

Maine School of Ministry (MESoM) Quick Facts

The challenge: Many smaller churches in Maine need authorized ministers, but their dwindling numbers and small-town locations make it hard to attract full-time, seminary-educated pastors.

The opportunity: More and more churches recognize the leadership gifts of their own members and want to equip one of their own to become pastor. Opportunities for education are limited, however.

Why a school?

- To help those who feel called to explore and develop their capacities for ministry
- To provide renewal and stimulus to those in ministry
- "...To equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ" (Eph. 4:12), wherever and whoever they may be

How does it work? The school's affordable courses, taught by highly qualified faculty, are designed for adults who are exploring their own spiritual formation, discerning their calling to authorized ministry, or both. Students attend in person or electronically, from Maine and from other Conferences. Students can work their way through the Christian Studies and Leadership curriculum to achieve various levels of certification, including the Word and Sacrament program for those seeking ordination.

Quick Facts about the Christian Studies and Leadership Curriculum:

- Starting 2013, Maine School of Ministry offered its first courses, developed in consultation with the Maine UCC's Committees on Ministry.
- Its current 20-course curriculum includes Biblical Studies, Church History, Theology, Ethics, and topics in practical and pastoral theology.
- Some courses feature classroom learning while others stress hands-on experiences and/or site visits.
- A full year of the MESoM curriculum includes 5 courses: two per semester, and one in June.
 - Semester courses meet once a month on Saturdays, at UCC headquarters. Students can attend class via web-based teleconferencing.
 - June Intensives meet each Saturday of that month, and provide encounters with other forms of Christian worship, Judaism, Islam, and Native American religions.
- Tuition is \$350 per course; to date, six students have received Conference-funded scholarships.
- Registration in Christian Studies and Leadership courses averages 8 students per class.
- Total registration in since 2015: 107 students.
- Through June 2018, ten courses were offered. From Fall 2018-Spring 2020, the next ten courses in the sequence will be offered.
- In 2017-18, enrollment in Christian Studies and Leadership courses was divided equally between students interested in spiritual formation and those in discernment for authorized ministry. The Maine School of Ministry successfully serves both groups, simultaneously.

"...Speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knitted together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love." (Eph. 4:15-16)

For more information about the School and its offerings, please contact Rev. Dr. Ron Beard, Acting Dean (rbaard@maineucc.org) and visit its website at <http://maineucc.org> under Ministries.
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