

Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta

Clergy Continuing Education Policies

The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith, and the of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. Ephesians 4:11-13

Continuing Education Covenant

In accordance with Canon 9, Sec. 1 and Can 7, Sec. 5 of the Episcopal Church Canons

All clergy are encouraged to engage in regular continuing education to strengthen their ministries. All churches of our diocese are expected to provide both time and money to make such study possible for their clergy.

Continuing Education should be focused on vocational development, workshops, courses or intentional study in areas that under gird present or future ministry and develop or strengthen existing talents and skills in the seven canonical areas.

These seven canonical areas are: The Holy Scripture, Church History, Christian Theology, Christian Ethics and Moral Theology, Studies in Contemporary Society, including racial and minority groups, Liturgics and Church Music, and Theory and Practice of Ministry.

Additional post-graduate degree work (Master of Sacred Theology, Doctor of Ministry, Doctor of Philosophy degrees), seminary courses for lifetime theological learning, workshops with institutions such as The Alban Institute are particularly encouraged by the bishop and the Commission on Ministry. Also when clergy of the diocese pursue post seminary graduate degree work or certificate study in some specialized field, they may be given a respite following completion of the program, subject to approval by the Bishop.

Continuing Education time is not to be used by clergy as additional vacation or leisure time. The Bishop shall also decide which clergy conference or clergy day programs might meet certain required hours for clergy continuing education. Private individual reading or studying also does not meet the continuing education requirements as outlined in the definition section below.

Definitions:

For the purposes of this diocesan policy a Continuing Education Unit is defined as the amount of credit a program gives a participant. For example, a course at an accredited seminary might provide a student with four hours of course credit.

This is different however from a Contact Hour. A Contact Hour is defined as each hour the student and instructor are together in a learning situation. A four hour (CEU) course might give

the participant twenty-four Contact Hours. Because contact hours vary within different Continuing Education programs, "Contact Hours", not CEUs are the standard that will be used.

It is these Contact Hours that are the basis of the Continuing Education requirements for all clergy to be in good standing in the Diocese of Atlanta.

A full-time, stipendiary priest shall take 40 Contact Hours of Continuing Education annually.

All Active deacons shall take 20 Contact Hours of Continuing Education annually.

Diocesan Expectations for Churches:

Parishes must budget a minimum of \$1,000 each year towards the expenses of continuing education projects for each full time priest on staff. This is a separate item that is not part of the diocesan minimum for salary and housing.

Stipendiary priests should have two weeks of continuing education time per year, which shall include at least one Sunday away from the parish.

Applicable Courses:

If a clergy person has a question about whether or not a particular course meets the requirements outlined above, he or she should contact the Bishop's office in advance. It should be noted that the Bishop will generally approve 10 hours of the continuing education requirement being met by attendance at clergy conference, and that 5 hours will generally be approved for each clergy day sponsored by the Bishop's office. Retreats are important and valuable, but are not counted toward meeting these continuing education requirements.

Limited scholarship funds are available for clergy serving in small churches. For information, contact the Canon to the Ordinary.

The "Continuing Education Reporting Form" should be sent in each year. [Click here for pdf download](#)

This policy takes effect January 1, 2007.

Ced/02/07