

Louisville Seminary Office of Field Education

Policy on Credit Awarded for Previous Ministry Experience

Master of Divinity students should recognize that field education during their seminary career is considered a vital part of their overall theological education and preparation for ministry. This is in keeping with Louisville Seminary's commitment to the integration of academic study and contextual learning in theological education.

At the same time, Louisville Seminary recognizes that many students enter the M.Div. degree program with significant previous professional ministry experience. In such cases, upon the successful completion of the required year of field education in a congregational setting and the *Practical Theology in Congregations* course (taken concurrently and normally during the middler year), students may be granted up to two additional units of credit in field education for previous ministry experience, upon approval of the Director of Field Education. Students seeking field education credit for previous ministry experience must complete the Previous Ministry Work Petition Form and submit the completed form **no later than October 1 of their senior year**.

The following guidelines help to determine whether previous ministry experiences may qualify for field education credit:

- Previous professional ministry experiences were done full-time for a calendar year or more, prior to matriculation. Full-time normally means no less than 40 hours a week.
- Qualifying experiences are not required to be paid full-time positions; however, past supervisors will need to verify the full-time nature of the ministry (see Petition Form).
- Ministry work as a licensed or ordained minister under appointment or call prior to matriculation may also qualify as previous ministry experience for purposes of this policy.
- Qualifying experiences normally entail face-to-face, more traditionally defined ministries in the life of the church and would exclude primarily administrative functions (e.g., church secretary, bookkeeper, facilities manager).

Students who are considering this option for field education credit and who have questions about the process and the guidelines are encouraged to speak to the Director of Field Education before filing their petition.

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