I recommend that you allow at least three weeks for processing. It is your responsibility to make sure your registration gets to the school on time, so you'll need to follow up after you have submitted your form and payment.

If you have additional questions, please contact Shelley Nelson, Associate Director for the Board of Ordained Ministry, at snelson@kyumc.org or by phone at (502) 425-3884, ext. 308.

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