

ASSOCIATED MENNONITE BIBLICAL SEMINARY  
Mission and Ministry Experience Credit

Mission and Ministry Experience credit may be granted by the faculty of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary toward the Master of Divinity degree for up to nine (9) hours of credit. A maximum of six (6) hours of credit may be granted toward the Master of Arts in Peace Studies or the Master of Arts ministry degree (MACF). No such credit is currently available toward the Master of Arts in Theological Studies.

**ELIGIBILITY**

A student must meet the following criteria in order to be eligible to apply for Ministry and Mission Experience credit:

1. Normally at least 30 years of age; petitions from students younger than 30 are approved by the Curriculum Committee;
2. Have had the mission or ministry experience within the five years prior to entering AMBS as a student;
3. Have between 400-1200 hours of *documented* ministry or mission experience in setting with a supervisory structure and regular evaluations by a supervisor or overseer (see portfolio requirements for range of supervisory relationships allowed);
4. Successfully completed 30 credit hours of work at AMBS with a grade point average of B (3.0) or higher;
5. Has never received equivalent credit for ministry and mission experience in any other degree program.

**ASSIGNING HOURS OF CREDIT**

Hours of direct mission or ministry work including supervision	Credit hours assigned
400 hours	3
800 hours	6
1200 hours	9

**GRADING Mission and Ministry Experience**

Normally, the Mission and Ministry Experience Portfolio is evaluated on a Credit/No credit basis. Student may request a letter grade through the standard procedure for changing grading patterns.

## RECORDING KEEPING

The final evaluation written from the faculty evaluator and record of Curriculum Committee action will remain in the student's record filed in the Registrar's office and will be placed by the Registrar in the student's electronic portfolio for program assessment purposes.

## **PROCEDURE**

### **For Master of Arts: Peace Studies and Christian Formation Students**

#### **STAGE ONE: PRELIMINARY APPROVAL**

1. Students in the Master of Arts programs who meet the above criteria and wish to apply for Ministry and Mission Experience (MME) credit will
  - a. Discuss with their academic advisers the merits of using past supervised experience for curricular credit within the specific degree program requirements, students' vocational interests, the educational goals set for their chosen program of study, and academic readiness to undertake the project (including language competence).
  - b. Complete the application form for MME credit and complete the petition describing:
    - i) the mission or ministry location and the amount of time spent in direct work;
    - ii) a brief summary of the primary mission or ministry activities engaged;
    - iii) the structures for oversight or accountability attending the work;
    - iv) names of three references who witnessed growth in the practice of this work; and
    - v) a rationale for why credit should be given for this experience that makes clear how the experience informs and relates to the mission and/or ministry to which student senses a call and addresses the specific educational goals outlined by the degree program in which the student is enrolled.
  - c. October 15 and March 15 are the deadlines for completing the petition process during the semester in which students plan to complete the MME portfolio
  - d. Procure the adviser's approval of the application and petition through his or her signature
  - e. Submit the application to the Academic Dean.
2. The Academic Dean will assess submitted petitions in consultation with the MA Director or Director of the MAPS program. If the Dean deems the request appropriate to the educational goals and values of the student's degree program, he or she will report acceptance or rejection of the application to the applicant and assign a faculty member to serve as MME evaluator of the portfolio.

#### **STAGE TWO: MME PORTFOLIO AND FINAL APPROVAL**

1. In consultation with her or his assigned faculty MME evaluator, the student will plan and complete the MME portfolio (see pages 7-8).

2. All student work in the portfolio will meet the regular requirements for Turabian style and standards for good writing.
3. When the portfolio is complete, the student will meet with her or his MME evaluator to discuss the contents using the student's vocational interests and the educational goals of the student's program to frame the discussion. The evaluator may require additional work on the portfolio to deepen the student's learning or to rework problematic issues. Where appropriate, the evaluator may identify specific learning agenda for the student to pursue during the remainder of his or her seminary studies. The evaluator may also determine that the work in the portfolio is not worthy of graduate-level standards.
4. The MME evaluator will write an evaluation report assessing the student's portfolio using the educational goals of the student's chosen program and her or his vocational goals. This evaluation should indicate the number of credit hours that may be assigned for the mission or ministry experience and should be minimally two pages single-spaced in length.
6. The Academic Dean will receive the evaluation and take the recommendation for granting credit to the Curriculum Committee for approval. In the event that the evaluation is submitted at a time when the Curriculum Committee does not have a scheduled meeting, the Academic Dean may approve the evaluation and later report the action to the committee. Upon approval, the student will pay the stated catalog fee per credit hour. Credit will then be posted on the student's transcript, and the evaluation report will be filed in the student's permanent record and electronic portfolio.

## **For Master of Divinity Students**

### **STAGE ONE: PRELIMINARY APPROVAL**

1. Students enrolled in the M.Div. program seeking Mission and Ministry Experience (MME) credit to fulfill any part of their Ministry in Church and World or Supervised Ministry Experience requirements will discuss with their academic advisers the merits of using past supervised experience for curricular credit within the educational goals of their degree program, their vocational interests, and their academic readiness to undertake the project (including language competence).
2. They will prepare the following items for submission to their academic adviser and the Director of Missional Leadership Development. (October 15 and March 15 are deadlines for completing the petition process during the semester in which students plan to complete the portfolio.):

- a. The application (page 9 of this document) and a petition describing
  - i) a brief summary of the primary mission or ministry activities engaged;
  - ii) the structures for oversight or accountability attending the work;
  - iii) names of three references who witnessed growth in the practice of this work; and
  - iv) a rationale for why credit should be given for this experience that makes clear how the experience informs and relates to the mission or ministry to which the student senses a call and addresses the specific educational goals outlined by the degree program in which the student is enrolled.
3. Students will secure the signature of their academic adviser and meet with the Director of Missional Leadership Development to discuss the application and petition. The Director, in consultation with the academic adviser as needed, will determine whether the request satisfies the educational goals and values of the Ministry Formation and Assessment process and the particular emphasis of the students' degree program. The Director may propose the number of credit hours to be granted for the experience.
4. The Academic Dean will review the documentation and the recommendation of the academic adviser and Director of Missional Leadership Development and report acceptance or rejection of the application to the applicant. The Dean will assign a faculty member to serve as MME evaluator of the portfolio to be created.

## **STAGE TWO: PORTFOLIO AND FINAL APPROVAL**

1. In consultation with the assigned MME faculty evaluator, the student will plan her or his MME portfolio and the frequency of meetings desired for preparing the paper and the final interview.
2. All student work in the portfolio will meet the regular requirements for Turabian style and standards for good writing.
3. When the portfolio is complete, the student will meet with the MME evaluator to discuss its contents in light of the educational goals of the students' degree program and goals of Ministry in Church and World or the Supervised Ministry Experience. When appropriate the evaluator may prescribe a specific learning agenda for students to pursue during the remaining time of their studies. The evaluator may require additional work on the portfolio to deepen student's learning or to rework a problematic section. The evaluator may also determine that the work in the portfolio is not worthy of graduate-level standards.

4. The MME evaluator will write an evaluation report assessing the student's portfolio using the educational goals of the student's chosen program and her or his vocational goals following the rubric used for the senior paper of the Growth in Ministry seminar. This evaluation should indicate the number of credit hours that may be assigned for the mission or ministry experience and should be minimally two pages single-spaced in length.
5. The Academic Dean will receive the evaluation and take the recommendation for granting credit to the Curriculum Committee for approval. In the event that the evaluation is submitted at a time when the Curriculum Committee does not have a regularly scheduled meeting, the Academic Dean may approve the evaluation and later report the action to the Curriculum Committee. Upon approval, the student will pay the stated catalog fee per credit hour. Credit will then be posted on the transcript, and the evaluation report will be filed in the student's permanent record and electronic portfolio.
6. The student's portfolio paper may be used as the first draft of their senior paper required in Growth in Ministry.

## THE PORTFOLIO REQUIREMENTS FOR MA AND MDIV STUDENTS

Mission or ministry experience that has not been reflected upon or examined for its potential for learning and growth does not warrant MME credit. Mission and Ministry Experience credit is based on the student's ability to analyze experiences, to reflect theologically on them, and to identify learning derived from them. Even an experience that is deemed unsuccessful may be useful for theological reflection and personal learning.

The MME Portfolio submitted by students to the MME evaluator will include the following items:

- a. The completed application form with the petition
- b. Documentation of any evaluations (e.g., supervisor or conference executive evaluation, field supervisor evaluation, congregational evaluations, peer reviews, personnel reports, etc.)
- c. The MME portfolio must include three letters of reference that bear witness to the student's growth in ministry or mission work also including occasions of failure. Students will request these letters from people with whom they had supervisory or collegial relationships during the mission or ministry experience (e.g., conference/area church ministers; judicatory overseers; congregational leaders; church councils; ministry peers; employers; etc.). These letters should identify
  - i. specific gifts for ministry that were developed and exercised in the ministry or mission context;
  - ii. specific areas of growth observed;
  - iii. evaluation the student's cross- or inter-cultural communication skills, ministry skills, and abilities to reflect theologically;
  - iv. evaluation of student's capacities for self-awareness, healthy human relationships, and continual learning;
  - v. other comments of significance for this process
- d. Any other artifacts of the student's choice that demonstrate her or his capacity, development, and competence in ministry or mission work.
- e. A substantial paper (20 pages for 3 credit hours; 30 pages for 6 credit hours; 40 pages for 9 credit hours, double-spaced, 11 or 12 point font, one-inch margins) that:
  - i. Describes the ministry/mission setting and the work done in the setting, with the job description attached (if available) (normally 1-2 pages);
  - ii. Summarizes and evaluates the various testimonies to growth received from supervisors and/or colleagues including strengths, weaknesses, growing edges, areas of needed growth (normally 1-2 pages);
  - iii. Identifies three to five significant mission/ministry experiences that shaped the student's understanding of ministry and why these have become formative for their understanding of missional leadership (3-5 pages);

- iv. Reflects critically on the theme(s) arising from one to three of the ministry experiences cited above and addresses these questions (12-25);
  - a) What is the primary biblical theme revealed in the experience?
  - b) What historical background of the church, the tradition, the community, the people involved lies behind the experience?
  - c) What key theological or ethical issue comes to the fore in the experience?
  - d) How do these biblical, historical, theological resources help you interpret the experience?
  - e) In light of this analysis or interpretation, how do you see the experience differently?
  - f) What are the implications of this insight (or these insights) for your ministerial or professional leadership?
- v. Identifies and explores areas in which the student would like to grow and details plans for attending to this growth;
- vi. Summarizes learning in light of the educational program goals that contribute to the student's sense of call and identifies questions the student would like to pursue through further study and discernment.

Dean's Office 11/83  
Revised 4/91; 8/95; 7/97; 8/98; 3/03; 11/03; 11/11

ASSOCIATED MENNONITE BIBLICAL SEMINARY  
**Application for Mission and Ministry Experience Credit**

**Personal Information**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hours completed toward degree: \_\_\_\_\_ Current semester Degree program: \_\_\_\_\_

**Background**

Degree	Institution	Date

**Ministry and/or Mission Experience**

Assignment	Location	Church/Agency	Dates

By my signature below, I signify that

- 1) I have completed at least 30 hours of work at AMBS with a grade point average of "B" or higher.
- 2) I have not received equivalent credit for mission or ministry experience in any other degree program.
- 3) I have consulted with the MA Director, the MAPS Director, or the Director of Missional Leadership Development about this application.

Student's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**To be completed by the student's adviser:**

I have discussed the Ministry and Ministry Experience Credit with this student and recommend proceeding with the petitioning process.

Academic Adviser's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**To be completed by the Academic Dean**

Upon granting this student's MME petition, I name \_\_\_\_\_ to serve as MME evaluator.

Dean's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Petition for Mission and Ministry Experience Credit**

1. A brief summary of the primary mission or ministry activities engaged
2. The structures for oversight or accountability attending the work
3. The names of three references who witnessed growth in the practice of this work
4. A rationale for why credit should be given for this experience that makes clear how the experience informs and relates to the mission or ministry to which you sense a call and addresses the specific educational goals outlined by the degree program in which you are enrolled.

Return to Registrar's Office

Copies: Student, Student Adviser, MME Evaluator, Student Portfolio, MDiv Director, Registrar