



Shannon Conklin-Miller, Assistant General Secretary

Theological Education and Leadership Formation

Division of Ordained Ministry

MEMORANDUM

TO: District Superintendents and Boards of Ordained Ministry
COS Regional and Extension Schools

FROM: Rev. Shannon Conklin-Miller, Assistant General Secretary
Theological Education and Leadership Formation

DATE: January 23, 2019

GBHEM COS 121 & 122 Prerequisite Course Policy Effective June 1, 2019 with Transition Period through June 1, 2020.

The GBHEM Board of Directors for the Division of Ordained Ministry have approved a new Course of Study Prerequisite policy as follows:

“Effective June 1, 2019, Course 121 (Bible 1: Introduction) and Course 122 (Theological Heritage 1: Introduction) will be prerequisites for enrollment in any other Course of Study courses.”

COS 121 AND COS 122 PREREQUISITE COURSE - POLICY RATIONALE

COS 121 and 122 are foundational courses that provide basic instruction and a shared language for Biblical interpretation and theological reflection in the United Methodist ethos. These courses help to prepare students for the upper level coursework that is required in the COS curriculum. A shared biblical and theological foundation is particularly important as many local pastors come from non-United Methodist traditions.

Course 121 (Bible 1: Introduction) provides an overview of the canon and instruction on how to exegete scripture for sermons, Bible study, and supports congregational care, spiritual formation and discipleship program preparation, etc.

Course 122 (Theological Heritage 1: Introduction) provides an understanding of our Wesleyan tradition and the terminology necessary for subsequent COS courses as well as for proclamation preparation during the preaching course. The course provides instruction for offering bible study, pastoral counseling, spiritual formation, and understanding and offering the sacraments. COS 122 provides an understanding of our distinctive Wesleyan Tradition and Methodist movement/UMC in terms of Theology of Ministry and Practice of Ministry and our Wesleyan Heritage.

OTHER COS 121 and 122 PREREQUISITE POLICY INFORMATION

During the transition period, the Director of your COS school will work with local pastors on a case-by-case basis to determine the best way to both continue the student's studies and meet this new requirement.

How will this New Policy affect CURRENT local pastors

ALL current local pastors should take (or should have already taken) COS 121 and 122 by June 1, 2019 if at all possible so they can make satisfactory progress in COS according to the Discipline.

How will this New Policy affect NEW local pastors

Local pastors newly licensed in 2019 (and thereafter), will need to take COS 121 and 122 as first courses.

Policy Distribution

Registrars, please begin to distribute this new COS Prerequisite document at [Licensing School](#), along with information you distribute annually about how to enroll in Course of Study Courses.

Registrars, please email this new COS Prerequisite to all currently enrolled local pastors in January 2019. Local Pastors are responsible for following the policy. **The COS School may request that the student provide verification that COS 121 or 122 has been completed.**

Questions about the Policy

Contact the COS Program Director of the Extension or Regional COS School your local pastors attend.

Transcript Requirement for all Local Pastors registering for COS Courses

The **local pastor** is responsible for checking their official transcript to be sure they meet the new COS Prerequisite policy before they submit COS course registration forms to their District Superintendent, Conference and COS Extension or Regional School. Official transcripts are available to the local pastor by contacting Pamela Frost, the GBHEM COS Registrar at cosregistrar@gbhem.org. Extension and Regional Schools do not provide official transcripts.

Note to District Superintendents, Annual Conference Registrars and Staff

If this new policy means that a local pastor will not meet their requirements for appointment, please contact your COS School Director immediately.

GBHEM Policy on taking more than 4 COS courses per year

Please be aware that with the DS, Conference and COS program Director approval, local pastors may take **more than 4 courses per year**. The four course per year limit was dropped by GBHEM in 2017.