

ASSOCIATED MENNONITE BIBLICAL SEMINARY
Ministry and Mission Experience Credit

Ministry and Mission 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 MA ministry degrees (MACF or MAME). No such credit is 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.
2. Have documented ministry or mission experience in one of the following categories:
 - a. At least **five years of full-time ministry** and/or mission experience in an assignment affirmed by the church through election, call, or appointment (up to 9 hours of credit);
 - b. At least one year of full time ministry and/or mission experience no more than five years prior to making the petition for MME credit in an assignment with a **supervisory structure** in place and periodic **documented evaluation** of growth in ministry (up to 6 hours of credit);
 - c. At least **400 documented hours** of ministry and/or mission work no more than three years prior to making the petition for MME credit in an assignment with a **supervisory structure** in place and periodic **documented evaluation** of growth in ministry (3 hours of credit).
3. Successfully completed 15 credit hours of work *at AMBS* with a grade point average of B or higher.
4. Have never received equivalent credit for ministry and mission experience in any other degree program.

PROCEDURE

For Master of Arts 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 advisors the merits of using past supervised experience for curricular credit within the specific degree program, students' vocational interests, and academic readiness to undertake the project (including language competence)
 - b. Complete the attached application
 - c. Meet with their adviser to assess the merits of the petition
 - d. Procure the approval of the adviser through his or her signature
 - e. Submit the application to the Dean. (October 15 and March 15 are deadlines for completing the petition process during the semester in which students plan to complete the portfolio.)

2. The Academic Dean will assess the student's petition in consultation with the MA Director or coordinator of the MAPS degree. If he or she deems the request appropriate to the curricular requirements and values of the student's degree program, he or she will assign a faculty member to serve as MME evaluator of the portfolio.

STAGE TWO: PORTFOLIO AND FINAL APPROVAL

1. In consultation with the assigned faculty evaluator, the student will plan his or her portfolio (see below).

2. When the portfolio is complete, the student will meet with the MME evaluator to discuss the contents. 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 require additional work on the portfolio to deepen the student's learning or to rework problematic issues. The student will also submit a copy of the portfolio to his or her academic adviser and the MA Director.

3. The MME evaluator will meet with the MA Director to prepare a written recommendation to the Academic Dean regarding whether and how much Field Education credit should be granted for the student's past experience.

4. The Academic Dean will take the recommendation 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.

For Master of Divinity Students

STAGE ONE: PRELIMINARY APPROVAL

1. Students enrolled in the M.Div. program seeking Ministry and Mission Experience (MME) credit to fulfill any part of their Field Education requirements will discuss with their academic advisors the merits of using past supervised experience for curricular credit within their specific 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 Field Education at least one week prior to the meeting outlined in Step 3 below (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 attached to this document.
 - b. A petition describing:
 - 1) the ministry location and the amount of time spent in direct ministry;
 - 2) a summary of the ministry activities engaged;
 - 3) the structures for oversight or accountability attending the ministry;
 - 4) names of three references who witnessed growth in the practice of this ministry; and
 - 5) a rationale for why credit should be given for this experience that makes clear how the experience informs and relates to the ministry to which students sense a call and the degree program in which the students are enrolled.
3. Students will request an appointment with their academic adviser and the Director of Field Education to discuss the application and petition. The Director of Field Education—in consultation with the academic adviser as needed—will determine whether the request appears to satisfy the curricular goals and values of the M.Div. formation process and the particular emphasis of the student's degree program. The Director of Field Education will also propose the number of credit hours to be granted for the experience.
4. The Academic Dean will review the documentation and the recommendations of the academic adviser and Director of Field Education and report to the applicant. He or she will assign a faculty member (in most cases the Director of Field Education or a faculty member working with Minister in the Church) to serve as MME evaluator of the portfolio.

STAGE TWO: PORTFOLIO AND FINAL APPROVAL

1. In consultation with the assigned MME evaluator, the student will plan his or her portfolio (see below).
2. When the portfolio is complete, the student will meet with the MME evaluator to discuss the contents. Where appropriate, an evaluator may identify specific learning agenda for the student to pursue during the remainder of his or her seminary studies. The evaluator may require additional work on the portfolio to deepen the student's learning or to rework problematic issues. The student will also submit copies of the portfolio to his or her academic adviser.

3. The MME evaluator will prepare a written recommendation to the Academic Dean regarding whether and how much Field Education credit should be granted for the student's past experience.
4. The Academic Dean will take the recommendation 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.

THE PORTFOLIO

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

- a. The completed application form.
- b. A substantial paper (20-40 pages) that:
 - 1) Describes the ministry/mission setting and the work done in the setting, with the job description attached (if available);
 - 2) Identifies significant ministry/mission experiences that shaped the student's understanding of ministry and why these were formative for that understanding;
 - 3) Identifies personal strengths, weaknesses, and growing edges arising out of the experience;
 - 4) Reflects theologically on themes arising from the experience and/or on particular incidents that proved to be significant;
 - 5) Identifies and explores areas in which the applicant would like to grow and details plans for attending to this growth;
 - 6) Summarizes learnings that contribute to the student's sense of call and identifies questions the student would like to pursue through further study and discernment.

It is not sufficient merely to describe and document past experiences in ministry. Ministry or mission experience that has not been reflected upon or examined for its potential for learning and growth does not warrant credit. Ministry and Mission Experience credit is based on the 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 personal learning.

- c. Documentation of evaluation (e.g., supervisor or conference executive evaluation, congregational evaluations, peer reviews, personnel reports, etc.)
- d. Letters of reference or recommendation. Students will request three letters of reference or recommendation from people with whom they had supervisory or peer relationships during the ministry or mission experience. These letters should identify specific gifts for ministry that were developed and exercised in the ministry or mission context as well as specific areas of growth observed. They should evaluate the student's ministry skills, ability to reflect theologically, and capacity for self-awareness, healthy human relationships, and continual learning. The portfolio must include these references from external supervisors and/or ministry peers.
- e. Any other artifacts of the student's choice that demonstrate her or his capacity, development, and competence in ministry or mission work.

Dean's Office 11/83

Revised 4/91; 8/95; 7/97; 8/98; 3/03; 11/03

ASSOCIATED MENNONITE BIBLICAL SEMINARY
Application for Ministry and Mission Experience Credit

Personal Information

Name _____ Age _____

Degree program _____ Hours completed toward degree _____ Current semester _____

Academic Background

Institution	Dates	Degree
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Ministry and/or Mission Experience

Assignment, location, and church/agency	Dates
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

By my signature below, I signify that

- 1) I have completed at least 15 hours of work at AMBS with a grade point average of “B” or higher.
- 2) I have not received equivalent credit for ministry or mission experience in any other degree program.

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 on _____, I name the following person to
(date)
serve as MME evaluator _____.

Dean’s signature _____ Date _____

Return to Registrar’s Office

Copies to: Student, academic adviser, MME adviser, Director of Field Education, MA Director (if in MA program)