

**COURSE OF STUDY
FOR LICENSED AND ORDAINED MINISTRY
AND ADVANCED COURSE OF STUDY
ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES**

**General Board of Higher Education and Ministry
Division of Ordained Ministry
The United Methodist Church**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES.....	3
The Course of Study	3
Regional Course of Study Schools	3
Extension Schools for Part-Time Local Pastors	3
Curriculum	4
Faculty.....	4
Hiring	4
Director	6
Board of Advisors	7
Records	7
Admission	7
Advance Preparation.....	8
Class Hours	8
Class Attendance.....	8
Grades and Evaluation	8
Correspondence Courses.....	9
Appeal to these Policies.....	9
ECE COURSE OF STUDY TRAVEL POLICY.....	10
COMMUNICATION SKILLS GUIDELINES	11
COURSE OF STUDY TRANSCRIPT EVALUATION POLICY	12
GUIDELINES FOR ADVANCED COURSE OF STUDY	13
SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY	15
Definition of sexual harassment:	15
Procedures.....	16
Appeal Process.....	16
Confidentiality	17
Explanatory Notes.....	17
RACIAL HARASSMENT POLICY	18
Definition of Racial Harassment.....	18
Procedures.....	18
Appeal Process.....	19
Confidentiality	19
Explanatory Notes.....	19

Administrative Policies

The Course of Study

The Course of Study (COS) is prescribed by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry – Division of Ordained Ministry (§ 1421.3d). It includes License School, the Five-Year Basic Course of Study, Advanced Course of Study, and Correspondence Studies. In prescribing the COS, the Division of Ordained Ministry is responsible for developing curriculum, purpose and learning goals; providing resources; establishing, maintaining, and evaluating License Schools and Course of Study Schools (COS); keeping central records on all students, and reporting on student progress to each Board of Ordained Ministry every year.

Regional Course of Study Schools

Regional Course of Study Schools are established by the Division of Ordained Ministry at locations central to the student populations, taking into consideration such factors as availability of United Methodist theological school faculty, library resources, dormitory space, the density of student populations, etc. Full time local pastors shall attend one of the approved Regional Course of Study Schools.

Extension Schools for Part-Time Local Pastors

When the Division of Ordained Ministry determines that there is a need for a Basic Five-Year COS school for part-time local pastors who are unable to attend a Regional Course of Study School, the division may negotiate its development as an extension of an existing Regional Course of Study School. Regional Schools establishing Extension Schools shall not cross jurisdictional lines without consultation with other Course of Study Directors in the jurisdictions involved. The following process is utilized in establishing an Extension School:

1. Written Proposal is submitted to the Council of COS Directors
2. Reviewed by Council of COS Directors
3. Approved by Council of COS Directors
4. Approved by Division of Ordained Ministry
5. Board of Advisors is selected for the Extension School
6. Director of Extension School is approved by Division of Ordained Ministry, after consultation with:
 - a. Annual Conference(s). (This may be the Board of Ordained Ministry Executive Committee or task group assigned for this purpose, all with the Bishop's knowledge.)
 - b. Regional COS Director
 - c. Board of Advisors of the Extension School

- d. The Director of the Extension School shall be a United Methodist.
7. Faculty is selected by the Extension School Director with the approval of the Regional COS Director.
8. In development of new Extension Schools, each course offered shall be scheduled over at least two (2) non-consecutive weekends or sessions. There should be at least one month between course offerings.
9. All costs are to be assumed primarily by annual conference funding and student fees.
10. An Extension School will budget for the administrative support services provided by the Director of the Regional Course of Study School at a rate negotiated with the Regional Course of Study Director.
11. Extension Schools will send grade reports to COS Regional Directors and the Division of Ordained Ministry.

Curriculum

The Basic Five-Year Course of Study is a year-round experiential and classroom learning process. This process assumes cooperation between the instructors in the Course of Study Schools and the clergy mentors in the annual conferences. Each Regional Course of Study School shall offer all 20 courses of the Basic Five-Year COS and shall seek to meet the needs of both the full-time and part-time local pastors. Normally courses are to be taken in the sequence prescribed by the curriculum. At a minimum, students are expected to take first year courses in the first year of study and fifth year courses in the final year of study. In addition to these basic curriculum courses, the school may provide a communication skills program for students. Other special programs may be funded at the discretion of the schools or the Division of Ordained Ministry and other programs that meet student needs.

Faculty

Faculty from United Methodist theological schools shall be chosen to teach in the Course of Study School whenever possible. Those courses which cannot be filled with such faculty persons shall be taught by persons who would qualify for adjunct faculty status in that particular theological school. Attention to ethnic and gender inclusiveness shall be given in the selection of faculty.

Hiring

- 1) Process, Information, and Documentation
 - a) The Resume (Curriculum Vita)
 - i) Academic qualifications (documented through copies of transcripts, degrees, or letters certifying completion of academic programs)
 - ii) Teaching experience

- (a) Teaching experience where academic credit was granted, location and dates
 - (b) Lacking academic teaching experience, are there reasons to anticipate good teaching performance from the candidate?
 - iii) Church, Pastoral or Lay Experience
 - (a) If clergy: ordination credentials (date, conference or judicatory)
 - (b) If clergy: pastorates served
 - (c) If lay person: church experience or evidence of commitment to the church
 - (d) Both clergy and lay: committees, boards, commissions of the judicatory (annual conference or general church)
 - b) Personal Interview
 - i) The Director(s) shall interview the candidate to ascertain information concerning the written documentation.
 - ii) Evaluate and authenticate the documents
 - c) Consultation with Regional Director
 - i) There will be a consultation with the Regional Director (if in an Extension School) of the curriculum vita and transcripts as required before hiring.
- 2) Evaluation of Documents and the Candidate
- a) Academic Qualifications
 - i) Are the candidate's degrees granted or experience in the academic or church skills in areas to be taught in the Course of Study?
 - ii) Does the candidate's record show at least two or more graduate courses in the field to be taught?
 - iii) What grades were assigned to such courses?
 - iv) Does the candidate have two or more courses in another field that would qualify the individual to teach other Course of Study courses?
 - v) If an individual is already recognized by one of our University Senate approved seminaries as a professor or an adjunct professor, transcripts will not be required.
 - b) Teaching Experience
 - i) Has the candidate provided evidence of teaching experience in an academic credit environment?
 - ii) Has the candidate provided evidence of teaching experience that has been evaluated by an academic supervisor?
 - iii) Does the candidate pursue study in the field after graduate study has been completed, thus keeping somewhat current in the field?
 - iv) If there has been no academic teaching experience, would the candidate be likely to develop such teaching abilities, given the opportunity?
 - c) The Interview
 - i) The candidate's affinity and/or desire for teaching

- ii) The candidate's affinity and/or desire for relating to pastors
- iii) The candidate's affinity and/or desire for relating to The United Methodist Church
- iv) The candidate's affinity and/or desire for advancing pastoral education and skills for local pastors
- v) The candidate's affinity and/or willingness to engage in such education with relatively minimal compensation
- vi) The value and appropriateness of the candidate's pastoral or church experience

Director

The Director of a Regional Course of Study School shall be a United Methodist. The Director shall be a member of the faculty or administrative staff of the sponsoring seminary.

The Director of a Regional Course of Study School is recommended by the seminary and the Board of Advisors of the school, and approved by the Division of Ordained Ministry. Responsibilities of the Director shall include:

- Selection and evaluation of faculty
- Administration of the school
- Publication of course descriptions
- Registration of students
- Keeping of school records
- Annual reports to the Division of Ordained Ministry
- Preside over faculty meetings
- Act as the liaison with the host school
- Participate in meetings of the COS Council of Directors
- Convene and chair the meeting of Board of Advisors
- Assist in the development of new curriculum
- Assist in setting standard policies
- Assist in setting the budget

The Regional School Director shall meet annually with Directors of Extension Schools in his or her region. The meeting shall include but not be limited by the following:

- Faculty vita review
- Prior approval of faculty to be used in the extension program
- Evaluation of the Extension School's program
- Sharing of syllabi and book lists

Periodic site visits of Extension Schools shall be conducted by the Regional Director and/or a Division of Ordained Ministry director to meet with faculty and students in order to assist in the evaluation process.

Board of Advisors

Each Regional Basic Five-Year Course of Study School shall have a Board of Advisors. The Board of Advisors shall be composed of at least one representative from the conference Boards of Ordained Ministry enrolling the majority of students in the school, the COS Director and a representative from the Division of Ordained Ministry. The COS Director shall convene and chair the Board of Advisors. The Board of Advisors shall also include other administrators, faculty and students. The board members may meet with the Director at least annually and review the program and needs of the school. The board shall seek to promote support of the Regional School through its constituent Boards of Ordained Ministry. Supplementary financial support for the Regional Course of Study School may be given through the board for the sake of maintaining the quality of the educational process. The board shall consult with the seminary and Division of Ordained Ministry concerning the choice of a new Director whenever a change in that position is appropriate or necessary.

Each Extension School shall have its own Board of Advisors or Board of Managers. The Board shall be convened and chaired by the Regional COS Director or her/his designee. Boards of Ordained Ministry being served by Extension Schools shall send a representative to the school's Board of Advisors. The representative shall conduct annual site visits to evaluate the effectiveness of the school. Findings may be submitted in writing or at the Board of Advisors Meeting.

Records

The records of the Course of Study School shall be kept by the Director under guidelines developed by the Division of Ordained Ministry and the General Council on Finance and Administration. An annual report on the progress of each student shall be sent to the Division of Ordained Ministry. Division of Ordained Ministry records grades on the student's permanent record. Copies of this permanent record shall be sent to the Registrar of conference Boards of Ordained Ministry who has the responsibility to forward this information to the appropriate district Committee on Ministry. The Division of Ordained Ministry shall issue official COS transcripts only upon written request of the student.

Admission

The Course of Study School is basically for the education and training of local pastors in The United Methodist Church. Those admitted to the Basic Five-Year COS program shall have:

- 1) Been certified as candidates for ordained ministry
- 2) Completed the requirements for license for pastoral ministry
- 3) Received the endorsement of the annual conference Board of Ordained Ministry

- 4) Be under appointment in The United Methodist Church, exceptions to be made with the approval of the conference Board of Ordained Ministry for a period not to exceed one year

Other students, including auditors and students from other denominations, may at the discretion of the Director, be admitted to the program. These other students are to be admitted at their own expense including an agreed upon amount for tuition. Students coming from the AME, AME Zion and CME churches, however, will not be charged a tuition fee. A report on the number of such special students shall be included in the Director's report to the Division of Ordained Ministry at the conclusion of school.

Advance Preparation

Advance preparation is required of all students. Some of this advance preparation is to be done in conjunction with a clergy mentor. Assignments will include material related to classroom studies, as well as, experience in pastoral ministry. Each school will determine the nature of the advance preparation required for students. The deadline for the submission of advance work is to be a school policy.

Class Hours

The standard number of class hours for each of the basic courses is a minimum of twenty (20) hours.

Class Attendance

A student is expected to attend every class session. Unexcused absences may be cause for loss of credit or dismissal from the school. A student missing twenty percent (20%) or more of the class room work shall not receive credit for those classes.

Grades and Evaluation

Course of Study Schools will use letter grades A, B, C, D, F or No Credit for grading effective September 1, 2007.

The maximum number of courses a student can take in the Basic Five-Year Course of Study is four courses per year. In unusual circumstances, students may be granted permission to take additional courses with the approval of the Board of Ordained Ministry, the Regional Director of the Course of Study School, Director of Extension COS and the Division of Ordained Ministry.

Grade reports will be sent to the Regional COS Director and to the Division of Ordained Ministry. They will indicate whether the student is a part-time or a full-time

local pastor. The deadline for grades will be 90 days after the completion of class sessions. A grade of F will remain on the transcript even if the course is retaken and passed.

Students who wish to have grade reports sent to undergraduate schools for purposes of receiving external degree credit for this work should apply to the Division of Ordained Ministry for a resource packet of material and an official Course of Study transcript describing the work that has been done, the learning goals for the courses, and a description of the Course of Study program of The United Methodist Church. Course of Study credit should only be applied to the undergraduate degree for those students who have completed the Course of Study, sixty semester hours of undergraduate studies at an approved school, and are seeking enrollment in an M.Div. program at a University Senate approved seminary in order to pursue ordination as an elder, or by those who are not seeking ordination in The United Methodist Church but would like to have an undergraduate degree.

Correspondence Courses

Courses are available by correspondence through the Division of Ordained Ministry. A student may only take four (4) courses by correspondence or via Internet.

Appeal to these Policies

Exceptions to these Administrative Policies must be approved by the staff of the Division of Ordained Ministry, at the request of a Course of Study School Director or conference Board of Ordained Ministry representative.

ECE COURSE OF STUDY TRAVEL POLICY

All students should book their flight through Caldwell Travel 30 days prior to departure. Students should contact the school for travel information.

A student who books a flight through another travel company will only be reimbursed the cost of what the ticket would be if it were booked through Caldwell Travel.

Students who travel by automobile will be paid mileage up to 1,000 miles or the cost of a round trip air fare booked through Caldwell Travel, whichever is less. Mileage must be verified by submitting a Mapquest printout of the route.

Exceptions will be made for students who may not be able to arrange for air travel 30 days in advance because of problems with visas or other personal issues. Decisions regarding exceptions will be decided between the Course of Study Director and the staff of the DOM.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS GUIDELINES

1. Each annual conference Board of Ordained Ministry should administer a preliminary reading test to all candidates for license for pastoral ministry. The Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) may be used and is available from the Division of Ordained Ministry.
2. Those local pastors who fall below established norms should engage in an appropriate program of remedial work in language prior to registering in the Course of Study. This program should be taken under the guidance of the District Committee on Ordained Ministry and the Board of Ordained Ministry using the resources of a local high school or college.
3. If the student has not taken the preliminary reading test, the Course of Study schools should administer a language proficiency test to all entering students.
 - a. Students falling below established norms should be assigned to appropriate classes for remedial work in a language during their first and second years.
 - b. Students scoring above the minimum standards may be offered enrichment courses during the same period of time.
 - c. Students falling below a standard established by a Course of Study School may be required to reduce their regular course work in order to devote time to remedial work in a language.
4. The Course of Study School should make a comprehensive assessment of the communication skill needs of these students and recommend a year long program of remedial study to be monitored by the Board of Ordained Ministry.
5. The communication skills program should be clearly outlined in advance publicity communicating a statement of philosophy, requirements, and goals. The program should be emphasized and clarified in the orientation students receive on campus.
6. Although the program will emphasize reading and writing skills, oral communication skills may be addressed through an enrichment program. It is recommended to make a communications lab available to students for remedial work or enrichment purposes.
7. The Course of Study School should routinely report student participation in a communication skills program. Language proficiency reports should be sent to the Boards of Ordained Ministry when a student scores below minimum standards. Reports on other students should not be routinely sent to the Boards of Ordained Ministry but should be made available, upon request, with the written permission of the student.

COURSE OF STUDY TRANSCRIPT EVALUATION POLICY

1. Evaluation of transcripts for the purpose of transferring credit to the Course of Study shall be done by the professional staff of the Division of Ordained Ministry, The Division of Ordained Ministry at the request of the conference Board of Ordained Ministry, District Superintendent or individual. Copies of the evaluation are sent to the conference Board of Ordained Ministry Registrar.
2. The request of the board shall be accompanied by the official transcript(s) to be evaluated and a general description of the applicant's educational background. When it is not possible to send an official transcript, a photocopy may be submitted.
3. Transcripts from graduate schools and schools of theology recognized by the University Senate of The United Methodist Church shall be acceptable for evaluation and the transfer of credit.
4. Credit received from a graduate school or seminary not recognized by the University Senate for the Basic Five-Year COS will be evaluated on a case by case basis.
5. Credit received from all other sources shall be reviewed and approved by the conference Board of Ordained Ministry Relations Committee and the Division of Ordained Ministry.
6. Credit may only be granted for a course of one and one-third semester hours or two quarter hours or more when the content and objectives of the course are substantially the same as the purpose and goals of a similar course in the Course of Study, and the course has been taken in the last 10 years. Exceptions to this policy will be considered only at the request of the conference Board of Ordained Ministry.
7. No introductory graduate school and seminary courses may be applied to the Advanced Course of Study unless they are in areas not covered by the Basic Five-Year Course of Study.
8. Credits transferred to the Advanced Course of Study shall include a balance between foundational courses (e.g., theology, church history, biblical study) and functional studies (e.g., counseling, administration, preaching, education, missions, evangelism).
9. Undergraduate credit may only be considered for Course of Study credit when requested in writing by the conference Board of Ordained Ministry for a maximum of six (6) courses.
10. Undergraduate credit or seminary credit for courses with grades of less than "C" shall not be allowed as applicable to the Course of Study.

GUIDELINES FOR ADVANCED COURSE OF STUDY

Completion of Basic Five-Year Course of Study and a bachelor's degree at a regionally accredited school is a prerequisite to pursuing the Advanced Course of Study. With the approval of the conference Board of Ordained Ministry, an exception to the bachelor's degree can be made for those who have a minimum of sixty semester hours of undergraduate credit from a University Senate approved school.

1. 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.
2. Local pastors need to complete a total of 32 semester hours of graduate theological studies at a University Senate approved school or its equivalent as determined by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry in order to qualify for probationary and full membership.
3. A minimum of six semester hours of credit in United Methodist history, doctrine, and polity are required for this curriculum. These courses are available through correspondence with the General Board of Higher Education, a University Senate approved seminary and some COS schools. All other specific course requirements listed in the *Book of Discipline* are met in the Basic Five-Year Course of Study.
4. Advanced Course of Study courses will not duplicate those included in the Basic Five-Year Course of Study curriculum.
5. Courses selected shall include both foundational and functional studies appropriate to each candidate.
 - a. Foundational courses include studies in areas of theology, church history, biblical study, or church in society.
 - b. Functional courses include advanced work in counseling, church administration, evangelism, preaching, teaching or worship.
6. Advanced COS students shall be encouraged to enroll in the Master of Divinity curriculum courses.
7. Each student shall have courses approved and recorded by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry.
8. 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 up to a maximum of nine (9) semester hours. Such studies must have been taken within the last 10 years.
9. One basic unit of Clinical Pastoral Education may be recognized as the equivalent of six semester hours in the Advanced Course of Study.

10. Students may complete no more than ten hours of online or correspondence courses within the Advanced COS.
11. Individual students are responsible for ensuring they meet particular Advanced Course of Study requirements established by the annual conference.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

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

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 sexual harassment against any other person associated with the school. Any person of the Course of Study School community who believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual 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 school expects the cooperation of all members of the school community with respect to avoiding such harassment.

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.

Definition of sexual harassment¹:

“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, a term of 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 unreasonably interfering with an individual's work *or study* performance or creating an intimidating hostile, or offensive working *or studying* environment.”

¹The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Section 1604.11 of Title 29. Italicized words are added for the academic environment at the Course of Study School.

Procedures

The Course of Study School is committed to using the process outlined below to deal with allegations of sexual harassment within the school community. A sexual harassment allegation may be resolved on an informal basis.

Any member of the school community who wishes to make a formal complaint, must submit a written description of the incident to the Director.

Allegations are thoroughly investigated by the Sexual Harassment Committee which is composed of the Director and two members of the faculty chosen by the faculty. The investigation shall include a meeting with the person alleged to have engaged in harassment. The accused and/or the complainant may bring a trusted colleague (other than an attorney), committed to maintaining confidentiality, with him/her to such a meeting.

If the Sexual Harassment Committee decides inappropriate behavior has occurred, after completing the investigation, the Director takes appropriate disciplinary and/or other action related to the accused person's participation in the Course of Study School on that campus. In addition, the Director will inform the accused person's annual conference or judicatory body of the action taken.

Those called to investigate the allegations take appropriate steps to ensure that a person who in good faith brings forth a complaint of sexual harassment will not be subjected to retaliation. The Course of Study School also takes steps to ensure that a person against whom such a complaint is brought is treated appropriately and has adequate opportunity to respond to such accusations.

The complainant and the person complained against are notified of the disposition of the complaint. If the disposition involves any ongoing process, the Director keeps the complainant informed until the process is completed.

Appeal Process

If the accuser or the accused is not satisfied with the action taken by the Course of Study School, s/he may express such dissatisfaction in writing to the Director of Board of Ordained Ministry Relations, Division of Ordained Ministry, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry within 15 days after receiving the notification of the disposition of the complaint.

Confidentiality

Every effort will be made to ensure confidentiality to the extent feasible while permitting the Course of Study School to investigate the complaint thoroughly and to take appropriate action.

The Course of Study School will not tolerate retaliation against any member of the school community who complains of sexual harassment.

Explanatory Notes

If a person alleged to have engaged in sexual harassment is the Director, then the person bringing the complaint shall notify either one or both faculty members who serve on the Sexual Harassment Committee. The two faculty members shall ask the president of the seminary at the host school to appoint an administrative officer to serve as chairperson of the Sexual Harassment Committee and to function as the Director in the process outlined above.

RACIAL HARASSMENT POLICY

Persons enrolled in the Course of Study come under the jurisdiction of their own annual conference policies on racial harassment. However, while the person is in the Course of Study School the following policy shall also apply.

The Course of Study School is committed by Christian faith for justice for all persons and does not tolerate any behavior, verbal or physical, by any person associated with the school, which constitutes racial harassment against any other person associated with the school. Any person of the Course of Study School community who believes that he or she has been subjected to 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 school expects the cooperation of all members of the school community with respect to avoiding such harassment.

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.

Definition of Racial Harassment

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

Procedures

The Course of Study School is committed to using the process outlined below to deal with allegations of racial harassment within the school community. A racial harassment allegation may be resolved on an informal basis.

Any member of the school community who wishes to make a formal complaint, must submit a written description of the incident to the Director.

Allegations are thoroughly investigated by a Racial Harassment Committee composed of the Director and two members of the faculty. The investigation shall include a meeting with the person alleged to have engaged in the harassment. The accused and/or the complainant may bring a trusted colleague (other than an attorney), committed to maintaining confidentiality, with him/her to such a meeting.

If the Racial Harassment Committee decides inappropriate behavior has occurred, after completing the investigation, the Director takes appropriate disciplinary and/or other action related to the accused person's participation in the Course of Study School on that campus. In addition, the Director will inform the accused person's annual conference or judicatory body of the action taken.

The Course of Study School takes steps to ensure that a person against whom such a complaint is brought is treated appropriately and has adequate opportunity to respond to such accusations.

The complainant and the person complained against are notified of the disposition of the complaint. If the disposition involves any ongoing process the Director keeps the complainant informed until the process is complete.

Appeal Process

If the accuser or the accused is not satisfied with the action taken by the Course of Study School, s/he may express such dissatisfaction, in writing to the Director of Board of Ordained Ministry Relations, Division of Ordained Ministry, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, within 15 days after receiving notification of the disposition of the complaint.

Confidentiality

Every effort will be made to ensure confidentiality to the extent feasible, while permitting the school to investigate the complaint thoroughly and to take appropriate action.

The school will not tolerate retaliation against any member of the school community who complains of racial harassment.

Explanatory Notes

If the person alleged to have engaged in racial harassment is the Director, then the person bringing the complaint shall notify one or two faculty members who serve on the Racial Harassment Committee. The two faculty members shall ask the president of the seminary at the host school to appoint an administrative officer to serve as chairperson of the Sexual Harassment Committee and to function as the Director in the process outlined above.