

UUMN Code of Professional Practice

proposed text submitted to the UUMN Board in November 2016
by the Code of Professional Practice Task Force:

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Contents

- UUMN Code of Professional Practice Revision (vote of membership)
- Accountability Procedure - For Board Adoption (to replace Professional Rights Procedure)
- Professional Standards (non-actionable best practices recommended and periodically reviewed by UUMN)
- Supplemental Materials
 - Sample Letters of Understanding
 - Other Resources

Proposed Changes to Code of Professional Practice

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST MUSICIANS NETWORK

CODE OF PROFESSIONAL ~~PRACTICES~~ PRACTICE

As adopted at the Annual Meeting of the UU Musicians Network on August 3, 2005 in Denver, Colorado.

Revised July 15, 2010 at Annual Meeting in Madison, WI.

Revisions proposed November 2016

Preamble

We, the members of the Unitarian Universalist Musicians Network, do affirm this Code of Professional ~~Practices~~ Practice as our standard of commitment to music ministry. This Code will be followed by all the members of this Network who are or have been engaged as Professional Musicians* working in UU congregations, and will be supported by all who are joining our membership.

I. Self

A. As a professional musician serving within the Unitarian Universalist Association and Canadian Unitarian congregations, I commit myself to honor the ideals of music as ministry, and to actively explore and articulate the underlying values and principles that those ideals express.

B. I will not engage in sexual contact, sexualized behavior, or a sexual relationship with any person over whom I have power and/or authority. I will honor the covenants of my own and other personal relationships.

~~I recognize that as a religious leader in whom trust and power have been placed, I am both morally and legally in a professional relationship to which I am called to be faithful. I will never abuse the authority of my position by manipulating others to satisfy my personal needs. Objectionable behaviors may include, but are not limited to, sexual behavior with any child, adolescent, or vulnerable adult seeking advice or comfort; or with any adult in another committed relationship; or with colleagues serving my congregation.~~

I will observe the legal requirements of my state or province regarding the reporting of physical or sexual misconduct.

C. The recognition of the importance of music ministry by my congregation requires acknowledgement of my worth as a professional musician. Understanding that other music ministry professionals will follow after me, I will work actively with an appropriately designated group within my congregation to help establish up-to-date standards of fair compensation and working conditions that support our professional skills.

D. I will sustain a respect for music ministry. Because my private life is woven into my practice of this ministry, I will refrain from private as well as public words or actions which are degrading to this ministry or destructive of congregational life.

II. Colleagues

A. Since I share the welfare of the congregation with other religious professionals, I will seek to be part of mutually cooperative, supportive, open, consultative and ethical relationships with them as we carry out our shared and separate responsibilities. Should difficulties arise, I will seek help judiciously and express my concerns professionally, keeping in mind the dignity and value of my position.

B. I recognize that in my relationship with religious professionals, I have a responsibility to be supportive in both personal and public situations. I will offer honest and caring responses to them and endeavor to designate appropriate help when called for. Understanding the trust that colleagues place in relationships with each other, I will honor the need for confidentiality, keeping in mind that such confidentiality is not to be used to allow harm to another or to prevent appropriate help from being sought. I accept the responsibility to confront a colleague's misuse of power, or to report concerns about suspected misconduct to a UUMN Good Officer.

C. A change in music leadership can have a dramatic impact on a congregation. In the event of my departure, I will create space for new work in the congregation by refraining from any actions that might jeopardize the ministry of any who succeed me in leadership, or the health and well-being of the congregation. I will avoid contact, including social media, with the congregation I served until there can be a covenant expressed in a Letter of Understanding between myself and those who remain in leadership, including my successor. This covenant is intended to outline the nature and limits of my involvement with the congregation. Because of the implicit power of my prior position, I will initiate this Letter of Understanding and share it with members of the congregation as the minister and Board deem appropriate. I will make my family members aware of the impact their continued presence and involvement may have on the congregation.

As a departing music leader, I will be expected to discontinue all contact with the congregation, its members, and staff if:

- a. my ministry involved established misconduct;
- b. I have violated the UUMN Code of Professional Practice; or
- c. I repeatedly violate the terms of my covenant.

If and when I am no longer a member of the UUMN, and am no longer bound by the Code of Professional Practice, I will not take inappropriate advantage of my previous professional relationship with the people of the congregation.

I understand that it is customary for ordained Clergy to leave a congregation when their time of service concludes and this is acknowledged as a healthy model for leave taking. In the event that I remain a member in the congregation where I have previously served as a music leader:

- I will refrain from being involved in the process of selecting my successor unless formally requested to do so.
- I will encourage members of the congregation to speak to their current music professional or other appropriate persons for answers to all current music issues or concerns, and I will bring any of my own concerns directly to my successor.
- For two years after my professional leadership has been concluded, I will support my successor by refraining from accepting positions on policy-making bodies in the congregation.
- I will refrain from accepting or volunteering for roles in the music program unless formally requested to do so by my successor.

● For two years following my departure from the staff of the congregation, I will refrain from offering opinions on congregational issues in real-time or online interactions with congregants, regardless of my congregational membership status. ~~In the event that I remain a member in the congregation where I have previously served as a musician, I will refrain from being involved in the process of selecting my successor unless formally requested to do so. Further, I will support my successor by leaving room for him/her to establish her/his own identity and leadership in the congregation and by refraining from accepting positions on policy-making bodies in the congregation (such as board, music committee, finance committee, personnel committee) for two years after my professional leadership has been concluded in that congregation unless being specifically asked to serve by the new leadership. I will consult with her/him before accepting or volunteering for roles in the music program, and will encourage members of the congregation to speak to their current music professional or other appropriate persons for answers to all current music issues or concerns.~~

D. I will defer accepting requests for any musical services from members of any congregation I am not now serving until I have consulted with the incumbent musician(s) in that congregation. If my colleague asks me to refrain from performing the service, I will comply. Should emergency circumstances make such a consultation impossible, I shall render only limited services and consult with my colleague at the earliest possible opportunity.

III. Congregation

A. I will uphold and honor the liberal religious principles of congregational polity and inclusiveness, within the congregation I serve, knowing that by modeling such principles, I am upholding the experience of free religious life for the entire congregation.

B. I will honor the confidences shared with me by members of the congregation, keeping in mind that such confidentiality should not contribute to personal or professional misuse of power.

C. In the case of planned or forced resignation or significant change in role or responsibility, I will consult with a UUMN Good Officer for counsel and assistance in executing a well-managed departure or change.

IV. Wider Association

A. As a UUMN member, I will understand my responsibility to educate lay people and religious professionals about the qualifications for and dimensions of professional music leadership, and to enlist their help in according appropriate status to professional church musicians.

B. To promote professional integrity and leadership, I will advocate for UUMN's Code of Professional ~~Practices~~ Practice.

C. I will support and participate in activities and programs of the UUA and Canadian Unitarian churches as applicable, and encourage the participation of others in such events, knowing that wider participation will lead to deeper understanding of our goals as professional church musicians.

D. Recognizing the relationship between liberal religious goals and values and adequate financial resources needed to support their attainment, I will work to support fair and appropriate funding efforts advocated by the UUA, UUMN and associated interests and other organizations of professional church musicians.

V. The Larger Community

A. As a professional church musician, I understand that whenever I participate in the wider community, I represent my particular faith group and will strive to be a model of ethical leadership.

B. As a musician in the larger community, I will respect the work of composers and arrangers and will follow the appropriate copyright laws.

*Professional Musician is defined as those serving in professional music leadership roles, both compensated and uncompensated, in Unitarian Universalist communities.

Accountability Procedure (To replace current Professional Rights Procedure)

The Mission of the Unitarian Universalist Musicians Network is “to nurture, educate, and inspire UU music leaders to create dynamic and transformative music ministries and to model and promote excellence in shared ministry. The members of UUMN covenant to support and motivate one another in joyous and loving community.” With this mission at its heart, our organization’s Code of Professional ~~Practices~~ Practice provides specific behavioral guidance toward the creation and nurturing of that “joyous and loving community.”

The UUMN Good Offices program is in place to assist members with any professional problems or concerns, and should be the first contact in discerning how to handle an issue.

First Steps: Direct Dealing

When a UUMN member observes a colleague engaging in behaviors that fall outside of that Code, our covenant calls the observer to support the colleague by approaching them directly, unless there is a concern for safety. Members are advised to consult Good Offices for assistance in preparing for direct dealing and throughout the process. A Good Officer is initially neutral, advising the member and exploring the possibility of an informal resolution. Only after direct dealing has been attempted with unsatisfactory results should UUMN leadership be engaged by the filing of an official grievance.

Grievances: Loving Community in Practice

When direct dealing fails to provide satisfactory resolution, the observer’s next responsibility is to engage the leadership of the UUMN through the Grievance Procedure outlined below. UUMN leaders will assist in caring for all involved individuals fairly and with appropriate confidentiality, and will strive to respond in a manner in keeping with the impact of the behavior(s) and in alignment with the community we aspire to be as the UUMN.

Throughout our dealings with one another, members of UUMN bringing grievances, or against whom grievances may be brought, are assured that collegial confidences will be honored and information shared only as is necessary within UUMN leadership, with the following exceptions:

- As mandated by law
- To prevent a clear and immediate danger to a person or persons
- Where disclosure of a confidence may be required for defense in a legal action between colleagues
- If and only to the extent that there is a waiver previously obtained in writing concerning persons against whom the findings are adverse. Public notice will be given only when the action is in the form of probation, suspension, or removal from membership.

The Grievance Procedure

In accordance with the UUMN Bylaws, Section 2.5 [The Suspension or Removal of Membership], grievances concerning behavior which is inconsistent with the Code of Professional Practice should be addressed to the UUMN President, who will immediately contact the Good Offices Director(s), who will ensure that the UUMN member against whom the grievance is directed receives appropriate support. The President will then initiate the grievance response procedure in consultation with the Good Offices Director(s) and advise the UUMN Moderator of the grievance.¹

The President will then provide a copy of the grievance in writing to the person against whom it is directed and approach those involved in a pastoral manner, seeking a fair and sound collegial resolution. If it is determined that additional fact-finding is needed, the President or members of the UUMN Board of Trustees designated by the Moderator may seek additional information by questioning the person or persons involved, seeking documentation, and if necessary, making an on-site visit, always within the limits of confidentiality as indicated above. All information gathered must be documented in writing and will be given to the UUMN President.

If a satisfactory resolution for both parties cannot be made at this point, the Board of Trustees will convene to consider the case. All collected facts will be presented to the Board. Any persons involved may be questioned or may present information to the Board directly or in writing. UUMN members shall have full access and full freedom to respond to all grievances and evidence cited against them.

The UUMN Board shall listen to all information presented from all sides. The Board, by at least a two-thirds majority affirmation, will then determine their response to the grievance in the form of one of the following actions:

¹ In cases where a grievance is presented against an elected leader or a conflict of interest is present, the UUMN board shall determine an alternate individual to preside over the grievance process, and the language of this procedure adjusted accordingly.

- Determine that the grievance is unfounded;
- Advise, caution, admonish, or reprimand the UUMN member; or
- Place the UUMN member on probation, suspend, or remove from membership.

The UUMN member has a right to appeal the decision of the Board of Trustees. If any member believes he or she has been treated adversely by the proceeding, he or she may appeal, within thirty days, to the UUMN membership by informing the President of this decision in writing. Any appeal must include new information or documentation regarding the case.

When an action consisting of probation, suspension, or removal has been taken, and no appeal has been made within thirty days, notice of the action shall be given immediately thereafter to the congregations or UU communities that the individual serves as a music leader, to the UUMN Membership, and to the Ministries and Faith Development Staff Group of the Unitarian Universalist Association or to the Canadian Unitarian Council.

UUMN Professional Standards

Recognizing that musicians in religious leadership are called to nourish the health and wholeness of the communities they serve, and recognizing the fiduciary nature of our profession, and as stated in our actionable Code of Conduct, UUMN members who serve in leadership will not engage in sexual contact, sexualized behavior, or a sexual relationship with any person over whom they have power and/or authority.

The following are non-actionable best practices drawn from the wisdom of much research across many religious organizations about what behaviors uphold healthy religious communities and ministries. In the spirit of deepening our understanding of loving, just, healthy relationships, these guidelines point towards truths about healthy conduct for those who engage in professional ministries. We understand that no truth names the whole truth or covers every situation. To that end, music leaders should engage in discerning dialogue with themselves, their colleagues, and their supervisors, to better understand what these best practices mean in the context of their leadership setting.

1. UUMN Members should maintain ongoing familiarity with the updated guidelines and best practices published in the UUA Safe Congregations Handbook (<http://www.uua.org/safe/handbook>) and similar materials published by The Religious Institute (<http://www.religioustheology.org/>).
2. In the case where a UUMN member chooses to enter into a romantic or sexual relationship with someone for whom they have served as a music leader, the UUMN member should acknowledge the power differential that may exist, to understand the far-reaching impact that such relationships can have upon spiritual communities, and to be accountable not only to their romantic partner(s) but also to the minister or body responsible for the spiritual health of the community s/he serves.
3. UUMN members should maintain appropriate boundaries of privacy and discretion with those they serve.

Sample Letters of Understanding

WHEN MUSIC LEADER DEPARTS A CONGREGATION

SAMPLE LETTER OF UNDERSTANDING

Between

Departing Music Leader (DML) and New Music Leader (NML)

As professional colleagues and active members of the Unitarian Universalist Musicians Network (UUMN), we, DML and NML, make this covenant with one another:

- To maintain a professional relationship based on mutual respect for one another as Unitarian Universalist musicians;
- To hold as our highest priority the health and on-going ministry of the congregation at the UU Church of City, State;
- Understanding that congregations are especially vulnerable in periods of staff transition; DML agrees to refrain from intentional contact, both personal and professional, with members, friends, and staff of UU Church of City; furthermore, DML will help their partner, partner's name, to also refrain from intentional contact with members, friends, and staff of UU Church of City;
- NML recognizes that former parishioners may, on occasion, request DML services either by reaching out to them directly or by requesting such services through the church. DML accepts that it is in the best interest of the congregation to decline such invitations and refer them to NML;
- If and when the DML is no longer a member of the UUMN, and no longer bound by the Code of Professional Practice, DML will not take inappropriate advantage of the previous professional relationship with the people of the congregation;
- Together, we agree to make public the terms of our covenant to the Board, Staff, and any lay leaders who may need to know.

This covenant has evolved from conversation and negotiation between the two music leaders whose signatures appear below:

New Music Leader

Departing Music Leader

—

Date

Date