

The Association of Assemblies of God District Schools of Ministry

Guidelines



As approved by the Association Membership for
Presentation to the Executive Presbytery
August 7, 2006
(Amended August 8, 2010)

The Association of Assemblies of God District Schools of Ministry

Association Guidelines

Article I. Name

The name of this association will be *The Association of Assemblies of God District Schools of Ministry*.

Article II. Purpose

The Association of Assemblies of God District Schools of Ministry (hereafter “the Association”) exists to facilitate the mission of the church by promoting and enabling the training of ministers and Christian workers through District Schools of Ministry. The responsibilities of the Association include providing means for interaction and coordination between member schools, assisting districts in establishing new schools, providing standards for endorsement by the Association, monitoring compliance to Assemblies of God doctrines and practices and association guidelines, and other duties as deemed necessary by the Association.

Member schools provide training for those sensing a call to ministry, whether as credentialed ministers or as equipped laypersons within the local church. The schools seek to promote a unified purpose for ministry within the Fellowship, providing doctrinal and practical instruction based upon common core values and shared ministry goals.

The faculty and leadership of member schools fully subscribe to the Statement of Fundamental Truths of the Assemblies of God and are committed to proclaim and support the principles and polity of the Assemblies of God. They commit themselves to provide training that meets district and General Council educational requirements for ministerial credentials.

Member schools also seek to fulfill the mission of their respective districts.

Article III. Endorsement

Member schools that provide training equivalent to criteria adopted by the General Presbytery of the Assemblies of God and comply with association guidelines may be recognized as endorsed for ministerial training. The initial endorsement shall be for three years and subsequent endorsements for five years.

A list of new and renewing schools shall be submitted annually to the Executive Presbytery of the General Council of the Assemblies of God for recognition and approval as District Schools of Ministry. Courses required for Assemblies of God credentials and successfully completed at a member school shall be accepted as meeting General Council educational requirements for the respective level of credential.

Member schools offer professional and practical training programs at an institute level. Unless offered through an accredited college or university, courses are not for college credit and are not transferable as college credit.

Article IV. Educational Philosophy

The School of Ministry seeks to take the student of the Word into the depths of the Scriptures, bringing about an intelligent understanding of the truth and providing them with an organized method of studying the Word of God. A standard of excellence will be set before the students to ensure their development both in research and classroom experience. An effort will be made to cultivate their creative abilities in presenting the gospel. The School of Ministry will provide student interaction in the classroom to develop a broad perspective of understanding the Church's mission.

Members of the Association will seek to integrate spiritual formation, relationship building and academic achievement to provide a unique learning experience for the student as prescribed by 2 Timothy 2:15, "*Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed handling accurately the word of truth*" (NIV). Academic excellence, spiritual experience, and skill development will be the goals set forth in the classroom. Students will be encouraged to acquire knowledge necessary for obtaining ministerial credentials in each level of ministerial recognition.

Article V. Statement of Faith

The Association adopts the Statement of Fundamental Truths, as adopted by the General Council of the Assemblies of God, as its statement of faith.

Article VI. Eligibility

Admission to the Association shall be open to any school of ministerial training for credentialing sponsored by an Assemblies of God geographical district, ethnic/language district, or ethnic/language fellowship that meets the criteria for admission. District Schools of Ministry sponsored by the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada (PAOC) or the Pentecostal Assemblies of Newfoundland (PANF) that meet those standards shall also be eligible for admission.

Schools of Ministry sponsored by an entity comparable to an Assemblies of God district in other fellowships that meet the standards for admission may apply and be considered for admission. They may be denied admission, admitted as members, or participate as "guests," as determined by a vote of the Association.

Church-based Bible institutes or schools of ministries are not eligible for admission.

Universities, colleges, seminaries, and other degree-granting institutions are not eligible for admission.

Article VII. Criteria for Admission

To become a member of the Association, a school shall:

1. Subscribe to the Statement of Fundamental Truths of the Assemblies of God.
2. Meet the Association's standards for instructors, texts and study guides, instructional methodology, course offerings, financial accountability, relationships, peer review and evaluation, participation and other such standards as adopted by the Association.

3. Be sponsored by an Assemblies of God geographical district, ethnic/language district, or ethnic/language fellowship and approved by its presbytery or equivalent board, OR
4. Be sponsored and approved by the entities within another fellowship analogous to an Assemblies of God district and its presbytery.

Article VIII. Standards

1. Course Offerings:
 - a. Member schools shall offer all courses required by the General Presbytery of the Assemblies of God for credentialing requirements.
 - b. A school may offer other courses it deems necessary to enhance ministry within its district and advance the cause of Christ.
 - c. All courses shall meet the relevant association standards.
2. Textbooks:

A member school shall have the prerogative of selecting textbooks for its courses providing that it adheres to the following criteria:

 - a. Textbooks for courses that teach Assemblies of God doctrine, distinctives, and practices shall be either those used by Global University or textbooks approved by the Association's Executive Council. The texts used by Global University may be either the textbooks used as "collateral" reading, the independent study text, or both. If a school elects to use textbooks other than those used as Global University "collateral" reading or independent study texts, it shall submit a list and a brief description of material it intends to use to the Association's Executive Council for approval.
 - b. Textbooks for all other courses shall be consistent with Assemblies of God doctrine and practices, be appropriate for the course, reflect the highest standards of current scholarship, and be of demonstrable value to the student.
3. Instructional Methodology:
 - a. Each course shall require a minimum of ten hours of student study prior to class and at least five hours of in-class instruction with a qualified instructor. The pre-class work shall include the reading of an approved text and completing the study material and/or other assignments required by the school.
 - b. Each course shall include an examination or other appropriate evaluation of the student's work and mastery of the subject.
 - c. An individual school may require other work (additional reading, writing assignments, projects, etc.) at its discretion.
4. Instructor Qualifications:
 - a. All instructors must exemplify Christian character, have received the baptism in the Holy Spirit with the initial physical evidence of speaking in other tongues, subscribe to the Tenets of Faith of the Assemblies of God, be spiritually mature and have demonstrated an effective ministry.
 - b. All instructors shall be credentialed ministers with the Assemblies of God or members of an Assemblies of God church. The instructor shall also meet the applicable criteria listed below:

- Be an ordained minister or a minister who has attained a level of credential more advanced than the level at which the course is offered, OR
 - Be a person who has achieved an advanced degree or degrees appropriate to the course being taught, OR
 - Be a person who by experience or exemplary service has distinguished himself or herself or has other outstanding qualifications in the area of the course being taught.
- c. Exceptions may be made for instructors with exceptional qualifications in the study discipline by the superintendent or presbytery of the member district.
 - d. If the school is sponsored by a sister organization, instructors may be ministers credentialed with the parent body or members of a church affiliated with the parent body.
5. Peer Review/Evaluation:
- a. The school shall submit at the time of application such documentation as the Association deems appropriate for consideration of admission,
 - b. The school shall agree to a peer review/evaluation three years after admission to the Association and every five years thereafter. Standards and procedures for peer review/evaluation shall be developed and approved by the Association. Costs for the peer review/evaluation shall be borne by the school being evaluated.
 - c. If a site visit is deemed as the most appropriate method of evaluation, the costs shall be borne equally by the school being visited and those schools providing members of the visiting team.
6. Financial Integrity:
- a. Member schools shall operate with the highest degree of financial integrity and accountability.
 - b. Member schools shall do all in their power to operate efficiently, keep costs low and ensure that attendance is easily affordable.
 - c. Member schools may be required to pay application fees, membership dues, and other fees as deemed necessary by the membership.
 - d. Member schools and districts agree to participate in the Association at their own expense and share other costs the Association may incur.
 - e. All other financial matters of member schools are at the discretion of the school and its sponsoring district.
7. Participation:
- a. Members agree to attend the annual meeting of the Association or other meetings called by a majority of the members of the Association. All costs for attendance at these meetings are to be borne by the members.
 - b. Members agree to work together to develop curriculum, study materials, and other resources as needed and share, at no cost, those resources with other members.
 - c. Members agree to submit changes and developments that directly impact the instructional process to the Association for review.

8. Relationships:
 - a. Member schools are the creation of and amenable to their respective District Councils and leadership.
 - b. Member schools are to adhere to the standards and guidelines for ministerial credentials established by the General Council of the Assemblies of God (or their parent denomination).
 - c. Members are to maintain a respectful, positive, cooperative and noncompetitive relationship with Global University and other Assemblies of God universities, colleges and seminaries, and encourage students, where appropriate, to benefit from the educational opportunities provided by other institutions. Members are encouraged, whenever possible, to develop mutually beneficial partnerships with our institutions of higher education. Directors or presidents of district schools are encouraged to periodically invite presidents (or designees) of Assemblies of God endorsed colleges and/or universities into the District School of Ministry setting to promote higher education.
 - d. Members shall seek to maintain a respectful, positive and cooperative relationship with the pastors and churches of their respective districts and serve them to the best of their ability.
 - e. Members are to recognize their collegial relationship with members of the Association and do all in their power to cooperate, support, and assist member schools.
 - f. Members will recognize that their primary responsibility is to the cause of Christ and His church and act in accordance with that mission.

9. Student Admissions and Records:
 - a. Member schools may admit any person, clergy or lay, seeking to enhance his or her ministry to Christ and His church.
 - b. Member schools may not deny admission solely based on race, national origin, gender, or physical disability.
 - c. Member schools may, at their discretion, deny admission to any person for any other reason.
 - d. In their admission procedures and practices, member schools will diligently seek to guide students to seek the course of ministry preparation that will best serve the student, including Global University or attending an Assemblies of God university, college, or seminary.
 - e. Member schools are responsible for keeping accurate transcripts and other student records and making them available to the student upon request. Member schools may charge an appropriate fee for these services.

Article IX. Governance

1. Voting Constituency: Member schools shall be represented at meetings of the Association by the district superintendent, or his designee, and school of ministry director of the sponsoring district. Members present at any regular or specially called meeting of the Association shall constitute a quorum.

2. Biennial Meetings: Member schools shall meet biennially, in non-General Council years, to conduct the business of the Association. The time and place of this meeting shall be determined by the membership or the Executive Council. Member schools shall receive written notice of the meeting no less than 30 days before the meeting.
3. Rules of Order: Business of the Association shall be conducted according to the latest edition of *Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised*.
4. Agenda: Members may submit any agenda item to the chairman of the Executive Council. An agenda shall be provided with the notice of the meeting.
5. Special Meetings: Any three members may call for a special meeting of the Association. Prior to calling such a meeting their request and reasons shall be submitted to the chairman of the Executive Council. The Executive Council shall do all in its power to resolve those matters. If the matter cannot be so resolved, the Executive Council shall call a special meeting of the Association. Member schools shall receive written notice of the meeting no less than 30 days prior to the meeting. The notice shall include the reasons for the meeting, steps taken by the Executive Council, and a summary of the issue(s) to be addressed.
6. General Council Participation: A liaison with the General Council, selected by the General Council Executive Presbytery or Board of Administration, shall be invited to the annual and specially called meetings of the Association. The General Council liaison may participate in dialogue and deliberation, without voting privileges, and represent the concerns of the General Council.
7. Guests: The membership may invite any other person(s) deemed appropriate to its annual or any special meeting. Such a guest may participate in discussion but may not vote.
8. District Leadership: District Superintendents of member schools or their designees shall be informed of, attend, and fully participate in, at their discretion, the annual or any special meeting of the Association.
9. Officers: At the biennial meeting of the Association, members shall elect a president and at least four representatives from the membership of the Association to serve on its Executive Council. The president shall be the chairman of the meetings of the Association and of the Executive Council and shall perform any other functions usual and customary as presiding officer.
10. Terms of Office: All officers shall be elected for a two year term and may be reelected.
11. Prerogatives of the Executive Council:
 - a. The Executive Council shall conduct the business of the Association between sessions when the full membership is not meeting.
 - b. The Executive Council may select from its members a secretary and/or treasurer and other officers, as deemed necessary.
 - c. The Executive Council may create committees and seek assistance from nonmembers as it deems necessary. The membership of committees may include nonmembers whose expertise is beneficial for the committee's work.
 - d. The Executive Council may conduct its business in person or via letter, telephone, facsimile, e-mail or any other means it deems appropriate.
 - e. District Superintendents of member schools, or their designees, may attend, at their discretion, any meeting of the Executive Council.

Article X. Amendments

These guidelines may be amended at any regular or special meeting of the Association by a majority of all votes cast. Proposed amendments should be submitted to the chairman of the Executive Council for the Council's review and comment no less than 60 days prior to the Association's meeting and distributed to membership no less than 30 days prior to the meeting. Proposed amendments not meeting these requirements may be considered during a meeting by a majority vote.

No amendment to these guidelines shall be enacted until it has been adopted by the membership and approved by the Board of Administration and/or the Executive Presbytery of the General Council of the Assemblies of God.