

Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association Policies

A. Vision Statements

The Mission of the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association is to nurture excellence in ministry through collegiality, continuing education, collaboration and shared commitment to antiracist, anti-oppressive, multicultural practice. We, the Board of Trustees of the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association, understand these terms to mean:

- a. Nurturing means intentionally to promote the growth and well being of something; in this case ministry. By nurturing we mean to create the conditions that allow excellent ministry to flourish.
- b. Excellence means to go above the norm or the common expectation. By excellence we mean that the ministry we nurture will be of the highest quality.
- c. Ministry means the process by which people are in service to the Holy, however they may understand it. By ministry we mean to include the work of religious professionals, as well as the work of the laity in serving the Holy.

1. Relationship to UUism: The UUMA provides spiritual, theological, and religious leadership throughout Unitarian Universalism. We partner with the Unitarian Universalist Association and UU religious professional organizations to achieve our shared vision of excellence in ministry to people in all stages of life, organizations, communities and the earth.

2. Continuing Education: UUMA members embrace continuing education as a critical, ongoing path to excellence in ministry. The UUMA is a primary source of continuing education for our members and partners. We provide relevant, flexible, accessible learning opportunities. We offer high quality mentorship and coaching. With our partners we guide the recruitment and formation processes for new ministers, and we discern and promote multiple avenues for the acquisition of ministerial education and credentials.

3. Anti-racism, Anti-oppression, Multiculturalism: The UUMA functions with an antiracist, anti-oppressive, multicultural world-view and practice. UUMA members support each other and are engaged in the work of antiracism, anti-oppression and multiculturalism. In UUMA collegial gatherings, continuing education, and governance, white, male, heterosexual cultural norms no longer dominate; shared meaning is discovered rather than assumed.

4. Collegial Development: The UUMA creates structures to help members sustain life-giving relationships with other members, with other UU religious professionals, with interfaith partners, and within members' families and communities. These relationships exist for members across all identities, professional settings, and career stages.

5. Organizational Health and Effectiveness: The UUMA is a healthy, effective organization focused on living its mission and achieving its vision. We have systems and processes in place:

- to articulate clear roles for leaders and staff;
- to develop and sustain sufficient human & financial resources;
- to utilize the most effective communication technology and practices; and
- to rigorously monitor our goals.

6. Relationship to the World: The UUMA is in partnership with religious communities beyond Unitarian Universalism to nurture excellence in ministry across faith traditions.

1. Collaborating through shared learning and public witness, we build and strengthen our relationships with other progressive religious professional organizations.

B. Limitations

1. Global Limitation

The Executive Director and staff shall not cause or allow any practice, activity, decision, or organizational circumstance which is either unlawful, imprudent or in violation of the UUMA's Charter, Bylaws, or commonly accepted business and professional ethics.

2. Budgeting

1. Total expenses will balance with a reasonable estimate of total income.
2. Membership dues income will be estimated along historical trends.
3. All of the Board's vision statements will be funded in some manner within the budget.
4. If the budget passed at the Annual Meeting changes more than 5% during the fiscal year, the Executive Director will immediately inform the Board.
5. The Executive Director will set the salary and benefits for all staff within the budget. The Executive Director will include a cost of living increase for Executive Director's salary in the proposed budget to the Board. The Board will set the final amount of the Executive Director's salary, with the possibility of merit increases.
6. Chapter subsidies will be sufficient to cover all chapters if they apply.
7. The budget will contain an expense item for a bi-annual audit.
8. Designated income from grants may only be used for their intended purpose. Undesignated grant income shall make up no more than 10% of total income.
9. Designated reserves may only be used for their intended purpose. Undesignated reserves shall make up no more than 10% of total income.
10. Up to 4% of the three year average of the UUMA Endowment may be used for the operating budget. The Executive Director will report if endowment monies were spent on a specific project.
11. Expenses for childcare and/or eldercare for members of UUMA Committees will be part of that committee's budget.
12. The Executive Director will include a multiyear budget, reflecting estimated income and expenses, when the strategic plan is presented to the Board.
13. The Executive Director will provide the Board with the following information in a summary style report: Total Expense, Total Income, Chapter Subsidies, vision statements within the budget, grant income, reserve balances, audit expenses, special projects that were specifically funded from endowment money, committees with childcare/eldercare expenses and significant changes to budget assumptions.

3. Financial Condition

1. Total income and total expense are consistent with historical trends over a three year period.
2. Designated funds shall be spent only for the purposes for which they are intended.
 - a. The offering for the 25/50 Service at Ministry Days will be split between international ministries and the Service of Living Tradition Fund.
3. The Executive Director may use less than \$10,000 for a one-time unbudgeted expense. Whenever possible the Executive Director will consult with the Treasurer regarding the unbudgeted expenditure.
 - a. The Institute for Excellence in Ministry, which occurs once every two years, at times requires unbudgeted expenses a year ahead of time. These expenditures are permitted, provided that:
 - i. The Executive Director informs the President and Treasurer of the expenses before they occur.
 - ii. The Executive Director includes that year's Institute expenses in the budget the following year.
4. The Executive Director and staff shall develop and execute processes that ensure the safety and security of the UUMA's financial assets.
5. The Executive Director will provide the Board with the following information in a summary style report: List unbudgeted expenses, designated funds expenses, Institute expenses, total income, and total expenses.

4. Endowment

1. Investment
 - a. The Executive Director shall invest the assets of the endowment with the objective of earning an average annual total return of 8 to 12 percent consistent with moderate risk.
 - b. Endowment Fund Investments shall be managed by a professional investment manager. The Executive Director may allocate the investment funds in such a way as to achieve the growth benchmark (see part a. above).
 - c. The Executive Director will give priority to socially responsible investment strategies.
2. Disbursement
 - a. Disbursement will begin when the total assets in the endowment equal \$500,000 or more. If the total assets of the endowment fall to \$250,000, then disbursement may continue only with an affirmative vote of the Board.
 - b. The amount of money available to spend from the endowment shall equal the average value of the endowment over the last three years or starting from the endowment's creation.
 - c. Up to 4% of the disbursement amount (see part b. above) will be available for the UUMA's operating budget.
 - d. Up to 1% of the disbursement amount (see part b. above) will be available for sister organizations.
 - e. Up to 1% of the disbursement amount (see part b. above) will be available for international colleagues.

3. Criteria for accepting gifts
 - a. The Executive Director is encouraged to direct budget surpluses in the annual operating fund to the endowment.
 - b. The Executive Director may refuse gifts that if, in his or her view, the gift would:
 - i. Distract from the primary mission and vision of the UUMA.
 - ii. Expose the UUMA to expenses or liabilities that could pose a hardship on the financial resources of the Association.
4. The Executive Director shall not engage in any self-dealing or transactions with the endowment fund in which he or she has a direct or indirect financial interest. The Executive Director shall refrain at all times from conduct in which his or her personal interests would conflict with the interest of the endowment fund.
5. Monitoring. The Executive Director will provide the Board with the following information in a summary style report: Total value of the assets in the endowment, donations made to the endowment in the past year, annual growth versus 8%-12% benchmark, fund allocation of the investments, amount donated to sister organizations and international colleagues, and withdraws from the endowment in the previous fiscal year.

5. Membership

1. The Executive Director and the staff shall always treat members of the UUMA with compassion and respect in accordance with our Unitarian Universalist Principles.
2. The Executive Director and staff shall keep an accurate roster of colleagues in all membership categories.
3. The Executive Director will report all membership additions and changes in accordance with the monitoring schedule.
4. Applications for associate membership will be forwarded to the Board for review and determination.
5. The Executive Director shall grant Life member status to any UUMA member in good standing who has a) served for at least five years, b) retired through the process defined by the UUA, and c) stated that they have no plans to earn future income as a minister. Associate Life status may be granted to Associate members who retire from active ministry and verify their retired status.
6. All membership categories and procedures – including those for associate members - will be defined by the Executive Director, in consultation with the Board of Trustees as needed.

6. Personnel

With respect to treatment of paid staff, unpaid staff and volunteers, the Executive Director shall:

1. Operate with written personnel policies that:
 - a. Clarify rules for staff
 - b. Provide for effective handling of grievances
 - c. Are accessible to all employees
 - d. Inform staff that employment is neither permanent nor guaranteed

2. Ensure non-discriminatory practices as defined by city, state and federal laws.
3. Ensure safe and healthy working conditions.
4. Provide a written internal grievance procedure accessible to all staff.
5. Set forth clear performance expectations and an equitable process for giving feedback.
6. Establish current compensation and benefits that comply with recommended salary ranges.

7. Public Statements and Positions

1. The Executive Director may make public statements endorsing (or promoting) specific organizations or initiatives or expressing a position on an issue or event if they meet all of the following criteria:
 - a. Statement or position is congruent with, and further achieves, the vision statements of the UUMA;
 - b. Statement or position is not in violation of written limitations policies;
 - c. Statement or position does not make unreasonable financial commitments for the UUMA;
 - d. There is some indication that the statement or position is widely shared throughout the membership of the UUMA.
2. Public statements that fall outside these criteria may be approved by the Board of Trustees on a case by case basis.

C. Governing Procedures

1. General Policies

1. The Board may change its written policies at any time through a majority vote of the Board members present.
2. The President ensures that the Board is following its own policies; specifically the Governing Procedures and Board-Executive Director Linkage policies.
3. As the elected representative leadership of the UUMA, Trustees provide visionary leadership for the UUMA and ensure that the vision is brought about in a responsible manner. The Board's job is to write, review, and monitor their compliance with these policies, and to monitor the performance of the Executive Director.

Officers:

- a. The President oversees the continuing operations of the UUMA; leads the UUMA and Board of Trustees in creating a vision for the future and monitoring realization of this vision; represents the UUMA mission and vision to the larger Unitarian Universalist movement; ensures the continuing operations of the UUMA through facilitation of board monitoring of and delegation to the Executive Director; and upholds the Constitution and Bylaws, Guidelines and Code of Professional Practice, and general policies of the UUMA.
- b. The Vice President provides counsel and support to the UUMA President, accepts duties as assigned by the President, and assumes the duties of the President in their absence.

- c. The Secretary performs the duties of Secretary for the Board of Trustees and for the Association.
- d. The Treasurer serves as overseer of the finances of the UUMA, offers direction on budget issues and decisions, and provides financial guidance as needed/requested.
- e. The president designate becomes familiar with the operation of the Board of Trustees and their upcoming role.

At-Large Trustees:

- f. Three (3) At-Large Trustees focus on particular priority areas, which are determined by the Board and President and may change from year to year. Such areas of focus are identified in Board Position descriptions, found in the Appendix A. These will include:
 - a. Counsel and Advocacy
 - b. Anti-Racism, Anti-Oppression, and Multiculturalism
 - c. Governance

2. Board Covenant

1. The Board shall have a covenant that it will follow and review regularly.
2. We seek to speak the truth with love, humor and intention – earning and extending trust, openly sharing our dreams, concerns, hopes, misgivings and vulnerabilities.
3. We promise:
 - to speak up if something affects our ability and willingness to trust;
 - to be patient with questions, supporting each other as we struggle towards decisions;
 - to share background when we know it, and ask for it when we don't;
 - to communicate clearly, especially about our expectations.
4. In all our shared efforts, we will:
 - prioritize self-care;
 - laugh and play together as well as debate and disagree;
 - place a high priority on board business, but after family and ministerial duties;
 - appreciate the diversity of cultures, styles and gifts,
 - assume good intentions and be mindful of our impact.
5. In our meetings together, we will be attentive:
 - posting documents at least 72 hours before meetings;
 - reading posted documents and e-mails prior to meetings;
 - beginning each business day in worship/centering;
 - conducting daily process observations about our intercultural competencies and this covenant;
 - following our policies.
6. Outside of meetings, we will:
 - let others know when commitments won't be fulfilled;
 - speak with one voice, even though we may disagree with decisions;
 - be clear and direct with one another about our needs and commitments,
 - and err on the side of checking in.
7. We promise our Staff and one another:
 - to communicate with clarity and honesty;
 - to commit to timeliness;

to follow agreed-upon procedures, and speak up when we need support;
when staff members are present, to invite them to participate fully unless specifically noted.

3. Board Linkage

1. The Board is accountable to our current members on behalf of our past, present, and future members.
2. The Board will regularly be in conversation with the members of the UUMA serving in a diversity of settings and through all stages of their membership. The purpose of these conversations will be to understand the concerns, ideas, and values of the members. These conversations will provide insight to the Board on its policies.
3. The Board will also be informed through the Executive Director's reports on UUMA programs and his/her collaboration with members.

4. Board Relationship with Stakeholder Boards

1. The Board of Trustees will be intentional about connecting with Boards of other organizations with whom the UUMA is in relationship, in order to promote our vision of being a leader in the UU world. These meetings, which may be via technology will occur as needed, and at least every few years. Among those the UUMA Board will be in relationship with include the Boards of the UUA, the UU Society for Community Ministers, the UU Retired Ministers and Partners Association, Liberal Religious Educators Association (LREDA), and the UU Musicians Network (UUMN), and also the Executive Committee of the Ministerial Fellowship Committee.
2. If the President designates one of the members of the Board to represent the UUMA Board to a gathering of one of these groups, that individual will report to the Board about the connection.

5. UUMA Committees

1. The Board may create Committees and Taskforces for a specific purpose and/or for a limited amount of time. The work of these Committees and Taskforces will not interfere or duplicate the work of the Executive Director or the staff. Such Committees and Taskforces fall under the purview of this policy.
2. Nominating. The Nominating Committee assists the Board in identifying candidates for elected positions.
3. UUMA Standing Committees named in the Bylaws are accountable to the UUMA Board of Trustees. Their charters are included as Appendix B. The following UUMA Standing Committees fall under this policy:
 - a. Guidelines
 - b. Ethics and Collegiality
 - c. Committee on Anti-Racism Ministry

Other Board committees include the Leadership Development Committee (LDC).

4. Ministerial Conference in Berry Street. The Board appoints UUMA members to serve as a MCBS Executive Committee.

5. The UUMA Board will select the members of UUMA Board Committees and Standing Committees with input from the Executive Director, staff, and the UUA. Chairs of UUMA Board Committees and Standing Committees will be in final fellowship.
6. The Board will appoint and regularly receive reports from UUMA representatives on the Ministerial Fellowship Committee (MFC) and a Regent to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts
7. All members of UUMA Committees must be members in good standing with the UUMA. Colleagues in all membership categories, except candidate members, are eligible to serve on Standing Committees.
8. The Executive Director may fully participate in the meetings and the work of all UUMA Board Committees, Taskforces and Standing Committees, except when such involvement is explicitly denied within limitation policies.
9. All Standing Committees of the Board shall have a mission and a charge written by the Board or jointly between the Board and the Committee's chair.
10. The length of service for Standing Committees will be two years, staggered among its members.
11. Any member of a Standing Committee may be removed from service through a majority vote of the Board of Trustees.

6. Board Meetings and Conference Calls

1. **Generative Thinking.** Organizations do not travel a straight line and rational course from vision to mission to goals to strategy to execution. Generative thinking helps leaders to confront and move forward on complex, value-laden problems that defy a "right" answer or "perfect" solution. In this way, the Board becomes an asset that creates added value and comparative advantage for the UUMA.
The Board will seek to practice generative thinking in its meetings and conference calls:
 - a. Framing problems before identifying solutions; asking questions that are more catalytic than operational.
 - b. Determining what decisions to tackle before making any decisions.
 - c. Identifying what is worthy of a strategy before developing any plans.
 - d. Being intellectually playful and inventive as well as logical and linear.

The Board relies more on retreat-like meetings, teamwork, robust discourse, work at the organization's boundaries, and performance metrics linked to organizational learning.
2. **Board Development.** The Board will regularly conduct a leadership development program as part of its Fall and Spring meetings. Leadership development programs will rotate through the following and other goals, at the discretion of the President:
 - a. Understanding the Board's governance model.
 - b. Generative thinking to encourage a strategic and visionary approach to the UUMA.
 - c. Refining linkage procedures and processing feedback from members.
 - d. Nurturing an anti-racism, anti-oppression, multiculturalism orientation.
3. **Conference Calls.** The purpose of conference calls is to conduct time-sensitive business of the Board between face to face meetings. Board meeting policies apply to conference calls, except for worship and process observation which will be at the discretion of the President.

4. Consent Agenda. Items that require Board approval but do not require discussion may be included in the consent agenda. The Board will regularly include a consent agenda in its agenda for meetings and conference calls.
 - a. Items in the consent agenda are voted up or down as a slate.
 - b. Any item on the consent agenda that requires further discussion and a separate vote may be removed from the consent agenda and added to the regular agenda at the request of any member of the Board.

7. Board Public Statements and Positions

1. The President of the Board of Trustees or another member of the Board of Trustees the President appoints may make public statements endorsing (or promoting) specific organizations or initiatives or expressing a position on an issue or event if:
 - a. The statement or position does not fit within the responsibilities of the Executive Director, and
 - b. The Board has approved it, and
 - c. The statement or position strengthens relationships with UUMA partners.
2. All public statements by the Board will be developed in consultation with the Executive Director.
3. Neither the UUMA Board nor any individual Board member shall make a public endorsement of any candidate for UUA elected office.

8. Monitoring Schedule

1. The Board of Trustees shall rigorously monitor its own performance *vis a vis* its policies. The schedule for monitoring Governing Procedures and Board-Executive Director Linkage policies is as follows:

Policy	Policy Name	Monitoring Date
C.1	General Policies	Fall
C.2	Board Covenant	June
C.3	Board Linkage	Fall
C.4	Board Relationship with Stakeholder Boards	Spring
C.5	UUMA Committees	Spring
C.6	Board Meetings and Conference Calls	June
C.7	Board Public Positions and Statements	June
C.8	Monitoring Schedule	Fall
D.1	Delegation to the Executive Director	Spring

D.2	ED Monitoring	Fall
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D. Board-Executive Director Linkage

1. Delegation to the Executive Director

1. The Executive Director is the CEO, the head of staff, and in charge of the financial matters of the UUMA in consultation with the Treasurer.
 - a. Applications for a waiver for membership dues will be submitted to the staff, along with supporting documentation. The staff will then forward the application and supporting documentation to the Treasurer. In accordance with Bylaw IV.3, the Treasurer will grant a waiver of membership dues based on financial hardship or full disability.
 - i. Candidate members of the UUMA may not receive a waiver.
2. The Board delegates all authority and responsibility not explicitly named in either the Bylaws or the limitation policies to the Executive Director and staff.
3. The Executive Director is accountable only to the Board’s written policies. The Board gives instruction to the Executive Director as a whole, speaking with one voice through a majority vote.
4. Verbal instructions by individual Board members may be offered in order to clarify or give more detail on a given policy, but are not by themselves authoritative over the Executive Director or the staff.
5. The Board deals directly with the Executive Director. The Board does not give instructions to staff or volunteers that report to the Executive Director, unless the latter gives permission to do so.
6. The Executive Director may move outside of the parameters set by the limitation policies with the approval of a majority vote of the Board.
7. If the Executive Director believes a situation has arisen in which he or she will unintentionally move outside of the parameters set by the limitations policies, then he or she will immediately inform the Board President, Vice President, and in the case of financial matters, the Treasurer.
8. The Executive Director will collaborate with stakeholder organizations.

2. Executive Director Monitoring

1. The Executive Director will make regular reports to the Board based upon his or her goals, the goals of the other staff and how well the vision statements are being accomplished. These reports would include interpretations that demonstrate how the goals are related to the Board’s vision statements.
2. The Executive Director will report key numbers and statistics that are specifically named in the Summary portion of the limitations policies. Additional data may be provided as incidental information, if the Executive Director believes it to be of interest to the Board and its work.
3. The Executive Director will be evaluated once every two years. The Board’s limitations, vision statements and the Executive Director’s annual goals will form the basis of the evaluation.

4. Strategic Planning. The Board will do a comprehensive review and revision of its vision statements every three years on the third year of the sitting president's term. The Executive Director shall present the Board with a comprehensive interpretation of the vision statements within the following year. The Executive Director will create a three year strategic plan aligned to the Board's vision statements.
5. The schedule for monitoring Limitations and Ends policies is as follows:

Policy	Policy Name	Monitoring Date
General	Mission	Fall
A.1	Relationship to Unitarian Universalism	Spring
A.2	Continuing Education	Fall
A.3	Anti-racism, Anti-oppression, Multiculturalism	Spring
A.4	Collegial Development	Fall
A.5	Organizational Health and Effectiveness	Spring
A.6	Relationship to the World	Fall
B.1	Global Limitation	Fall
B.2	Budgeting	Winter; Spring
B.3	Financial Condition	Quarterly
B.4	Endowment	Spring
B.5	Membership	Quarterly
B.6	Personnel	Fall
B.7	Public Statements and Positions	June