



Board of Ordained Ministry Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church

Educational Requirements for Provisional Membership

One course in each area listed below must be included in graduate theological education in preparation for provisional membership in the VAUMC, and the Basic Graduate Theological Studies, noted with an asterisk *, must equal at least 27 semester credits total. Please note: the Virginia Conference requires completion of all educational requirements prior to commissioning and provisional membership. In addition, completion of an undergraduate bachelor's degree is required.

- Old Testament
- New Testament
- Theology
- Church history
- Mission of the church in the world
- Worship/liturgy
- Evangelism
- A minimum of two semester or three-quarter hours in each of the fields of United Methodist history, doctrine, and polity.
- A course in preaching is required by the Virginia Conference. This is required for both provisional deacon and provisional elder candidates (effective 2020).

In addition to the above requirements, the Virginia Conference Board of Ordained Ministry requires that all candidates for ordination complete **at least ½ unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) by the application deadline for ordination as a deacon or elder and/or full membership in the conference.** The Board strongly encourages completion of CPE prior to provisional membership. CPE must be taken at a CPE site that is accredited by the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE). Online CPE programs are not accepted.

The Virginia Conference Board of Ordained Ministry strongly encourages completion of United Methodist doctrine prior to applying for provisional membership. The Board recommends courses in Christian education and systematic theology for all candidates.

The Virginia Conference Board of Ordained Ministry allows **up to 1/2 of all course work** to be completed through distance education, with no more than 1/3 of the course work to be completed by fully asynchronous methods.* The United Methodist Church allows online courses to be taken only at one of the 13 official United Methodist seminaries or Asbury Theological Seminary. Distance education includes all correspondence, online and hybrid courses in which the students and faculty are not in the same physical location. "Fully Asynchronous" courses are those in which students and faculty are neither in the same physical location nor online at the same time.

Although each seminary has the responsibility to designate which basic courses meet the core requirements and advise students of these courses, the conference Board of Ordained Ministry will have the final authority to approve academic studies. Questions should be addressed to the Registrar, Rev. Jessie Colwell at JessieColwell@vaumc.org.

* The Virginia Conference BOM voted to suspend the distance learning requirement of only ½ classes being online until the upcoming General Conference. We understand that during 2021 many in-person classes turned into online classes. Moving forward we will be assessing hybrid models of seminary from accredited universities and will update our education requirements accordingly with GBHEM and the recommendations that come out of the upcoming General Conference.