

THE STEM HANDBOOK

Systematic Training for Effective Ministries
STEM

STEM is a joint ministry of
the Michigan Conference, United Church of Christ,
and
the Christian Church Michigan Region
(Disciples of Christ)

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STEM Board of Directors
(Compiled by Rev. Kent A. Meyer, Ph.D., STEM Dean, 2002 – 2004; Anne McCauslin, STEM Dean,
2005-current.)

Contents

	Page
An Overview of STEM Programs	4
Lay Leadership Development Program (LLD)	4
Licensed/Commissioned Ministry Program (LCMP)	5
UCC Commissioned Ministry and STEM	5
The Lay Leadership Development Program	5
The Licensed/Commissioned Ministry Program	6
Application Requirements	6
Requirements	6
Elective Activity	7
Overview of LCMP Curriculum	9
LCMP Syllabus	10
History & Polity Required Course	18
Course Reports	19
LCMP Book Review Guidelines	19
LCMP Pastoral Visit Verbatim Outline	20
LCMP Advisor Guide	22
General Information	25
Instructors	25
Class Venue	25
Meals	25
Tuition & Fees	25
LCMP Credit for Outside Classes	25
Attendance	26
Class Cancellation Policy	26
Tuition Refund Policy	26
Housing	27
Staying at the Parish House	
Motels in area	
Graduation	27
Auditing Courses (for STEM grads only)	27
A Taste of STEM- Program	27
Directions	27
Addresses/Phone numbers	27
Michigan Conference Office	28
Parish House	28

DOC Regional Office	28
First Christian Church, Lansing	29
Directions to Michigan Conference from the East and West	29
Appendix 1 Licensing/Commissioning Requirements	29
Appendix 2 Licensing/Commissioning Authorizing Bodies	29
STEM Dean Contact Information	30

AN OVERVIEW OF STEM PROGRAMS

STEM stands for Systematic Training for Effective Ministries. The STEM program began in 1982. There was a felt need in the Michigan Region/Michigan Conference for training for lay church leaders. At that same time there was an awareness of talented and qualified persons who might be able to provide training.

In response to this need and abundance of resources, the STEM program was established as a joint ministry of the Michigan Region, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) (“**DOC**”), and the Michigan Conference, United Church of Christ (“**UCC**”). Its goal was to provide practical training and opportunities for spiritual growth for church leaders and Christian educators.

STEM students are challenged to reflect on their faith, to be open to new perspectives and insights, and to claim their ministry roles within the Body of Christ. Since 1982, hundreds of men and women have graduated from STEM programs and used their gifts in the service of God.

In the mid 1990's, the STEM program was asked to take on the additional task of providing training for Licensed Ministers for the conference and the region. The original STEM program began to be known as the **STEM Core** program and the new Licensed Ministry Program began to be called the **STEM LMP**. Students who complete the STEM Core program were then able to choose to seek further training in the STEM LMP if they experienced the call to Licensed Ministry. A number of STEM Licensed Ministry Program graduates are now serving in churches in Michigan and other states.

Since 2011, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) no longer recognizes “licensed ministry” as an order of ministry. Instead, the ordering of ministry encompasses Commissioned Ministry (not seeking ordination (nso)), Commissioned Ministry (seeking ordination(so)) and Ordained Ministry. The STEM Licensed Ministry Program may provide for some of the educational training requirements for Commissioned Ministry (nso). Disciples of Christ students seeking to be Commissioned Ministers (nso) must meet with the Regional Commission on Ministry to determine the specific educational requirements they will need.

From the mid 1990s to 2012 there were two programs within STEM: The Core Program and the Licensed/Commissioned Ministry Program (LCMP). In 2012 it was noted that almost every student entering the STEM Programs was following a call to licensed ministry. Following its stated mission of training lay leaders, the STEM Board consolidated the Core Program into the LCMP for lay leaders following a call to pastoral ministry. For Lay Leaders, STEM is offering the LLD Program of learning events geared specifically to develop skills necessary for lay leadership.

The **Lay Leadership Development Program (LLD)** is designed for lay members or lay leaders who are interested in exploring their faith and gaining new skills for leadership within the church. Three to six workshops or learning events will be offered each year that will address current topics and needs of the lay leaders in our churches. Topics will vary from year to year. Workshops will be offered at different locations throughout the state. Lay leaders will be able to enroll individually for as many workshops as fit their needs.

The Licensed/Commissioned Ministry Program (“LCMP”) provides basic training for those seeking licensing or commissioning (nso) within the UCC Conference or the DOC Region. A High School Diploma, or its equivalent, and being in or under care with the proper licensing/commissioning body is required for admission. The LCMP is a 5 year learning journey that encompasses class room learning, practical experiential learning and preparation of a number of written or recorded assignments relating to pastoral ministry, similar to the work required by their association or region for licensing. See Appendix 1.

Most of the Associations of the Michigan Conference UCC accept this program for the educational component for Licensed Ministry. For those in the Michigan Region (DOC) seeking Commissioned Ministry (nso) the Commission on Ministry must be consulted about educational requirements. Completion of the LCMP *does not* guarantee licensing/commissioning. The STEM program only provides training and does not authorize ministry. Authorization for ministry is the sole prerogative of the authorizing body of each denomination: in the UCC, the association’s Church & Ministry committees; in the DOC, the Commission on Ministry. Students interested in Licensed/Commissioned Ministry should discuss their intentions with their pastor and make an *initial* contact with their association minister or regional minister regarding their calling. See Appendix 2 for contact information.

UCC COMMISSIONED MINISTRY & STEM

Although the STEM LCMP is designed primarily for parish ministry, it may also be useful for those pursuing commissioned ministry in the UCC (for example, parish nursing, Christian education director, church administration, church music, mission-related work). UCC commissioned ministry candidates will need to write a paper on their understanding of commissioned ministry related to their specific field. As with licensed ministry, the STEM program only provides training and does not authorize ministry. Students *must* go through the commissioning process set up by their association to be authorized as a commissioned minister.

LAY LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The LLD Program is designed to provide church leaders and Christian Educators with practical skills for leadership, opportunities for spiritual growth, and new insights into Christian faith. Learning Workshops or events will be offered to address current topics and needs of the local church and lay leadership to enhance leadership functions at the local church level.

Topics will vary from year to year. The learning events will be offered at different locations throughout the state. Most Events will be one day learning opportunities offered on any given Saturday. Times will vary. Lay Leaders will be able to enroll in as many Events as fit their needs.

The cost of Events will be \$35, unless otherwise noted. Lunch will be included, unless otherwise noted.

THE LICENSED/COMMISSIONED MINISTRY PROGRAM

The Licensed/Commissioned Ministry Program is intended to provide basic training for students interested in pursuing licensed or commissioned ministry in the UCC and commissioned ministry (not seeking ordination) in the DOC. The goal of the program is to give basic tools for parish ministry and opportunities to reflect on pastoral practice.

The Licensed/Commissioned Ministry Program (LCMP) is *only* an educational program. Completion of this program **does not** guarantee licensing/commissioning by either denomination. Licensing/commissioning is the sole prerogative of the authorizing bodies. Students interested in licensed/commissioned ministry are encouraged to make initial contact with their associate conference minister (UCC) or regional minister (DOC) regarding the procedures required by their denomination for licensing/commissioning (see Appendices I and II).

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Completion of the LCMP application form (available from the Dean).
2. Letter of recommendation from your minister supporting your pursuit of licensed/commissioned ministry and entrance into the program.
3. Letter of recommendation from your church council/consistory, or president/chairperson supporting your pursuit of licensed/commissioned ministry and entrance into the program.
4. Make initial contact with your conference minister (UCC) or regional minister (DOC) regarding your sense of call to licensed/commissioned ministry and the procedures and requirements of your denomination. Submit a letter acknowledging your contact.
5. Find an ordained or licensed minister to serve as your Advisor. This may be your home pastor. Advisors should be involved to some degree in parish ministry and be able to provide you with the opportunity to observe various pastoral activities and participate in ministry to fulfill the requirements given below.

CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

1. **ATTEND ALL CLASSES** (plus an outside History & Polity class). Complete required Course Reports.
2. **CLASS REPORTS-** Submit completed Class Reports for each course, elective activity, and written assignment within 90 days of the class/activity.
 - a. The Course Report form is available from the Dean.
 - b. Complete the Course Report Form according to the requirements listed on pp. 18-19.

c. Students review their completed Course Report with their advisor. **If the student has demonstrated a basic grasp of the subject matter and identified what was new learning, the advisor signs the class report** and it is forwarded to the Dean. *The student will not receive credit for a course or elective activity until a signed report form is received by the Dean.* Students should keep copies of their reports in case the originals are lost or misplaced.

d. Class and elective reports become part of the student's permanent file. Reports are not returned except by special request.

e. Class and elective reports must be received by the Dean **within 90 days** of the course or event to receive credit. If a report is not received in this period of time, the student will lose credit for the course or event. In extenuating circumstances, students may apply for a waiver by letter to the Dean and STEM Board.

3. ELECTIVE ACTIVITY HOURS:

Students are required to complete 60 hours of educational experiences or new activities in the church in addition to their class participation. These "electives" may include: seminars, workshops, book reports, video reports, conducting worship, writing and delivering sermons, or new responsibilities in the local church. Students are encouraged to complete these elective hours in the first 2 years in the program.

A. Elective Activities & Reports – 60 Hours

Students are to be active in learning from a variety of sources. Students are required to complete 60 hours worth of elective activities. These include seminars, workshops, videos, and new activities in the church. A full list is given below. Reports must be filed for each activity giving the number of hours for credit. As with course reports, the activity reports must be reviewed with, and signed by, the student's Advisor. *Students may not have more than 20 hours of credit in any given activity or type of activity (with the exception of seminars and workshops). Students may not earn more than 20 credit hours for any one activity.*

B. Elective Credit Activity Options

1. Seminars & Workshops

Any seminars or workshops related to a course of study may be used. These must be taken during the time of study (unless allowed by the Dean). The student must write up an elective report form (the same form as for classes) within 90 days of the event to receive credit. For events which have multiple workshops/seminars, please write up separate reports for each event. The student will receive credit for the length in hours of the seminar/workshop.

2. Book Reports

Any book related to a course of study may be used. It must be read during the course of study. See the "Book Review Guidelines" below. A book report following the book review guidelines is worth 5 hours of credit.

3. Church Activities

An activity in the church *which you have not done before* is acceptable for credit, with the exception of being on a committee. For example, if you have not taught a Bible Study, leading a Bible Study in your church is acceptable. Hours would include both prep time and the actual class. An elective report is filed as usual. Other possibilities include: being a delegate to your association, conference, or regional meetings; planning & leading VBS; planning or leading worship. Again, *committee work is not acceptable*.

4. Preaching

Students may prepare and preach a sermon for elective credit (in addition to the 3 sermons required below for graduation.) Write an elective report about the experience and include a copy of your sermon. Three sermons are allowed for elective credit. Preaching a sermon is worth 6 elective hours.

5. Video Lectures

Video lectures are treated as seminars. Elective hours are given for the length of the lecture.

6. Movie Reviews

A movie review will be treated the same as a book review. Complete the report following the book review guidelines and submit it with a course report. Movie reviews are worth 5 credit hours.

7. Independent Research Projects

Students may conduct an independent research project leading to a research paper. Topics must be related to a course of study. The paper must be at least 5 pages, single space, and have at least four references in a bibliography. Credit will be given for 20 elective hours.

4. PREACH 3 SERMONS.

Submit sermon text or tape with a signed course report. One sermon should be preached between the Preaching I and Preaching II courses. The report should include some brief reflections on how the student approached the sermon and what the student learned from preaching it.

5. OBSERVE A FUNERAL AND WRITE A “HOW TO” PAPER.

The student makes arrangements with their advisor to sit in on a pre-funeral meeting with the family. Student reviews the steps in preparing a funeral and funeral meditation with the advisor. Student observes the funeral. The paper should be a step-by-step outline of how to put together and officiate at a funeral. It must be signed by your advisor.

6. OBSERVE A WEDDING AND WRITE A “HOW TO” PAPER.

The student discusses with their advisor how to do a wedding (confidentiality may not permit the student to sit in on actual pre-marital sessions). Student reviews how to do pre-marital counseling with their advisor. Student reviews how to prepare a wedding service and wedding meditation with

their advisor. Student observes the rehearsal and the wedding. The paper should be a step-by-step outline of how to put together and officiate at a wedding. It must be signed by your advisor.

7. MAKE 3 PASTORAL VISITS AND SUBMIT VERBATIM REPORTS.

The student arranges with the advisor to make three pastoral visits. At least one visit should be to someone in a hospital or nursing home. The student then writes a verbatim of each visit and includes pastoral reflections on the visits. The student reviews their verbatim with their advisor and has the advisor sign the written verbatim. Please see Verbatim Guidelines below for how to write a verbatim (p. 20).

8. ATTEND A HISTORY & POLITY CLASS ON ONE’S OWN DENOMINATION offered, or recommended, by the DOC Region or the UCC Conference. Students are encouraged to attend both the DOC and UCC History & Polity Classes.

9. WRITE A PAPER ON THE HISTORY & POLITY OF HIS/HER DENOMINATION.

This paper should follow the requirements of the student’s denomination for the paper required for licensing/commissioning. This paper should demonstrate a basic understanding of the history of the student’s denomination, major themes in that history, how the denomination is organized and run, and current issues the denomination is wrestling with.

10. WRITE A PERSONAL THEOLOGY PAPER.

This paper should follow the requirements of the student’s denomination for the paper required for licensing/commissioning. It should include brief statements on the student’s understanding of the Bible, God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Christian life, the Church, and the Sacraments.

11. WRITE A THEOLOGY OF MINISTRY PAPER.

This paper should express the student’s own understanding of ministry; its Biblical foundations, essential character and major functions. The student should identify a pastoral issue that may arise while in pastoral ministry and explore the theology behind the student’s response to the issue. The student will be required to give an oral defense of the paper to his/her peers and the Dean.

OVERVIEW OF LCMP CURRICULUM

The LCMP is made up of 31 courses, taught in a 4 year cycle. STEM offers a rolling enrollment but classes are offered once every four years.

Intro to UCC/Intro to DOC	Preaching I	Church Dev/Evangelism	Theology I
Old Testament	Worship I	Faith Formation	Theology II
New Testament	Worship II	Stewardship/Mission	Contemp. Theology
Faith Development	Sacraments	Leadership Styles/Conflct Mgt.	Issues in Theology
Church History	Preaching II	FamilySystems/Conflct Mgt	Covenant
Bible & Interpretation I	Ethics	Spirituality	Theology of Ministry
Bible & Interpretation II	Church Administration	Spiritual Formation	Defense of Theology
Pastoral Care	Mission	Self Care	of ministry paper

Completion of Classes in the History and Polity of the student's denomination are required for STEM Certification. These classes are currently offered by the Michigan Region, the Michigan Conference or a seminary.

LICENSED/COMMISSIONED MINISTRY PROGRAM SYLLABUS

Introduction to the Christian Church (DOC)

This course provides a brief introduction to the life and ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). It includes: a brief historical overview; basic principles and concepts informing the Christian Church; basic structure and organization of the region and the national denomination.

Students will become proficient in the following Marks of Readiness:

***Ability to be conversant on the history and beliefs of the Christian Church (DOC);
Demonstrate knowledge to access programs and resources provided by the Region and the National office to assist the local church in growth and development.***

Introduction to the UCC

This course provides a brief introduction to the basic principles and structure of the United Church of Christ. It includes: a brief historical overview, focusing on the 4 major parent denominations; the UCC Statement of Faith as a theological statement; the basic principles of UCC polity (headship of Christ, autonomy, covenant); the structure of UCC polity; the ministry and structure of the conference and the national denomination.

Students will become proficient in the following Marks of Readiness:

***Ability to be conversant on the four streams which came together to form the UCC and what each brought to the table;
Knowledge of, and ability to, express what it means to be a peace and justice church;
Demonstrate knowledge to access programs and resources provided by the Association, Conference, and National settings of the church, to assist the local church in growth and development.***

Old Testament

This course provides an overview of the Old Testament; its story and its historical and social context. It includes: an introduction to modern methods of Biblical studies; forms of Biblical criticism; an overview of OT history; and an overview of OT literature; identification of major theological themes of the OT.

Students will become proficient in the following Marks of Readiness:

***Knowledge of the major stories, themes, and strands of the Hebrew Scriptures;
Commitment to pursue personal enrichment and ongoing formation through the study of the Hebrew Scriptures.***

New Testament

Building on the OT course, this course provides an overview of recent scholarship on the New Testament. It includes: the historical and social context of the NT; critical approaches to the NT (source, form, redaction, literary); the quest for the historical Jesus; the theologies of the Gospels; Pauline and Deutero-Pauline letters; apocalyptic literature.

Students will become proficient in the following Marks of Readiness:

Knowledge of the content, authorship, history and theological perspectives of the New Testament;

Commitment to pursue personal enrichment and ongoing formation through the study of the New Testament.

Faith Development

This course introduces students to the basic principles of Christian Education. Special attention will be given to Fowler's "Stages of Faith" and their significance for Christian Education.

Students will become proficient in the following Marks of Readiness:

Ability to craft and lead educational lessons;

Ability to identify one's own learning style.

Church History

This course provides an overview of the history of the Christian Church in the West. Periods and areas covered will include: Apostolic & Sub-Apostolic eras, Patristic era, the Medieval Synthesis, the Protestant Reformation, Christianity in the age of European colonization, American Church History, the rise of liberal Protestantism, controversies of the 20th Century, the Church in the Third World, and present trends. Particular attention will be given to significant theological movements, changes in Church polity, Church/State relations, and the role of the Church in the world.

Students will become proficient in the following Marks of Readiness:

Knowledge and understanding of the histories and traditions of the Christian Church, from the time of the apostles to the present;

Appreciation of the Protestant Reformation and its impact on Western Christianity.

Commitment to deepening one's understanding and appreciation of the global histories of the Christian Church through the ages and across cultures.

Bible & Interpretation I

This course provides an overview of how to study and interpret the Bible for the purpose of sermon preparation. The course includes an overview of Scriptural themes, explores the implications of historical-critical method for sermon preparation, and reviews available commentaries and resources for sermon preparation. The purpose of the Lectionary is reviewed.

Students will become proficient in the following Marks of Readiness:

Ability to interpret the scriptures through the use of critical methods;

Ability to use resources such as commentaries, concordances, journals and study aids in

the exegesis of a text;
Ability to relate scripture to contemporary life.

Bible & Interpretation II

Offers an in depth exploration of a particular book of the Bible, a particular type of Biblical literature (for example: Prophets, Pauline letters, Johannine literature, the Pentateuch), or particular Biblical themes (for example: sin & grace, healing, oppression & liberation). Possible preaching topics are highlighted.

Students will become proficient in the following Marks of Readiness:
Ability to interpret the scriptures through the use of critical methods;
Ability to use resources such as commentaries, concordances, journals and study aids in
The exegesis of a text;
Ability to relate scripture to contemporary life;
Ability to lead effective Bible Studies of the Hebrew Scriptures or New Testament.

Pastoral Care

Students will learn the basics of pastoral care. This course will include an historical overview of pastoral care, pastoral visits, crises counseling skills, and how to make referrals. Different models will be presented on how to relate Christian faith with secular counseling approaches. Students will explore the question “What makes pastoral care *pastoral*?” Class assignment: write three verbatims of pastoral visits.

Students will become proficient in the following Marks of Readiness:
Knowledge of Biblical and theological foundations for pastoral care;
Ability to assess and nurture spiritual growth within one’s congregation;
Ability to exercise skills for pastoral counseling and crisis intervention.

Preaching I

This course provides an introduction to the art of preaching. The class will review the Biblical foundations of preaching. Students will become familiar with the basic structure of a sermon, different styles of preaching, basic principles of public speaking, and current preaching resources. Students are required to preach at least once between this class and Preaching II.

Students will become proficient in the following Marks of Readiness:
Ability to use exegetical methods for delivering a sermon from a Biblical text;
Ability to articulate an awareness of what makes for effective preaching.

Worship I

This course offers an overview of the structure and theology of worship. It includes: a review of the meaning and basic structures of worship; an analysis of the current cultural context of worship in America; an overview of new trends in worship; an introduction to alternative forms of worship.

Students will become proficient in the following Marks of Readiness:
Knowledge of, and ability to, articulate the nature and purpose of Christian

*Worship in the life of the local congregation;
Ability to articulate a knowledge of the Scriptural and historical roots of Christian worship
in the UCC and Christian Church (DOC).*

Worship II

This course offers practical skills for preparing components of worship. The liturgical year is explained. Students will be introduced to use of technology in worship and will have the opportunity to create a worship service.

Students will become proficient in the following Marks of Readiness:

*Ability to prepare and lead worship experiences for the local congregation that demonstrate appropriate cultural sensitivity and are attuned to the seasons of the church year;
Knowledge and ability to use appropriate denominational resources such as UCC Book of Worship, the New Century Hymnal, Chalice Hymnal, Chalice Worship and other current resources to enhance the music and liturgical life of the church.*

Sacraments

This class includes a general theology of sacraments (with special attention given to UCC and DOC beliefs and practices), orders of service for baptism and communion (with practical guidance), special services for Advent and Lent. Students will learn how to prepare for and conduct weddings and funerals.

Students will become proficient in the following Marks of Readiness:

*Knowledge of and ability to articulate a theological understanding of the sacraments of baptism and communion;
Ability to administer the sacraments and rites of the church meaningfully and with integrity.*

Preaching II

Students will present a sermon delivered after taking Preaching I, and receive feedback from the instructor and class.

Students will become proficient in the following Mark of Readiness:

Commitment to refining one's own preaching style and "voice."

Ethics

This course offers an introduction to Christian ethics. This class will focus on sources for ethical reflection, the use of philosophical ethics in Christian practice, and current issues in Christian ethics. Students will explore the variety of ways in which Christian ethics has been applied to areas such as economics, the environment, justice issues, sexual ethics, and government.

Students will become proficient in the following Marks of Readiness:

*Knowledge of and commitment to one's conference/association/region guidelines regarding professional ethics and conduct;
Knowledge of scriptural, theological and historical resources for moral and*

ethical decision-making;
Knowledge of the variety of ethical approaches that influence actions and choices;
Ability to help congregations address issues of ethical and social responsibility.

Church Administration

Students will be introduced to basic management and administrative skills. Practical areas include how to understand and develop a church budget, record keeping, and how to relate to employees.

Students will become proficient in the following Marks of Readiness:
Knowledge of basic principles of church administration;
Ability to set goals and objectives and to develop programs and strategies to accomplish them;
Knowledge of group and organizational behavior and an ability to manage human resources within the church.

Mission

This course engages the students to think about the ministry of the church “beyond the walls.” It includes: the Biblical basis for mission; how “mission” has been understood historically; the variety of mission outreach options (evangelism, social service, medical, social action); the need for cross-cultural awareness; current trends in mission work.

Students will become proficient in the following Marks of Readiness:
Ability to assess the needs of the local community and provide leadership in addressing those needs.
Ability to access programmatic resources that are available in the community.
Ability to communicate how the UCC and Christian Church(DOC) churches are structured for mission locally and globally.

Church Development and Evangelism

This class will provide an introduction to methods for church development and growth. Students will be introduced to current resources for church development.

This course will look into the Biblical basis for evangelism, explore methods for personal evangelistic ministry and learn how evangelism intersects with church development.

Students will become proficient in the following Marks of Readiness:
Knowledge of the meaning of evangelism and its Scriptural and theological underpinnings;
Familiarity with and ability to access and use the resources for evangelism and congregational vitality offered by the national offices of the UCC and DOC;
Commitment and ability to foster a ministry of radical hospitality and extravagant welcome within one’s congregation.

Faith Formation

This class presents the basic principles of Christian Education. It includes how to evaluate and choose curriculum, an overview of current curriculum, age appropriate teaching methods, teacher training, and confirmation.

Students will become proficient in the following Marks of Readiness:

Knowledge of the nature, purposes, contexts, contents and methodologies of Christian Education;

Ability to evaluate and assess the effectiveness of Christian Education resources, curricula and programs;

Ability to craft and lead educational lessons and programs that demonstrate attention to faith development across the lifespan;

Ability to identify one's own learning style;

Commitment to modeling lifelong learning and fostering the same within one's Congregation.

Stewardship and Mission

Students will explore the Biblical, theological and practical understandings of Stewardship. An overview of current trends in Environmental Stewardship and Financial Stewardship and the Church will also be covered.

Students will be introduced to the theology of missions, its historical background, variety, and current trends. Special attention will be given to how to promote missions involvement in the local church.

Students will become proficient in the following Marks of Readiness:

Ability to assess the needs of the local community and provide leadership in addressing those needs;

Ability to access programmatic resources that are available in the community;

Knowledge of and ability to communicate how the UCC/DOC are structured for mission

both

globally and locally;

Commitment and ability to equip and empower local church members for stewardship and mission.

Leadership Styles & Conflict Management

This course has two components. The first part introduces students to the Myers-Briggs Personality-typology (Temperament) and its usefulness for leadership in the church. A simplified inventory will be used to allow students to identify their M-B type and demonstrate how individual differences may affect a person's response to situations and how different approaches may be needed for different people.

The second part provides students with models for understanding conflict in the church and a basic introduction to conflict management skills.

Students will become proficient in the following Marks of Readiness:

Ability to identify one's own Myers-Briggs temperament and its implications for ministry;

Ability to identify triangling and how it impacts conflict dynamics;
Ability to demonstrate reflective listening;
Ability to articulate a biblical foundation for dealing with conflict (Matthew 18:15-22;
Acts 6:1-7, etc.).

Family Systems and Conflict Management

This course provides an introduction to Family Systems theory as it applies to the congregation, with special attention to the approach developed by Friedman. Students will learn models for understanding and handling conflict and will be assisted in identifying their own style for handling conflict.

Students will become proficient in the following Marks of Readiness:
Ability to listen and reflect back your understanding of what you heard (reflective listening);
Ability to mediate conflict and stay in relationship;
Ability to recognize triangles and to de-triangulate.

Spirituality

This course provides an introduction to the practice of Christian spirituality. It includes: spiritual disciplines (individual and corporate); spiritual direction; new directions in spirituality.

Students will become proficient in the following Mark of Readiness:
Ability to demonstrate familiarity with the variety of spiritual practices within the Christian faith and guide others in their individual and corporate spiritual formation.

Spiritual Formation

This course will focus on teaching various forms of prayer, meditation and other spiritual disciplines. Students will identify particular spiritual practices that are helpful in their own lives. They will discuss the need for regular spiritual direction and how this relates to effective ministry. Emphasis will be placed on learning how to articulate one's own faith journey and sense of call to use as a foundation for exploring ways to guide others in their spiritual formation.

Students will become proficient in the following Marks of Readiness:
A willingness and commitment to attend to one's own spiritual formation by engaging in ongoing spiritual direction, mentoring, and/or the exercise of personal spiritual disciplines;
Ability to articulate a deep faith, including a passion for God, trust in Jesus Christ, and an openness to the Holy Spirit;
Ability to articulate a sense of having been called by God and by the church to ministry.

Self-Care

This course will be devoted to learning basic skills for pastoral self-care, including looking at ways to attend to one's: physical health, intellectual health, emotional health, social needs and

spiritual care. Boundary issues will be considered. Ways to avoid pastoral burn-out will be considered and shared.

Students will become proficient in the following Mark of Readiness:
Ability to exercise appropriate boundaries and self-care in one's ministry.

Theology I

The course is designed to introduce students to the process of theological thinking and basic issues in Christian theology. Theology I includes: theological method; sources for theological reflection; the nature of God; the nature of humanity; the nature of sin; the nature of Creation; and theological anthropology.

Students will become proficient in the following Marks of Readiness:
Ability to identify the major elements of Christian theology;
Ability to think critically;
Begin to articulate and integrate theological issues with the rest of life.

Theology II

This course includes: Christology; the Holy Spirit and the Trinity; Ecclesiology (including the general ministry of the church and sacraments); Christian Ethics; Eschatology and the Reign of God.

Students will become proficient in the following Marks of Readiness:
Ability to identify the major elements of Christian theology;
Ability to think critically.

Contemporary Theology

This course is designed to give students an overview of the theologies of the 20th century including Liberation, Process, Womanist, Feminist, Gay, Existentialist, and Evangelical theologies.

A current issue under debate may be the focus of a more in depth exploration using one or more of these theological viewpoints. The focus will vary with each instructor.

Students will become proficient in the following Marks of Readiness:
Ability to identify the major theological elements in 20th century Christian Practice;
Ability to think critically;
Ability to articulate and integrate theological issues with the rest of life.

Issues in Contemporary Theology

This course provides an introduction to current issues and debates in theology through a selected set of issues. The goal of the course is to invite students into the “conversation” on these issues. Topics covered previously included: the Jesus Seminar, the current theological spectrum, and Gay Theology. The specific issues covered will vary with the instructor.

Students will become proficient in the following Marks of Readiness:
Ability to think critically;

Ability to articulate and integrate theological issues with the rest of life.

Covenant Training for Lay Leaders

This course provides an introduction to the concept of covenant and the nature of the covenant between clergy and parish/ministry site. The class focuses on the theology of covenant, the principles of pastoral action, and how to identify “boundary situations”. The course includes a group exercise with various boundary scenarios.

Students will become proficient in the following Marks of Readiness:

Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of setting boundaries and identifying where those boundaries should be;

Ability to understand the responsibilities, as well as the freedoms, of being in covenantal relationship;

Understand how all expressions of the church relate to all other expressions of the church and affect the reputation of the church in the world.

Theology of Ministry

This seminar will help students to develop their own theology of ministry in preparation for their papers for licensing. The theological dimensions of basic areas of pastoral practice will be explored, along with several current models for ministry.

Assignment: Write a Theology of Ministry paper (See p. 9). *A follow-up seminar will be held for students to present their theology of ministry paper and receive feedback from other students and the Dean.*

History & Polity of the UCC -

UCC Students are required to take a course that provides the historical background and formation of the UCC, its polity and structure for certification in the LCMP.

Students should contact their associate conference minister or their association’s Church & Ministry committee to find out where an acceptable UCC History & Polity course is being offered. Each association sets its own standards and so any association may require a student to attend a history & polity course provided by another institution or the conference.

Students who take a UCC history & polity course approved by their association must send the Dean verification of their completion of such a course and submit a STEM Course Report for that course.

History & Polity of the DOC -

DOC students are required to take a course that provides the historical background and formation of the DOC, its polity and structure for certification in the LCMP. Students will be made aware of current issues facing the denomination.

Students should contact the Michigan Region to learn the times and dates of the DOC history & polity course offered by the Region.

Students must send the Dean verification of their completion of such a course and submit a STEM Course Report for that course.

COMPLETING COURSE REPORT FORMS:

1. Forms must be completed and received by the Dean within 90 days of the class or event.

2. Under paragraph 1 “.Description/Summary of Event” – Summarize topics covered, reading assignments completed, discussion topics.

3. Under paragraph 2 “I learned” – Discuss how you interacted with the event and new information. Describe how your theology was affected, how your relationship with God, God’s Church, God’s creation, and Christ were impacted by the course and it’s discussions. Share any “aha” moments or struggles.

4. Under paragraph 3 “Learning regarding Marks of Readiness Competencies” – Highlight how this class enhanced and developed your competency of the Marks of Readiness noted for this Course in the Course Syllabus found in the Handbook. Under the next paragraph note which competencies need to be better developed and explain steps you will take to do so.

5. Under paragraph 5 “This course/event fits my goals in the following way” – Explain how the readings, discussions, events will be useful to you in your ministries in the church. It is not sufficient to state that the course is required. Imagine how you will use the information and why.

5. To be eligible to graduate, all written requirements must be received by the Dean no less than 2 weeks prior to your Graduation Ceremony.

BOOK REVIEW GUIDELINES:

We encourage you to make reading a part of your STEM learning experience. Instructors, advisors, or the dean may know of books to suggest. The student’s advisor must approve each book selected. Book reports count 5 hours each toward your elective hours (no more than 4 book reviews will be credited). **Please complete a report form (including advisor’s signature), attach a copy of the book review to it, and send it to the dean.** You may want to organize a group of students to read the same book and discuss it. A “Group Book Review” will require a written proposal and approval of the advisors of all involved.

The following items should be covered in your book reviews:

I. Give complete title, author’s name, publisher, and any information you have on availability.

II. Review contents

- A. Give overall subject of the book
- B. List major topics/areas covered.
- C. What were the author's main points in each area covered?

III. Strengths and Weaknesses of the Work

- A. What method did the author use? (historical, topical, descriptive, fiction, poetry, .)
- B. What assumptions does the author make about the reader's background? What impact did that have?

IV. How has reading this book affected your understanding of the topic covered? Give examples of new concepts or insights.

V. Your opinion of the book

- A. Did you enjoy reading it? Why or why not?
- B. Would you recommend it? Why or why not?
- C. Does this book have lasting value?
Is it more focused on a current issue or will it be of value to you 10 years from now?

PASTORAL VISIT VERBATIM OUTLINE

A verbatim is a means of reflecting on a pastoral care encounter. Part of this process includes a record of part of the pastoral conversation. Though it may seem intimidating to try to remember a conversation, you will find that, with some practice, you can remember much of a conversation or at least get the gist of what was said. The following is an outline of the sections to be included in a verbatim:

1. Basic information

- a. Give a name for the person being visited/counseled. You may make up a name or use the first name and last initial.
- b. Date of the interaction.
- c. Some basics about the person (M/F, approximate age, any other relevant information)
- d. What was the presenting reason for the conversation?

2. Give a section of the conversation

Don't worry about getting the whole conversation. If you can remember it, great! If not, then record the most significant section. Always include your closing remarks and prayers that you used.

3. Summarize what you know or learned about the person in the following areas.

- a. Physical: What is the person's physical condition, general health, nutrition.
If there are any physiological problems, list these.
- b. Psychological: What is the person's general mental condition.
What feelings is the person experiencing? Are there conflicting emotions?

What is the person's stress level?

- c. Social: What is the person's social context? Who does the person have relationships with? Are these relationships sources of support or conflict?
- d. Spiritual: What spiritual issues are raised, directly or indirectly? How does this person experience God? What is this person's faith like? What spiritual dynamics are involved (belief/unbelief, sin/grace, etc.)?

4. Reflection:

Reflect on the interaction and your role in it. Were you able to work with the issues? Is there anything you would do differently? How will you counsel this person in the future?

5. Prayer:

Write a brief prayer lifting up the person involved and any issues that were raised for you.

Licensed/Commissioned Ministry Program Advisor Guide

The purpose of having Advisors for licensed/commissioned ministry students is to provide students with a guide in their preparation for licensed/commissioned ministry. Advisors can provide students with the kind of “hands on” experience and wisdom that they could not get in a classroom. Advisors can also act as a sounding board for students as they struggle with questions regarding their calling and the demands of authorized ministry.

Who can serve as an advisor?

Advisors should be ordained ministers, STEM graduates or active leaders in their local church and greater church (region, conference, national manifestations of the church).

How do I find an advisor?

Students should first discuss obtaining an advisor with the STEM Dean and may contact local UCC or DOC clergy directly or ask their pastor for suggestions. The Dean may have names of people who have previously served as advisors in a student’s locale.

Can I switch advisors?

Students may change advisors when it is no longer possible to continue the relationship (such as a move) or if the advisor is not working out. Students should contact the Dean if they wish to change advisors.

STUDENT’S RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. The Advisee (student) will arrange with the Advisor a time for the initial interview during the first month of participation in the program.
2. The Advisee has the primary responsibility to maintain the relationship with the Advisor. Quarterly meetings are strongly suggested and the Advisee is responsible for making contact and scheduling a time.
3. The Advisee will complete a Course Report form after each Course and each elective event/activity. This form must be reviewed with the Advisor and signed by the Advisor. The form must then be delivered to the STEM Dean. It is the Advisee’s responsibility to get the signed form to the Dean.
4. The Advisee will keep track of her/his progress towards completing the program, including the number of reports and elective hours recorded by the Dean.
5. The Advisee may miss no more than one course in each year to meet graduation requirements. Opportunities for make-up work, or an extension of the program, should be discussed with the Advisor and the STEM Dean. See Attendance & Certification Requirements p. 26.

ADVISOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. The Advisor should contact the Dean if the student has not contacted him/her for the initial interview. The Advisor is encouraged to use the Interview Guidelines form provided by the STEM Dean in completing the Initial Interview. The Advisor is to keep one copy in their own student file and send the original form to the STEM Dean.

2. Advisors are encouraged to attend one core course during the student's term of study. Advisors are of course always welcome to attend.

3. Advisors are asked to attend an advisor orientation session arranged with the Dean.

4. Advisors will review course report forms and elective activity reports with the student. If the student has demonstrated a basic grasp of the subject matter and identified what was new learning, the advisor may sign the class report. Advisors are encouraged to add their observations to the Report.

Please note: the student will not receive credit for taking the course until the signed report form is received by the Dean within 90 days of the class/activity.

5. Advisors are asked to watch for educational opportunities that the student could use for elective credit work. Elective work is chosen by the student with the advice and consent of the Advisor. Ministry activities that are new to the student can also be used for elective work (e.g. leading a Bible study, preaching, etc.). The Advisor will recommend the number of credit hours the student should receive for each elective item. The actual number of hours awarded will be determined by the Dean following STEM guidelines.

6. Advisors should monitor the progress of advisees towards completing requirements. Advisors are encouraged to contact the Dean with any concerns or questions.

7. Students are *not* allowed to graduate until *all* of their requirements are in the hands of the Dean. All reports and papers must be received by the Dean no less than 14 days prior to graduation services.

ADVISOR TASKS:

1. Meet with your student at least 3 times per year.

2. Be available for your student to reflect on what she/he is learning and to reflect on her/his spiritual struggles in preparation for ministry.

3. Review your student's class reports with your student and sign them per Note #4 above. (Students do not receive credit until the signed class report is received by the Dean).

4. Allow your student to observe you doing the preparatory family consultation for, and conducting of, a funeral service. Please go over the procedures you follow with your student.
5. Share how to do a wedding and allow your student to observe the rehearsal and the ceremony (we understand that students cannot sit in on pre-marital counseling sessions). Please review what steps are taken for pre-marital counseling.
6. Review and offer comments on required papers.
7. Provide opportunities for your student to preach.
8. Provide opportunities for your student to make pastoral visits.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Instructors-

Our instructors are generally ordained ministers. Many have advanced study or advanced degrees in their areas. It is our intent to provide instructors from a variety of backgrounds and viewpoints. Students will often find the ideas expressed to be challenging and sometimes controversial. Students are encouraged to view this as an opportunity to broaden their knowledge of different viewpoints in Christian faith.

When do LCMP courses meet?

Courses are held on Friday evening from 6:30 to 9:30 pm and on Saturday from 9:00 am to about 3:30 pm with a short break for lunch. Unless otherwise noted, classes will be held on the second weekend of the month in which the class is scheduled.

Where do LCMP courses meet?

Courses are held in the Lansing area. Most are held at the Michigan Conference Center (see p. 27 for directions). We have also used local churches in the Lansing and East Lansing area. Students will be notified of the scheduled location.

What about LCMP meals?

Meals are the responsibility of each student unless otherwise noted. Students eat lunch together at the class site. The students choose a local carryout restaurant, and the Dean, if present, will make a run to pick-up an order. The cost is paid by each student. Refrigeration and kitchen facilities are available at each site and students may bring their own lunch. Students may leave to get lunch on their own, but we encourage them to stay for fellowship with other students and informal talks with the instructors.

What about tuition and fees?

Each full weekend LCMP class currently costs \$ 150.00. We encourage students to pre-pay for the eight classes in each academic year (a total of \$1,200.00). If needed, students may set up a payment plan with the Dean.

LLD Program event fees are \$35 per event unless otherwise advertised.

Receiving LCMP Credit for Outside Classes:

Students who have taken college or graduate level courses related to ministry, or who have gone through ministry related training programs, may apply to the Dean to have these courses accepted in lieu of the corresponding LCMP courses. The student should discuss this with the Dean and arrange to have an academic transcript or copy of certification or CEU credit certificate sent to the Dean. The student's tuition will be reduced corresponding to the number of class substitutions, unless the class is a make-up class covering an absence.

Application Procedure:

1. The student discusses the class he/she would like credit for with the Dean.

2. Student contacts educational institution and has a transcript mailed to the STEM Dean.
3. The Dean reviews the transcript and assigns appropriate credit. The Dean may contact the student regarding the exact content of the course.
4. No more than four courses may be counted toward LCMP credit.

ATTENDANCE:

Class participation is an important part of the STEM experience, exposing students to a variety of views and experiences within the Christian faith, not only from the different instructors, but also from the other participating class members. Students are strongly encouraged to attend all of the classes for the full class time. If a student has to miss a course, it may be made up using one of the means listed below under “Attendance and Certification Requirements”. You may make up 1 class in any one year. Any missed classes beyond that will need to be taken the next time they are offered -- in approximately 4 years and at additional cost of class tuition. Students must still pay the tuition cost of \$150 for missed classes.

Attendance and Certification Requirements:

1. Attend *all* courses. If a course is missed, it may be made up in one of the following ways:
 - a. Listen to an audio tape of the missed class and complete a Course Report Form.
 - b. Attend a substitute event approved by the advisor and the STEM Board and complete a Course Report Form.
 - c. Take a substitute college or seminary course, approved by the advisor and the Board and complete a Course Report Form.
 - d. Attend and pay for the course the next time it is offered by STEM and complete the Course Report Form.
2. *No more than 1 class each year may be made up using options a, b, or c.*
3. To be eligible to graduate, all written requirements must be received by the Dean no less than 2 weeks prior to the graduation ceremony.

CLASS CANCELLATION POLICY:

All efforts will be made to hold classes as scheduled. If the instructor and the Dean are able to make it to the class site, class will be held. Class may be canceled due to instructor illness or severe weather in the Lansing area. If class is canceled, the Dean will notify students by e-mail or phone by 10 pm the day before the class meets. If you have not been notified, assume class is being held. Students are asked to use their own best judgment on whether it is safe to drive to Lansing.

TUITION REFUND POLICY:

1. There is no tuition refund for missed classes. Each class must be paid for in full to receive credit for the class.
2. If a student pre-pays for a full year’s tuition but must drop out mid-term from STEM, the student may request a partial refund of tuition. Application for a refund must be made in

writing to the STEM Dean. Approval for a refund is determined by the Dean and the STEM Board on a case by case basis.

HOUSING:

Overnight housing is available at the Parish House for a fee of \$ 25.00. Bunk beds, blankets, pillows, towels and linens are provided.

There are a number of motels in the area. Students may make their own arrangements at their own cost. Some of these are:

Comfort Inn, Okemos	(517) 349-8700
Hampton Inn of East Lansing	(517) 324-2072
Red Roof Inn, Jolly Rd.	(517) 332-2575
Sleep Inn, Dewitt	(517) 669-8823

GRADUATION:

Graduation for LCMP students will be held annually at either JAMRA (Joint Annual Meeting/ Regional Assembly), a DOC Regional Assembly or the UCC Annual Meeting.

Note: **All assignments and reports must be in the hands of the Dean *no less than 2 weeks before graduation. Students completing requirements after that time will not be able to participate in the graduation ceremony until the following year.***

AUDITING COURSES:

STEM grads may register to audit courses in the program they have completed. Since knowledge and approaches in theological studies do change over the years, grads may want to audit a class to refresh or update their training. The cost of auditing a course is currently \$ 80.00. Room and board costs are the responsibility of the student. If you are interested in auditing a course, please contact the STEM Dean.

“A TASTE OF STEM” PROGRAM:

If you are considering the LCMP program, you may take *one course* before applying and receive credit for the course. This option is intended for prospective students to “try out” STEM. If you or someone you know is interested in “a taste of STEM”, please contact the Dean. The current cost for one class is \$150.

Any person may opt to take any one STEM course. Students may bring a friend along to any course. The Dean should be notified in advance to discuss fees and pre-class assignments. The cost of attending one class is \$150.00.

DIRECTIONS

The **UCC Michigan Conference Office** is located at 5945 Park Lake Road, East Lansing, MI 48823. The phone number is (517) 332-3511.

The **DOC Michigan Regional Office** is located at 2820 Covington Ct, Lansing MI 48912. The phone number is (517) 372-3220.

Directions to the UCC Conference Office:

From Alpena...Go west on US-23 for 100 miles. Turn right onto SR-61 for 3 miles. At I-75 go south for 73 miles. Merge onto west I-69 for 38 miles. Take Business I-69= Saginaw Street= SR-78 west for 3.5 miles to Park Lake Rd. Turn right and the office is the first driveway on the left.

From Calumet...Go south on SR-41 for 117 miles. Turn east on SR-28 for 93 miles. Turn south on SR-117 for 15 miles. Turn east on US-2 for 48 miles. Turn south on I-75 for 95 miles. Bear right on US-27 for 51 miles. At US-10 US-27 Exit, continue south on US-10 for 4 miles toward Midland. At US-27 US 10 Exit, continue south on US-27 for 75 miles toward Mount Pleasant and join the new US-127 bypass of St. Johns. Exit on Saginaw St and take Saginaw St East to Park Lake Rd. Make a Michigan left onto Park Lake Rd. and the Conference Office is the first building on the left.

From Detroit area...Find your best route to the I-96 Expressway west. Follow I-96 west for about 55 miles and Exit at Okemos Road (exit 110) and go north for 6 miles. Turn left (west) on Lake Lansing Road for 1 mile. Turn left on Business I-69= Saginaw Street= M-78 west for a quarter mile to Park Lake Rd. Turn right and the Conference Office is the first building on the left.

From Grand Rapids...Go east on I-96 for 52 miles. Merge onto I-69 north for 16 miles. Take Business I-69= Saginaw Street= SR-78 west for 3.5 miles. Turn right and the Conference Office is the first building on the left.

From Muskegon...Go south on US-31. Take I-96 southeast for 90 miles. Merge onto I-69 north for 16 miles. Take Business I-69 Saginaw Street SR-78 west for 3.5 miles. Turn right and the Conference Office is the first building on the left.

From Port Huron...Go west on I-69 for 104 miles. Take Business I-69= Saginaw Street= SR-78 west for 3.5 miles. Turn right and the Conference Office is the first building on the left.

From Saginaw...Go south on I-75 for 31 miles. Merge onto I-69 for 38 miles. Take Business I-69= Saginaw Street= SR-78 west for 3.5 miles. Turn right and the Conference Office is the first building on the left.

From St. Joseph...Go east on I-94 for 78 miles. Go north on I-69 for 36 miles. Merge onto I-496 for 8 miles. Go north on US-127 for 1 mile. Go east on Business I-69= Saginaw Street= SR-78 for 3.5 miles. Turn right and the Conference Office is the first building on the left.

From Traverse City...Go southeast on US-31 to M-115. Go southeast on M-115 to the US-10 bypass of Clare. Take US-10 east to the US-27 interchange. Go south on US-27 and join the new US-127 bypass of St. Johns. Exit on Saginaw St and take Saginaw St East to Park Lake Rd. Make a Michigan left onto Park Lake Rd. and the Conference Office is the first building on the left. Alternatively, From US-115, take US-131 at Cadillac south to I-96 near Grand Rapids. From there follow the Grand Rapids directions above.

To reach the **Parish House** from the Conference Center, go one block north on Park Lake Road, and turn left on Lake Lansing Road to the first house on the left. The house is gray. The phone number is (517) 332-7167.

To reach the **DOC Michigan Regional Office** of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), from the Conference Center, go west on Business I-69= Saginaw Street for 2.5 miles. Turn right on Chester Rd., immediately west of the US-127 highway interchange. The office is the small brick building on

the southwest corner of Chester Rd and Covington Ct. The parking lot opens on to both Chester Rd and Covington Ct.

First Christian Church, Lansing, is the next building north of the Regional Office, at 1001 Chester Road, just across the street (Covington Ct) from the Regional Office.

Directions to the Regional Office and First Christian Church, DOC:

From Westbound or Eastbound I-69...Take US 127 south about 6 miles. Exit on Saginaw St. Turn right (going west) on Saginaw St.= Grand River Ave.=Business I-69. Stay in the right lane and make a right at the first street=Chester Ave. (going north). Go one block: Regional Office is on Southwest corner of Chester and Covenant Court; First Christian Church is on the Northwest corner of Chester and Covington Court.

From Westbound I-96...Take US 127 north to Saginaw Street Exit. Take Saginaw St. west one block to Chester Ave. Turn right and go one block: Regional Office is on Southwest corner of Chester and Covenant Court; First Christian Church is on the Northwest corner of Chester and Covington Court.

APPENDIX 1

Requirements for Licensing/Commissioning (nso)

UCC Procedure & Requirements

Each Association has its own procedures and requirements. Please contact your Association office to get this information. In most cases, the associations follow the Manual on Ministry, but there are considerable local variations on procedure.

DOC Procedure

Please contact the Christian Church Michigan Region (Disciples of Christ) Regional Office at 1-517-372-3220. Ask to speak with a Regional Minister to set a meeting to establish one's individual goals and requirements.

APPENDIX 2

Contacting Authorizing Bodies for LCMP:

DOC Michigan Regional Office

(517) 372-3220

Web Page: www.michigandisciples.org

E-mail: ccmr@michigandisciples.org

Regional Minister Rev. Eugene James

E-mail: eugenej@michigandisciples.org

UCC Michigan Conference Office

(517) 332-3511

Web Page: www.michucc.org

E-mail: conference@michucc.org

Conference Minister Rev. Campbell Lovett

E-mail: Campbell@michucc.org

STEM Dean Contact Information

(248) 821-4669

Anne McCauslin

584 Sedgefield

Bloomfield Hills, MI 48304

Email: annemccauslin1@yahoo.com