

STUDENT HANDBOOK

2020/2021



YOU BELONG @



MEADVILLE LOMBARD
THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL

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Welcome to Meadville Lombard

OUR MISSION

At Meadville Lombard Theological School, our mission is to educate students in the Unitarian Universalist tradition so that they may go forth and embody liberal religious ministry in Unitarian Universalist congregations and wherever else they may be called to serve. We do this so that we may take into the world our Unitarian Universalist vision of justice, equity, and compassion.

STUDENT COVENANT

We call forth each other's full and authentic presence, in the spirit of love and openness to the many different gifts we bring. We covenant to be each other's support and share each other's joy. We trust that doing differently will lead to thinking differently. May we move forward with courage and gratitude for our opportunities to learn and grow.

- We will respect diversity in all its manifestations as a sign of strength; we will honor all contributions to the community.
- We will listen deeply to all points of view.
- We will offer everyone an opportunity, and an invitation, to be heard.
- We will allow and honor silence.
- We will communicate compassionately, directly, and honestly.
- We will use "I" language and speak from our own stories and experiences.
- We will respect confidentiality.
- We will support the structures in our community that actively turn conflict towards healing and growth.
- We will resolve our conflicts proactively. When we need to step back, we will return as soon as it is healthy.
- We will make every effort to settle differences openly: giving and receiving criticism kindly.
- We will confront our assumptions.
- We will accept and forgive imperfections in ourselves and in others.
- We will be open to connection with the full breadth of the Meadville Lombard community.

OUR COMMUNITY

Meadville Lombard is an educational community comprised of a variety of cultures, theological perspectives, and traditions. As a learning community, Meadville Lombard seeks to be a positive and supportive environment that is conducive for all students, faculty, and staff to the exchange of ideas and knowledge, both on campus and off. As a spiritual community, we hold each other accountable for maintaining principles of fairness, civility, and respect for divergent perspectives. As a diverse community, we promote the dignity and worth of all persons.

To This End, We Recommend These Guidelines for Right Relations in Community,

Adapted from Rev. David Miller

- Am I reflecting on how my attitude and actions contribute to the tone of our community?

- Am I assuming the good intentions of the other(s)?
- Am I communicating directly with the person with whom I am having the issue?
- Am I resolving issues or am I spreading them through gossip, anger and/or frustration?
- Am I reflecting on what personal wounds, issues, and tendencies of mine are contributing to the issue?
- Am I willing to be an active participant and to work in good faith to clear up issues?
- Am I projecting onto someone else through my own framework what they are thinking or doing as opposed to engaging them and asking them to share their thoughts and story?
- Am I actively listening to what others are saying and not formulating a response or the next comment or question while they are talking?
- Can I let go of my need to control the situation?
- Can I graciously leave space for others by letting someone else speak first or by not speaking my mind if the point has been raised or made already?
- Can I have disagreements with an individual or group, do so in love and respect, and continue to stay in community?
- Can I take into account importance of the task in relation to the importance of the relationship?

To support our learning community for all, Meadville Lombard provides:

- A supportive environment that facilitates the educational goals of Meadville Lombard on campus and online.
- Access to timely and accurate information.
- Opportunities for leadership development (Student Activities Council, student organizations, etc.).
- Confidentiality of student records (FERPA).
- Reasonable ADA accommodations.
- Due process in disciplinary proceedings.
- Safe physical environment on campus.

Meadville Lombard asks you to:

- Encourage one another in ministerial formation.
- Recognize the value of diversity and an open exchange of ideas in local and global contexts.
- Pursue education and practices that will enhance your understanding about living and working in a multicultural and anti-oppression community.
- Practice high ethical standards through the promotion of honesty, dignity, courtesy, and respect when interacting with other students, faculty, and staff.
- Help keep campus facilities clean and inviting.
- Read and follow Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association Guidelines for the Conduct of Ministry (UUMA Guidelines) <http://www.uuma.org/default.asp?page=guidelines>.

Student Guide/General Information

Organizational Structure

Corporate Identity and Authority

Meadville Lombard Theological School, located in Chicago, Illinois, is an independent Theological School with Unitarian Universalist roots and affiliations. Formally titled “Meadville Theological School of Lombard College”, the institution is more commonly referred to as Meadville Lombard Theological School. It is the surviving corporation of a merger between Meadville Theological School (which was incorporated in Pennsylvania by a Special Act on April 14, 1865) and Lombard College (which was incorporated in Illinois by the Secretary of State on May 15, 1851). This “surviving corporation” operates under the original Lombard College charter and is accredited by the Association of Theological Schools.

Board of Trustees

As provided in its charter, the Board of Trustees holds final authority for the governance of the institution. It is responsible for appointing the School’s chief executive and fulltime faculty, approving budgets and faculty salaries, and authorizing both earned and honorary degrees. The Board consists of thirteen to eighteen members: including the President, a faculty trustee, a voting student trustee— who is elected by a majority vote of all students in good standing (pursuant to election rules established by the Student Affairs Council)— and the President of the Meadville Lombard Alumni/ae Association.

The Board elects members to serve a term of three years, with the exception of the President (who serves ex-officio), the student trustee (who serves for a maximum of two, one-year terms), the faculty trustee (who serves for a two-year term), and the Alumni/ae trustee (who serves so longs as that trustee holds the Alumni/ae office). Trustees who have completed three terms are not eligible for another term until after a gap of one year. The Board presently meets three times a year. The Executive Committee— composed of the Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, chairs of all other Teams that the Board establishes, one or more at-large members, and the President— carries on necessary business between meetings, and special meetings of the Board may be called on occasion. Other committees of the Board may also meet between regular Board meetings.

The Board has presently established the following Teams and Committees:

- Executive
- Development and Communications
- Education
- Finance and Administration
- Nominating

Members of these Teams and Committees are either ex-officio or elected by the full Board. Because its primary responsibility lies in the making of policies, the Board is not directly involved in the administrative and academic affairs of the School. Major administrative decisions are discussed with members of the Executive Committee and others as needed.

The Board has a diverse array of duties. These duties include: evaluating the Chief Executive; reviewing, providing counsel for, and adopting broad institutional goals and policies; and fundraising. Present and former Board members support the School financially and develop financial support from other individuals and churches. While formal authority rests with the Board, authority for

running the School is delegated to the President, Administration, and Faculty. For a list of current Board of Trustees members, please visit our website (www.meadville.edu).

President

The President, who is elected by the Board of Trustees, serves as the spiritual leader, chief educational officer, and chief administrator of the School. These responsibilities are carried out through delegation and collaboration.

Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs

The Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs is appointed by the President to oversee the educational program (in consultation with the faculty), accreditation, and the department of Student Affairs. The Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs is a member of the President's Leadership team and, as such, is actively involved in decisions regarding the institution's overall administrative policies.

Faculty

The Meadville Lombard Faculty, which includes the President and the Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs, meets weekly from August through June. Because the School seeks to provide the best possible educational experience, a considerable amount of time is devoted to meeting with individual students and discussing their first year of study; their experiences in Signature Courses, internships, and Clinical Pastoral Education; and their progress in their degree programs. Moreover, individual faculty members frequently agree to assume tasks—such as the development of draft statements—which might then be referred to a committee within the larger faculty. Finally, individual faculty members serve on school committees, sometimes as the chair of the committee.

Meadville Lombard Council

Purpose

The Meadville Lombard Council acts as an advisory committee to the Meadville Lombard President on academic and non-academic issues related to community life. To accomplish this aim, the Council meets monthly between September and May (with the exception of January) to discuss and examine issues that Council members deem important. Additionally, the Council will examine issues brought to its attention by community members—provided that the Council members agree that the issue falls under Council jurisdiction.

Structure

Each Council member has one vote. For voting purposes, five Council members constitute a quorum. Council membership consists of:

- Faculty/Staff positions (five votes)
 - The Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs
 - The Vice President of Finance and Administration (or representative)
 - The Director of Enrollment and Student Affairs
 - One Staff member (elected by the Staff)
 - One Faculty member (elected by the Faculty)
- Student positions
 - A representative appointed by the Student Advisory Council
 - The Student Representative to the Meadville Lombard Board of Trustees

- The President (serves ex-officio)

Leadership

The two offices of the Council are the Chair and the Recording Secretary.

These are one-year terms that are filled by members of the Student Advisory Council; this council will then decide which member fills either role.

Open Meeting Policy

Unless otherwise noted, all Council meetings are open to the entire Meadville Lombard community. Council members oversee conveying information back and forth between their constituencies and the Council.

Accountability

The Meadville Lombard Council is expected to engage in ongoing communication with the President in matters related to its discussions. The Meadville Lombard Council is also charged with annually communicating to the Meadville Lombard community summaries of its deliberations and recommendations after each meeting through the weekly bulletin/newsletter, "This Week @ Meadville Lombard" (see Section 2.4.2), or via the School's email lists. The Meadville Lombard Council is also expected to provide an "Annual Report" each June to the entire student body. This report summarizes the previous year's matters and discussions and is delivered by way of "This Week @ Meadville Lombard" or the School's email lists.

Committees

Committee structure within the community is flexible and subject to change to adapt to new concerns or situations that may arise. Special committees appointed by the Council have discussed issues such as course evaluation and spiritual life, and they have conducted sessions to provide conflict resolution skills. Frequently, other individuals or groups may assume—or be given responsibility for—some aspect of the School's life or operations. Committees within the community can be broadly classified into two categories: voluntary and elected. Any committee may have student, faculty, and staff representatives on them.

Student Leadership

The Student Advisory Council (SAC) is a group of Meadville Lombard students elected yearly by their colleagues, and it represents the interests of currently enrolled students. Roles in the SAC may include co-chairpersons, a student representative to the Meadville Lombard Board of Trustees, a treasurer, a communications officer, a buddy coordinator, and other positions as needed.

Functions of the SAC include: sharing meeting minutes with the student body, maintaining online discussion groups for both the SAC and the entire Meadville Lombard student community, participating in monthly Meadville Lombard Council meetings, ensuring that students are represented in Meadville Lombard committees and task forces, making buddy assignments for incoming students, managing the finances of the student community (including student activity fees), selecting Good Offices persons, and distributing the Meadville Lombard Guidelines of Right Relations for all classes. To participate in SAC, or represent students in the Meadville Lombard Council, a student must be a registered student in Academic Good Standing as defined by the Student Handbook.

Registered Student Organizations

A group of three or more currently enrolled students may form a registered student organization by following these steps:

- Complete a yearly registration form for the Director of Student Services.
- Secure a full-time faculty/professional staff advisor.
- Develop a constitution and bylaws to govern the organization and ensure a version is on file with the Director of Student Services. The bylaws must include the following information:
 - Name of the organization
 - Purpose of the organization
 - Eligibility for membership
 - Description of the duties of each officer
 - Voting procedures
 - Schedule of meetings
 - Description of committees and their functions
 - Provisions for amendments to the constitution
- Limit group membership to students, faculty, and staff at Meadville Lombard.
- Extend membership without biases prohibited by applicable law, including, but not limited to, sex, race, color, national origin, religion, age, veteran status, disability, marital status, or affectional orientation.
- Agree to conduct organization affairs in accordance with school regulations.
- Understand that only students in Academic Good Standing, as defined by the Student Handbook, can participate in student organizations.

For any questions or assistance regarding student organizations, please contact the Director of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs.

Communication

Email

Upon matriculation, you will be given a Meadville Lombard email address. This is usually, but not always, your first initial of your first name, and then your last name .edu (i.e., Jenny Chicago would be jchicago@meadville.edu). This email account is the School's official means of communicating with you, therefore, you are expected to check your incoming mail regularly. Upon request, graduating students will be permitted to keep their Meadville email for up to one year after graduating. An official request should be emailed to the Director of Registrar in May of your graduation year.

Students beginning their degree program in the summer term will receive their email addresses after submitting ID verification paperwork to the Registrar, before the start of Summer Semester.

Students beginning their degree program in the fall will receive their email addresses after submitting ID verification paperwork to the Registrar, before August Ingathering.

When the email address is created, an eight-character, temporary password will be automatically generated. You will be required to change it to either a password or passphrase that is something both familiar and strong. Some guidelines, tips, and suggestions follow:

- Passwords:
 - The password should be at least eight characters in length, and should have a combination of letters, numbers, and symbols.
 - "Password" is a commonly used passphrase and is easily hackable. A way to strengthen this otherwise weak password would be to replace some of the letters with numbers: such as Pa55w0rd. To make the password even stronger, symbols can be added in: such as P@55w0r&.
- Passphrases:

- Because passwords can be difficult to remember, many people are moving towards replacing them with passphrases. These are series of words that make sense to you, but that no one else would think to use.
- Example: MyFavoriteBirthdayPresentWasABlueBike
- At 37 upper- and lowercase characters, this example passphrase will be nearly impossible to crack. Additionally, despite its length, it will also be hard to forget because the blue bike used in the example holds a special place in the user's memory.

Your Meadville email accounts will be the only email address used by staff and faculty to communicate school, course, and formation matters. Meadville email accounts are to be used for course work and outreach only. They are not to be used for online shopping, registering with non-academic sites, as a personal address for non-Meadville conversations, or anything that could cause spam to be sent to the Meadville domain.

This Week @ Meadville Lombard (aka “The Bulletin”)

During the Academic Year, the Communications Office sends out a weekly bulletin titled, “This Week @ Meadville Lombard.” The bulletin includes announcements regarding policy changes, upcoming deadlines, and any other news that affects the entire community. This bulletin is the official vehicle for the delivery of such news and is delivered via your Meadville Lombard email account.

Populi

Our e-community classroom forum, called Populi is where students and faculty upload assignments, papers, media, PowerPoint presentations, etc. Populi enables you to archive and track electronic documents and assignments, participate in forums, form private online study groups, and even share ministerial formation sermons and documents electronically with congregations or groups.

Once you matriculate, you will be issued a Populi account and password by the Registrar.

Advising

Upon accepting admission into a degree program, the VP of Academic and Student Affairs will assign students to a Faculty Advisor who they will meet with to begin the process of planning their academic roadmap. New students will want to confer with their Advisor as early as possible to discuss questions about equivalency requirements or transfer units. Students are expected to meet with their Advisor on a routine basis depending on the structure of their degree program and will need to obtain Advisor approval for classes taken outside of Meadville Lombard academic classes.

A successful advising relationship hinges on regular communication between advisor and advisee, both structured and informal, to establish and reinforce mutual expectations and foster a positive relationship. Some advising needs can be fulfilled through carefully prepared documentation regarding program requirements, recommended course selection and planning, and course descriptions and schedules. These documents are developed to assist students in achieving their academic program goals within a reasonable timeframe so as to help minimize the financial burden a graduate education can create. Students and faculty should follow the sequences laid out in these documents as much as possible.

For other advising needs, students are encouraged to begin by recognizing the values, goals, and responsibilities that faculty and students share as part of the Meadville Lombard Theological School experience.

Shared Values

- Educational excellence and rigor
- Academic integrity

- Spirit of collaboration
- Justice, equity, and compassion
- Professionalism in all aspects of advising relationships

Shared Goals

- Academic progress and graduation of student according to the students' desired timeline
- Financial stability
- Mastery of the subject material
- Advancement of knowledge and skills
- Professional development and personal growth
- Career success and satisfaction

Shared Responsibilities

- Uphold and abide by department and school policies and procedures
- Maintain a respectful and inclusive environment
- Abide by the highest ethical and professional standards
- Foster a culture of open, honest, respectful communication and collaboration

To uphold these shared values, goals, and responsibilities, advisors and students must meet the following expectations:

Role of Your Advisors

- Meet with students. Regularly publicize times they are available. Advisors should plan to meet with their advisees two times a year by phone or in person.
- Evaluate students' progress and performance in a regular and inform students about their performance in relation to expectations of normal progress and to norms associated with successful degree completion.
- Provide accurate and timely advice. Advisors should place students' timely completion of degree requirements among their highest priorities.
- Listen carefully.
- Offer guidance in course selection and insight regarding best study practices.
- Provide formational counseling*.
- Be familiar with MLTS policies, procedures, and deadlines.
- Advisers should keep their relationships with advisees focused on academic and professional development.
- Address student questions regarding ministry realities.
- Give advice that helps students transition from studies to their professional pursuits.
- Write letters of recommendation at the request of the advisee.
- Collaborate with the Senior Director of Contextual Ministry regarding any changes to a student's status.

* Formational advising helps the student cultivate skills that are necessary for ordained ministry or vocational service and are external and practical expressions of UU principles.

Expectations for Students

- It is the student's responsibility to make appointments with their advisor, ideally once in the fall and once in the spring. Understand that advisors lead demanding lives and have professional as well as family responsibilities; it is not reasonable for students to expect immediate access at all times. Request a meeting during the advisor's publicized office hours. If you need to reschedule or cancel a meeting, be prompt in notifying your advisor.

- For issues related to internships, CPE, teaching pastors, teaching mentors or credentialing, consult with the Senior Director of Contextual Ministry.
- Consult with your advisor prior to registering for courses, particularly related to the composition of your concentration.
- Consult the Student Handbook before asking a question of the advisor.
- Come to meetings prepared with questions and ideas.
- Take notes and/or memorize suggestions made by your advisor so you can refer to them later.
- Expect constructive criticism to be part of the advising experience.
- Be attentive and responsive to the advice offered by the advisor.
- Make requests for letters of recommendations well in advance of deadlines whenever possible.
- Take responsibility for your actions or inactions as a student spiritual leader.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries and expectations with your advisor. Academic and formational advising will be provided; however, personal counseling, grief counseling, etc., must be sought outside of the advising relationship.

Remedies for Adverse Advisor-Student Relations

In the event that difficulties develop between an advisor and a student, students should contact the Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs to determine suitable options (if a student's advisor is the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, difficulties should be brought to the attention of the President.) Advisors who experience difficulties with advisees may find it helpful to seek advice from peer faculty. If the issue cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the concerned party, a change in advisors will be recommended by the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs (or the President.)

Finance Policy

Meadville Lombard is a non-profit, educational institution. For questions about non-confidential budget items, contact the Vice President of Finance and Administration.

Tuition and Fees

Information on current tuition and fees can be found on our website (<http://www.meadville.edu/becoming-a-student/tuition-and-fees>)

Student Accounts

In the event of a past due balance of any nature on a student's account, diplomas will not be issued, enrollment for subsequent terms will not be allowed, and transcripts of college credits will not be released until the balance is paid in full. A "hold" will be placed on the student's account.

Federal financial aid awards are applied to student accounts based on the disbursement schedule for the semester designated and cannot be used to pay for outstanding balances from a prior semester.

Institutional tuition reduction awards and scholarships cannot be used to pay for fees or prior years' outstanding balances.

Tuition Refund Schedule

Students may drop classes without academic or financial penalty until the end of the Add/Drop period each term (<https://www.meadville.edu/current-students/academic-calendar/>). After the end of the Add/Drop period, course and program withdrawal requests must be made in writing, on the approved form ([Course Withdrawal Form](#)), and submitted to the Registrar. Normally, no tuition or fee refund will be granted for course withdrawals after the Add/Drop period.

Returned Check Policy

Meadville Lombard expects students to be responsible in their financial dealings with the School. However, we do understand that, on occasion, mistakes are made that may result in a check being returned by the bank.

In the event a check is returned, an additional Returned Check Fee will be added to the student's account in the amount of \$30.00. Checks returned for reasons other than insufficient funds will be charged the Returned Check fee, and the student will be contacted to resolve the reason for the returned check. Remember, to graduate or register for future courses, accounts must be current.

Questions regarding student accounts or this policy can be addressed to the Business Office.

Emergency Advance Against Financial Aid

In an emergency, students may receive an advance against their upcoming financial aid award, up to a maximum of \$1,000: if at least that amount of financial aid (\$1,000) has been awarded for living expenses. This request should be submitted to the Director of Student Services. When financial aid is available to be released to a student's account, any amounts advanced will be reimbursed to MLTS before a check is released to the student.

Technology Requirements

Significant aspects of learning for all students will be facilitated through various forms of technological media over the course of the degree program. In a distance-learning format, technology and the associated equipment should be thought of as a "required textbook" that is necessary to complete the coursework. We strongly suggest that you have reliable and steady access to the internet, specifically through at least broadband access. Your internet access should allow you to participate in electronic classroom forums, video conferencing, podcasts, chat rooms, and Populi. There will also be times when you will be exchanging documents with fellow students and faculty and using software such as Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint.

Minimum Specifications

- **A computer:**
 - You will need a reliable computing device. Because there are many varieties of computing devices, rather than suggest particular hardware, your computing device should be capable of easily handling the specifications and activities outlined here. As a starting point, we recommend a device with a current and supported version of Windows or Mac OS.
 - Choose hardware that includes a built-in video camera and microphone as part of the package or purchase an external webcam and microphone that works with your device.
- **Internet Access:**
 - Access to high-speed internet (DSL/Cable/T1), capable of handling video conferencing.
- **Software:**
 - Internet browser such as Firefox, Safari, Chrome, or Microsoft Edge. We recommend your browser be setup to accept cookies and show the newest version of a webpage. We also recommend disabling pop-up blocking features on official websites used for coursework.
 - Office software capable of viewing, creating, and editing documents, spreadsheets, and presentations such as any of the following: Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint) (free for MLTS students), iWorks (Pages, Numbers, Keynote), Google Suite, or LibreOffice. You will be required to submit assignments in word (.doc/.docx) and PDF formats.
 - A PDF viewer such as Adobe Reader or Foxit PDF Reader.

- A media player capable of playing video and audio files such as Windows Media Player, VLC Media Player, or iTunes.
- **Conferencing:**
 - Telephone service that will allow for free long- distance calling. We expect that some courses will require approximately two hours of conference calls per week plus additional monthly conference calls on the weekend.
 - Zoom Video conferencing will be used as a teaching strategy over the course of your study. Students should expect to Zoom and should download the application to their computers, if possible.

Health Insurance & Immunization Records

Each year, all students enrolled in a degree program at Meadville Lombard must provide proof of health insurance coverage to the Registrar. Students are responsible for securing their own health insurance coverage. Students who live in the Chicago area can contact the Registrar for information about accessing the University of Chicago health insurance plan via Meadville Lombard.

All students must provide immunization records. Students who have not met the state of Illinois requirements for immunization documentation will have a hold placed on their account and will not be able to register for classes.

Campus Security

Security

It is the policy of Meadville Lombard to make a reasonable effort to provide security for its students, faculty, staff, authorized visitors to its premises, and its property. All members of Meadville Lombard are expected to know and comply with the Meadville Lombard security procedures and report any violations or potential problems to the Security Officer, designated as the Vice President for Finance and Administration. It is then the responsibility of the Security Officer to respond to reports of security violations.

Security Officer

Meadville Lombard has appointed the Vice President for Finance and Administration as Security Officer of the School. The responsibilities of the Security Officer include:

- Recommending, implementing, and enforcing all security procedures, while additionally making periodic audits of existing procedures.
- Coordinating with building owner the systems to issue and control school identification devices and keys and to identify and control Meadville Lombard's physical assets.
- Investigating thefts and acts of vandalism
- Safeguarding electronic communications and files, confidential information, and the release of sensitive information.
- Communicating security procedures to Meadville Lombard personnel, and training/retraining Meadville Lombard personnel with respect to their security responsibilities.
- All Meadville Lombard personnel are encouraged to accurately and promptly report all crimes to the Spertus Building faculty, appropriate police agencies, and the Meadville Lombard Security Officer.

Access

Meadville Lombard is not a public access facility. Access to campus facilities is limited to members of the Meadville Lombard community and their designated invitees. Private offices are restricted to designated occupants and their invitees. Students and employees are responsible for their guests.

Student ID

The Meadville Lombard Student ID Card is an official school picture ID card. In addition to identifying the relationship with Meadville Lombard, the card provides access to the Spertus Building and Meadville Lombard's Offices. The first ID is free, expiring IDs are replaced free, and IDs that are lost or damaged can be replaced for \$30.00.

Clergy Act

The Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act requires that each institution of higher education in the United States that participates in federal student aid programs must prepare, publish, and distribute an annual report containing crime statistics and statements of security policy.

The Campus Crime Statistics and the Annual Security Report are available from the Vice President of Finance and Administration and on Meadville Lombard's Website.

General Policy Statement and Notice of Non-Discrimination and Non-Harassment

Meadville Lombard Theological School is committed to fostering the full humanity of all its members. All forms of discrimination and harassment are prohibited at this institution. Meadville Lombard Theological School does not discriminate, or tolerate discrimination or harassment, against any member of its community on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex/gender, age, religion, disability, pregnancy, veteran status, marital status, sexual orientation, or any other status protected by applicable federal, state or local law in matters of employment or admissions or in any aspect of the educational programs or activities it offers.

In furtherance of Meadville Lombard Theological School's commitment to the principles of equality and equal opportunity for students, staff, and faculty this policy and the associated procedures are established to provide a means to address complaints of discrimination or harassment based on the protected categories described herein.

The policy has been written with the express goal of protecting the rights and concerns of both complainant and respondent. The school will make every effort to assure and protect these rights, and shall undertake no action that threatens or compromises them.

Harassment

All forms of harassment by any member of the Meadville Lombard community are prohibited. These include, but are not limited to, harassment regarding sex, race, color, ethnicity, religion, national origin, age, disability, gender identification, or affectional orientation. The intent is to prevent actions that subvert the mission of the School and threaten the well-being, educational experience, and careers of students, faculty, and staff..

Title IX – Prohibition of Sexual Discrimination

Pursuant to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and the U.S. Department of Education's implementing regulations at 34 C.F.R. Part 106, the School's Title IX Coordinator has primary responsibility for coordinating the School's efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under Title IX, which prohibits sex discrimination in all the operations of this School, as well as retaliation for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX.

Sexual misconduct against students, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, rape, and sexual exploitation, can be a form of sex discrimination under Title IX. The Title IX Coordinator oversees the School's response to reports and complaints that involve possible sex discrimination to monitor outcomes, identify and address any patterns, and assess effects on the campus climate, so the School can address issues that affect the wider school community. Additional information on preventing and responding to sex offenses can be found in the Safety and Security Information Report.

Inquiries regarding Title IX should be referred to the Meadville Lombard's designated Title IX Coordinator(s):

Coordinator

Manny Dotel

Director of Enrollment Management

312-212-0673

mdotel@meadville.edu

610 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60605

Harassment

All forms of harassment by any member of the Meadville Lombard community are prohibited. These include, but are not limited to, harassment regarding sex, race, color, ethnicity, religion, national origin, age, disability, gender identification, or affectional orientation. The intent is to prevent actions that subvert the mission of the School and threaten the well-being, educational experience, and careers of students, faculty, and staff.

This policy also prohibits such harassment of students by individuals who are not Meadville Lombard faculty members, students, or employees (such as donors, visitors, and vendors), and vice versa. If you have any questions about what constitutes prohibited harassment, do not hesitate to ask the Title IX Coordinator(s). Meadville Lombard also strictly prohibits sexual harassment.

Sexual Harassment

Definition of Sexual Harassment

For purposes of this policy, sexual harassment is any Quid Pro Quo by an employee, unwelcome conduct that a reasonable person would find so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it denies a person equal education access; any instance of sexual assault (as defined in the Clery Act), dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking as defined in the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA).

Sexually harassing behavior may include physical, verbal, and nonverbal behavior. Examples of inappropriate sexual behavior include, but are not limited to:

- Sexual advances
- Inappropriate touching or other physical contact
- Demands for sexual favors in exchange for promotion, retention, or tangible employment or educational action
- A decision made because of an individual's compliance with or failure to comply with sexual demands
- Repeated sexual jokes, flirtations, advances, or propositions, or discussions of sexual activity (whether in conversation or through electronic or other means)

- Abuse of a sexual nature or suggestive, insulting, or obscene comments or gestures
- Display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures

These and similar behaviors are unacceptable at Meadville Lombard and in other related settings such as Meadville Lombard social events. The Meadville Lombard sexual harassment policy prohibits sexual harassment by individuals who are not Meadville Lombard faculty members, students, or employees (such as donors, visitors, and vendors). If you have any questions about what constitutes sexual harassment, do not hesitate to ask the Title IX Coordinator.

Consensual Relationships

All members of the community are cautioned against the possible costs of even an apparently consenting sexual relationship in which power differentials exist. For example, a faculty member who enters into a sexual relationship with a student where a professional power differential exists, should realize that if a charge of sexual harassment is subsequently lodged, it may be difficult to maintain innocence on grounds of mutual consent. Codes of ethics for most professional associations forbid professional-client sexual relationships. In the view of the school, the professor-student relationship may often be comparable to the relationship of a professional and client.

Retaliation

Meadville Lombard strictly prohibits any retaliation against any student because they have, in good faith, made a report or complaint or participated in any investigation under the Policy Against Discrimination and Harassment. Retaliation is a serious violation of this policy and can result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge or expulsion. Any act of retaliation should be reported in the same manner as acts of discrimination or harassment and will be investigated using the procedures described below.

Procedures for Addressing Discrimination and Harassment

Steps in Reporting and Inquiry

1. Any person wishing to report an instance of suspected or alleged discrimination or harassment should do so by contacting the Title IX Coordinator.
 - a. There are two types of notice: Formal Notice and Informal Notice
 - i. Formal Notice is when the complainant either emails the Title IX Coordinator from their Meadville Mail account or when the complainant submits a signed written statement with their harassment complaint. Formal Notice is what triggers the School's Harassment investigation and decision making procedure.
 - ii. Informal Notice is when the complainant verbally notifies a Person of Authority (Title IX Coordinator, Staff or Faculty) at the School. Please note that Informal Notice does not necessarily trigger the School's Harassment investigation and decision making procedure, but interim measures to support the complainant can be addressed.

Although there is no specific time limit for reporting a suspected violation of this policy, an individual who believes that he or she has been subjected to conduct that violates this policy is encouraged to contact an appropriate staff or faculty member as soon as possible after the alleged act of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation to discuss the available options for proceeding. Please note that until formal notice is given to the Title IX Coordinator, the School can not start our harassment procedures.

2. The School will promptly and equitably investigate and resolve all suspected or alleged violations of this policy. Alleged or suspected violations of this policy will be investigated by a Formal Resolution process as outlined below.
3. The School will attempt to complete investigations within 60 days of the filing of a complaint or the date on which the school becomes aware of a suspected violation of this policy, unless the school determines in its discretion that more time is required to complete the investigation.

Meadville Lombard Theological School is committed to the prompt and equitable resolution of all alleged or suspected violations of this policy, regardless of whether a complaint alleging a violation of this policy has been filed and regardless of where the conduct at issue occurred.

The school's ability to investigate in a particular situation, or the extent of the investigation in any given situation, may be affected by any number of factors, including whether the complainant is willing to file a complaint or to consent to an investigation, the location where the alleged conduct occurred, and the school's access to information relevant to the alleged or suspected violation of this policy. The school is nonetheless committed to investigating all alleged and suspected violations of this policy to the fullest extent possible under the circumstances.

4. To the extent permitted by law, the confidentiality of all parties involved in the resolution of alleged or suspected violations of this policy will be observed, provided that it does not interfere with the school's ability to conduct an investigation and take any corrective action deemed appropriate by the school.

Persons should be aware that, under certain circumstances, once an instance of suspected or alleged discrimination or harassment is reported, the school may choose to initiate an investigation, even if the person making the report does not wish to proceed with an investigation.

5. The school reserves the right to suspend any member of the school community suspected or accused of violating this policy or to take any other interim measures the school deems appropriate, pending the outcome of the investigation. Such interim measures can include, but are not limited to, modifying course schedules and issuing a "no contact" order.
6. The school also reserves the right to take steps to protect the complainant as deemed necessary during the pendency of the investigation and resolution process (e.g., allowing for a change in academic situation, issuing a "no contact" order to the accused, etc.). Any such interim steps will be taken in a manner that minimizes the burden on either party to the extent possible.

Formal Resolution

The formal resolution process applies (i) to all matters involving alleged or suspected assault or violence; (ii) when any party so requests in writing; or (iii) when the School elects to use the formal resolution process in any matter when the School deems doing so appropriate.

When the formal resolution process is invoked, the Vice President of Finance and Administration will conduct the investigation. If the Vice President of Finance and Administration is accused of a violation of this policy, the President will appoint a replacement; if the President is the accused or the complainant, the Chair of The Board of Trustees will take charge of this appointment process.

The function of the Investigator is to gather information, make a preliminary determination regarding whether a violation of this policy has or has not occurred, and if, in their judgment, sufficient evidence exists to move to disciplinary procedures, recommend to the appropriate school disciplinary body (as described below) for adjudication and final determination of appropriate sanctions or other corrective action.

The following procedures shall apply in all cases in which the formal resolution process is used.

1. After an initial investigation, the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs will oversee a live (on Zoom or in person) hearing. If the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs is accused of the violation, the President will name a replacement.
2. The School shall provide any individual suspected or accused of violating this policy with a written explanation of the suspected or alleged violations of this policy. Complainants and Respondents shall both be provided with the following in connection with the resolution of suspected or alleged violations of this policy:
 - The opportunity to speak on their own behalf or have parties speak on their behalf.
 - The opportunity to identify witnesses who can provide information about the alleged conduct at issue.
 - The opportunity to submit other evidence on their behalf.
 - The opportunity to have their party cross-examine the complainant/accused.
 - The opportunity to review any information that will be offered by the other party in support of the other party's position (to the greatest extent possible and consistent with FERPA or other applicable law).
 - The right to be informed of the outcome of the process (to the greatest extent possible and consistent with FERPA or other applicable law).
 - The opportunity to appeal the outcome of the process.
3. To help ensure a prompt and thorough investigation, complainants are asked to provide as much information as possible, such as:
 - A description of any relevant incident(s), including the date(s), location(s), and the presence of any witnesses.
 - The alleged effect of the incident(s) on the complainant's opportunity to benefit from the School's programs or activities.
 - The names of other individuals who might have been subject to the same or similar acts of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation.
 - Although it is not required, any steps the complainant has taken to try to stop the discrimination, harassment, or retaliation.
 - Any other information the complainant believes to be relevant to the alleged discrimination, harassment, or retaliation.
4. Oral and written statements shall be gathered from the parties involved in the alleged policy violation, and from others who may have pertinent information.

5. The standard used to determine whether the policy has been violated is clear and convincing.
6. In a timely manner, both the complainant and the respondent will be informed in writing of the outcome of the investigation and hearing, including whether there has been a determination that this policy has been violated. This written notice will be issued concurrently to the complainant and respondent unless the school determines in its discretion that concurrent notification would not be appropriate. If there is a finding that this policy has been violated, the school will take such action as it deems necessary to eliminate the policy violation, prevent the recurrence of the violation, and address the effects of the violation.
7. The Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs must deliver written opinion to the appropriate school body (see description below) that:
 - in their view no violation of this policy occurred or that the evidence is insufficient to determine whether or not it occurred;
 - in their view a violation of this policy occurred and that disciplinary procedures should be invoked.

The standard used to determine whether the policy has been violated is clear and convincing evidence.

If there is a finding that this policy has been violated, the School shall take such action as it deems necessary to eliminate the policy violation, prevent the recurrence of the violation, and address the effects of the violation.

- a. The appropriate school bodies are defined as follows:
 - i. Reports regarding students are submitted to the Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs and are addressed according to the Student Handbook;
 - ii. Reports regarding staff members are submitted to the Vice President for Finance and Administration and are addressed according to the Staff Handbook;
 - iii. Reports regarding faculty members are submitted to the Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs and are addressed according to the Faculty Handbook;
 - iv. As the School deems appropriate, any of these reports may go to judicatory officials and/or supervisors.
- b. If there is a finding that this policy has been violated, these bodies will take action that may include, but is not limited to:
 - i. Formal reprimand, with defined expectations for changed behavior;
 - ii. Recommending or requiring psychological assessment and/or counseling;
 - iii. Mandatory psychiatric assessment and/or treatment;
 - iv. Probationary standing, with the terms of such probation clearly defined;
 - v. No Contact Order
 - vi. Suspension
 - vii. Dismissal from the school.

8. Appeals: Normal appeals procedure as outlined in student, staff, administrative and faculty manuals and handbooks of Meadville Lombard Theological School will be followed. In matters involving allegations of discrimination or harassment (including sexual assault and sexual violence), both the

complaining party and the responding party will be afforded the right to appeal on the following bases:

- a. Procedural irregularity that affected the outcome of the matter
- b. Newly discovered evidence that could affect the outcome of the matter
- c. Title IX personnel had a conflict of interest or bias, that affected the outcome of the matter

School Discretion

The school reserves the right to interpret this policy and modify it as appropriate in the circumstances of a particular case, in its discretion.

Student Records and FERPA

The Buckley Amendment, also called the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974

(FERPA), and related federal regulations, establish guidelines protecting the privacy of student records and give a college student the right (subject to certain exceptions) to review their “educational records,” and, within forty-five (45) days of formally requesting to do so, to challenge and/or seek to amend the contents if they believe the records are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy rights. FERPA also gives students the right to consent to the disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student’s education records, except to the extent that the law authorizes disclosure without consent.

FERPA permits disclosure of educational records without a student’s knowledge or consent under certain circumstances, including:

- Directory Information (if available).
- Meadville Lombard officials.
- Other institutions of higher learning.
- Federal and State Officials.
- Accrediting Organizations.
- Appropriate officials in case of health and safety emergencies.
- State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student.
- Parents of dependents.

FERPA provides students the right to file a complaint with the Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with the Act. Written complaints should be directed to the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 600 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C., 20202-4605.

Non-Academic Student Discipline Procedures

Misbehavior relating to moral character can be described in three ways: actions contravening accepted canons and standards of scholarship, actions contravening accepted canons and standards of ministerial practice, and actions seriously disrupting the educational experience of others. Actions that contravene accepted canons and standards of scholarship are covered in the Academic Integrity Policy. Actions that contravene accepted canons and standards of professional and ministerial practice include unethical conduct violating the rights of another person or of the School may be grounds for disciplinary action by the school. Guides for this category can be found in the “Code of Professional Practice of the Unitarian Universalist Ministers’ Association,” “Ministerial Guidelines,” and the “Ministerial Fellowship Rules and Policies” of the Unitarian Universalist Association. Copies of the guidelines and policies are in the library. Students may also

request a copy from the UUA's Department of Ministry or the UU Ministers' Association or download them from their respective web sites.

Complaints relating to moral character may be brought to the attention of the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs or designee by individual students, faculty members, or other members of the Meadville Lombard community. The complaints will be investigated by the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs and/or the Director of Contextual Ministry. The Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs or designee will investigate, determine whether to proceed with the charges, and, if so, propose the appropriate sanction. Students will have the opportunity to appeal any disciplinary action. The intention of the following procedure is to resolve such issues while providing immediate assistance and confidentiality to those students involved in non-academic disciplinary measures.

The Disciplinary Proceedings at Meadville Lombard include two phases: Administrative Conduct Procedure and Hearing Process.

Administrative Conduct Procedure

1. Written Notification.
 - a. The Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs or designee will notify the student about the allegations of misconduct.
2. Investigation.
 - a. Allegations of misconduct will be investigated by the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs or designee. Evidence can include statement of charges, police reports, witness testimonies, and other relevant data and information. The Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs may then consult with outside professional resources, including legal counsel, if necessary. Otherwise, the complaint will be kept confidential with that office.
3. Meeting with Student.
 - a. The Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs or designee will summon the student to appear for the purpose of discussing the allegation. The meeting can take place face-to-face or via an online platform. The refusal of a student to accept delivery of the summons, or failure to maintain and read student emails, will not be considered good cause for failure to respond.
 - b. If a student fails to appear without good cause, the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs or designee may proceed with disciplinary action based upon other information available.
 - c. The student may wish to bring a supportive person to this meeting. The Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs or the designee may wish to include the student's Faculty Advisor. This initial meeting will attempt to clarify the specifics of the behavior of the student against whom a concern or complaint has been lodged. Ideally, this initial session will facilitate a resolution to the problem. A written summary of this resolution will be sent to the student and placed within the student's official Meadville Lombard file within seven (7) days of the resolution.
4. Review of Evidence and Interim Sanctions
 - a. The Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs or designee will review the evidence, determine whether to proceed with charges, and, if so, determine the sanction appropriate to the charges.
 - b. The student may be subject to probation, suspension, or dismissal, as decided by the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs or designee.

5. Uncontested Cases with Agreed Sanctions
 - a. In any case where the accused student elects not to dispute the facts upon which the charges are based and agrees to the sanctions the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs or designee assesses, the student may execute a written waiver of the hearing procedures and waiver of any appeals under the policy. This administrative disposition shall be final and there shall be no subsequent proceedings regarding the charges.
 - b. In those cases, in which the accused student disputes the facts upon which the charges are based, the charges shall be heard and determined by a fair and impartial Hearing Committee in accordance with Section 2.15.2, below.

Hearing Process

1. The formal hearing process is initiated by a hearing form signed by the student (forms are available in the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs' Office). The form must be completed within fifteen (15) working days of the end of the Administrative Conduct Procedure phase. The form is to be given to the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs.
2. Upon receiving the complete form, the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs shall appoint a three-person Hearing Committee. In the event that the formal complaint involves the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, the President shall assume the function of the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs within this process. Individuals implicated in the complaint cannot serve on the Hearing Committee, and the Hearing Committee shall respond to the complaint in writing within thirty (30) working days from receiving the hearing form.
3. The investigative hearing and decision-making phases of the process shall begin promptly after the signed form is received.
4. The Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs and the person charged with the misconduct are both to have an opportunity to present evidence to the charge and to respond to evidence presented by the other party. The Hearing Committee shall have the responsibility of determining what is relevant in each situation. The person charged has the opportunity to be represented.
5. An audio recording of the evidence presented and considered by the Hearing Committee is to be kept under lock in the President's Office.
6. The decision of the Hearing Committee shall be based only on evidence presented to the Hearing Committee.
7. The Hearing Committee has a variety of options available to it following its decision as to the merits of the complaint:
8. It may uphold the complaint and recommend to the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs that:
 - a. An unrecorded reprimand be given to the one charged.
 - b. The one charged be given some recommendations and/or requirements.
 - c. The appropriate body and/or individual be asked to add documents detailing (1) or (2) above to the official record of the one charged.
 - d. The Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs suggest to the appropriate body and/or individual that disciplinary action be initiated against the person charged.
 - e. The Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs initiate termination of the person charged through the established processes for that constituent group.
9. ii. It may dismiss the complaint, and:
 - a. It may, upon request of the one charged, include that dismissal in the record of the one charged.

- b. It may decide to destroy the record.
- c. It may admonish the complainant.
- d. In extreme cases, it may recommend disciplinary action against the complainant as in (i.4) above.

Grievance against Faculty or Staff

If a student's complaint is based on alleged misconduct by school employees, including faculty and staff, the relevant disciplinary procedures should be used to resolve the complaint.

Staff: Alleged misconduct by the school staff or administrators should be reported to the Vice President of Student and Academic Affairs who will review the facts. If misconduct is found, the staff member's supervisor may take corrective action in accord with applicable personnel policy.

Faculty: Alleged misconduct by faculty members should be reported to the Office of the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs who will review the facts. If misconduct is found, the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs may take corrective action in accord with applicable faculty policy.

Whistle Blower Policy

This policy applies to all Meadville Lombard Theological School employees and students including faculty and staff as well as part time, temporary, contract and student employees.

Purpose

Meadville Lombard Theological School is committed to the highest possible standards of ethical, moral, and legal business conduct. In line with this commitment and Meadville Lombard's commitment to open communication, this policy aims to provide an avenue for employees and students to raise concerns and reassurance that they will be protected from reprisals or victimization for whistle blowing in good faith.

Policy

The whistle-blowing policy is intended to cover concerns over actions that could have an impact on Meadville Lombard Theological School. Such actions include those that:

- Are unlawful;
- May lead to incorrect financial reporting;
- Are not in line with School policy; or
- Otherwise amount to serious improper conduct.

Meadville Lombard Theological School will not make, adopt, or enforce any rule, regulation or policy preventing an employee or student from disclosing information to a government or law enforcement agency if the employee or student has reasonable cause to believe that the information discloses a violation of a municipal, State, or federal law, rule or regulation.

Safeguards

Harassment or Victimization

Meadville Lombard Theological School will not retaliate against a student for disclosing information to a government or law enforcement agency where the student has reasonable cause to believe that the information discloses a violation to a municipal, State, or federal law, rule; or regulation. In addition, Meadville Lombard Theological School will not retaliate against a student for refusing to participate in an activity that would result in a violation of a municipal, State, or federal law, rule, or regulation.

Students are protected against retaliation for, in good faith, filing, testifying, assisting, or participating in any manner in any investigation, proceeding or hearing conducted by Meadville Lombard Theological School and/or a federal or state enforcement agency.

This policy also prohibits retaliation against students connected to an investigation.

Students who have a reasonable and good faith belief that a policy or practice of Meadville Lombard Theological School violates legal standards, and based on that belief opposes, implicitly (e.g., through conduct) or explicitly, that policy or practice, are protected against retaliation, even where Meadville Lombard was acting lawfully. In addition, Meadville Lombard prohibits retaliation against anyone who, in good faith, reports a perceived violation of any Meadville Lombard policy or in good faith cooperates with any investigation of such a claim.

Individuals may state their opposition to a specific practice or activity that they believe constitutes an unlawful action(s). Such opposition must be based on reasonable and good faith belief. A person claiming retaliation does not necessarily need to be the person engaged in the opposition. Individuals may participate in an investigation, proceeding, hearing, or litigation without fear of retaliation.

Protected Activity

Protected Activity includes, but is not limited to:

- Initiating an internal complaint or report of discrimination or harassment;
- Filing a claim of discrimination;
- Requesting an accommodation for a disability;
- Filing a Workers' Compensation claim following a work-related injury;
- Filing a safety or environmental related complaint with state and/ or federal oversight agencies.
- Reporting perceived illegal acts.

Confidentiality

Every effort will be made to protect the complainant's identity consistent with the need to investigate the complainant's allegations fully and fairly.

Procedures

Timing

The earlier a concern is expressed, the easier it is to take appropriate action.

Evidence

Although the student is not expected to prove the truth of an allegation, the student needs to demonstrate to the person contacted that there are sufficient grounds for concern.

Reporting Violations

Any employee or student who in good faith believes that there is reportable activity taking place or that they or any other students are being subjected to retaliation in violation of this policy or any other Meadville Lombard policy or law is urged to report the situation to the Vice President, Finance and Administration or another member of the Meadville Lombard Theological School Management Team as soon as possible.

Reports will be promptly and objectively investigated in accordance with Meadville Lombard's investigation procedures. If a complaint is substantiated, appropriate disciplinary action, up to and

including termination, will be taken against those who have engaged in such behaviors, as Meadville Lombard deems appropriate in its sole discretion.

Co-workers are legally prohibited from engaging in retaliation against other employees and will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination, for such conduct.

How a Complaint Will Be Handled

Action taken will depend on the nature of the concern. The Leadership Team at Meadville Lombard Theological School will receive a report on each complaint and a follow up report on actions taken, except when the complaint involves a specific member the Leadership Team, the details of the complaint will not be shared with that member during the initial investigation.

Initial Inquiries

Initial inquiries will be made to determine whether an investigation is appropriate, and the form that it should take. Some concerns may be resolved by agreed action without the need for investigation.

Report to Complainant

Subject to legal constraints as well as confidentiality and privacy concerns, the complainant will receive information about the outcome of any investigations. The complainant will be given the opportunity to receive follow up information regarding their concerns promptly after submitting the complaint including:

- Acknowledging that the concern was received;
- Indicating how the matter will be dealt with;
- Indicating whether initial inquiries have been made;
- Indicating whether further investigations will follow, and if not, why not.

All legitimate concerns will be respected and investigated. However, given the fact that the investigation of concerns will vary depending upon their nature, while an estimate may be provided, no specific timeline can be set.

If, at the conclusion of the investigation, the complainant remains dissatisfied, the complainant should report his/her concern to the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

Further Information

The amount of contact between the complainant and the body investigating the concern will depend on the nature of the issue and the clarity of information provided. Further information may be sought from the complainant.

Sanctions

The following sanctions may be assessed singularly, or in any combination, by the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs or designee and/or by the Hearing Committee, as applicable, in accordance with these procedures:

- A written warning that further violations may result in a more severe penalty.
- Disciplinary probation. The student is not eligible to register until a plan of action is developed.
- Reimbursement for damage to, or misappropriation of, Meadville Lombard's property.
- Suspension of rights and privileges, including participation in extracurricular activities.
- Suspension from Meadville Lombard for a specified period of time.
- Expulsion (permanent separation from Meadville Lombard) and bar against readmission.
- Other sanction as deemed appropriate under the circumstances.

Appeal Policy

If a student is assigned a disciplinary action after the hearing, the student has the right to appeal to the President based on the following criteria:

- a. New evidence is available that was not submitted at the Administrative Conduct Procedure phase or the Hearing Process.
- b. The conduct process as described above was not followed.

The student has seven (7) calendar days from the delivery of the decision from the Hearing Committee to file an appeal. Appeal requests may be denied in cases not having sufficient grounds in one or more of these areas.

After reviewing the appeal, and depending upon the demonstrated grounds for appeal, the President may take any of the following actions: affirm the charge, impose greater sanctions, or impose lesser sanctions.

Alcohol and Drug Policy

Meadville Lombard recognizes both alcohol and drug abuse as potential health, safety, and security problems. The School expects everyone to assist in maintaining an environment free from drug and alcohol abuse. Meadville Lombard prohibits all students and employees from the unlawful manufacture, possession, use, distribution, sale, or purchase of alcohol, recreational cannabis, and drugs on its premises, or as part of any School activity, and prohibits work performed under the influence of alcohol, recreational cannabis, or illicit drugs. Meadville Lombard allows moderate consumption and/or possession of alcohol on School premises at approved functions (e.g., receptions) by those legally permitted to consume or distribute alcohol. Such functions must comply with the following guidelines:

- At all events at which alcoholic beverages are available, nonalcoholic beverages and snacks will be made available in quantity and variety.
- At a school-sponsored meal where alcohol is available at the beginning of the gathering, it will not be replenished throughout the duration of the gathering.

All members of the Meadville Lombard community are responsible for being fully aware of the requirements of federal and Illinois statutes and Chicago ordinances concerning the consumption, possession, and sale of alcohol, recreational cannabis, and other drugs. The School expects each member of the community to be responsible for their own conduct, and the consequences of that conduct. Various federal and state laws prohibit the possession, distribution, and use of controlled substances, unless in compliance with licensing requirements or a doctor's prescription. Moreover, Illinois law prohibits the consumption and possession of alcohol and/or recreational cannabis by persons under the age of 21, and the supplying of alcohol and/or recreational cannabis to any person under the age of 21. Additionally, Illinois law prohibits the sale of alcoholic beverages or recreational cannabis except by those licensed to sell such items.

Finally, Illinois law and city ordinances also prohibit public intoxication, operation of a vehicle or bicycle under the influence of alcohol, recreational cannabis, or other intoxicants, and consumption of alcohol in a public place. Violation of these laws or other laws relating to drugs and alcohol may result in probation, fines, imprisonment, and a permanent criminal record.

Sanctions Pertaining to Alcohol and Drug Use

Besides legal consequences, the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol, and any violation of the School Alcohol and Drug Policy by a student, will result in appropriate discipline under the student disciplinary procedures outlined in [Non-Academic Student Disciplinary Procedures](#). Sanctions include but are not limited to: discharge from student employment,

probation, suspension, or expulsion from the School. The School retains full and final discretion on whether, when, and under what conditions a student may be reinstated or reemployed after an instance of alcohol abuse and/or improper drug use. Student organizations violating this policy are also subject to sanctions, including—but not limited to—probation and removal of recognized student organization status. The particular sanction in a given case will depend on such factors as the nature of the individual or organization and may include the successful completion of an approved rehabilitation or chemical dependency program.

In order for Meadville Lombard to comply with federal law, student employees who are convicted for any violation of any criminal drug statute (including misdemeanors) for a violation occurring either on Meadville Lombard property or during working time must notify the Vice President of Finance and Administration within five (5) days of the date of conviction. A conviction includes any plea or finding of guilty, any plea of nolo contendere (no contest), and/or any imposition of a fine, jail sentence, or other penalty. Pursuant to federal law, if the convicted employee is working on a project funded through federal grant or contract, the School is required to notify the relevant federal contracting or grant agency within ten (10) days of receiving such notice of conviction.

Counseling, Treatment, and Referral

Meadville Lombard, as a concerned community, recognizes that in our society and our community there exist numerous illnesses, among which are alcoholism and other chemical dependencies. It is Meadville Lombard's policy to encourage the earliest possible identification, intervention, and appropriate aid for anyone suffering from these harmful dependencies. Such illnesses manifest in the impairment of one's bodily, mental, social, and spiritual capacities and—unless arrested and treated—can lead to irreparable damage. Extensive experience indicates that persons afflicted with these illnesses are usually blind to developing symptoms in themselves and are rarely capable of effective self-help. Hence, the Meadville Lombard community recognizes the need to develop a procedure to facilitate proper education, intervention, diagnosis, treatment, and recovery.

Procedure

The following procedure is designed to serve as a resource for students seeking aid in recovery:

1. Any student who becomes aware of their own need, or knows someone who suffers from these illnesses, is encouraged to seek advice and/or assistance from the Senior Director of Contextual Ministry; all inquiries are kept confidential.
2. The Senior Director Contextual Ministry, along with the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, will work to obtain a consultant/expert in the area, if needed, to assess the dependency, evaluate its seriousness to the individual, and provide appropriate recommendations/referrals for help.
3. Anyone who is referred, or who seeks assistance, may become a part of the evaluative procedure in determining what course of action is best suited for that individual.
4. Every effort will be made by the School to cooperate with any student undergoing treatment and to minimize disruption of studies during treatment. To further guarantee confidentiality, only the Senior Director of Contextual Ministry and the President (if necessary) will know the reasons for any related leave granted.

The primary objective of this policy is one of concern, formulated in the hope of relieving pain and suffering, as well as restoring the individual to health, dignity, and a productive, rewarding involvement in their school, ministry, and/or community.

International Formation

For more than 130 years, Meadville Lombard Theological School has educated religious leaders under the Unitarian Universalist values of compassion, equality, and justice. The international formation office aims to take this mission to a global audience. By welcoming international students to the School's graduate programs, offering short-term programs for international religious leaders, and creating study abroad opportunities for students enrolled in our Master degrees, Meadville Lombard Theological School is looking to equip ministers and lay leaders with the skills necessary for leading in today's globalized world.

Degree-Seeking International Students

If you are an international student taking graduate level classes towards degree completion at MLTS you must demonstrate a valid immigration status and maintain it during the time you are enrolled at MLTS.

After being accepted in the program, you must obtain a valid U.S Visa through following these steps:

1. Meet with the Meadville Registrar and Director of Assistant Financial Aid to discuss the visa process and review your yearly cost of attendance.
2. Complete the I-20 application form on Populi. Be certain to attach all the required documents, including:
 - a. A copy of your passport
 - b. Confirmation of financial resources (bank statements from you or your sponsor and/or scholarship letter)
3. MLTS will mail the original I-20 form that you will need in order to apply for your F1 visa.
4. Pay the SEVIS fee. You will need to pay the SEVIS fee at least 3 days before your visa interview.
5. Apply for and receive an F1 student visa. The procedure to apply for the F1 visa varies from country to country. For more information, please visit the website of the American Embassy in your country.
6. International students will always be required to enter the United States with their student visa (F1) and I-20 when traveling to the United States to take classes at Meadville Lombard. If you enter with a different visa, you will not be allowed to attend classes and you will be automatically unenrolled from the classes you are registered for.

Upon arrival at Meadville Lombard, international students need to report to the Registrar for the required orientation. Be sure to do this before (or on) the first day of classes. This meeting will take approximately 30 minutes and will include an explanation of your rights and responsibilities as an International Student. Please bring with you:

- A copy of your Visa
- A copy of your I-94
- Your I-20

At the end of the week, MLTS will give you back your I-20 with an updated signature. Every time you enter the United States you will need to get a new signature. To maintain your F1 visa you have to:

- Be enrolled full-time for every semester but summer semester. Full-time status is equal to 9 credits per semester.
- You cannot be outside the country in which the School is located for more than 5 months. If you leave the United States for more than 5 months, you will need to apply again for an F1 visa. You will need to request a new I-20 and follow the procedure explained above.

Health Insurance:

You must have health insurance valid in the United States to attend classes at Meadville Lombard.

Please check with your local provider about international coverage.

You will need to provide proof of health insurance coverage that is valid in the United States.

Housing:

Students are responsible for making their own housing arrangements. Please visit the MLTS website for information about housing around campus.

Non-degree Seeking International Scholar

Short-term International Programs:

Visa Requirements:

If you are a participant in a short-term international program such as the U/U Global Conference and the Global Fellowship for Multifaith and Multicultural Engagement, then you are not taking classes for credit and will stay in the United States for less than 90 days. Thus, you are not required to have a student visa.

Students are responsible for obtaining a B1 visa in their home country. For more information about how to obtain a non-immigrant visa, please visit the website of the American Embassy in your country.

Health Insurance:

You must have a health insurance valid in the United States in order to attend classes at Meadville Lombard. Please check with your local provider about international coverage.

You will need to provide proof of health insurance coverage that is valid in the United States to the Registrar.

International Students Enrolled as At-Large Students to Audit Classes:

Visa Requirements:

As an international student who is not enrolled full time at Meadville Lombard you can only audit classes. Therefore, you are not required to have a student visa. Students are responsible for obtaining a B1 visa in their home country. For more information about how to obtain a non-immigrant visa, please visit the website of the American Embassy in your country.

Health Insurance:

You must have health insurance valid in the United States to attend classes at Meadville Lombard. Please check with your local provider about international coverage.

You will need to provide proof of health insurance coverage that is valid in the United States to the Registrar.

Program Commitments

Participants in the international programs commit to:

- Complete class assignments and reading material
- Travel to the United States during the time stipulated in the call for applications
- Actively participate in online portion of the programs
- Submit all required papers
- Submit a final evaluation of the program
- Follow the policies that are contained in this Student Handbook

Other Activities

As part of the programs, International scholars will attend all activities related with the program and, upon request, will speak at school events, donor events, or religious services.

International Immersion Experience:

In order to apply for MLTS International Immersion Experience, students must be in good academic standing and receive approval from their Academic Advisor. Information, dates, and application forms are distributed through the school's communication channel or can be obtained at the International Formation Office. To travel, awardees must have a passport and a valid visa. They must complete the pre-travel reading and reflections, as well as submit a final reflection one month after the program finalizes. Students must also complete any other requirements specified in the scholarship. Awardees must become familiar with and follow the legal rules of the host country and the host institution.

Academic Policy and Procedures

Educational Goals

The Master of Divinity degree curriculum is designed to challenge and support students in an ongoing process of developing their individual and unique gifts for service in the liberal religious community. It provides a foundation of basic preparation for ministry centered in the following values:

Liberal religious heritage: The ability of students to read themselves deeply, passionately, and critically into the story of liberal religion, especially Unitarian Universalism, as part of the larger human story.

Excellence in ministerial practices: The ability to demonstrate a significant understanding of, and progress in, the basic arts and skills of ministry. This includes leadership and administrative skills, worship leadership, religious education, preaching, pastoral care, and prophetic ministry in the larger community.

Intellectual capacities: The capacities that will open students to the fields of intellectual discourse, allowing them to make significant contributions to the cause of liberal religion.

Moral vision grounded in an engagement with a diverse world: A deep, moral engagement with the world, celebrating its rich diversity, and confronting its problems of oppression, injustice, poverty, and environmental degradation.

Personal readiness: Personal self-awareness, resilience, humor, good judgment, ethical and moral integrity, a well-tested seriousness of intent, and the ability to balance personal needs with the needs of ministry.

Spiritual depth: A spiritual depth united with disciplines that aim to preserve and increase that depth as students encounter the challenges and distractions of a ministerial life.

Interdependence: Ability to exercise collaborative leadership of the church understood as a covenant community learning institution and agent of broader cultural transformation.

Degree Programs

Meadville Lombard offers the following degree programs:

The Master of Divinity

This degree program prepares students for religious leadership in congregations, or in any place that a student may choose to serve. Graduates of this degree program hold positions as ordained ministers in congregations, as leaders of community or not-for profit organizations, and as chaplains in hospitals, correctional facilities, and hospice centers.

Master of Arts in Leadership Studies (MALS)

The Master of Arts in Leadership Studies (MALS) provides advanced work for lay leaders, community organizers, social justice activists and ministerial students in the theology, theory and practice of leadership and social change.

The MALS degree is designed to develop liberal religious leadership for congregational and community life; it is grounded in a clear sense of the current challenges leaders face amidst our contemporary pluralistic, multifaith, cross-cultural world.

The Master of Divinity/Master of Arts in Leadership Studies Dual Degree Program

This dual degree program allows students to complete the three-year Master of Divinity Program, while simultaneously completing most of the coursework for a second, experiential-based Master of Arts in Leadership Studies (MALS). In the dual degree program, students will complete an additional year comprised of an immersion internship, plus course work.

The Master of Arts in Religion

This degree stresses opportunities for personal discernment and in-depth study in specific areas of concentration.

Core Curriculum Requirements

Master of Divinity

Contextual Learning Model

Under the Contextual Learning Model, the Master of Divinity degree program consists of ninety (90) units anchored by and organized around three years of Signature Courses: Cultural Grounding and Theological Formation (Fall Year 1), Social Engagement (Spring Year 1), Vocational Studies (Year 2), and Leadership Studies (Year 3). The Signature Courses are multi-unit, interdisciplinary courses that integrate practical fieldwork and seminar learning. In addition to the Signature Courses, students will meet their total unit requirements by taking one unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (for which they will receive six (6) units of academic credit) and a combination of required and elective courses.

The Year 1 Fall and Spring Signature Courses can be taken in separate academic years, but all students (part-time and full-time) will be required to complete the Year 2 and Year 3 Signature Course during one academic year.

Full-time students can plan on completing the MDiv degree in three years, and the dual MDiv/Master of Arts in Leadership Studies in four years. For part-time students, it may take as long as six years to complete the MDiv program, and seven years to complete the dual degree program.

Degree Requirements

Below is a chart outlining the core requirements for the Master of Divinity degree. Successful completion of 90 units of credit (1 full course = 3 units of credit) are required: 30 credits from the

Signature Courses; 6 credits from Clinical Pastoral Education (one unit as measured by the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education); 33 units of credit for required intensive academic coursework; 21 units of credit of intensive elective coursework.

MDiv Degree Requirements			
Required Intensive Courses (33 credits)		Signature Courses, Electives, and CPE (57 credits)	
Title	Credits	Signature Courses	Credits
Introduction to Pastoral Ministry	3	Cultural Grounding and Theological Formation	3
Constructive Theology	3	Social Engagement (includes Community Site)	3
Topics in Worship and Liturgy	3	Vocational Studies: Formation	3
Preaching as if You Mean It	3	Vocational Studies: Communities	3
Faith Formation in a Changing World	3	Year 2 Internship (year-long)	6
Global Religions	3	Leadership Studies: Formation	3
Hebrew Scriptures	3	Leadership Studies: Administration	3
New Testament	3	Year 3 Internship (year-long)	6
Healthy Boundaries, Healthy Ministry	3	Total	30
Introduction to Ethics: Themes & Topics	3		
History of Global Christianity	3	Clinical Pastoral Education	6
Total Credits	33	Electives (7 courses)*	21

* To meet MFC Credentialing requirements, UU students should take the following as two of their electives:
 Unitarian Universalist History and Polity
 Tools for Parish and Non-Profit Administration

Students matriculated into the MDiv degree program are allowed to transfer up to twenty-seven (27) credits from prior graduate work, with approval from the faculty. Such transfer credit is subject to approval in compliance with the [transfer credit policy](#). Once students matriculate, they may take up to nine (9) credits outside of Meadville Lombard Theological School, at another accredited graduate institution. Students may take as many as twelve (12) credits at any of the Association of Chicago Theological School member schools.

Concentrations

Chaplaincy

The MDiv with a Concentration in Chaplaincy provides preparation for those seeking to serve in chaplaincy roles in a variety of settings, including medical, military, prison, and university contexts, and to bring chaplaincy best practices to bear as faith leaders in congregational and community settings. Grounded in religious literacy and intercultural competency, the concentration prepares students to offer spiritual care in times of need and to all who seek comfort and support.

To receive a Concentration in Chaplaincy, a student must complete Introduction to Chaplaincy, plus three elective courses in the area of chaplaincy.

To pursue board certified chaplaincy, students should also consult with the appropriate certifying body – additional educational requirements will apply.

Faith Formation Pedagogy

The MDiv with a Concentration in Faith Formation Pedagogy prepares students to hold faith formation leadership roles in a congregational and/or community setting, to direct a faith formation curriculum as part of a congregational or community leadership team, or to provide faith formation leadership at a denominational level. Building upon the learning experience and content of the Signature Courses, this concentration develops principles of engaged/transformative pedagogy. In addition, this concentration builds on religious literacy and intercultural competency and in the

formational growth and community leaderships skill, in preparing students to lead faith-based organizations into commitments of being socially inclusive, adaptive, and strategic change communities.

To receive a Concentration in Faith Formation Pedagogy, a student must complete three elective courses in the area of faith formation and religious education.

Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE)

In addition to coursework, all MDiv students must complete one unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) for details about CPE, see [section on Clinical Pastoral Education](#) in this handbook or contact the Senior Director of Contextual Ministry. Students are awarded six (6) academic credits for completing one unit of CPE.

Students must complete Introduction to Pastoral Ministry before they begin CPE.

3-year Required Course Plan

To plan their course of study, students can consult a suggested 3-Year Course Plan, as outlined in [Appendix 3](#). This plan can support full-time students in selecting the courses that they need to fulfill degree programming in a timely fashion. Should students have questions about the 3-Year Course Plan, they should consult their advisor. For questions related to CPE, please contact the Senior Director of Contextual Ministry.

UUA Credentialing Requirements

In order to be granted Ministerial Fellowship with the UUA Master of Divinity, students need to prepare for credentialing throughout their studies, beginning even before they enter the degree program. Meadville Lombard works closely with its students to ensure they have the opportunity to meet the requirements of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee (MFC) credentialing process. MFC guidelines are subject to change, and so it is important that students remain on top of the current guidelines. For the most current and complete information on UUA requirements for UU Fellowship, please see the UUA website (<http://www.uua.org/>). Among the items that may be found there are "The Requirements for Ministerial Fellowship with the Unitarian Universalist Association" handbook, forms, and scholarship information.

Master of Arts in Leadership Studies (MALS)

Master of Arts in Leadership Studies (MALS) MALS is designed for students who seek to effect change by addressing the social and spiritual needs of people and organizations outside the direct care of congregations. The course of study can be completed in 18 months and combines cohort learning, field work, and required and elective intensive courses. The purpose of the degree is to prepare students to lead across the intercultural, multifaith and multiracial contexts of diverse organizational settings. In consultation with their Academic Advisors, and on the basis of their internship site and course selection, students in the stand-alone MALS may elect a pathway if they wish. Options include Lay Ministry, Religious Education, and Humanism.

Educational Goals:

- Develop leadership skills for a pluralistic, multifaith, cross-cultural world.
- Develop competency in liberal religious history, theology, and ethics
- Demonstrate spiritual discernment through course work, site supervision, and a project.
- Utilize the insights of leadership and organizational theory in diverse settings.
- Participate in discourse with diverse constituencies of the Meadville Lombard community

Degree requirements:

Successful completion of 36 units of credit (1 full course = 3 units of credit) are required. Of the 36 credits, students will receive 3 units of credit for Cultural Grounding and Theological Formation, 3 units of credit for Social Engagement, 6 units of credit for a year-long internship, and 24 units of credit for required and elective.

REQUIRED COURSES FOR MALS

- Field Work: MALS students must complete the Signature course sequence in their first year. This includes Cultural Grounding and Theological Formation (Fall, 3 credits) and Social Engagement (Spring, 3 credits). In addition, MALS students will complete a year-long internship during their second and third semesters (6 credits).
- Required Courses: All MALS students must complete three additional required courses:
 - Tools for Parish and Nonprofit Administration (3 credits)
 - Healthy Boundaries, Healthy Ministry (3 credits)
 - Pedagogy for Social Change (3 credits)
- Electives: The remaining coursework consists of 15 credits (5 courses) of elective coursework.
- Pathway Option: Students can use 3 of the 5 elective courses (9 credits) to focus their studies via a pathway. Pathway options include Lay Ministry, Religious Education, and Humanism, in partnership with the American Humanist Association.

MALS Degree Requirements	
Cultural Grounding and Theological Formation	Credits
Social Engagement	3
Internship (year-long)	6
Required Intensive Coursework	
Tools for Parish and Nonprofit Administration	3
Healthy Boundaries, Healthy Ministry	3
Pedagogy for Social Change	3
Electives	15
1 <i>Optional: Concentration elective</i>	
2 <i>Optional: Concentration elective</i>	
3 <i>Optional: Concentration elective</i>	
4	
5	
Total Credits	36
Concentrations available in Lay Ministry, Religious Education, and Humanism.	

Master of Divinity/Master of Leadership Studies Dual Degree

The dual-degree MALS is for MDiv students who would like to supplement their MDiv with an additional internship and coursework. The dual-degree MALS is completed in a single academic year after the student has completed all requirements for the MDiv.

Application to the Dual Degree Program

Students currently enrolled in the Master of Divinity degree program may apply to be considered for the Master of Arts in Leadership Studies dual degree program at any time before their graduation from the Master of Divinity degree program. Request a meeting with your Academic Advisor to consider ideas for the internship component of the degree and to determine what academic courses are still required for the completion of the degree.

To be considered for institutional aid, such as scholarships and tuition reduction, you must request admission by the Financial Aid Priority Deadlines (January 15 and February 15) of your final year in the MDiv degree program. Students seeking to complete the supervised internship component of the MALS in the context of a congregation should follow the guidelines posted on the UUA's website and pay close attention to those deadlines.

Current students in the MALS degree program who wish to enter the Dual MDiv/MALS Degree program are advised to consult with their Academic Advisor about additional requirements of entering the MDiv program.

Dual MDiv/MALS Degree Requirements

In addition to the completion of the requirements for the MDiv Program, a student wishing to be awarded the Dual MDiv/MALS degree must complete the following:

Internship – 6 credits

As part of the Dual degree program the student must complete a year-long internship.

Coursework – 12 credit hours

- Tools for Parish and Nonprofit Administration (3 credits)
- Elective courses (9 credits)

Dual degree students seeking a pathway need to complete three electives in their pathway either as part of the MDiv or as elective coursework in the MALS. Students who took Tools for Parish & Non-Profit Administration in the MDiv can meet that requirement for the MALS with an additional elective course.

Requests to be relieved of MALS requirements

On occasion, students are admitted into the Master of Divinity degree program with a qualification that they complete the dual degree program. Student may make a formal request to the faculty to be relieved of this requirement during their Congregational Studies or Leadership Studies years. The procedure for making such a request is as follows

1. Contact your Academic Advisor in writing to request to be relieved of the requirement to complete the dual degree. This request should include:
 - a. A copy of the admissions decision which stipulates the requirement (you may request a copy of this letter from the Registrar if you cannot locate your original copy).
 - b. A statement as to why you believe the Master of Divinity degree is sufficient for your formation.
2. The Faculty Advisor will bring the request to the faculty to review the request and determine the disposition as follows:
 - a. Approved (no further action required);
 - b. Deferred (may require further action or documentation from either the Teaching Pastor or Signature Course faculty; or the faculty may think the request is premature and request that you re-petition during the Leadership Studies Signature Course); or
 - c. Denied (faculty believes that the dual degree continues to be the best formation route).
3. Faculty will communicate the decision to the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, who will then contact you with the decision via Meadville email.

Master of Arts in Religion

A total of forty-eight (48) credits are required for the MAR degree. Nine (9) credits are granted for a thesis written in consultation with an Academic Advisor and three (3) credits are awarded for Academic Research and Public Theological Writing. Eighteen (18) credit hours will be taken in required disciplines: Ethics/Theology, Faith Formation, (Religious Education),

and the Historical Context of Ministry. Of the remaining eighteen (18) elective credit hours, students may choose to complete a twelve (12) credit concentration in the area of Theology/Ethics, Faith Formation, or Historical Context of Ministry. Student may transfer up to 6 credits from another institution. Such transfer credit is subject to approval in compliance with the [transfer credit policy](#).

MAR Thesis

All MAR Student are required to submit a thesis in support of completion of their Master of Religion Degree. All submitted theses should follow the Thesis Submission Guidelines, [Appendix 2](#) of this handbook.

MAR Degree Requirements	
Intensive Coursework (in the following subject matter) Theology/Ethics Religious Education Historical Context of Ministry Religion and the Arts Ministry and the Church Cultural Context of Ministry	Credits 24
Concentration (in one of the following areas of study): Theology/Ethics Religious Education Historical Context of Ministry	12
Thesis Academic Research and Public Theological Writing	9 3
Total Credits	48

General Academic Policies (applicable to all degree programs)

Continuous Enrollment

Students who do not enrolled in classes without taking an official Leave of Absence will be considered to have withdrawn from the school after a period of one year.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

Responsibilities of Community Members:

MLTS is an academic community whose most fundamental purpose is the pursuit of knowledge. High principles of academic integrity are essential to the function and continued growth of the community. Students and faculty are responsible for adhering to the principles of the Academic Integrity Policy, and MLTS will not tolerate any abuse of its stipulations. Students who engage in any of the prohibited actions below may be subject to charges under this Academic Integrity Policy.

Those who violate these standards should expect to be sanctioned up to and including dismissal from MLTS.

Every member of the MLTS academic community is responsible for upholding the standards of professionalism and ethics declared in this Policy. Members of the community are expected to

promptly report to the VP of Academic Affairs any situations or circumstances they believe constitute violations of this Academic Integrity Policy. If a student is unsure whether her or his actions might constitute a violation of academic integrity, they have the responsibility to counsel with the instructor in advance about any ambiguities.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the use of any outside source in work submitted for evaluation and grading, without proper acknowledgment. “Outside source” means any work, published or unpublished, by any person other than the student. “Outside sources” include but are not limited to: books, articles, websites, lectures, sermons, videos, and other online sources. Plagiarism is an extremely serious offense toward the scholarly community, one that can result in an academic sanction. Ordinarily, instances of plagiarism are discovered by the faculty member who has the authority to confront a student, assess the gravity of the instance, and determine the academic consequences within the course in question, up to and including the assignment of a failing grade. The faculty member must also report all instances of plagiarism to the VP of Academic Affairs, providing the documentation of the alleged plagiarism, and a description of the measures taken by the faculty member, including grade implications. General requirements for the proper acknowledgment of sources of academic work are as follows.

Unattributed Quotations

Each quotation, regardless of length, must be placed in quotation marks or clearly indented beyond the regular margin. Each quotation must be accompanied, either within the text or in a footnote, by a precise indication of the source. Any sentence or phrase that is not the original work of the student must be acknowledged.

Unattributed Paraphrasing

Any material that is paraphrased or summarized must also be specifically noted in a footnote or in the text and the source acknowledged. A thorough rewording or rearrangement of an author’s text does not relieve one of this responsibility. Occasionally, a student maintains that they have read a source long before they wrote a paper and has unwittingly duplicated some of its phrases or ideas. This is not a valid excuse. The student is responsible for taking adequate notes so that debts of phrasing may be acknowledged.

Borrowed Ideas and Facts

Any ideas or facts that are borrowed should be specifically acknowledged in a footnote or in the text, even if the idea or fact has been further elaborated by the student. Occasionally, a student in preparing an essay has consulted an essay or body of notes on a similar subject by another student. If the student has done so, they must state the fact and clearly indicate the nature and extent of their obligation. The name and class of the author of an essay or notes that are consulted should be given, and the student should be prepared to show the work consulted to the instructor, if requested to do so. Some ideas, facts, formulas, and other kinds of information that are widely known and considered to be in the “public domain” of common knowledge do not always require citation. The criteria for common knowledge vary among disciplines; students in doubt should consult a faculty member.

Unauthorized Multiple Submission

Under certain conditions, the student may be permitted to rewrite an earlier work or to satisfy two academic requirements by producing a single piece of work more extensive than that which would

satisfy either requirement on its own. Failure to gain prior permission from the instructors to do so constitutes a breach of academic integrity.

False Citation

False citation is deliberately attributing materials to an improper source or citing a source from which the material was not, in fact, derived.

False Submission

False submission is claiming as one's own work done by someone else, with or without that person's knowledge.

Student's Defense

The only adequate defense for a student accused of an academic integrity violation is that the work in question does not, in fact, constitute a violation. Neither the defense that the student was ignorant of the regulations concerning academic violations nor the defense that the student was under pressure at the time the violation was committed is considered an adequate defense.

Seriousness of the Offense

Academic infractions are always considered a serious matter but will be considered especially serious if: (1) The student has submitted a paper prepared by another person or agency. (2) The student has on record a previous conviction for another serious violation. (3) The infraction includes the theft of another student's work—even if the paper or assignment is returned after use, or consulted without being removed from the other student's room or from a public or private room or from an electronic online location such as a web site where work has been placed.

Penalties

Breaches of these rules shall be handled according to the procedures outlined in the Student Handbook under the section on [Satisfactory Academic Progress](#). If the faculty, under the leadership of the VP of Academic and Student Affairs, concludes that the violation of this policy requires action beyond the scope of the individual faculty member in whose class the violation occurred, the penalty for the student will normally be one year's suspension or dismissal from the School. Students suspended or dismissed for violations of the Academic Integrity Policy may request that Meadville Lombard reconsider its action by submitting, in writing, an appeal to the President of the school explaining any extenuating circumstances previously unavailable, which would warrant a change in the academic action. The student's written request for reconsideration must be received by the President within seven (7) days of the student's notification of suspension or dismissal. The President will review the written appeal and the supporting information of the previous decision. The decision of the President is final.

Credits

Meadville Lombard assigns three (3) units of credit to intensive courses that meet for 37.5 class hours. Our credit requirements are as follows:

- Ninety (90) units are required for the MDiv degree
- Thirty-six (36) units are required for the MALS degree.
- Forty-eight (48) units are required for the MAR degree.
- One hundred-eight (108) units are required for the Dual MDiv/MALS degree

Grades

Grades are assigned by the faculty at the end of the semester. A, B, C, D, and P are passing grades. The number values of grades toward a student's grade point average are as follows:

A = 4.0	A- = 3.67
B+ = 3.33	B = 3.0
C+ = 2.33	C = 2.0
D+ = 1.33	D = 1.0
F = Failing; Non-Credit	
P = Pass	

AU = Audit; non-credit

W = Withdrawn Without penalty; non-credit

I = Incomplete; non-credit unless changed to a letter grade

- A Thorough mastery of the material, critical use of sources, exceptional creativity, constructive imagination, and outstanding global focus and form of work.
- A- Exceptional graduate-level attainment, with conspicuous excellence in most respects, but not uniformly so.
- B+ Superior level of attainment, marked by consistently good work, advanced understanding of the material, clear logic, circumspect judgments, originality, and strong global focus.
- B Good work, with general indication of constructive ability in application.
- B- Satisfactory achievement, with assignments completed accurately and on time, but without significant evidence of excellence or distinction.
- C+ Adequate attainment with some ability to use knowledge of the course and meeting minimal expectations.
- C Attainment below minimal standards with less than adequate performance
- D Serious inadequacies in preparation, logic, information, and use of sources.
- F Work is unacceptable and fails to meet requirements

Grade Averages

A student matriculated for a degree must maintain an average at or above a "B" (or 3.0 grade point average) in the academic program. A student may repeat a failed course but cannot receive Institutional Tuition Reduction for the repeated course. A student's failure to achieve a "B" (3.0 GPA) average by the end of the first year will result in probation. A "B" (3.0 GPA) average must be achieved by the end of the second year of study, or enrollment may be suspended or terminated.

Policy for "P" (Pass) Grade

Each professor will designate whether they will offer the class for a letter grade or Pass/Fail. If they do not designate on their syllabus what the grading requirements are, the default will be a letter

grade. A student wishing for Pass/Fail grading in such a class must petition the professor for approval to receive such a grade by the posted drop/add date. Students may take no more than half (50%) of their credits for a given degree Pass/Fail.

A grade of Pass will not impact a student's cumulative GPA. A failing grade in a Pass/Fail course will have the same impact on the GPA as a failing grade in a graded course. In order for a student to receive a grade of Pass in a Pass/Fail course, the student must receive a point percentage of at least 75% in course assignments.

Registration Procedures

Students are required to register for classes online (see the following section for instructions).

Under certain circumstances, a student may need to register directly with the Registrar; this can be done via email (from Meadville.edu accounts only).

Online Registration using Populi

- To register for courses, go to your **Profile** and click the **Registration** tab. Courses you are currently registered for will be listed under the **My Courses** header.
- To register for a course section, find it in the Available Courses table and click the  in either the **Enroll** or **Audit** column next to it. The course will appear under My Courses.
- As you select courses, those remaining in the Available Courses section will update their information in relation to your selections.
- If you register for a course section, the "enroll" and "audit" buttons for the other sections of that same course inactivate themselves.
- To drop a course during the registration period, click the  next to the course under My Courses. You cannot drop a course after the semester's drop/add date without withdrawing and getting a "W" for that course on your transcript. You will also need to pay any fees if applicable.
- To add or drop a course after the registration period has ended, see the [Drop/Add Deadlines and Course Withdrawal Section](#)
- **Don't Forget to Save!**

Association of Chicago Theological Schools (ACTS)

Matriculated students have the opportunity to cross-register for classes at any of the ACTS schools (Association of Chicago Theological Schools) but are limited as to how many of these classes may be counted toward the completion of their degree program. Students may take as many as four (4) classes at ACTS member schools and as many as three (3) courses at the University of Chicago.

ACTS Cross Registration:

- Contact the Registrar at Meadville Lombard to obtain and complete the ACTS Cross Registration Form; save it as a Word document, then email it to the Registrar. Before completing the form, however, verify that the desired course is indeed being offered by referring to the most recent course schedules available in the ACTS catalog or on the secondary school's website.

Drop/Add Deadlines and Course Withdrawal

The Registration Periods for the Fall, Spring, and Summer Semesters are designated on [the Academic Calendar](#), as published on our website each academic year. Students will receive a full refund of tuition and fees for courses dropped prior to the Drop/Add deadline. After the Drop/Add deadline, a refund will only be granted in cases of a medical or personal emergency, subject to approval by the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs.

Students must contact the Registrar in order to withdraw from a course after the Drop/Add deadline. The student will complete a [Course Withdrawal Form](#) and submit this to their Academic Advisor. If the course change results in a tuition/fee adjustment, the adjustment will be made at that time. Withdrawal from a course or courses after the drop/add deadline may impact a student's financial aid eligibility. For more information about withdrawal and financial aid, see sections [refer to FA section on withdrawal & loans and withdrawal & scholarships.]

Program Change

At times a student may decide that their current Program of Study does not align with their personal and/or professional goals. Such a student may elect to request a program change.

Students who wish to change programs must consult with their Academic Advisor first. Once it is determined that a change of program is the student's best option, the student must submit the signed [Program Change Form](#) to their Academic Advisor.

The advisor will submit the request to the V.P. of Academic and Student Affairs who will notify the student of the final decision.

Changing programs may jeopardize financial aid eligibility. Please check with the Financial Aid Office, VA Representative, and/or SEVIS Administrator.

The submission of [Program Change Form](#) does not mean automatic acceptance in the program of your choice. Additional admissions requirements and/or information may be requested for acceptance into the new program. Notification of such requirements will be sent to your Meadville Lombard Theological School (MLTS) student email by the V.P. of Academic and Student Affairs or another designated Academic Administrator.

Background Check

Effective 6/30/17, all students (with the exception of international students) will receive a background check as part of their enrollment at Meadville Lombard. Students will fill out the background check paperwork as part of the admissions process. Student Affairs will conduct a background check on the entering students at least one month before the beginning of Community Studies. Students admitted prior to the inception of this policy will also be required to undergo a background check.

Supportive Space Policy

We recognize that there may be times when someone feels emotionally raw and vulnerable in the classroom. By its very nature, there are times when ministerial formation and theological education will not feel "safe." However, we strive to make the classroom a supportive space so that we can continue the work of transformation and growth. Please be in conversation with your professor so that they can point you toward support and resources. Meadville Lombard provides the following resources for students who may be triggered in the classroom:

- Availability of the chaplain during Fall and Spring Intensives.
- A list of area counseling resources available by request from the Student Affairs and the Director of Contextual Ministry.

Withdrawal

MLTS takes seriously the decision of any student to suspend studies and withdraw from their program. If you are considering such actions, you are strongly encouraged to seek the advice of your Advisor. To officially withdraw from MLTS, a [Program Withdrawal Form](#) must be completed and

submitted to the Registrar's Office. The effective date of withdrawal is the date on which a written statement of withdrawal and the form is submitted and received by the registrar.

If a student withdraws from the academic program after the Drop/Add period in a term for which they are enrolled in courses, the [course withdrawal](#) policy applies, along with relevant [Financial Aid policies](#).

Return after Withdrawal

If a student withdraws voluntarily and seek to reapply within two years, the student can reapply with a short application and an essay of 500 words. If a student has been withdrawn for more than two years, the student will need to submit a full application.

Incomplete Policy

An Incomplete is defined as any extension of time to complete class work beyond the last day of the course semester. The mark "I" (Incomplete) on a transcript indicates that a student registered for course credit has not submitted all the evidence required for a qualitative grade but has made satisfactory arrangements with the instructor prior to the original date when work is due. The mark, "I," is given only under special circumstances for students who fall within the guidelines listed below. Final determination on granting an Incomplete rests with the instructor.

- To qualify for an incomplete the student must have completed 70% of their classwork with passing grades.
- In any given semester, the maximum number of credits for which a student may request an Incomplete shall be no more than 50% of the credit hours they are enrolled in for the semester.
- Each degree plan has a maximum number of credits hours in Incompletes a student may take over the course of their degree plans. Those maximums are as follows
 - Master of Divinity student may take no more than 15 credit hours in Incompletes over the course of their degree plan;
 - Master of Leadership Studies may take no more than 6 credit hours in Incompletes over the course of their degree plan;
 - Master of Arts in Religion may take no more than 9 credit hours in Incompletes over the course of their degree plan.
- No incomplete shall be authorized for the penultimate semester (the semester PRIOR TO THE GRADUATING SEMESTER)

Meadville Lombard Theological School requires that work must be completed within the semester immediately following the semester in which the extension was requested, including summer semester. If the work is not completed and graded satisfactorily by the end of the semester immediately following the semester in which the course was originally taken, the grade will be recorded as "Failure" (F) and no credit will be earned for the course. Both the "Incomplete" (I) and "Failure" (F) grades are considered unsuccessful completions and will affect a student's eligibility for Federal and Institutional Financial Aid (See the Student Academic Progress (SAP) section of Financial Aid Policies in this handbook). [Student Academic Progress \(SAP\)](#) section of Financial Aid Policies in this handbook).

Incomplete Policy Procedures:

1. The maximum allowable time for an extension is one semester after the end of the semester in which the course was taken (for example: coursework for an Incomplete taken in Spring Semester must be completed by end of Summer Semester).

2. Before the last day of the semester in which the course is being taught, the student must arrange with the instructor for an Incomplete.
3. Procure an [Incomplete Request Form](#) from the Registrar.
4. Obtain the instructor's signature and return the form to the Registrar by the last day of the semester; the Registrar then forwards the form to the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs for signature.
5. The Registrar sends one copy of the completed form to the Faculty Advisor and files one copy in the student's record.
6. Upon successful completion of the coursework, the instructor will submit a grade of Pass/Fail to the Registrar (one cannot earn a letter grade for an Incomplete). The Registrar will record the grade and notify the Advisor of the completed work.
7. Failure to complete a course by the end of the next semester will result in an "F" on the transcript; the student will not earn credit for F's. No Institutional Tuition Reduction Awards will be awarded for any course taken to replace an F course for which Institutional Aid was given.

Financial Aid Implications of Incompletes

Please note that the mark "I" on a student's transcript will count against their "pace" (as defined in the Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy) and may result in their ineligibility for Federal Financial Aid and/or Institutional Tuition Reduction during future terms. See Section 4 for Financial Aid Policies.

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP) POLICY

As an academically rigorous institution, the Meadville Lombard community adheres to a high standard of academic success and professional preparation. We believe that this standard is a combination of classroom success, contextual practice, and, when applicable, ministerial fitness.

In addition to quantitative academic review (as described below), all degree seeking students at Meadville Lombard are subject to review by faculty concerning their progress in preparation for ministry. Such a review will address student academic progress and formation (personal, emotional, and professional preparedness for ministry), and financial planning. If formation concerns are noted, faculty will notify the student to discuss a means of resolving such concerns. Major formation concerns may affect Academic Good Standing. It is important to note, depending on the severity of the formation concern, a student may be placed on any adverse SAP status in any order.

While enrolled at Meadville Lombard students are expected to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress or SAP. As part of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) to be considered in "Academic Good Standing", students must meet both Quantitative and Formational guidelines:

1. Quantitative Guidelines
 - o Maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher
 - o Successfully complete of at least 67% of all coursework attempted during each academic term.*
2. Formational Guidelines
 - o Maintain satisfactory professional preparedness
 - o Adherence to the Student Covenant
 - o Avoid conduct that creates a hostile or disruptive environment

**Attempted coursework is defined as any course in which a student is enrolled at the end of the 100% refund period (see Refund Policies 2.8.1). Successful completion of coursework is defined as receipt of a grade of A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, or P if a course is taken Pass/Fail. Unsuccessful completion of coursework is defined as receipt of a*

grade of F, I, PI, or W. Repeated coursework is counted as many times as the course is repeated in the computation of total units attempted. Courses that are assigned an Incomplete grade are included in the cumulative hours attempted but cannot be used as credits earned toward progress standards until a successful grade is assigned. Credit officially accepted in transfer and specifically applied toward a student's degree program will not be counted toward the pace or GPA.

Should a student not meet Satisfactory Academic Progress, they will be subject to the guidelines set forth in the Satisfactory Academic Progress Review Policy.

Satisfactory Academic Progress Review Policy

Each term, students' cumulative grade point average (CGPA) is calculated based on the letter grades they receive in their classes (See [Grades](#) for point values). Additionally, students must maintain a pace of successful coursework completion which can lead to graduation within an appropriate timeframe. A Student's SAP Status is determined by the results of that evaluation.

Warning

- If a student's CGPA falls below 3.0, or
- If a student's pace falls below 67%

The student will be notified that they have failed to meet SAP, and Academic Warning Status will be applied to their record. Notification to this effect will be sent to their Meadville email account. A student will regain satisfactory SAP provided they earn a cumulative GPA of 3.0 (B) or higher and meet all other good academic standing requirements in the next term. Warning status may also affect Financial Aid eligibility. For more information, please see [Financial Aid Warnings and Appeals](#).

Probation

- After receiving a warning, if a student again receives a term or cumulative GPA under 3.0, they will be put on Academic Probation Status.
- Students who demonstrate actions that cause major concerns around formation that could be a detriment to the student's professional ministry will be placed on Academic Probation

When students are placed on Academic Probation, notification of Probation status will be sent to their Meadville email account. A student on Probation for failure to meet the minimum CGPA must raise their cumulative grade point average above 3.0 and may be required to undergo a performance improvement plan that will be developed by their advisor in consultation with faculty.

Students on Probation for Formational concerns are not eligible to register for future courses until after meeting with the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, or a Meadville Lombard designee. Additionally, Meadville Lombard funding (including Federal Aid) may be suspended. The Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, and faculty will develop a series of steps which the student must complete in order to satisfy the probationary status.

Probation status may also affect Financial Aid eligibility. For more information, please see [Financial Aid Warnings and Appeals](#).

Suspension

- If a student fails to meet the terms of Probation or has a cumulative GPA below 3.0 for three consecutive terms, they will be subject to Suspension.
- If a student has not met the conditions of Probation for formational concerns, they may be put under Suspension once [Non-Academic Student Disciplinary Procedures](#) are taken. A

student under Suspension is not eligible to return to campus until a set of conditions are met including educational and/or behavioral requirements.

Students who are suspended are not eligible to return for a period of at least one term. The Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, in consultation with faculty, determines the length of suspension. In certain cases, students who receive unsatisfactory faculty reviews as a part of contextual education may be suspended. Any Warning notice received in any term after a term of Probation, as described above, results in Suspension. A student under Suspension may be subject to a set of conditions, including educational and/or behavioral requirements, to return to Meadville Lombard. Suspension status may also affect Financial Aid eligibility. For more information, please see Section 4.3 Financial Aid Warnings and Appeals.

Dismissal

- Failure to fulfill the quantitative conditions of a completed Suspension is immediate grounds for dismissal. Furthermore, students whose cumulative GPA is 2.0 or below may be dismissed.
- If a student continues to fail to meet the standards of academic or community life, or that a student's behavior may be destructive to the School, other students, a church, the denomination, or the profession of ministry, the student may be dismissed. Such cases will undergo review in accordance with the Non-Academic Student Disciplinary Procedures. Failure to fulfill formational conditions of Probation may be grounds for immediate Dismissal.

Dismissal is the loss of student status at Meadville Lombard. A dismissed student is not eligible for readmission. Dismissal procedures are reserved for cases in which it is clear to the faculty that the student is failing to meet academic, professional, or formational standards. Failure to fulfill the conditions of a completed Suspension is immediate grounds for dismissal. Furthermore, students whose cumulative GPA is 2.0 or below may be dismissed.

Students suspended or dismissed for unsatisfactory academic performance may request that Meadville Lombard reconsider its action by submitting, in writing, to the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, any evidence of extenuating circumstances previously unavailable which would warrant a change in the academic action. A student's written request for reconsideration must be submitted within seven (7) days of their notification of Suspension or Dismissal. The President or a Meadville Lombard designee will review the written appeal and the supporting information of the previous decision. As a final option, the student can register an appeal with the Board of Trustees. The decision of the Board of Trustees is final.

Leave of Absence Policy

The Faculty of Meadville Lombard Theological School acknowledges that there are occasions and circumstances in a student's career in which they may need to take a leave of absence. In such cases, Master of Arts and Master of Divinity students will present a [Leave of Absence Form](#) to the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs. Such an application will be taken to the faculty for consideration. If approved, the application will be granted and the student will be responsible for taking the form to the Registrar for inclusion in their official file. Leaves will be granted for no less than one semester and no more than two years. A non-refundable fee of \$75.00 per semester (Fall and Spring only) will be assessed.

If a Student on Leave of Absence does not return after two years, they will be withdrawn from the degree program by the School. If, after two years, the student wishes to return, they will have to reapply for admission to the program.

Students who are not actively enrolled in coursework for more than one year without an approved Leave of Absence will be withdrawn from the degree program by the School. If the student wishes to return, they will have to reapply for admission to the program.

Taking Courses at other Institutions

Students enrolled in a Meadville Lombard degree program may take classes at any of the Association of Chicago Theological Schools (ACTS) by cross-registering through the Meadville Lombard Office of the Registrar. Students cannot take transfer classes in their first semester at Meadville Lombard. Classes taken at any of these seminaries are counted as Meadville Lombard courses and are not calculated as part of the number of credits that students may take elsewhere. However, students are limited to taking four (4) courses at ACTS schools. Each degree program allows a different number of courses from accredited graduate programs (other than the ACTS member schools) to be applied toward the degree, as follows:

Master of Divinity

Once students matriculate, they may take up to nine (9) credits at another accredited graduate institution.

Master of Arts in Religion

Once they matriculate, MAR students may take up to six (6) credits at another accredited graduate institution.

Master of Arts in Leadership Studies

Once students matriculate, they may take up to nine (9) credits at another accredited graduate institution.

Advance Standing/Transfer Credit Policy

Students matriculating into a degree program may apply graduate-level work done at other institutions to their degree program. Meadville Lombard limits the number of units that can be applied as follows:

Master of Divinity

In the MDiv, students are allowed up to twenty-seven (27) credits to be transferred in from prior graduate work.

Master of Arts in Leadership Studies

Up to six (6) credits may be transferred from another graduate degree program.

Master of Arts in Religion

Up to six (6) credits may be transferred into the MAR from prior graduate work.

Transfer Credit Policy

Meadville Lombard Theological School accepts transfer course credit from regionally accredited colleges and universities if the courses are deemed comparable in scope and rigor to courses offered at Meadville Lombard Theological School.

Graduate courses completed at another regionally accredited college or university (or a recognized foreign institution) may be transferred to the Meadville Lombard Theological School and applied toward a graduate degree program, if these criteria are met:

- The course earned graduate credit at the home institution and is comparable to Meadville Lombard Theological School graduate level work;
- The student earned a grade of A or B in the course (or the equivalent, if another grading system were used);
- The course was taken within 10 years of the date of the request.
- For courses taken during a student's program at MLTS, the student receives approval of the transfer course(s) prior to taking it.

Transfer course work is not computed in the Meadville Lombard Theological School's grade-point-average (GPA).

In order for approved transfer credit to be awarded, students must submit an official transcript (a sealed official transcript or an e-transcript) that clearly indicates all of the following information for each course:

- Course codes or numbers
- Course titles or descriptions
- Final grades earned
- Course credits earned

Directed Study

Directed Study in a course will be granted only in extraordinary circumstances. Any Directed Study requires enrollment in an established registration period, execution during an established semester, and payment of the normal per-credit tuition amount. A letter grade is normally awarded for Directed Study.

The Directed Study needs to be administered by a full-time faculty member, or by a faculty member who has recently taught the course at Meadville Lombard Theological School.

To register for a Directed Study course, students must obtain the [Directed Study](#) form from the Registrar.

Registration fees and tuition are the same for Directed Study classes as for any other Meadville Lombard course.

Accessibility/Disability and Accommodations Policy

Statement

Meadville Lombard Theological School is committed to providing a quality theological education to a diverse group of students and will provide reasonable accommodations to special needs within the limits of what is readily achievable. The partnership between student and Meadville Lombard in addressing a challenge presented by a disability involves the following:

Disclosure

It is the responsibility of the student to self-disclose learning disorders and/or disabilities that require accommodations.* If the student chooses to self-disclose, they must use the [Request for Accommodation Form](#) and the [Reasonable Accommodation Design](#) form. The School recognizes that the choice to self-disclose is very personal and all conversations/documentation will remain confidential.

*Accommodation refers to "modifications that need to be made to minimize the discriminatory effect of a person's physical, emotional, or learning disability, insofar as the provision of the

adjustment does not cause undue burden on the setting or the institution. In academia, reasonable accommodations are called academic adjustments, and they might include classroom adjustments, exam modifications, or administrative accommodations."

Timelines:

1. The student should complete the Request for Accommodation Form within 3 weeks after the start of the semester.
2. The student must complete the Reasonable Accommodation Design form prior to the first day of class or within two weeks of diagnosis.

Policy/Process

Meadville Lombard Theological School follows these guidelines and procedures for medical documentation of disabilities:

1. The clinician selected by the student must be qualified to make a diagnosis in the area of specialization (and cannot be a member of the student's family).
2. The evaluation should be written on professional letterhead, be current (usually within six [6] months, but no more than one [1] year) and should contain the date of the last appointment with the student.
3. The clinician must clearly state the disability claimed to be covered under the ADA.
4. The documentation must clearly support the claimed disability, with relevant medical and other history.
5. The evaluation must include a description of current treatments and assistive devices and technologies (if any), with estimated effectiveness in ameliorating the impact of the disability.
6. The evaluation must include a statement from the clinician indicating a timeframe within which the student should be re-evaluated for the learning disorder and/or disability, indicating that no re-evaluation is needed if that is the case.
7. There must be a description of the functional limitations the student experiences as a result of the disability which specifically addresses a post-secondary educational setting.
8. The request, utilizing the [Request for Accommodation Form](#), must clearly state the accommodations being requested. In addition, the student in consultation with each professor for whose course they are requesting reasonable accommodation(s), the faculty must complete the [Reasonable Accommodation Design](#) form.
9. The documentation must clearly support the need for the requested accommodation(s). Once an accommodation is agreed to, it will be documented as an agreement signed by both the student and the Director of Student Services.

Once an accommodation is agreed to, it will be documented as an agreement signed by both the student and the Director of Student Services.

The agreement will then be entered on to the student's information account in Populi.

The student accounts are confidential and can only be accessed by authorized individuals. Each time the student registers for a new semester, their registration will be reviewed and each faculty member teaching a course for which this student has registered will be notified that this student has an ADA accommodation and the faculty member should view the accommodation on the student's Populi account. The faculty member shall be responsible for providing the academic and/or classroom accommodations called for, and for keeping appropriate notes to document accommodations and outcomes.

Graduation

Degrees are regularly awarded at the May Commencement Ceremony. Students planning to graduate must file an Intent to Graduate Form, which is distributed by the Registrar during the year that they intend to complete their degree program. All books must be returned to the Meadville Lombard Library, and all debts owed to the School — including Graduation and Commencement fees — must be paid on time according to the timeline laid out in the Academic Calendar, typically, three (3) weeks prior to Commencement. Until these responsibilities have been completed, a degree will not be awarded, and the School may prohibit participation in Commencement activities.

Students who complete the Declaration of Intent to Graduate will be contacted in February by the President's Executive Assistant with further details for the Commencement Ceremony, including times and locations of all Commencement activities, procedures for renting and/or purchasing regalia, and distribution of invitations. Graduation fees are paid by all student regardless of whether they participate in the commencement ceremony.

Questions regarding academic requirements for Graduation should be directed to the Registrar. Questions regarding Commencement activities should be directed to the President's Executive Assistant.

Policy on Research on Human Subjects

The Meadville Lombard Internal Review Board (MLIRB) is chaired by the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs and comprised of two members of the faculty, elected annually.

As an institution committed to upholding the worth and value of every human being and the interconnected web of life, Meadville Lombard Theological School requires that all research impacting human beings meet the standards that follow:

Meadville Lombard Theological School Standards for Conducting Research on

*Human Beings*¹

Honesty

Strive for honesty in all scientific communications. Honestly report data, results, methods and procedures, and publication status. Do not fabricate, falsify, or misrepresent data. Do not deceive colleagues, granting agencies, or the public.

Objectivity

Strive to avoid bias in experimental design, data analysis, data interpretation, peer review, personnel decisions, grant writing, expert testimony, and other aspects of research where objectivity is expected or required. Avoid or minimize bias or self-deception. Disclose personal or financial interests that may affect research.

Integrity

Keep promises and agreements; act with sincerity; strive for consistency of thought and action.

Carefulness

¹ Adapted from Shamoo A and Resnik D. 2009. Responsible Conduct of Research, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press).

Avoid careless errors and negligence; carefully and critically examine your own work and the work of your peers. Keep good records of research activities, such as data collection, research design, and correspondence with agencies or journals.

Openness

Share data, results, ideas, tools, resources. Be open to criticism and new ideas.

Respect for Intellectual Property

Honor patents, copyrights, and other forms of intellectual property. Do not use unpublished data, methods, or results without permission. Give credit where credit is due. Give proper acknowledgement or credit for all contributions to research. Never plagiarize.

Confidentiality

Protect confidential and/or private communications, such as papers or grants submitted for publication, personnel records, trade or military secrets, and patient records.

Responsible Publication

Publish in order to advance research and scholarship, not to advance just your own career. Avoid wasteful and duplicative publication.

Responsible Mentoring

Help to educate, mentor, and advise students. Promote their welfare and allow them to make their own decisions.

Respect for colleagues

Respect colleagues and treat them fairly.

Social Responsibility

Strive to promote social good and prevent or mitigate social harms through research, public education, and advocacy.

Non-Discrimination

Avoid discrimination against colleagues or students on the basis of sex, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identification, socioeconomic class or other factors that are not related to their scientific competence and integrity.

Competence

Maintain and improve your own professional competence and expertise through lifelong education and learning; take steps to promote competence in science as a whole.

Legality

Know and obey relevant laws and institutional and governmental policies.

Animal Care

Show proper respect and care for animals when using them in research. Do not conduct unnecessary or poorly designed animal experiments.

Human Subjects Protection

When conducting research on human subjects, minimize harms and risks and maximize benefits; respect human dignity, privacy, and autonomy; take special precautions with vulnerable populations; and strive to distribute the benefits and burdens of research fairly.

Who Must Gain Permission to Conduct Human Research

Formal approval is needed for any research where generalizable data is gathered from human subjects with the intent to publish or convey research findings publicly. The language of "generalizable" comes from OHA, the AHA, and the Office of Human Research Protections. According to this joint report, historians "do not reach for generalizable principles of historical or social development; nor do they seek underlying principles or laws of nature that have predictive value and can be applied to other circumstances for the purpose of controlling outcomes." Accordingly, historical research, including oral histories is excluded from most IRB requirements.

Students must consult with their Faculty Advisors about securing this approval from the MLIRB before beginning research. IRB approval is not required for class assignments that inquire into the role, experience, efficacy, or outcomes of ministry reported out to other students, faculty, or staff in the context of said class. Likewise, approval is not required for research by students, faculty, or staff that uses data such as grades, course work, surveys, interviews, etc., if it is intended to provide feedback to improve a course or program.

IRB approval is required for circumstances when:

1. Data will be disseminated outside of the seminary (e.g., publication, presentation of findings at a conference, general assembly, professional meeting, or a granting agency);
2. Research projects involve intervention with people and communities outside the seminary and will be published/made public;
3. The potential for conflict of interest is present (see section below); and/or
4. Data is being collected for Master's theses and doctoral dissertations.

Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest is said to exist whenever the researcher, their significant other, or dependent child falls under any of the following conditions and/or meets the criteria below:

1. Is an investigator on the protocol (only applicable to IRB members);
2. Has entered into a financial arrangement with the sponsor or agent of the sponsor, whereby the outcome of the study could influence the value of the economic interest; Acts as an officer, director, or agent of the sponsor;
3. Has any equity interest in the sponsor exceeding \$5,000 or 3% of the equity of the sponsor;
5. Has received any payments or other incentives from any sponsor that total in excess of \$5,000;
6. Has identified themselves for any other reason as having a conflicting interest.

Use of Private Information in Research

Private Information includes information about behavior that occurs in a context in which an individual can reasonably expect that no observation or recording is taking place, and information which has been provided for specific purposes by an individual, and which the individual can reasonably expect, will not be made public (for example: a counseling session, grade, health status). Private information must be individually identifiable (i.e., the identity of the subject is, or may readily be, ascertained by the investigator or associated with the information) in order for obtaining the information to constitute research involving human subjects.

Responsibilities of Conducting Research

1. Accept personal responsibility for protecting the rights, welfare, health, and safety of human research subjects and comply with the applicable regulations.

2. Acknowledge the authority and responsibility of the IRB to make the final approval (or disapproval) of research involving human subjects.
3. Fully inform subjects of the risks, benefits, subjects' expectations, compensation, and other aspects of the research in which they are being asked to participate.
4. Use only the IRB approved consent document.
5. Obtain Informed Consent from each human subject in a non-coercive manner. Provide each subject a copy (or duplicate original) of their signed Consent form. All signed Consent documents are to be retained in a secure and confidential manner.
6. During the retention period, data, signed consent forms, and other documentation related to human subjects must be stored in a safe area for three years. Access to data, signed consent forms, and other documentation related to human subjects must be limited to the researcher or identified agents.
7. Report promptly proposed changes in previously approved human subject research activities to the IRB. The proposed changes will not be initiated without IRB review and approval, except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subjects.
8. Report promptly to the IRB any injuries or other unanticipated or adverse events involving risks or harms to human research subjects or others.

Training

A good source for online training for the protection of human research subjects is here:

<https://phrp.nihtraining.com/index.php>

Oral Histories and Written Interviews

Students who conduct oral histories and/or written interviews for historical research do not require an IRB. Students are, however, obligated to follow oral history best practices as stated by the Oral History Association (<http://www.oralhistory.org/about/principles-and-practices/>).

Any oral histories or written interviews that are intended to be donated to the Meadville Lombard Archives require approval by the Meadville Lombard Archives before the interview is conducted. All oral histories and interviews must:

1. Follow Oral History Association best practices
2. Be historically significant and conducted in such a way to be useful to researchers.
3. All claims of copyright must be given to Meadville Lombard in writing by both the interviewer and the subject.
4. The subject must be informed that the interview will be made publicly available to researchers and may be made accessible online.

UU Fellowship and CPE Policies

UU Fellowship Process

There are three stages within the fellowship process: applicant, aspirant and candidate status. People who contact the Ministerial Credentialing Office are considered in applicant status. Applicants who successfully complete the required paperwork gain aspirant status. Aspirants who complete their career assessment, have completed at least one year of

theological school and have completed a field education or ACPE/CPSP experience are eligible to receive candidate status.²

Aspirant status provides support from the Ministerial Credentialing Office and opens membership to the UU Ministers Association. The designation of candidate status and completion of additional requirements allow a candidate to request an interview with the Ministerial Fellowship Committee.

Meadville Lombard's policy for course enrollment differs in timing from the UUA. In order to be approved to begin a congregational internship and enroll in the Vocational Studies Signature Course, a student must have completed Clinical Pastoral Education and a Career Assessment and received confirmation that they have obtained candidate status with the UUA.

Procedures for Waivers

1. Students seeking a waiver must submit a petition via Populi to the Senior Director of Contextual Ministry explaining that they are not pursuing fellowship with the UUA.

The Senior Director of Contextual Ministry will present the request for a waiver to the faculty for a vote, with a recommendation.

2. The student will be notified via email that the waiver has been granted and that if they later decide to pursue UUA fellowship, they need to meet with the Senior Director of Contextual Ministry and a failure to do so will impact the student's eligibility for graduation. The advisor will be copied on the email.

Career Assessment

The Career Assessment is a component of the UUA fellowshipping process. The Career Assessment Report is an important resource to support your formational growth and to guide you towards potential CPE and Internship Learning goals.

The School cannot legally require that the student share the results of the Career Assessment. However, students are strongly urged to do so for the reasons stated above. Students must share the results with the Office of Ministerial Credentialing, however, in order to attain candidate status. The results of the Career Assessment may be shared with the Registrar or Senior Director of Contextual Ministry for addition to the student's confidential record.

Waivers will be granted to students who are not pursuing fellowship with the UUA. Deferrals may be granted for students attending part time, or in extenuating circumstances, which includes but is not limited to: deaths, major illnesses, and difficulties with career assessment site. Deferrals will last a maximum of one academic year.

Procedure: Waiver

1. Students seeking a waiver must submit a petition via email to the Senior Director of Contextual Ministry explaining that they are not pursuing fellowship with the UUA.
2. The Senior Director of Contextual Ministry will present the request for a waiver to the VP of Academic Affairs, with a recommendation.

² Requirements for Ministerial Fellowship with the Unitarian Universalist Association, August 2017

https://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/requirements_mfc.pdf

3. The student will be notified via email that the waiver has been granted and that if they later decide to pursue UUA fellowship, they need to meet with the Senior Director of Contextual Ministry and a failure to do so will impact the student's eligibility for graduation. The advisor will be copied on the email.
4. If a waiver is granted, a tag will be added to the student's Populi profile that says "Waiver – Career Assessment".

Procedure: Deferral

1. Students seeking a deferral must submit a petition via email to the Senior Director of Contextual Ministry explaining the reasoning for the request.
2. The Senior Director of Contextual Ministry will review requests for deferrals.
 - a. If the deferral is based on a student going part time and delaying the start of Congregational Studies, difficulties with the Career Assessment site, or major illness, the Senior Director will decide whether to grant the deferral.
 - b. If the deferral is based on other reasons, the Senior Director of Contextual Ministry will bring the petition to the VP of Academic Affairs with a recommendation.
3. If a deferral is granted, a tag will be added to the student's Populi profile that says "Deferral – Career Assessment".
4. Faculty will be notified of the decisions around deferral.
5. The student will be notified via email whether or not the deferral has been granted and for what terms. The Advisor will be copied on the email and it will be posted on the Student's Populi record.

Clinical Pastoral Education

Clinical Pastoral Education is a method of learning ministry by means of pastoral functioning under supervision. One CPE unit is 400 hours and typically takes place in a hospital or hospice, although other sites are sometimes utilized. CPE units are administered through the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education <https://www.acpe.edu/> and the College of Pastoral Supervision and Psychotherapy <http://www.cpsp.org/> in the United States; and the Canadian Association for Spiritual Care <http://www.spiritualcare.ca/>; and the Australia & New Zealand Association for Clinical Pastoral Education <https://anzacpe.com/>.

Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) is a requirement for the fellowship process.

Because of the costs, applications process, and limited availability, students must be proactive in order to be able to complete this requirement. We require CPE before the congregational internship begins so that a student may enter their internship having worked on their ministerial presence.

Master of Divinity students must complete one unit of CPE during the summer after their first year in order to be approved to begin a congregational internship in the Fall.

Waivers are rare and will only be considered for extreme cases. Deferrals may be granted for extenuating circumstances including, but not limited to: health issues, deaths, economic hardship, difficult getting accepted to a site. Deferrals may be for a full or part-time CPE program concurrent with the first year of internship, or the summer after that first year of internship.

Waiver/Deferral Request Procedures:

1. Students seeking a waiver or deferral must submit a petition via email to the Senior Director of Contextual Ministry explaining the reasoning for the request.
2. The Senior Director of Contextual Ministry will review the request.
 - a. If a deferral request is for an extended unit concurrent with the first year of internship, the Senior Director of Contextual Ministry will talk with the student about the difficulties of doing internship and CPE at the same time.
 - b. The Senior Director of Contextual Ministry will bring the petition to the VP of Academic Affairs with a recommendation.
3. If a deferral is granted, a tag will be added to the student's Populi profile that says "Deferral – CPE."
4. If a deferral is not granted, the student will have to delay the beginning of their internship until they have completed the CPE.
5. The student will be notified via email by the Senior Director of Contextual Ministry whether or not the deferral has been granted and for what terms. The Advisor will be copied on the email and it will be posted on the Student's Populi record

CPE Withdrawal Policy

Withdrawing from CPE is read as a red flag that something major is happening in a student's life. Here at Meadville Lombard, we feel that it is important that we be aware of these issues. Since the CPE grade is dependent on successfully passing CPE, a dismissal is tantamount to failing the CPE program, and will be recorded as such on the student's transcript.

If a student wishes to withdraw from CPE course, they must get approval from the Senior Director of Contextual Ministry. Approval will be based on the reason for the withdrawal. If a student is dismissed from a CPE program, that will result in a failing grade for CPE.

CPE Withdrawal Procedures:

1. The Senior Director of Contextual Ministry will talk with the student to find out the reasons for withdrawing.
2. The Senior Director of Contextual Ministry will also talk to the CPE Supervisor to find out if there are any issues of which we should be aware.
3. If the student has been dismissed from the CPE program, they cannot withdraw and will receive a failing grade for the CPE course.
4. If the withdrawal is for behavioral and formation issues that will severely impede a student's ability to minister, a review under the Academic Good Standing Policy will be initiated.

Appeal Procedures

If a student wishes to appeal a decision by the Senior Director of Contextual Ministry regarding CPE or Career Assessment, they may appeal to the faculty.

1. Submit a letter of appeal to the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs.
2. The Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs will ask the Senior Director of Contextual Ministry for a rationale for their decision.
3. The Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs will bring the letter of appeal and rationale to the faculty.

4. The faculty will decide whether to approve or deny the appeal.
5. The Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs will notify the student via email whether or not the appeal has been granted.

Teaching Pastor Change Policy

Teaching Pastors can only be changed in extreme circumstances and must be approved by the faculty. The only reasons a change may be made are if the Teaching Pastor or Congregation chooses not to continue, or if there is a major life change.

Financial Aid Policies

Students enrolled in degree programs at Meadville Lombard Theological School may be eligible for student aid through Federal Student Loans and institutional financial aid (including scholarships and Tuition Reduction awards).

Federal Student Aid (FSA)

Students who are matriculated into a degree program at Meadville Lombard are eligible to apply for Federal Student Aid if they meet the basic eligibility requirements, are enrolled at least half-time, and maintain satisfactory academic progress.

The primary form of FSA available at Meadville Lombard are in the form of Federal Direct Loans. The U.S. Department of Education (rather than a bank or other financial institution) offers Direct Loans at low-interest rates for students to help pay for the cost of their education. Additional information on Federal Direct Loans is available from the Department of Education on their website at <https://studentaid.gov>.

While loans are available to students who meet the requirements, the use of these loans can be a burden for graduates as they pursue a career. Many of our student students receive institutional aid in the form of scholarships and/or tuition reduction grants, and many receive assistance from organizations dedicated to helping students manage their debt load such as the Unitarian Universalist Association. Meadville Lombard welcomes and encourages students to seek outside scholarships, grants, and assistance to assist them in paying for their education.

Types of Federal Student Aid

There are two types of Federal Student Aid available to graduate students at Meadville Lombard. Both are Federal Direct Loans: Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loans and Federal Direct Graduate PLUS Loans.

Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loans

A Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loans is a federally guaranteed loan available to graduate students; there is no requirement to demonstrate financial need. Most students are eligible to borrow up to \$20,500 per academic year. You are responsible for paying the interest on a Direct Unsubsidized Loan during all periods. However, if you choose not to pay the interest while you are in school and during grace periods and deferment or forbearance periods, your interest will accrue (accumulate) and be capitalized (that is, your interest will be added to the principal amount of your loan). For more information visit: <https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/loans/subsidized-unsubsidized>

Federal Direct Graduate PLUS Loans

A Federal Direct Graduate PLUS loan is a federally guaranteed loan available to graduate students; this loan is based on financial need. The maximum PLUS loan amount a student can borrow is the cost of attendance minus any other financial assistance you receive. Because graduate PLUS loan limits vary from student to student, please contact Jon Coffee, Asst. Dir. of Financial Aid and Student Services. to determine your eligibility should you desire funds in addition to your Unsubsidized Loan amount. To receive a grad PLUS loan, you must be a graduate or professional student enrolled at least half-time at an eligible school in a program leading to a graduate or professional degree or certificate; not have an adverse credit history (unless you meet certain additional eligibility requirements); and meet the general eligibility requirements for federal student aid. For more information visit: <https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/loans/plus/grad>

Federal Direct Graduate PLUS Loans

A Federal Direct Graduate PLUS loan is a federally guaranteed loan available to graduate students; this loan is based on financial need. The maximum PLUS loan amount a student can borrow is the cost of attendance minus any other financial assistance you receive. Because graduate PLUS loan limits vary from student to student, please contact Jon Coffee, Asst. Dir. of Financial Aid and Student Services. to determine your eligibility should you desire funds in addition to your Unsubsidized Loan amount. To receive a grad PLUS loan, you must be a graduate or professional student enrolled at least half-time at an eligible school in a program leading to a graduate or professional degree or certificate; not have an adverse credit history (unless you meet certain additional eligibility requirements); and meet the general eligibility requirements for federal student aid. For more information visit: <https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/loans/plus/grad>

Application Procedures

To apply for a Federal Direct Stafford Loan, complete the four steps below:

Step 1. Complete the FAFSA Online

If you are planning to receive student loans, you must complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) for the 2020/21 Academic Year. You can complete the FAFSA by visiting the Federal Student Aid website at <https://studentaid.gov>. Through the Federal Student Aid website, you should also be able to check whether you have already completed a FAFSA for the 2020/21 academic year. It may take up to 48 hours for Meadville Lombard to receive your FAFSA once you complete it. Please note, you must complete the FAFSA every year you wish to apply for and receive FSA funds.

Step 2. Complete Online Entrance Counseling

If this is your first year receiving a federal loan, please be sure to complete Entrance Counseling. Students who wish to receive an unsubsidized Stafford loan or graduate PLUS loan(s) under the Direct Loan Program must complete entrance counseling before funds can be distributed.

If you have not done so already, please go to <https://studentaid.gov> and click the “In School” Tab then click “Complete Loan Entrance Counseling” and follow the instructions.

Please note, you only have to do this once. Generally speaking, if you have already completed Entrance Counseling at MLTS in a prior year, you do not have to redo entrance counseling each year.

Step 3. Complete and Sign your Electronic Master Promissory Note (MPN)

If this is your first year receiving a federal loan, please be sure to complete a Master Promissory Note, or MPN. Students who wish to receive an unsubsidized Stafford loan under the Direct Loan Program must complete an MPN before funds can be distributed.

To complete an MPN for unsubsidized loans, please go to <https://studentaid.gov> and click the “In School” Tab. Click “Complete Loan Agreement (Master Promissory Note)” and follow the instructions for the appropriate loan.

If you have both an unsubsidized and a PLUS loan, you must complete an MPN for each type of loan. Please note, you only have to do this once for unsubsidized loans and once for PLUS loans. Generally speaking, if you have already completed an MPN at MLTS in a prior year, you do not have to complete a new MPN.

Step 4: Complete the Federal Direct Student Loan Request Form

After you have completed your FAFSA for the 2020/21 academic year, please complete the Student Loan Request Form at <https://www.meadville.edu/files/resources/2019-20-mlts-loan-request-form.pdf>. Please note, you must complete this form each year.

Additional Application Procedures for Graduate PLUS Loans

This step is only required if you wish to request a Graduate PLUS loan. If you do not wish to request a PLUS loan you can skip this step. If you intend to apply for a graduate PLUS loan, in addition to the requirements above, you must complete the PLUS loan application. Please go to <https://studentaid.gov> and click the “In School” Tab. Then click “Apply for a PLUS Loan for Graduate School” and follow the instructions. **Please note, you must complete a PLUS loan application each academic year you wish to receive a PLUS loan.**

Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for a Federal Student Aid at Meadville Lombard, a student must:

- Be a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen.
- Be enrolled at least half-time and be matriculated in a degree program
- Not owe any refunds on a Pell Grant or other awards received, and not be in default on repayment on any type of student loan

There may be additional requirements that apply to your situation, you can read more about FSA eligibility requirements at <https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/eligibility>.

Enrollment Requirements

Recipients of Federal Student Aid funds must be enrolled at least half-time to be eligible for Direct Loan Program funds; at Meadville Lombard, a student is considered half-time or higher if they are enrolled in at least 6 credits in the fall, 6 credits in the spring, and (optionally) 3 credits in the summer. Withdrawing from courses after student loan funds have been disbursed, may result in all or a portion of those funds being returned to the Department of Education. This may result in a large balance due to the Meadville Lombard.

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) and Federal Student Aid

Recipients of Federal Student Aid funds must meet the standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) to establish and maintain eligibility for Federal Student Aid..

Withdrawal and Federal Student Aid

Federal rules and regulations stipulate how schools must determine the amount of Title IV program assistance that a student earns should they withdraw from school: be it an official or unofficial

withdrawal. The Title IV programs that are covered by these guidelines are: Federal Pell Grants, Academic Competitiveness Grants, National SMART Grants, TEACH Grants, Stafford Loans, PLUS Loans, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (FSEOGs), and Federal Perkins Loans.

When a student withdraws during their payment period, or period of enrollment, the amount of the Title IV program assistance that they have earned up to that point is determined by a specific formula. If the student receives (or if Meadville received on the student's behalf) receives more assistance than they earned, the excess funds must be returned by Meadville and/or the student (see "Return to Title IV" below). If they received less assistance than the amount that they earned, they may be able to receive those additional funds (see "Post-withdrawal Disbursement" below).

The amount of assistance that a student has earned is determined on a pro-rated basis. For example, if the student completes 30% of their payment period, or period of enrollment, they earn 30% of the assistance they were originally scheduled to receive. Once they have completed more than 60% of the payment period, or period of enrollment, they earn all the assistance that they were scheduled to receive for that period.

Return to Title IV (R2T4)

If the student receives (or if Meadville received on the student's behalf) receives more FSA assistance than they earned, the excess funds must be returned by Meadville and/or the student, or perform a "Return to Title IV" (R2T4). After calculating the amount of FSA funds, the student has earned, any FSA funds that were disbursed in excess of the earned amount must be returned by Meadville Lombard to the Department of Education. This may result in a balance owed by the student to Meadville Lombard. If the student received a refund check, they may be required to return all or a portion of those funds to Meadville Lombard.

Returning Funds

The amount to be returned to Meadville will be determined by the student's tuition and other education-related expenses, by other refunds that they might have received for non-educational expenses, and by funds that must be returned to the federal government.

The amount to be returned to the federal government will be calculated using the date that the student officially withdrew from classes or, in the case of an unofficial withdrawal, the last date they were involved in an academically related activity. To determine the amount of aid the student earned up to the time of withdrawal, the Financial Aid Office will determine the percentage of the semester/award period that the student attended. The resulting percentage is then used, along with the student's institutional costs and total federal funds that they received (funds that were disbursed directly to their Meadville student account and/or refunded to them) or that they were eligible to receive, to determine the amount of aid that they are allowed to keep.

Any unearned Title IV aid must be returned to the federal government within 45 days of the date that determines the student's withdrawal. The Financial Aid Office will notify the student with instructions on how to proceed if Meadville Lombard or the student are required to return funds to the government.

Funds that are returned to the federal government are used to reduce the outstanding balances in individual federal programs. Financial aid returned by the student or Meadville must be returned in the following order:

1. Federal Unsubsidized Direct Loan
2. Federal Subsidized Direct Loan

3. Federal Direct Grad Plus

Post-Withdrawal Disbursement

If a student does not receive all of the Federal Student Aid funds that they earned, they may receive a post-withdrawal disbursement. If their post-withdrawal includes federal loan funds, Meadville must get their permission before it can disburse them. The student may choose to decline some, or all, of the loan funds so that they do not incur additional debt. The student's Financial Aid Offer letter serves as their notice of their loan eligibility. Meadville may automatically use all, or a portion of their post withdrawal disbursement of grant funds for tuition and/or fees. There may be some Title IV funds that they were scheduled to receive that cannot be disbursed to the student once they withdraw because of other eligibility requirements.

If a student receives (or Meadville received on their behalf) excess Title IV program funds that must be returned, Meadville must return a portion of the excess which is equal to the lesser of: the student's institutional charges multiplied by the unearned percentage of their funds, or the entire amount of the excess funds.

If Meadville is not required to return all of the excess funds, the student must return the remaining amount. Any loan funds that they must return, the student repays in accordance with the terms of the promissory note. The student makes scheduled payments to the holder of the loan over a period of time.

The Requirements for the Title IV program funds when a student withdraws are separate from any refund policy that Meadville may have. Therefore, the student may still owe funds to Meadville to cover unpaid institutional charges. Meadville may also charge the student for any Title IV program funds that they are required to return. If the student needs information about Meadville's refund or withdrawal policies, or if they need more information about post-withdrawal policies, disbursements, and obligations, contact the Director of Student Services.

Retaking a Class

If a student retakes a class that was not completed successfully, the course will count toward their enrollment status in the new semester; Federal Student Aid may be used for the first retake of a course. However, any third attempt of a previously uncompleted course will not be funded by federal student aid.

Exit Counseling

Federal regulations require that all student loan borrowers must have an exit interview/financial counseling during their final semester at Meadville Lombard. Students may access and complete the Financial Counseling form on the FAFSA website or at studentloans.gov. This will satisfy all requirements for financial counseling and give the borrower up to date information on their student loan balances. This is the quickest and easiest way to satisfy the exit counseling requirement. If a student does not complete the Exit Counseling, a hold will be placed on their Populi record. The hold will not allow the student to receive transcripts or to check grades.

Repayment

Once you graduate, drop below half-time enrollment, or leave school, your federal student loan(s) go(es) into repayment. In most cases, however, you have a [six-month grace period](#) before you are required to start making regular payments. PLUS loans do not have a grace period; but if you received a PLUS loan as a graduate or professional student, you'll automatically get a six-

month deferment after you graduate, leave school, or drop below half-time enrollment. For more information visit: <https://studentaid.gov/manage-loans/repayment>.

INSTITUTIONAL AID

Questions or concerns related to Institutional Aid should be directed to Jon Coffee, Assistant Director of Financial Aid and Student Service, at jcoffee@meadville.edu. Any request for policy exceptions should be addressed to Manny Dotel, Director of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs, at mdotel@meadville.edu.

Types of Institutional Aid

Meadville Lombard Theological School is pleased to be able to offer students institutional aid in the form named scholarships and tuition reduction grants. All Institutional aid is subject to both student eligibility and availability of funds.

Named Scholarships

Each year, Meadville Lombard offers at least one full-tuition, merit-based scholarship and a number of smaller, merit-based scholarships to full-time students enrolled in a degree program. Named scholarships are subject to eligibility and availability.

Full-tuition scholarships provide students 100% tuition assistance for the length of their program as long as the student remains full-time, maintains good academic standing and completes their program as outlined in their financial aid offer letter. Priority consideration is given in the order in which applications are completed.

The following is a partial list of our full-tuition scholarships. Not all scholarships are available every year.

- The Hardy and Betty Sanders Scholarship for Excellence
- The Stanley D. Christianson Family Endowed Scholarship for Excellence
- The Arnold and Julia Bradburd Endowed Scholarship for Excellence
- The Julia Bradburd Endowed Scholarship for Excellence
- The Ed and Betty Law Endowed Scholarship
- The Joseph and Marion Wertheim Endowed Scholarship for Excellence
- The Spencer and Susan Lavan Endowed Scholarship

Tuition Reduction Grants

Meadville Lombard is able to offer students need-based institutional aid in the form of tuition reduction grants. These grants offer a percentage reduction of tuition charges for the length of your degree program. To be eligible, students must be enrolled in a degree program full-time and demonstrate financial need. As with named scholarships, tuition reduction grants are subject to eligibility and availability.

Application Procedures

Beginning August 2020, Meadville Lombard will implement a rolling application for institutional aid. Students who wish to be considered for Institutional Aid are encouraged to submit their application as soon as they are able.

To apply for institutional aid students should do the following:

1. Complete their [Application for Admission](#)
2. Complete the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid](#) (FAFSA)(US citizens and permanent residents only)
3. Complete the [Institutional Aid Application](#)
4. [Schedule a financial aid interview](#) with Student Affairs after your application for admission and institutional aid application is complete.

All applications will be considered for aid once all of the above components are complete. For merit-based aid, consideration is based on the information you provide on your application for admission, the institutional aid application, and your financial aid interview. For need-based aid, consideration is based on the information you provide on your application for admission, the FAFSA, the institutional aid application, and your financial aid interview.

The application for aid may be completed before the student has received an official admissions decision. However, financial aid offers will not be made until a student has been accepted to a program at Meadville Lombard.

Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for institutional aid, students must have completed all of the components of the Institutional Aid Application Procedures. Students must also be accepted to a Meadville Lombard degree program.

Enrollment Requirements

Recipients of Institutional Aid, must successfully complete a minimum of 30 course credits each year. Students must be continuously enrolled in courses each fall and spring. Summer term coursework is optional. Any coursework completed in the summer will be counted toward the total number of required credits for the year. Unapproved leaves of absence will result in a loss of institutional aid. If a student fails to meet this requirement at any point, they may lose their Institutional Aid.

Non-tuition units of credit (CPE for all students) count toward the calculation of a course load; however, because these are fee-based units of credit, no reduction in tuition or fees will be awarded for these courses.

Institutional Aid will be available only for courses registered and paid through Meadville Lombard.

Institutional Aid is limited to the number of units of credit required to complete the degree program.

Institutional Aid will end once a student leaves the school or transfers to another school

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) and Institutional Aid

Recipients of Institutional Aid funds must meet the standards of [Satisfactory Academic Progress \(SAP\)](#) in order to establish and maintain eligibility for Institutional Aid. [The Financial Aid Warnings and Appeals Policy](#) can be found in the next section

Withdrawal and Institutional Aid

If the student receives Institutional Aid from Meadville Lombard and then subsequently withdraws from the course or program for which the institutional aid was provided, they may be responsible for returning a pro-rata amount of that scholarship as calculated by their date of withdrawal.

Retaking a Class

If a student retakes a class that was not completed successfully, the course will count toward their enrollment status in the new semester. However, institutional aid is not available for classes retaken because of an unsuccessful completion.

FINANCIAL AID WARNINGS AND APPEALS

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) will be reviewed at the conclusion of each term by the faculty. Should a student not meet Satisfactory Academic Progress, they will be subject to the guidelines set forth in the [Satisfactory Academic Performance Review](#) Policy.

Financial Aid Warning

If a student is placed on Academic Warning, they will also be placed on Financial Aid Warning. While on Financial Aid Warning a student will remain eligible for both Institutional Aid and Federal Student Aid.

If the student is able to meet SAP and be removed from Academic Warning in the following term, they will no longer be on Financial Aid Warning. If, however, they do not meet SAP in a term directly following a warning, they will no longer be eligible for Institutional Aid or Federal Student Aid.

At that time, the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs will notify the student via email, at their Meadville mail account, of their ineligibility for further Institutional Aid or Federal Student Aid within one week of the conclusion of the grading period.

Appeals

Students may appeal for reconsideration of Institutional Aid or Federal Student Aid eligibility by submitting a Letter of Appeal to the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs. The Letter of Appeal must state the circumstances resulting in the student not meeting SAP. These reasons must be clear and critical, i.e.:

- The death of a relative
- An injury or illness of the student
- Extreme circumstances (flood, fire, etc.)

The Letter of Appeal must also address the change in circumstances that will allow a student to demonstrate Satisfactory Academic Progress by the end of the next term. The Letter of Appeal must be received by email or regular mail within two weeks of the notice of ineligibility.

The appeal will be reviewed by the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, the Faculty Advisor, and the Registrar. The student will be notified of the committee's decision within two (2) weeks of receipt of the Letter of Appeal.

If the appeal is not granted, the student will be ineligible for any further Institutional Aid and/or Federal Student Aid.

Probation

If the appeal is granted, the student will be put on Financial Aid Probation and will be deemed eligible for Institutional Aid and/or Federal Student Aid during the term. If the student does not meet SAP at the end of that term, they will be ineligible for any further Institutional Aid and/or Federal Student Aid.

A student whose Institutional Aid or Federal Student Aid eligibility has been reinstated under the terms of an academic plan is considered to be making satisfactory progress. A leave of absence is not sufficient grounds for a waiver of SAP.

Suspension and Dismissal

A student who is suspended or dismissed is not eligible for Institutional Aid or Federal Student Aid

COST OF ATTENDANCE (COA) and NET PRICE CALCULATOR

Meadville Lombard publishes our annual Cost of Attendance (COA) calculation on our website at <https://www.meadville.edu/becoming-a-student/tuition-and-fees/cost-of-attendance/>.

The school also publishes a Net Price Calculator to assist students in estimating their institutional charges based on their particular course plans. The calculator can be found on our website at <https://www.meadville.edu/net-price-calculator/>.

VETERAN BENEFITS

Meadville Lombard participates the GI Bill® and other education benefits available through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

VA students can submit applications online at <https://www.va.gov/education/how-to-apply/> If students don't have access to apply online, they can call 1-888-442-4551 and ask that an application be mailed to them.

All VA students must file an application when they first start school before they can receive benefits. Students who have never received VA benefits must file an original application. More information about education benefits offered by VA is available at the official U.S. government Web site at <https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill>.

As of October 16, 2012, "GI Bill" is a federally registered trademark owned by VA.

VA Pending Payment Compliance

In accordance with Title 38 US Code 3679(c), Meadville Lombard Theological School (MLTS) adopts the following additional provisions for any students using U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Post-9/11 G.I. Bill® (Ch.33) or Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment (Ch. 31) benefits, while payment to the institution is pending from VA.

MLTS will not

- Prevent the student's enrollment.
- Assess a late penalty fee to the student.
- Require the student to secure alternative or additional funding.
- Deny the student access to any resource (access to classes, libraries, or other institutional facilities) available to other students who have satisfied their tuition and fee bills to the institution.

However, to qualify for this provision, students may be required to

- Produce the VA Certification of Eligibility (COE) by the first day of class.
- Provide a written request to be certified.
- Provide additional information needed to properly certify the enrollment as described in other institutional policies.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Outside Scholarships and Aid

Other scholarships and aid are also available to Meadville Lombard students including scholarships for Unitarian Universalist ministerial students, scholarships from the John Haynes Holmes Memorial Fellowship, and others. We also accept the vast majority of scholarships and grants that students receive from outside institutions. Fastweb and Cappex are great resources for identifying other forms of available aid.

Meadville Lombard is happy to provide any documentation the student's may require from the school when applying for outside scholarships and grants.

Emergency Loan Policy

Meadville Lombard Theological School recognizes that there may be times when unexpected financial emergencies may cause undue stress and hardship on our students. To assist those who encounter financial emergencies while enrolled, Meadville Lombard has made available a short-term emergency loan. Reasons such as rent payments, car payments, groceries or other normal bills that are part of the student's regular, monthly expenses are not considered emergencies.

Below is a list of requirements for receiving an emergency loan:

- The student must be enrolled in a Meadville Lombard degree program.
- A student may only apply once per semester.
- The student must complete and submit an emergency loan application to the Director for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs.
- The maximum amount for a short-term emergency loan may not exceed \$1,000 per semester.
- The short-term emergency loan will be charged to the student's Meadville Lombard account.
- The student is required to repay this zero-interest loan in full within 60 calendar days, or before the first day of the semester that follows the semester in which the emergency loan was received, whichever occurs first.
- No loan will be approved if the student:
 - a. Has an outstanding account with the School that will not be covered by the approved financial aid (i.e. grants, scholarships, or student loans).
 - b. Has written insufficient checks to the School.
 - c. Has defaulted on a previous short-term emergency loan.
- Additional emergency loan funds in a succeeding semester will be approved only if the loan for the preceding semester has been repaid.
- Title IV funds may be applied to any outstanding or defaulted short-term emergency loans on a student's Meadville Lombard account.

SAC Hardship Grants

Any student who meets the eligibility requirements stated below may apply for a SAC Hardship Grant. SAC Hardship Grants may be used for the same purposes as federal financial aid as specified in the Higher Education Act of 1965.

Eligibility

Any currently enrolled full- or part-time student who is registered for a minimum of one class may request a SAC hardship grant after the drop/add date of their first semester. Students who are the subject of disciplinary action by the Unitarian Universalist Association or the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association or any other professional or accrediting body, or who are under investigation

for, or have been charged with, criminal child abuse, sexual assault or any other violent crime, may not receive a SAC Hardship Grant during the pendency of the action determining their culpability in any illegal or prohibited act, or during the period of any imposed sanction.

Amount

Students may request, and SAC may award, Hardship Grants in the amount of up to two hundred dollars (\$200.00) per student. A student may not receive more than one Hardship Grant during any SAC Term. (The SAC Term is understood to begin at the installation of newly-elected SAC officers and runs until the installation of the officers elected during the next election.)

In its discretion, SAC may award up to 15 Hardship Grants per SAC Term.

Application Process

Students may submit a request for a SAC Hardship Grant by email from their official Meadville email account to any SAC officer at their official Meadville email account, or by sending the request to SACofficers@meadville.edu. The names of the SAC officers and their individual email addresses may be found in each "This Week at Meadville" (a.k.a. the Bulletin). Requests submitted from or to non-Meadville accounts will not be considered. The student should include the amount requested (up to \$200.00) and describe the circumstances and purpose of the request.

If a member of the Meadville Lombard faculty or staff believes that a student may benefit from a Hardship Grant, they should inform the student of application process.

Review Process

Grant requests are considered confidential. The SAC President and Treasurer will jointly review and decide Grant requests. In the event either the President or Treasurer are making a Grant request, that person must recuse themselves from the decision-making process and another member of the SAC Executive Team will review and decide on the request in their place. In selecting a replacement for the review process, the Vice President will be considered first, and if unavailable, the Secretary will participate in the review process.

Up to three (3) Hardship Grants during any SAC Term may be approved by the President and Treasurer. Any additional requests received during the SAC Term must be reviewed by all available members of the SAC Executive Team. Up to twelve (12) additional Hardship Grants may be awarded. SAC Executive Team members reviewing a request may, with the prior consent of the applicant, consult with members of the Meadville-Lombard faculty or staff.

Award Process

If a SAC Hardship Grant request is approved, the SAC Treasurer will send a check request to the SAC student liaison staff person at Meadville. The student liaison will process the paperwork, send the check directly to the student and notify the SAC Treasurer of the date payment was issued. The SAC Treasurer will contact the student to confirm receipt of the check.

The SAC Treasurer is responsible for keeping records of all Hardship Grant disbursements made during their term of office. At the conclusion of the SAC Term and as part of the transition process, the outgoing Treasurer will give to the incoming SAC President and Treasurer a report on the Hardship Grant requests and disbursements during the outgoing Treasurer's term of office.

Appeal Process

In the event the applicant would like to appeal an unfavorable decision, they should make an appeal request to either of the Good Officers. The appeal request must explain, in detail, why the SAC

decision should be overturned. Any request for an appeal must be made using Meadville mail accounts. The names of the Good Officers and their individual email addresses may be found in each "This Week at Meadville" and also on the school website at www.Meadville.edu. Decisions of the Good Officers are final.

Right of Modification

In its sole discretion, SAC may at any time review and change any aspect of this policy and its procedures.

Library & Archives

The Meadville Lombard Library and Archives is designed to support students in their coursework, formation, and research. Both in Chicago and back home, you will have full access to library and archive resources and services. Nearly all physical library material can be mailed to you anywhere in North America. We also have extensive digital resources, including ebooks, journal databases, reference material and digital archives that are accessible online anywhere in the world.

Library

The Wiggin Library is the onsite library of Meadville Lombard and contains over 35,000 volumes, specializing in Unitarianism, Universalism, and Unitarian Universalism. This collection is available to faculty, students, and community members. Most of the books in our collection can be circulated through the mail.

I-Share Libraries contain over 35 million books from academic and theological libraries across Illinois. Current Meadville Lombard faculty and students are eligible to borrow I-Share books. We circulate I-Share books to you through the mail or you can pick up and return your library books at any I-Share library in Illinois.

Archives

At Meadville Lombard, archiving is a form of justice making work. From preservation to digitization, we work to make the richness and diversity of Unitarian Universalism's history freely and easily available to anyone who seeks it. We have been collecting history for over 175 years and hold material from students and scholars, laity and ministers, and congregations and organizations around the world. As the only exclusively UU archive, we take seriously the trust our community has placed in us to preserve our shared history.

We have over 400 physical and digital archival collections, with topics ranging from Puritanism to Paganism and everything in between. Our emphasis is liberal religion in the west, 20th century Unitarian Universalism, and communities underserved and excluded by traditional archives. We are particularly proud of our UUA Congregational Records, which tell the story of every Unitarian, Universalist, and Unitarian Universalist congregation from the 1920s to the 1990s

Student Privileges

Student privileges include access to library staff support, the Wiggin Library (including special material collections), I-Share Libraries, access to OCLC Interlibrary Loan for articles, and all digital resources. In addition, students can receive borrowing privileges from the University of Chicago and any ACTS Library. Student accounts are created automatically by library staff and their Meadville ID with a library barcode attached functions as their library card. If desired, students must request University of Chicago, ACTS, and New York Times digital subscription accounts.

Degree Seeking Students maintain their library privileges until graduation. Non-degree Seeking Students (such as students working towards a certificate, auditors, students from other schools, and students-at-large) maintain their privileges for one year from the beginning of their most recent class.

Fees and Account Blocks

Meadville Lombard Library and Archives does not charge late fees to students. However, students are responsible for damaged and lost books. Students will be billed for the cost of lost or damaged material plus a \$25.00 processing fee, per item. Patrons are not responsible for books the library has shipped to them that are lost in the mail but are responsible for the books they return to Meadville Lombard through the mail.

Students who accrue fines or fees at I-Share libraries are responsible for resolving those fines or fees. Fines and fees at other libraries are administered according to those libraries' policies and not Meadville Lombard's policies. Patrons are subject to fines and fees for overdue, lost, or damaged materials from I-Share libraries. Meadville Lombard library staff are not able to intercede on a patron's behalf and cannot accept payment for charges at another library. Patrons must contact the library at which they have outstanding charges for more information about the fees, and to find out how to pay the charges.

All patrons with an outstanding balance or a lost item from the Wiggin Library or I-Share Libraries will be blocked from checking out additional items until all books are returned and all fees are paid. In addition, students with an outstanding balance will be reported to the Business Office and the Registrar. Students will be restricted from registering for classes or graduating until outstanding balances are cleared for all Wiggin and I-Share material.

More Information.

Information about using library resources and how to contact library staff can be found at
<https://www.meadville.edu/library-and-archives/>

A list of the complete policies of the Meadville Lombard Library and Archives can be found at
<https://www.meadville.edu/library-and-archives/mission/>

Administrative Forms

The following forms are attached for your ease of use:

- Directed Study Form
- Drop/Add Form
- Incomplete Request Form
- Request for Accommodations
- Reasonable Accommodations Design
- Program Change Request
- Withdrawal Form
- Leave of Absence Application
- MLTS Institutional Aid Application
- Transfer Credit Request
- Emergency Loan Policy and Request Form

Directed Study in a course will be granted in only most extraordinary circumstances. Any directed study requires enrollment in an established registration period, execution during an established semester, and payment of the normal per-credit tuition amount. A letter grade is normally awarded for directed study.

The directed study needs to be administered by a full-time faculty or by a faculty member who has recently taught the course at Meadville Lombard Theological School.

The registration fees and tuition are the same for Directed study classes as for any other Meadville Lombard course.

The following sections must be completed and returned to the Registrar.

TO BE COMPLETED BY STUDENT (please print)

Name: _____ ID # _____

Course Title: _____ Semester/Year: _____

I request permission to take a directed study in the course named above. By signing below, I confirm that I have read and understand the parameters outlined above.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

TO BE COMPLETED BY COURSE INSTRUCTOR

I have arranged for the student named above to take a directed study under me in the course noted above.

The student will earn _____ credit(s) for this directed study.

Instructor Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

THE PROVOST AND THE STUDENT'S ACADEMIC ADVISOR MUST APPROVE THE DIRECTED STUDY

Academic Advisor: _____ Date: _____

VPASA : _____ Date: _____

Registrar: _____ Date: _____

FOR STUDENT RECORDS OFFICE USE ONLY

Course ID: _____ Filed in Student Record: _____ Credit / Grade: _____

COURSE WITHDRAWAL FORM

Student's Name

Semester

Year

--	--	--

DROP COURSE(S)

Course No.	Course Title

Reason for Withdrawal

--

I request a waiver of tuition for my withdrawn course(s) due to a medical or personal emergency.

Please note: For students who have received federal student aid and withdraw from all courses in a given term, a prorated portion of funds will be returned to the federal aid program. Any returned funds will be charged back to the student's account.

Electronic Signatures

Date

Student _____

Advisor _____

Registrar _____

INCOMPLETE REQUEST

TO BE COMPLETED BY STUDENT

Name: _____ ID # _____

Course ID: _____ Course Title: _____

Semester/Year: _____

Special Circumstance(s) prompting Incomplete Request: _____

By signing below, I confirm that I have read the Incomplete Policy and understand that the work must be completed before the end of the semester immediately following this semester (including summer) or I will receive a Permanent Incomplete, resulting in no earned credit for the class. By signing below, I also confirm that I understand by failing to complete the work for this class I may become ineligible for Federal Financial Aid and/or Institutional Tuition Reduction.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

TO BE COMPLETED BY COURSE INSTRUCTOR

Instructor Name: _____

Approved: _____ Rejected: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

V.P. of Academic and Student Affairs: _____ Date: _____

Registrar: _____ Date: _____



REQUEST FOR ACCOMMODATIONS

Request for accommodations because of learning disorder or disability includes:

1. Initiation of request to the Director of Enrollment Management and Student Services (by the deadline); and
2. Evaluation of request and clinical documentation.

The evaluation of the request for accommodations may be shared with the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, the Registrar, and the Vice President of Finance and Administration as deemed appropriate. When accommodations are authorized, the student will work with the Director of Enrollment Management and Student Services and the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs to determine appropriate and reasonable accommodations.

First name: _____ Last name: _____

Student ID #: _____

Preferred Phone #: () _____ - _____

Nature of learning disorder and/or disability:

Accommodation you will require at Meadville Lombard Theological School:

Attach recent clinical documentation (no older than one year) regarding disability to this form.

Signature: _____

Director for Enrollment Management & Student Services

Date: _____

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION DESIGN

In addition to the request for ADA accommodations, we ask that students complete this secondary document which is a specific *design* document. Its purpose is to help the student work with individual professors to identify accommodations appropriate to the course(s). While the ADA form alerts the school of desired ADA status, we cannot by law then take the info students provide us and share with your professors. We need your consent and faculty very often need to be informed of specific accommodations related to a particular class. This *design form* is the resource we hope you will find helpful to those conversations. Because accommodation needs may shift with each class and/or by the next year or semester, this process of consent between student and faculty should happen even informally (that is, without needing to prepare another form for the same faculty) across the time in the degree program.

This form does not share the student's health information. It simply states the student/you have been approved to receive reasonable accommodations and what that accommodation will be.

Directions:

1. Students who have an approved Request for ADA accommodations should contact each of the faculty members, with whom they are taking classes, to discuss what accommodation would be appropriate for their course.
2. During the discussion, the faculty member should fill out this form. Both the student and the faculty must sign this form.
3. The faculty member will then forward the signed form to the Senior Director of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs.
4. The Senior Director of Enrollment Management then obtains the initials of the Director of Contextual Ministry, and the Registrar.

Student Name: _____

Course: _____ Term: _____

Faculty: _____

The above named student has been approved to receive reasonable accommodation(s) in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (Section 504) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).



Reasonable Accommodation Design (cont.)

Meadville Lombard strives to be supportive of the academic needs of all its students. Reasonable accommodations are modifications and/or changes that enable equal access to degree programs for students with a disability without impeding an essential function of the course/degree program. All academic modifications or adjustments are not predetermined but, instead, are individualized and appropriate for each course. Thus, accommodations are designed by conversation between student and faculty.

Please complete this form and return to the **Director of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs**.
Accommodation(s) requested and approved:

Faculty

Date

Student

Date

Director of Enrollment Management & Student Affairs

Date

Director of Contextual Ministry

Registrar

PROGRAM CHANGE REQUEST

Student ID# _____

Name: _____
First Middle Last (Please Print Clearly)

Current Program to be ended:

Program Desired/Added:

Reason for requesting change/addition:

Please consult with your Academic Advisor first. Your advisor will submit your request to the V.P. of Academic and Student Affairs. The V.P. of Academic and Student Affairs will provide the Registrar with a copy of the paperwork and the V.P. of Academic and Student Affairs will notify the student of the final decision. Changing programs may jeopardize financial aid eligibility. Please check with the Financial Aid Office, VA Representative, and/or SEVIS Administrator.

For students transferring INTO the MDiv program: You must also submit two letters of recommendation – one from clergy, and one from their congregation. Transfers into the MDiv program are subject to faculty vote.

The submission of this form **does not** mean automatic acceptance in the program of your choice. Additional admissions requirements and/or information may be requested for acceptance into the new program.

Notification will be sent to your Meadville Lombard Theological School (MLTS) student email if additional requirements must be met. The V.P. of Academic and Student Affairs or an Academic Administrator will also notify you via your MLTS email of the decision.

Student Signature

Date _____

For Office Use Only

Faculty/Advisor Approval: _____ Date: ____/____/____

VP for Academic and Student Affairs: _____ Date: ____/____/____

Registrar: ____/____/____ Initials: _____



WITHDRAWAL FORM

****BEFORE WITHDRAWING CONSULT WITH YOUR ADVISOR****

Student's Name: _____ **Student ID#** _____

Reason for Withdrawal:

Medical
 Military

Personal
 Academic

Semester of Withdrawal: _____ Fall _____ Spring _____ Summer / Current Year: _____

I am withdrawing from the _____ MDiv, _____ MALS, _____ MAR program at Meadville Lombard Theological School. I understand that withdrawing might have an impact on my financial aid benefits. I am also aware that I may have a financial obligation to Meadville Lombard Theological School based on the refund schedule deadlines for withdrawing as posted.

Documentation for medical, military, and personal withdrawals may be requested at the discretion of Meadville Lombard Theological School.

Reason for withdrawal/explanation.

*Declaration: By signing this form I am withdrawing from my current graduate program in which I am registered. Once I withdraw, I understand that I cannot re-enter the graduate program except through a new admissions application, which would be in competition with other applications. I understand that re-admission to a graduate program is not automatic or guaranteed in any way.

Student's Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Advisor's Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

V.P. of Academics and Student Affairs: _____ **Date:** _____

Registrar: _____ **Date:** _____



LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST FORM

Date: _____

Name: _____ Student ID# _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____

Email Address: _____ Phone: () _____ - _____

Students planning any leave should consult with their **Academic Advisor** and arrange for an interview with Director of Student Services. For full tuition refund, a leave of absence must be arranged either at the end of the semester prior to the leave or by the Drop/Add deadline of the requested semester. For the refund schedule and additional dates, visit the MLTS Academic Calendar.

A leave of absence will usually fall into one of the below categories:

1. a leave of absence while in good standing;
2. a leave of absence while on warning or probation;
3. a leave of absence for medical reasons; and
4. an involuntary leave of absence.

I request a leave of absence for the following period of time. Check all that apply:

Fall Semester Spring Semester Summer Semester

Reason for Leave:

Academic Year _____ Last Date of Attendance: _____ / _____ / _____

Registrar Signature: _____

Business Office Signature: _____

V.P. of Academic and Student Affairs Signature: _____



EMERGENCY LOAN REQUEST

I, _____ request an emergency loan in the amount of \$ _____ for the following reason:

I understand that this loan will be charged to my student account and is due to be repaid as follows:

Due Date	Payment Amount	Balance

Student's account must be current before transcripts will be issued or the final degree conferred.

Name – Printed

Signature

Date

Approved

Denied

Vice President, Academic and Student Affairs

Date

Vice President, Finance and Administration

Date

Appendix

Appendix 1: Thesis/Project Submission Guidelines

Appendix 2: Degree Completion Worksheets

- 3 year MDiv Course Plan
- MDiv Degree Completion Worksheet
- MALS Degree Completion Worksheet
- MAR Degree Completion Worksheet

Appendix 1: Thesis Submission Guidelines—Wiggin Library

I. Formatting and Pricing

- A. All theses submitted for binding must be delivered to the Library electronically as a PDF/A document, sent to the Librarian at slevine@meadville.edu. See directions for creating a PDF/A in section III.
- B. Page layout should have a 1.5-inch left hand margin.
- C. The \$75 Thesis Binding Fee covers binding of two copies, one copy for the library and one copy for the student's personal use. The fee will be billed upon submission of the thesis to the library and is due and payable when billed.
- D. Final thesis copies are due to the Library by April 1.
- E. All financial obligations must be paid in full on or before April 30 [approximately three weeks prior to Commencement].

II. Style

- Theses should be written with constant reference to the most recent edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style* (hereafter CMS). Some students will find Kate L. Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (hereafter Turabian) also helpful. Page references below are to the 15th Edition of the CMS, published in 2003, and the 7th Edition of Turabian, published in 2007.
- Some required and commonly included elements include:
 1. Title Page. cf. CMS p. 6; Turabian p. 379.
 2. Acknowledgements/Dedication. cf. CMS p. 20-21.
 3. Table of Contents. cf. CMS p. 16-17; Turabian p. 380.
 4. List of Tables and/or Illustrations (if appropriate). cf. CMS p. 18-19; Turabian p. 382/383.
 5. (Optional) Prologue/Introduction. cf. CMS p. 20-21.
 6. Body of paper. cf. Turabian p. 392 for first page of a chapter, and p. 393 for a sample page from the midst of a thesis/dissertation.
 7. Bibliography or Works Cited. Cf. Turabian p. 401 for sample Bibliography page.
- Below are samples of a Title Page, Acknowledgements, Table of Contents, and Bibliography. Italicized notes in brackets [*like this*] are notes for this guide, and do not indicate that any text given in that place should be bracketed and italicized.

MEADVILLE LOMBARD THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL

[*Title:*] MA THESIS SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

A THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE:
MASTER OF ARTS (RELIGION) [*or relevant degree*]

BY AUTHOR'S
NAME

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS MARCH
2017

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS/DEDICATION

[Optional:] To [whomever]

[Optional: a paragraph giving special thanks to those who made
the thesis possible, often certain faculty members, family,
partners, friends, and/or a religious community]

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CHAPTER 1: [CHAPTER TITLE]	1
CHAPTER 2: [CHAPTER TITLE]	27
CHAPTER 3: [CHAPTER TITLE]	55
CHAPTER 4: [CHAPTER TITLE]	80
CHAPTER 5: [CHAPTER TITLE]	95
BIBLIOGRAPHY	112

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Brown, Jason. "What Is Consciousness?" *Process Studies* 40:1 (Spring/Summer 2012): 21-41.

Owen-Towle, Tom. *Unwrapping the Inner Gifts of Christmas*. San Diego, CA: Flaming Chalice Press, 2013.

Przywara, Erich. *Analogia Entis: Metaphysics: Original Structure and Universal Rhythm*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2014.

Tucker, Cynthia Grant. *Prophetic Sisterhood: Liberal Women Ministers on the Frontier, 1880-1930*. Lincoln, NE: Authors Choice Press, 2000.

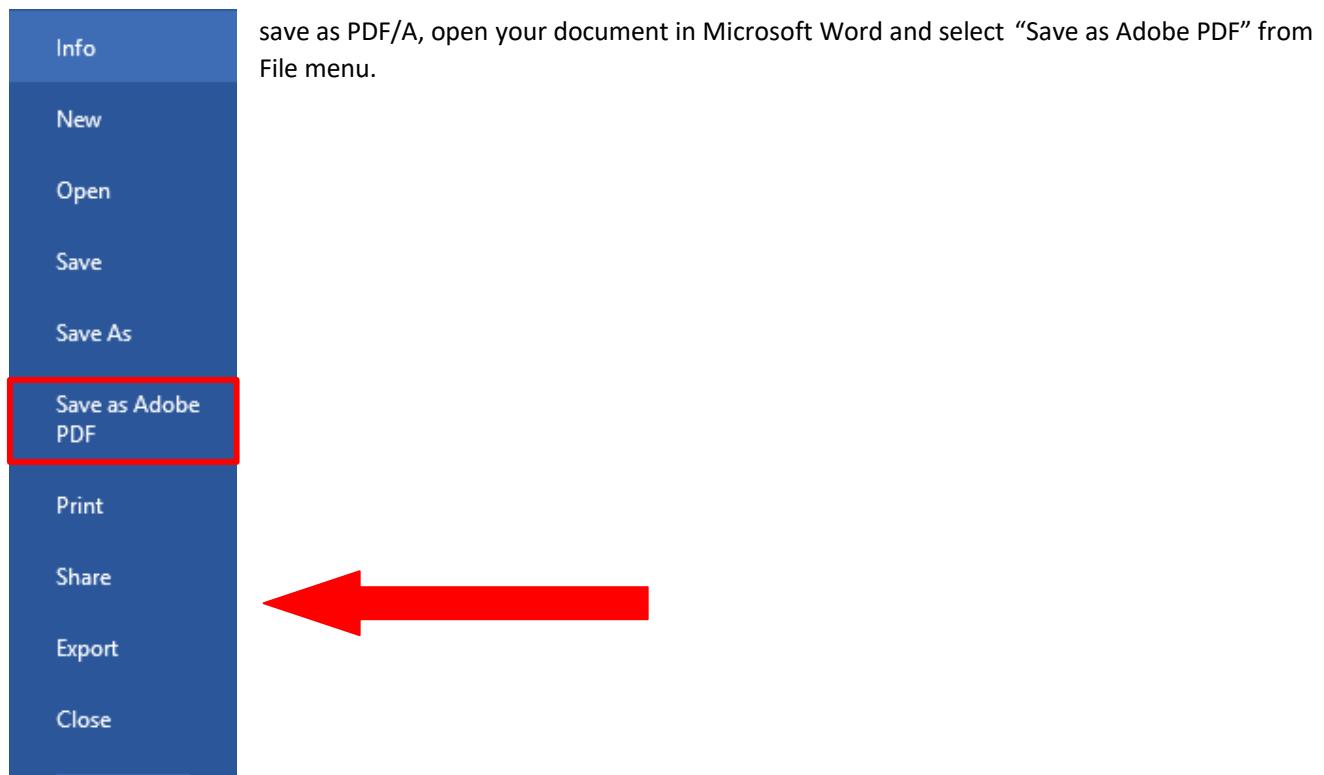
Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7th ed. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007.

And so on, in alphabetical order by author.

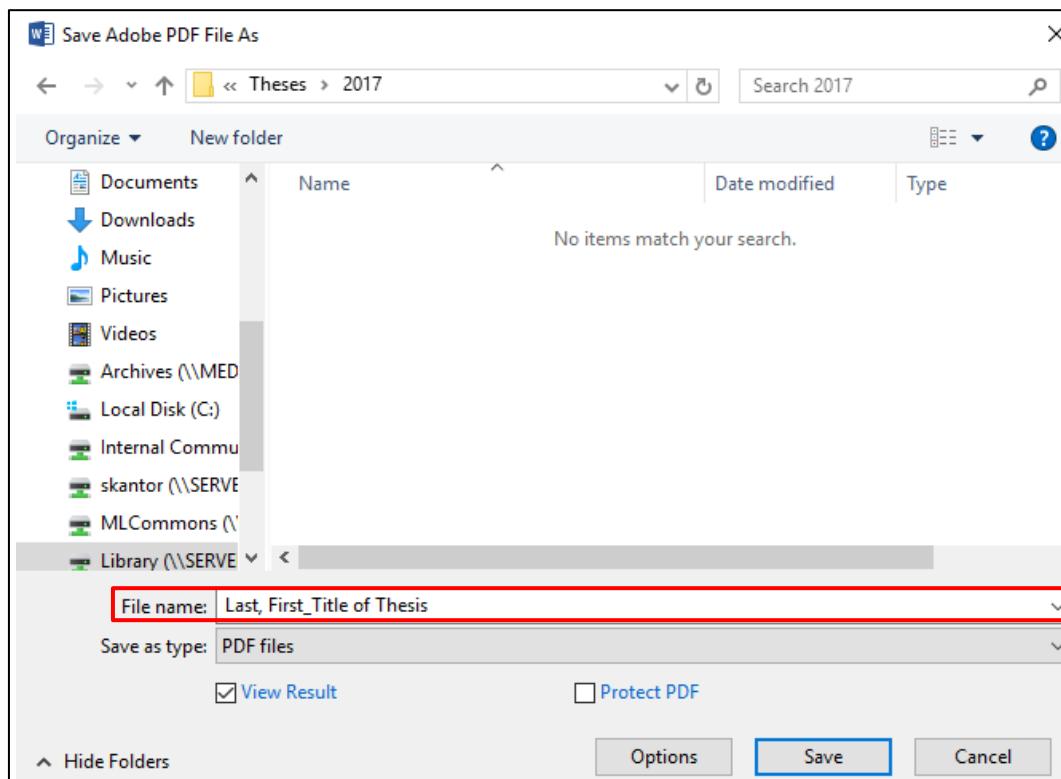
[NB: Above example includes citations of an article from an academic journal (Brown) and several books. See Turabian or the *Chicago Manual of Style* for further guidelines on citing sources, and rules for citing further kinds of sources.]

III. Saving as PDF/A

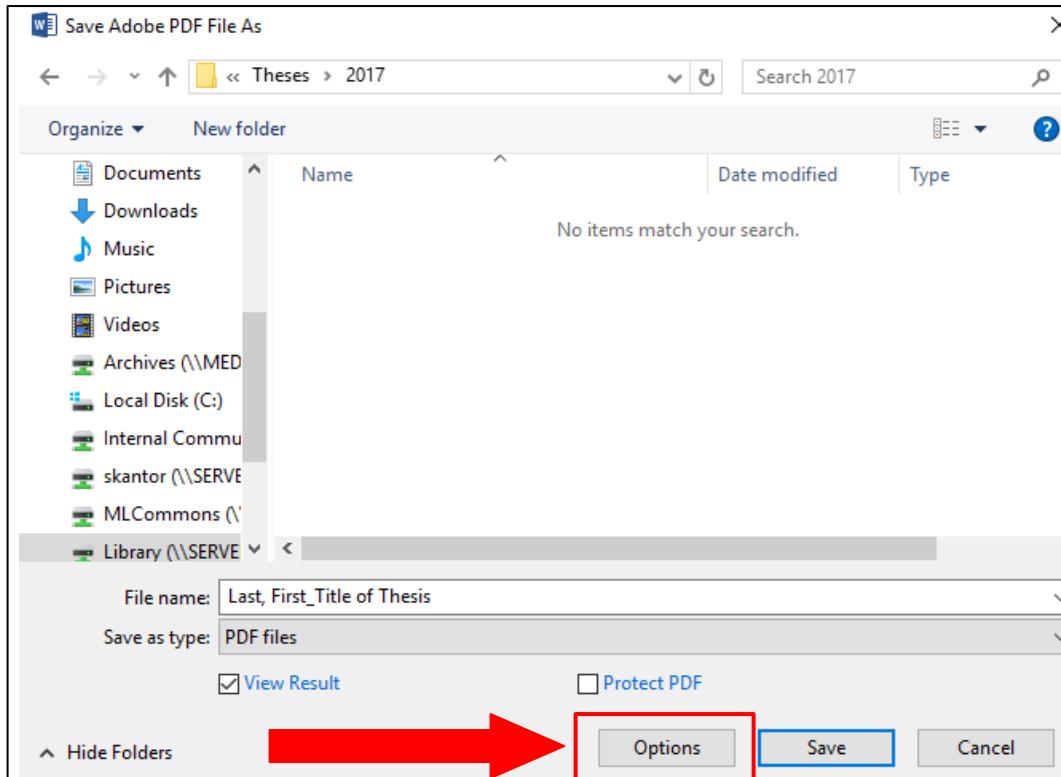
To the



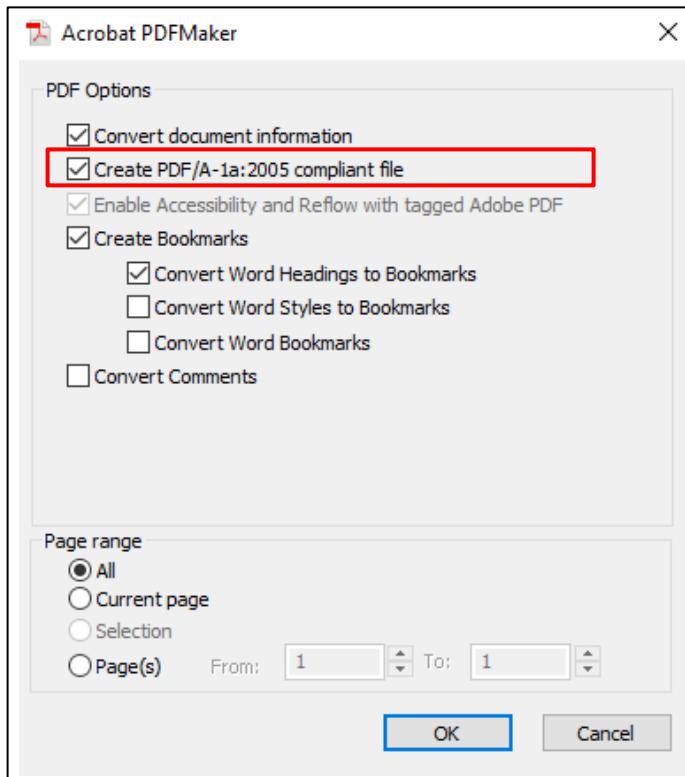
Enter a file name following this pattern: “Last Name, First Name_Title of Thesis”



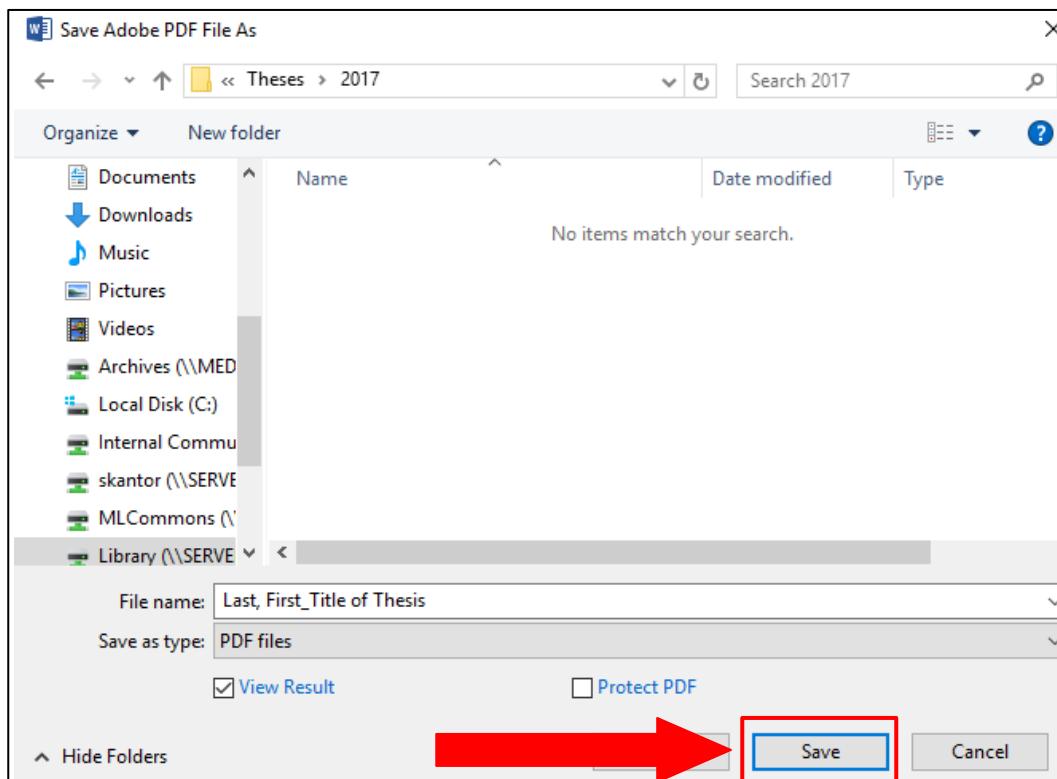
Before hitting “Save,” select “Options”



A new dialog box will appear. Check the box for “Create PDF/A -1a:2005 compliant file” and hit “OK”



The dialog box will close. Select “Save” as usual.



Before submitting the document, make sure that the fonts used are embedded – this is an option available in most PDF-producing programs. To check if your fonts are embedded:

- 1. Open the PDF/A in Adobe Reader or Adobe Acrobat**
- 2. Click on “Document Properties”**
- 3. Click on “Fonts Tab”**
- 4. Each font listed should have “(Embedded)” or “(Embedded Subset)” next to the font**
- 5. If font does not have one of these next to it, font is NOT embedded**

Appendix 2: Degree Completion Worksheets

Using the worksheets, on the following pages, students will be able to track their progress as they work through their respective degree programs. When saved electronically, the sheets will automatically tally the number of credits obtain toward degree completion. Using this sheet in consultation with your Academic Advisor is highly recommended.

- 3 Year MDiv Course Plan
- MDiv Degree Completion Worksheet
- MALS Degree Completion Worksheet
- MAR Degree Completion Worksheet

First Year				
Course	Fulfils	Planned Course/Term	Credits	Completed
Cultural Grounding & Theological Formation	Signature Course		3	
Social Engagement	Signature Course		3	
Introduction to Pastoral Ministry	Required (CPE pre-req)		3	
Faith Formation in a Changing World	Required		3	
Constructive Theology	Required		3	
History of Global Christianity	Required		3	
Healthy Boundaries, Healthy Ministry	Required		3	
Free Elective *	Free Elective #1		3	

Summer: Clinical Pastoral Education (6 credits)

Second Year				
Course	Fulfils	Planned Course/Term	Credits	Completed
Vocational Studies: Formation	Signature Course		3	
Vocational Studies: Communities	Signature Course		3	
Year-long Internship	Signature Course		6	
Hebrew Scriptures	Required		3	
New Testament	Required		3	
Introduction to Ethics: Themes & Topics	Required		3	
Topics in Worship and Liturgy	Required		3	
Elective	Free Elective #2		3	
Elective	Free Elective #3		3	

Third Year				
Course	Fulfils	Planned Course/Term	Credits	Completed
Leadership Studies: Formation	Signature Course		3	
Leadership Studies: Administration	Signature Course		3	
Year-long Internship	Signature Course		6	
Global Religions	Required		3	
Preaching As If You Mean It	Required		3	
Elective	Free Elective #4		3	
Elective	Free Elective #5		3	
Elective	Free Elective #6		3	
Elective	Free Elective #7		3	

Note: Students seeking UU fellowship should take Unitarian Universalist History and Polity and Tools for Parish and Non-Profit Administration as two of their free electives.

Overall MDiv Degree Requirements

Enter the number of credits completed in the "Completed" Column to automatically calculate your progress.

Signature Courses	Credits	Completed	Title	Credits	Completed
Cultural Grounding and Theological Formation	3		Introduction to Pastoral Ministry	3	
Social Engagement (includes Community Site)	3		Constructive Theology	3	
Vocational Studies: Formation	3		Topics in Worship and Liturgy	3	
Vocational Studies: Communities	3		Preaching as if You Mean It	3	
Year 2 Internship (year-long)	6		Clinical Pastoral Education	6	
Leadership Studies: Formation	3		Faith Formation in a Changing World	3	
Leadership Studies: Administration	3		Global Religions	3	
Year 3 Internship (year-long)	6		Hebrew Scriptures	3	
Total	30		New Testament	3	
			Healthy Boundaries, Healthy Ministry	3	
Elective Courses			Introduction to Ethics: Themes & Topics	3	
1	3		History of Global Christianity	3	
2	3				39
3	3				
4	3				
5	3				
6	3				
7	3				
Total	21		Program Total	90	

To meet MFC Credentialing requirements, UU students should take the following as two of their electives:

Unitarian Universalist History and Polity

Tools for Parish and Non-Profit Administration

In order to be eligible for Federal Aid, the student must be enrolled in a degree program at least half-time.

Designations:

Fall and Spring: Full Time = 9 credits; Part Time = 6 credits

Spring enrollment status continues through summer.

MALS Degree Completion Worksheet

Required Courses	Credits	Electives selected	Completed
Cultural Grounding and Theological Formation	3	1	
Social Engagement*	3	2	
Tools for Non-Profit and Parish Administration	3	3	
Healthy Boundaries, Healthy Ministry	3	4	
Pedagogy for Social Change	3	5	
Internship (year-long)	6		
Electives	Credits	Concentration (optional)	
Five free electives	15	1	
Note: three of these electives can be used to pursue a concentration		2	
Total Credits	36	3	

Enter the number of credits completed in the "Completed" Column to automatically calculate your progress.

In order to be eligible for Federal Aid, the student must be enrolled in a degree program at least half-time.

To meet these requirements, they must be enrolled as follows:

Designations:

Fall and Spring: Full Time = 9 credits; Part Time = 6 credits

Spring enrollment status continues through summer.

Overall MAR Degree Completion Worksheet

	Credits	Courses Selected	Completed
Intensive Coursework (in the following subject matter)	18		
Theology/Ethics			
Religious Education			
Historical Context of Ministry			
Religion and the Arts			
Ministry and the Church			
Cultural Context of Ministry			
Electives	18		
<i>Students may elect to complete a concentration:</i>			
<i>Theology/Ethics</i>			
<i>Faith Formation (Religious Education)</i>			
<i>Historical Context of Ministry</i>			
Thesis	9		
Academic Research and Public Theological Writing	3		
Total Credits	48		

Enter the number of credits completed in the "Completed" Column to automatically calculate your progress.

In order to be eligible for Federal Aid, the student must be enrolled in a degree program at least half-time.

To meet these requirements, they must be enrolled as follows:

Designations:

Fall and Spring: Full Time = 9 credits; Part Time = 6 credits

Spring enrollment status continues through summer.