

United Women in Faith

Mission u Handbook

2025-2028



United
Women
in Faith

Office of Transformative Education

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United Women in Faith

Vision

Turning faith, hope, and love into action on behalf of women, children, and youth around the world.

Mission

United Women in Faith seeks to connect and nurture women through Christian spiritual formation, leadership development, creative fellowship, and education so that they can inspire, influence, and impact local and global communities.

Purpose

To be a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.



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Welcome From the General Secretary & CEO

Welcome to this handbook for the transformative education program, Mission u! We're excited to embark on this journey with you, equipping you with the knowledge, skills, and passion to make a meaningful impact in your conference and beyond.

Let us celebrate that the vision for what we now call Mission u was cast in 1900 by women who wanted to provide information about mission in new contextual ways for their day. For the next four years, they worked to bring their vision to life. By 1904, they initiated a "train the trainer" model, known as the Ecumenical Schools of Christian Mission. From then to now, many iterations of the seeds they planted have evolved; however, United Women in Faith carries forth the vision for transformative, reflective, mission education through Mission u. We continue to develop intergenerational curricula, train, and equip Deans, Assistant Deans, trainers, and Study Leaders to share contextual and timely studies, creating experiences that foster learning and action.

As you prepare to make way for more women, men, children, and youth to be transformed, know that your efforts and leadership are invaluable. You are building on a legacy that has reached countless people, including you and me, by expanding our knowledge and worldview through spiritual growth and a call to action through mission. The Deans and Assistant Deans are the glue that holds together all the pieces of delivering the whole of Mission u. Thank you!

May this manual be your guide every step of the way. Remember, you carry forth the legacy of those who came before as seed planters. You are the ones to continue watering those seeds for growth. Your "yes" to this role opens the door for your growth, and for all who participate in your Mission u events, in person and/or virtually.

Relax, let go of any anxiety, and trust that you are the ones who make the path to transformative education possible. Trust and let God lead you and your team. Isaiah 40:31 says, "but those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint." Go forth with my prayers for you to soar like eagles as you plan for Mission u.

With faith, hope, and love,



Sally Vonner

General Secretary/CEO
United Women in Faith



Photo: Janet Joyner

Introduction

The continual changes in our world challenge us to think critically, to remain open to new learning, and to explore new ways to engage in mission. That is why education is key to our mission witness. As we learn together, we discover the ways in which this world does not measure up to the kin-dom of God, and then we are better able to discern and do the will of God together. The 2004 Education for Mission Policy Statement, God's Call to Mission, asserts:

God calls us to be in mission, to take the risks necessary to break the barriers of prejudice, isolation, and distrust which keep people from sharing in the good news that God loves every person. God calls us to love God, to be in relationship with God, to love each other, and to be in relationship with others as an expression of that love.¹

God invites us to be in mission, and we respond to God's call through study, service, and advocacy. Through studying together, we learn about ourselves and each other, discover the meaning of God's Word, realize the needs in God's broken world, and respond by putting our learning into action through service to address immediate needs and advocacy to create systemic change. This is learning together for the transformation of the world. This is Mission u.

Across the country, Mission u reaches thousands of individuals each year. Over the decades, participants point to United Women in Faith's mission education through Mission u and its predecessor programs as pivotal experiences in their faith formation. Mission u builds awareness of social injustices, helps us develop our theological language to speak to and respond to those injustices, and offers us the tools and community to better engage in God's mission.

We designed this Mission u Handbook to help you and your team plan your Mission u conference events. However, not every situation and detailed facet may be anticipated. Although there are clearly defined expectations and guidelines, your own context, insights, skills, and experiences will contribute to your vision and creative implementation of a Mission u that "expands concepts of mission" for United Women in Faith and the church.

As Dean or Assistant Dean, you play a vital role in this learning process. It is through your work and that of your team that Mission u can be an inspirational event where the Spirit of God can work to transform hearts and minds. Your leadership in organizing meetings, enlisting leaders, planning, and evaluation is critical to developing a supportive community where transformative learning can occur.

Thank you for your leadership role in this long-standing, life-changing mission education event. As you prepare for those attending the Mission u in your conference, may your planning also bring transformative moments for you and your team.



Jay Godfrey

Transformative Education and Training Specialist
United Women in Faith

1. *Education for Mission Policy Statement*. 2004. Women's Division, General Board of Global Ministries. Unpublished.

SECTION 1

Mission u

What is Mission u?



Mission u events are foundational to the transformative education that United Women in Faith has offered for decades. Mission u events provide members and leaders with powerful worship, fellowship, and learning centered on biblically based curricula from a justice perspective. For decades, thousands of people have gathered in conferences, districts, and local groups every year for the transformative learning experiences that are still available today at Mission u.

Mission u's tagline is "Learning together for the transformation of the world." These three phrases help to frame the purpose of Mission u:



Learning ...

- That engages Scripture in ways that help us uncover how this world does not measure up to the kin-dom of God
- That helps us develop our theological language to speak to social issues
- That recognizes how we are learning is as important as what we are learning
- That engages in study, reflection, and action



Together ...

- Works to become a community that engages in mutuality and shared power
- Celebrates the integrity of racial and cultural diversity and the differing perspectives that emerge as a result
- Embraces the value of inter-generational learning
- Invites us into a community that both challenges and sustains us



For the transformation of the world ...

- Understands God's call to mission and justice in both a local and global context
- Invites us into personal and communal action for a more just world
- Provides resources and models for local church mission, study, and action

Why is there a Mission u?

Mission u and its predecessor schools are significant in the growth of the women's mission organizations and in our own faith journeys. United Women in Faith and its predecessor organizations have long recognized that education is essential to our relationship with God and with one another, as well as to grounding our discipleship in God's love for all creation. That is why the United Women in Faith's *Constitution and Bylaws* state that the conference organization is responsible to "plan and promote a conference Mission u, which will serve as one means of fulfilling the Purpose" (See Article IV, Section 7: Committee on Mission u).

Education for mission helps us distinguish our cultural and personal assumptions from those of the dominant culture, allowing us to understand more deeply the biblical mandates, God's mission imperative, and our response to it. Today, Mission u continues to bring together adults, youth, and children for this transformative education.

A Mission Education Policy Statement:

Education is central to the witness of mission. It is a lifelong process. *One aspect of education is to ask questions about the portrayal of reality: whose reality is present, whose is left out, what is true, and who determines it.*

Education provides opportunities to claim and reclaim realities of those whom the dominant culture has excluded or marginalized. Education involves exploring and understanding a wide variety of historical and cultural contexts. Education leads to involvement and action.

Education for mission equips and empowers us to know and experience God's loving action in our lives and history. Its aim is a moral imperative to bring about the realm of God on earth. It affirms God's love for all creation.

This Mission u Handbook is a companion to the information in the United Women in Faith bylaws. It will share ideas and essentials on planning and carrying out your Mission u.

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SECTION 2

The Office of Transformative Education

Mission u is organized and implemented annually in each conference by United Women in Faith, either alone or in cooperation with other agencies of the conference. The United Women in Faith's National Office, through its Office of Transformative Education, provides guidelines, resources, and assistance to the Conference Committee on Mission u and serves as the primary contact for Conference Committees on Mission.

Information for Deans and Assistant Deans, as well as general information about Mission u, is also found in three places.

1. On the Mission u page on the United Women in Faith website
2. In the Deans and Assistant Deans Group on UWFaith Digital
3. In the Deans and Assistant Deans Google Folder

Links to each of these can be obtained from the Office of Transformative Education.

Resources From United Women in Faith's Office of Transformative Education



To assist the Conference Committee on Mission u in its work each year, the following resources are provided:

- **Mission u theme materials:** Mission u theme descriptions, Mission u theme, logo, promotional flyer templates, and notification of the availability of mission curricula.
- **Plenary:** Leader and participant scripts for an intergenerational plenary.
- **Worship services:** Leader and participant scripts for opening, closing, and healing worship services.
- **Training:** The United Women in Faith National Office provides annual training for Deans and Assistant Deans. This training includes:
 - Monthly Deans and Assistant Deans Calls each fall
 - Eight training sessions coincide with the Study Leader Training each spring
- **Certification requirements:** Each Study Leader is expected to complete the training course on UWFaith Digital, which includes reading and/or listening to supplemental materials in addition to the curriculum. A list of these materials is provided to Deans and Assistant Deans for distribution to Study Leaders and is included in the online training course on UWFaith Digital.
- **Training courses** on UWFaith Digital for the preparation of Study Leaders and Deans.

- **Dean's Report:** The Dean's Report is a summary report to be completed by the Dean after each Conference Mission u event. The Dean's Report is distributed and returned electronically. This survey must be completed and returned in a timely manner.

Mission u Leader Training

As part of the investment and support for the conference, Mission u, along with its leadership, offers Mission u Leader Training each spring for conference Deans and Assistant Deans, Music/Worship Leaders, and conference Study Leaders.

Study Leader Training includes two components that Study Leaders complete as part of a cohort of no more than 23 Study Leaders.

1. An online course on UWFaith Digital
2. Four virtual two-hour live sessions

During registration, each Study Leader selects a cohort that best fits their schedule. Upon completing registration, Study Leaders gain access to an asynchronous training course on UWFaith Digital, which they should complete before virtual live sessions begin with their cohort.

The live sessions take place over a two-week period. A multiracial training team facilitates the sessions. The live virtual training sessions allow Study Leaders to bring questions about the curricula, offer ideas on facilitation, and learn from fellow Study Leaders and trainers. (Section 9 gives information about Mission u registration and financial policies.)

Deans & Assistant Deans Training sessions are offered to equip Deans and Assistant Deans with the information, resources, strategies, and skills necessary to plan, organize, and execute a successful, transformative Mission u event. Specifically, these sessions are designed to:

- Prepare Deans and Assistant Deans for the current and upcoming year's program.
- Provide information related to Mission u resources and curricula.
- Provide guidance and materials for use in planning events, including mission and advocacy activities.
- Answer questions related to policies and procedures.
- Develop a community of Mission u leaders across the connection.

One of the Dean's sessions focuses on Mission u worship services, where worship and/or music leaders are invited to participate.

SECTION 3

Standards of Excellence & Best Practices

United Women in Faith's National Office, through the Office of Transformative Education, places high value on the in-depth study and transformative learning that is part of the Mission u experience.



Standards and best practices from the fields of education, spiritual formation, and theology, along with decades of experience, are described below to guide you and your team in providing the best possible event. Supporting these long-held standards maintains the integrity of the Mission u program and its effectiveness as a space for transformative education.

- Incorporate worship, learning, and fellowship as key components for rewarding attendee experiences.
- Utilize the worship and plenary resources developed for each year's theme.
- Use of the current year's curricula.
- A schedule that includes an appropriate time to engage the curriculum:
 - Each curriculum includes eight hours of study time.
 - If the study is being offered virtually or as part of a one-day event, it may be appropriate to provide fewer hours of study to accommodate the other important aspects of Mission u (fellowship, advocacy, soul care, and so on).
 - When fewer than eight hours of study time are offered at an event, Study Leaders should not try to cover all the material in the curriculum. Adapting the curriculum in a way that allows participants to experience fewer elements more fully is encouraged over briefly touching on all elements.
- No more than 30 participants in each class.
- Include the Mission u curriculum sessions that are one to two hours in length, while remaining cognizant of the need for breaks and soul care.
- Respect for the principles of participatory education and transformative learning methods in planning and implementing your event.
- Framed in the context of the global mission of the church and our response as Christians within that mission.
- Study Leaders, guest speakers, and program guests who are supportive and acquainted with the United Women in Faith organization and the inclusive and global nature of the church.

- Include leadership, participants, and program segments that reflect the diversity of people in God's creation.
- Plan a program that meets the needs of a variety of age groups and intergenerational experiences.

Other opportunities may be incorporated into Mission u in consultation with the United Women in Faith conference leadership team. Some suggestions are below:

- Promote United Women in Faith resources.
- Include presentations or workshops by deaconesses, missionaries, United Women in Faith staff and directors, or National Mission Institution staff.
- Include presentations or workshops compatible with Mission u by other boards and agencies of The United Methodist Church.
- Discusses justice priorities or other pertinent concerns of the conference.
- Action on current social issues (digital advocacy, letter writing, vigils, etc.).
- Engaging a book from the Reading Program related to the Mission u theme as a book club gathering during the event, or to continue the conversation afterward.
- Engagement with Soul Care programming resources that respond to the expressed need for self-care and spiritual rejuvenation is encouraged.

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SECTION 4

Models for Mission u

Decades of experience and testimonies from thousands of participants affirm that a consistent mission education curriculum is one of the best opportunities for United Women in Faith to deepen their understanding of mission—and to extend that opportunity to the entire church. Today's Mission u follows a proven standard that provides curricula, training, worship, and plenary resources for leaders and teachers to create events that are both educationally and spiritually transformative.

There are many wonderful ways to have a Mission u! Over the years, the shape of Mission u has evolved at both the national and conference levels as church structures and geographical boundaries have changed, as well as with the emergence of new learning tools and audiences. With new challenges also come new opportunities. Many conferences are now offering in-person and virtual events to expand access to as many people as possible, even beyond conference boundaries. Regardless of your venue or whether you offer it in person or virtually, Mission u should adhere to the standards that support transformative learning, as described in Section 3. Several models are described below.

One-Day Events

One-day events are often used to promote the current curriculum to specific audiences or those who are unable to attend full-time. It can be an effective tool for inviting and introducing annual conference leaders, such as the bishop and cabinet, to the curriculum topics. As a result of such exposure, these leaders can become advocates for Mission u and mission education in the districts and local churches, and be encouraged to attend full-time or become part of the Mission u leadership.

If holding a one-day event, consider the following:

- Consider offering multiday and one-day events to ensure that the one-day event is not a substitute for the longer Mission u experience.
- Consider having it a day before or after the full event so that your team can support the effort.
- If you are offering a significantly shorter overview of the curriculum, be clear about who will provide leadership for this (do not assume that the same Study Leader will lead at both longer and shorter events).
- Conferences should not schedule eight hours of class time or try to cover all the material in the curricula in one day.

Multiple Events



Various circumstances and contexts can determine if holding a Mission u at several sites would be beneficial to the mission education effort and/or to participants:

- Geographical breadth and barriers may determine that carrying out more than one Mission u event is to the conference's advantage. Analysis of actual and perceived travel times may also suggest adding a location or event at a different time of year.
- Conference mergers influence Mission u planning. In addition to increasing the geographical breadth of the conference, mergers can be opportunities to evaluate and refresh Mission u programs. Care should be taken to plan for the entire new conference, rather than simply maintaining or protecting the traditions of the former conferences.
- Efforts to attract new audiences may benefit from holding a Mission u at a different site and at a different time of year.

If it is decided to have multiple Mission u sites, the organization of the committee or planning team will be slightly different. For example, one Dean with "site coordinators" for each location is one model. Planning is conducted as a single committee, with the understanding that the "site coordinators" will manage the program at their respective sites.

Major program decisions will be made by the group, i.e.:

- Decisions on Study Leader invitations
- Dates
- Registration
- Site selection
- Budget
- Major program components and scheduling
- Marketing and publicity

The site coordinators determine logistical details:

- Classroom and space needs
- On-site registration and check-in
- Food and other hospitality
- Facility requirements: insurance, IT, and A/V requests
- Unique budgetary needs

But this is just one possible model! A conference considering this change should discuss how it plans to share planning and decision-making responsibilities early in the planning process. And don't forget to share the names of all Deans with the Office of Transformative Education so that we can ensure everyone receives the necessary information.

Virtual Events



Offering Mission u virtually provides access for participants who might not be able to attend in-person events and to those in other conferences interested in virtual options.

There are two basic models for a virtual Mission u event: the “event” model, which has a schedule similar to an in-person event, and the “study group” model, where a group meets for one to two hours for a set number of sessions (for example, every Wednesday evening for four to eight weeks). Either model or a combination of the two is encouraged.

Considerations for a virtual event include:

- Platform (e.g., Zoom) and licenses: Are they adequate for the event you envision?
- Tech support: Who will help attendees who have trouble signing in? Who will share any presentations, manage breakout groups, etc.? Is this something a member of the committee can do, or will you need to seek (and pay for) additional support?
- Accessibility: Who can attend a virtual event if they may not be able to participate in an in-person one? Who is left out of a virtual event? What might help people access this event?

Hybrid Events



Hybrid events combine both in-person and virtual elements, enabling attendees to participate in person or remotely. The hybrid model offers advantages and challenges.

- Advantages: Hybrid events offer many of the benefits of virtual events:
 - Expanded reach and higher attendance.
 - Offers a less expensive option for attendees who do not need to pay for meals, travel, or accommodations.
- Challenges: Hybrid events have unique challenges:
 - The cost of streaming elements of the event at some venues can be very expensive.
 - Ensuring equal engagement of online and in-person participants.
 - Added responsibilities for facilitators and worship leaders.

The United Women in Faith National Office has several resources available to aid in planning a virtual event, including a Guide to Leading Mission u Curricula on Zoom. Contact the Office of Transformative Education for the most updated resources.

Other Settings



Other opportunities for formal mission education occur at district levels, at local churches, and within local units of United Women in Faith. The support of the bishop, district superintendent, pastors, and church Christian education staff is helpful in the ongoing work of education for mission.

Local churches, in particular, may be interested in using Mission u curricula because of the emphasis on opportunities for intergenerational learning. Moments when children, youth, and adults come together for mutually beneficial learning can be both powerful educational experiences and formative in strengthening faith communities.

As members of The United Methodist Church, members of United Women in Faith should promote the use of Mission u curricula as educational resources for adults, youth, and children.

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SECTION 5

Leadership for Mission u

How do we put all of this together?

Planning and leading an event that describes itself as a learning experience for the transformation of the world can appear to be a daunting process. However, since the event itself emphasizes learning together, the planning and execution of the event should exemplify the same spirit by working together.

In any planning project, it is essential to have leadership that provides overall direction and fulfills necessary administrative tasks. For Mission u, these are elected positions that include the Dean, Assistant Dean, Treasurer/Business Manager, Secretary, Registrar, and Committee on Nominations.

As leaders of the Committee on Mission u, your role is vital in creating the “space” for this transformative learning to take place. All aspects of your planning and every member of your team are valuable as you build an experience that expands your participants’ knowledge, touches their spirits, and deepens their response to God’s call in their lives.

United Women in Faith Cooperative Mission u

To promote and implement mission education in The United Methodist Church, United Women in Faith members in each conference plan Mission u events. In some cases, conferences have formed partnerships with other conference boards and agencies to carry out what has frequently been called a “Cooperative Mission u.” This model involves sharing sponsorship, financial support, planning, and implementation. The potential benefits of holding a Cooperative Mission u include expanding interest in mission education among clergy and congregations, as well as increasing support for United Women in Faith across the church.

While some groups have multiple sponsors, the most common cooperative effort is between the conference agency responsible for mission and the Conference United Women in Faith. The Conference Committee on Mission u will consequently include members from the other boards and agencies involved in carrying out Mission u. The Conference Committee on Mission u is primarily accountable to the Conference Leadership Team (Executive Committee) and also responsible to the sponsoring boards and agencies. To ensure a shared planning process for your cooperative Mission u that maintains open communication and decision-making, it is recommended to have a Memorandum of Understanding that includes the standing rules and agreed-upon procedures.

For United Women in Faith to fulfill the mandate for an annual Mission u, a Cooperative Mission u should also emphasize content that includes:

- Curricula developed by the National Office for United Women in Faith for Mission u.
- Programs that are varied (not just classes) and include worship, plenaries, fellowship opportunities, and soul care.
- Offering, if taken, directed in total or in part for mission programs for which United Women in Faith has responsibility.
- Speakers, resource persons, and other programmatic elements that are related to mission programs of The United Methodist Church and the purpose of the curricula.

What other groups could become part of your Mission u planning—or at least participate in some aspects of the program? Could another denomination or community group join you for some or all of the program?

Elected Positions

Dean and Assistant Dean

The Dean and Assistant Dean are essential to the overall functioning of the Mission u program and the oversight of the Committee on Mission u (planning team). While charged with these specific leadership responsibilities, both the Dean and Assistant Dean work together and with the Committee on Mission u. This involves delegating responsibilities, following up to ensure the work is completed, and maintaining regular communication with team members.

Dean

It is the primary responsibility of the Dean to lead the Committee on Mission u in developing the vision and goals for Mission u and in carrying out planning to design, staff, promote, implement, and evaluate the Mission u program.

Assistant Dean

Works closely with the Dean, assisting in the implementation of Mission u plans. It is necessary for the Assistant Dean to remain fully informed about the details of all Mission u planning in order to be able to serve as Dean, if necessary.

Who serves as Dean and Assistant Dean?

If your Mission u is organized as a Cooperative Mission u, the responsibilities of the Dean and Assistant Dean should alternate between persons representing the conference cooperating agency and the conference organization of United Women in Faith. Each of you will be a member of and report to your respective organization during your term in office.

In years when the Dean is from the conference cooperating agency and the Assistant Dean is from the United Women in Faith, the Assistant Dean may serve as the Mission u leader who sits on the Conference United Women in Faith Leadership Team.

As Dean, your responsibilities include:

- Chair the meetings of the Committee on Mission u (Mission u team).
- Work closely with Mission u officers and committees in coordinating, developing, planning, and implementing Mission u. Receive and review regular reports on program, publicity, registration, finances, and other administrative aspects.
- Coordinate with the Business Manager to secure initial information from the selected venue regarding space availability, dates, and rates. The Site Committee can complete the initial investigation for venue selection.
- Keep the Assistant Dean fully informed of all essential details regarding the event planning.
- Work with the entire committee to identify and select Study Leaders.
- Extend invitations to selected Study Leaders, making sure that those invited understand the Conference's expectations of them. (See information in document: "Study Leader Role and Responsibilities". This document can be shared with Study Leaders as part of their invitation.)
- Serve as a liaison between the Mission u Committee and Study Leaders.
- Lead the opening and closing sessions of Mission u.
- Complete the Mission u Deans Report at the end of each Mission u event.

As an Assistant Dean, your responsibilities include:

- Work closely with the Dean to assist in carrying out the Conference Mission u plans. Stay fully informed on the details of Mission u and be prepared to serve as Dean, if necessary.
- The Chair the Program Committee:
 - Identify leadership for the plenary program as planned by the Mission u Committee.
 - Secure the Worship Leader, singers, and musicians, as directed by the Committee.
 - Schedule fellowship activities (such as Soul Care, mission project, book club, etc.) and secure the necessary leadership.
 - Oversee creation and distribution of the program book to include: program schedule, sponsorships, and other key information.
- Handle the following logistics:
 - Respond to requests for copying materials, according to Mission u policy.
 - Arrange for signs on classroom doors; check with the venue about locking classrooms, multiple uses of rooms, A/V needs, etc.
 - Secure basic supplies such as flipcharts, markers, poster board, etc.; distribute and/or keep these at the registration area, or another central location.
 - Collaborate with the person responsible for A/V resources to ensure that equipment is available and that someone with working knowledge and understanding of technology is present to assist during worship, plenaries, classes, etc.

Treasurer/Business Manager

As Treasurer or Business Manager, you manage the finances for Mission u and serve as the Venue Liaison. Your responsibilities include:

Financial management

- Develop a budget for your Mission u to be reviewed and approved by the Mission u Committee.
- Keep complete records and provide regular reports to your Mission u Committee.
- Arrange for participants to be covered by insurance.
- In consultation with the Dean, act as the liaison with the venue.
- Maintain a bank account in the name of Mission u.
- Ensure all Study Leader training registration fees are paid in full before the start of training.
- Receive funds before Mission u, on opening day, and throughout the event.
- Send book allowance to Study Leaders in the spring.
- Distribute expense vouchers at the opening meeting of the Mission u Committee to Study Leaders, Mission u Committee Members, and others as determined by the committee.
- Pay all bills connected with the Mission u, using vouchers with receipts signed by the Dean.
- Manage other financial details as necessary.
- Provide cash for change for any on-site sales.
- Coordinate the collection of an offering as designated by the Mission u Committee and submit it promptly to the recipient(s).

Business Manager as Venue Liaison (in consultation with the Dean)

- Negotiate contracts with the venue in consultation with the Dean.
- Conduct a site visit to inspect classrooms and other meeting rooms, ensuring they have the necessary equipment and that the technology meets the capacity requirements based on participant count, as well as accessibility and sustainability goals.
- Make special arrangements with the venue/site representative regarding the menu selection, dining room, and other facility spaces.
- Work with the Media and Technology coordinator regarding arrangements and charges for all A/V equipment for worship, plenary, and Study Leaders.
- Secure venue floor plans and identify lodging options, room accessibility, and meeting spaces and classrooms.

Secretary

Responsibilities for the Secretary include:

- Take attendance and minutes of all meetings of the Committee on Mission u.
- Keep the official record of committee decisions.

- Distribute minutes promptly.
- Handle all general correspondence.
- May serve as a second signatory on vouchers for payment from the treasury.
- Sign any papers as required.

Some Mission u committees find it helpful to have the Secretary work with the Registrar or be part of a registration team.

Registrar

If the conference is using the United Women in Faith registration platform, STOVA, which is recommended, the Registrar should attend STOVA training as scheduled by the National Office. Responsibilities for the Registrar include:

- Create, update, and maintain all Mission u registration records.
- Prepare registration information in consultation with the Mission u Committee, including:
 - Determine registration fees
 - Set registration deadlines
 - Establish a registration process that includes collecting registration payments electronically/manually by an agreed-upon deadline and developing a system for timely registration confirmation
 - Determine refund policies
 - Collaborate with the Publicity Committee to promote and distribute registration information
- Respond to registration-related emails and messages within 48 hours.
- Receive and record registration checks, then pass them on to the Mission u Treasurer/Business Manager for deposit.
- Monitor participant enrollment numbers and communicate as needed when classes or other sessions are full.
- Maintain participant confidentiality and limit access to personal registration information.
- Generate, maintain, and distribute necessary lists with copies to Deans for the smooth functioning of Mission u:
 - Participant list (for insurance and facility purposes)
 - Class assignments and locations
 - Lodging information
- In consultation with the Committee on Mission u, recruit and train an on-site registration team:
 - Help with setup, teardown, and other projects as needed
 - Assist in staffing registration or information table
 - Interact with participants and guests during registration periods at Mission u
- Attend and participate in the Committee on Mission u planning meetings.

Mission u Committee on Nominations (Mission u CON)

The work on the Mission u Committee on Nominations is essential to the continued strength of the Conference Mission u. Its primary task is to nominate all officers for the Mission u, who are then elected by the Committee on Mission u. It is a separate committee from the Conference United Women in Faith's Committee on Nominations. Conferences are encouraged to select members of the Conference Committee on Mission u at the close of their conference event to facilitate a smooth transition into the next planning cycle.

Who is on the Mission u Committee on Nominations? (Mission u CON)

- The Mission u CON should consist of three to seven members, depending on the size of your Committee on Mission u.
- Mission u CON members are not individuals who are members of the Committee on Mission u. It is a separate committee.
- The chairperson of the Mission u CON, however, may be a member of the Committee on Mission u when nominated by the Mission u CON and elected by the Committee on Mission u.
- In a Cooperative Mission u, the Mission u CON should have a balance of members from United Women in Faith and the cooperating agency(ies).
- Members of the Mission u CON can serve up to four years in rotating classes.

Who is nominated by the Mission u Committee on Nominations?

- Committee on Mission u Officers
 - Dean
 - Assistant Dean
 - Treasurer/Business Manager
 - Registrar
 - Secretary
 - Chair of the Mission u Committee on Nominations
 - Members of the Mission u Committee on Nominations
- Others may be nominated as part of the work of the Committee on Mission u:
 - Youth and children's representatives
 - Language coordinators
 - Others, as determined by the conference standing rules

Getting started

The Mission u CON should develop a plan to ensure that the members of the Committee on Mission u include representation that reflects the conference (geographic, racial, ethnic, cultural, age,

interests, etc.). The Mission u CON should be mindful of the Committee on Mission u goals to broaden Mission u participation. It should consider how the interests of any new groups might be addressed through a relationship or membership on the Committee on Mission u.

As chairperson of the Committee on Nominations:

- Review the *United Women in Faith's Constitution and Bylaws* for the conference to determine the members of the Committee on Mission u and how long they can serve.
- Check your conference United Women in Faith's standing rules to find out who else is named to serve on the Committee on Mission u and who is to name additional members. Are they named by the conference United Women in Faith leadership team? By the Mission u Committee on Nominations? By the sponsoring group, if you have a cooperative or interagency Mission u?
- Check to see if your standing rules or Mission u procedures list the number of members on the Mission u Committee on Nominations.

Mission u CON responsibilities also include:

- Develop a list of **vacancies** on the Committee on Mission u.
- Maintain a "**talent bank**" of individuals serving and the years they have served.
- Obtain current **job descriptions** for officers and other leaders to be nominated.
- Use **best practices** for Mission u CON work:
 - Be thorough in contacting and following up with nominees
 - Develop a process to address vacancies
 - Develop a timeline for the Mission u CON's work
 - Maintain confidentiality
 - Make decisions on potential nominees as a group and hold each other accountable
- **Communicate** with the Dean about when the slate should be presented to the Committee on Mission u and when the election is to take place.
- Be aware that conference or district United Women in Faith officers who are on the Committee on Mission u and are finishing their term (in December) as a United Women in Faith officer will continue to serve on the Committee on Mission u until the completion of Mission u the following year.



NOTES



SECTION 6

Mission u Planning

The Committee on Mission u (Mission u planning team), especially through the work of the Dean and Assistant Dean, provides oversight for the planning and implementation of Mission u.

Suggested Mission u Planning Timeline



Below is a suggested timeline for Deans and Assistant Deans to follow as they work with the Committee on Mission u to plan for their next Mission u event.

Early Fall (August–October)

- Participate in monthly Deans and Assistant Deans Calls with National Office (Sept.-Nov.).
- Discuss Mission u vision and goals, and review evaluations from the previous year.
- Establish committees by determining committee leads and members to be accountable for completing various tasks and responsibilities, and then report back during each planning meeting.
- In conversation with the Committee on Mission u, determine the frequency of meetings early in the fall, adjusting as necessary to ensure tasks are completed.
- Start researching venue(s) for the Conference Mission u for the following year.
- Once the venue(s) is confirmed, establish dates for the Conference Mission u event.
- Determine where to share Save the Date flyers throughout the conference.

Late Fall (October–December)

- Identify potential Study Leaders.
- Recruit worship, music, tech leaders, and speakers as needed.
- Begin developing registration.
- If offering scholarships, determine the procedure, timeline, and application form in multiple languages.

Winter (December–February)

- Confirm Study Leaders.
- Confirm worship, music, tech leaders, and speakers.
- Develop a program schedule.
- Mission u Committee on Nominations presents nominees for Dean and Assistant Dean.

Spring (March–May)

- Collect bios and photos of Study Leaders and speakers
- Invite and introduce the Study Leaders, Mission u Committee members, and other conference officers to each other.
- Finalize schedule, vouchers, and final planning details.
- Submit event details for inclusion in the National Office Mission u map.
- Distribute the registration flyer across the conference.
- Attend Deans and Assistant Deans Training Sessions.
- The Mission u Committee on Nominations presents the remaining slate of officers for the following year.

Early Summer (May–June)

- Finalize PowerPoint presentations and other details for plenary and worship sessions.
- Print program book.

Post–event Debrief Meeting (including Study Leaders) near the end of Mission u

- Conduct initial evaluation of the current Mission u.
 - Discuss what worked well; what were the challenges, and what improvements can be made.
- Hold officer elections for the following year.
- Set the next meeting date for the Committee on Mission u.

Mission u Committees



Many Committees on Mission u have found the following functions and related tasks to be an effective way to organize for the planning and implementation of their Mission u. Most of these are standard functions for planning events. You and your committee may decide to group tasks differently or name additional task groups. Regardless, organize the work based on what you are trying to accomplish, creating a space for transformative education to take place. Here are some suggestions:

Mission u Program Committee

Planning the full programming for your Mission u can be carried out by the entire Committee on Mission u or by a smaller Mission u Program Committee. Tasks for designing your agenda and programming include:

- Develop an event schedule that is mindful of the need for class time, fellowship, worship, and plenary sessions.
- Determine leadership for all programming outside of classes.
- Use worship and plenary resources developed by the United Women in Faith National Office.

- Develop plans for displays or other learning experiences beyond the classroom.
- Assist in creating the program book, slides, and/or other means to ensure accessibility for all attendees to participate fully in all programming.

Worship and Music Leader

These tasks may be combined with or separate from the work of the Program Committee.

- Plan special worship events, such as the healing service and opening and closing worship services.
- Work with the Program Committee to coordinate daily worship experiences aligned with the total program of Mission u.
- Plan for morning watch, vespers, a quiet meditation or prayer room, an individual devotional booklet, or other worship opportunities.
- Work with the Worship Leader/team to share resources and goals related to the event's theme.
- Ensure that copyright permission is secured as necessary for any music that will be printed or used on slides for group presentations. Copyright permissions also apply when only song lyrics are printed or placed on slides. Verify permissions for the use of audio and video materials. The Office of Transformative Education has secured permission for the songs used in Mission u plenaries and worship. The correct attribution of sources and permissions is required.

Publicity Committee

The Mission u Committee should give serious thought to plans for publicity and promotion of the Conference Mission u with attention to new and potential participant groups. Begin by listing groups of persons who may attend, such as:

- Conference and district officers of United Women in Faith
- Local officers and members of United Women in Faith
- Women who are not active in the organization of United Women in Faith
- If planning a virtual event, invite members of UWFaith Digital to join
- Clergy
- Local church members
- Children (specify ages)
- Youth (specify ages)
- Persons speaking Spanish, Korean, or other languages (material should be prepared and distributed in the appropriate languages)

Plan a publicity campaign that focuses on your various audiences. The Publicity Committee puts these plans into action by the following:

- Submit Mission u event information for conferences, district newsletters, and websites.
- Submit Mission u event information to be included on the Mission u map maintained by the National Office.

- Send brochures and registration information to appropriate local groups, such as:
 - United Women in Faith
 - Bishop, district superintendents, pastors
 - Church school superintendents (for children and youth)
 - United Methodist Men
 - Churches that have congregations speaking Spanish, Korean, or other languages (include a cover letter with registration information in the appropriate language)
- Use the current Mission u logo and flyer to create posters, slides, and announcements for various meetings at the district- and conference-level meetings.
- Display promotional material during annual conference meetings.
- Utilize email distribution lists to invite previous Mission u attendees.
- Post promotional and registration information on the conference and district web pages.
- Use guidelines in the Media Toolkit to contact local newspapers, radio stations, and/or television stations in the communities where Mission u will be held.
- Work with your Annual Conference Communication Office to create Mission u publicity and post it on various social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram.

Site Committee

A Site Committee can be formed which includes representatives of United Women in Faith and other agencies in a Cooperative Mission u. No site is perfect. The Mission u Committee should discuss priorities in selecting a new location and also consider how they can work with facility management to address needs. Based on the research done by the Site Committee, the Mission u Committee should select the future site.

In preparation for assessing a location, review and be familiar with United Women in Faith's "13 Steps to Sustainability," which outlines their commitment to sustainability and accountability. The following resources will help support your committee's work with:

- Persons with disabilities and vulnerable adults
- Children and youth safety
- Environmentally sustainable, anti-racist, accessible, affordable, and healthy practices

The United Women in Faith's "13 Steps to Sustainability" is comprehensive in scope and provides a wealth of information. As part of your team's ongoing effort to institute sustainable practices, focusing on one additional step of the many described in the "13 Steps" may be more feasible than undertaking all of them at once.

If the conference relocates the Mission u, there should be a regular site committee related to the Mission u Committee. Even if there is a good relationship with a site, it is still valuable to continue evaluating the policies and practices of the facility. When a facility has a positive relationship with its client, they are frequently open to suggestions for improvement. It can be an opportunity for United Women in Faith to draw attention to ways to strengthen sustainability efforts.

Site visits

With “13 Steps to Sustainability” in mind, assess a location, asking the following questions, along with any other that grow out of your committee’s experience:

- Is it reasonably accessible to all in the conference/area?
- Would the diversity of our membership, attendees, Study Leaders, and guests feel welcome and safe in the location’s environment?
- Is public transportation available? Or can only those with access to cars attend?
- What is the maximum number of people that the facility can house? Fed at one time? Seated in the ballroom or auditorium?
- What is the number and size of classrooms and other spaces needed? Are interior spaces of classrooms and other breakout rooms visible from the outside (hallway) to follow Safe Sanctuary standards? Check umcdiscipleship.org/equipping-leaders/safe-sanctuaries.
- Are facilities accessible to persons with disabilities? Do classrooms, dining spaces, and auditorium seating accommodate persons needing mobility assistance? Review criteria identified at umcdmc.org/resources-accessibility-accommodations.
- What is the site’s commitment to reducing, reusing, and recycling? What are their procedures for single-use plastic? Are the facility managers open to discussing these practices?
- Will other groups be sharing the facilities at the same time?
- What is the cost for room/board/linens/facility (auditorium, classrooms) usage?
- What fees are charged beyond room and board, and for what purpose (such as parking, participant administration fee, signage fee, A/V equipment fees, internet access fees)?
- Does the facility have air conditioning?
- What is the availability and cost of internet access and A/V equipment? Can Mission u or other volunteer leaders manage the use of A/V equipment, or are the facility’s professional staff required to operate it?

Local arrangements

The Site Committee works with the Registrar and/or Assistant Dean to identify committee members who live and are familiar with the area where the Mission u event will be held. This committee responds to needs that can be handled in advance of the Mission u event.

Prior to Mission u:

- Work with the Registrar to provide information, including travel directions, street address(es), venue maps or floor plans, emergency contact numbers, and nearby restaurants and local attractions.
- Provide any room amenities needed for Study Leaders and special guests.
- Work with the Assistant Dean and the Hospitality Committee to determine the necessary signage needed at the venue to guide participants to registration, worship/plenary and study rooms, the Ubuntu/Mission project location, etc.

Hospitality Committee

The Hospitality Committee fosters a welcoming and connected environment by assisting first-time and returning Mission u guests. Remember—and remind your volunteers—to keep receipts and submit expenses for supplies purchased or transportation provided as requested by the Committee on Mission u, as these costs are reimbursable.

Here are some suggested tasks that can be handled by or in collaboration with a Hospitality Committee:

- At facilities other than staffed hotels, secure personnel to assist with luggage during the arrival and departure times of Study Leaders and participants.
- Greet Study Leaders and participants upon arrival.
- Provide ground transportation for Study Leaders or special guests as needed.
- Prepare a designated Information Space for:
 - Notices of special meetings
 - Lost and found
 - Bishop, district superintendents, pastors
 - Schedule information
- Prepare and place event signage throughout the venue to identify the location of registration, Ubuntu or Mission projects, study rooms, dining rooms, and other relevant areas.
- Provide signs necessary for safe and efficient participation at the facility, including special instructions for persons with accessibility needs.
- Secure hosts to provide direction to class and meeting rooms when participants are moving to another scheduled program activity.
- Assume a hosting role in the dining room to manage the flow of traffic.
- Work with the Registrar to assign Study Leader classroom assistants.

Accessibility needs

Work with the Registrar to address accessibility needs:

- Identify and remove any barriers that prohibit or hinder full and equal access to participant engagement.
- Provide sign language interpreters.
- Provide accessible versions of information or documents, such as braille, large print, audio, captions for videos, and compliant electronic formats.
- Use of microphones.
- Use of large font and “white space” in printed materials and in slides.
- Water filling stations; encourage participants to bring a refillable water bottle.
- Identify individuals who will act as Compassionate Listeners throughout the event. See Appendix D - Guide for Compassionate Listeners.

Study Leader courtesy support:

- Welcome and assist the Study Leaders and guests.
- Provide selected team member contact information to assist Study Leaders and guests as needed.
- Help guests and Study Leaders with special travel arrangements.
- Assist Study Leaders in arrangements for shipping material at the close of Mission u.
- Secure Study Leader assistants:
 - Plan to arrive in time to assist the Study Leader in classroom setup.
 - Assist the Study Leader in setting up the classroom, locating shipped materials, and other supplies.
 - Note: It is better if assistants are not members of the Mission u Committee so that they are free to assist. However, Study Leader assistants are not to be “personal assistants” beyond tasks associated with the classroom.

Class secretary

The class secretary is a member of each mission study class selected by the Mission u Committee to:

- Manage attendance records for class participants seeking continuing education credits granted by the Board of Ordained Ministry or Certified Lay Speaker programs, or Certificates of Participation to lay persons attending full-time.
- Share announcements or other information in class as requested by the Dean or Assistant Dean.
- Deliver attendance records to the Registrar or other assigned committee member at the close of Mission u.

Mission u Resource Sales



Early in the Mission u planning process, the Committee on Mission u should decide how to provide Mission u curricula for participants who want their own copy. While participants are encouraged to have their own copy of the Mission u curricula, it should not be a deterrent to attending Mission u. If selling Mission u curricula at the event, remember to place orders early (**4-6 weeks ahead**) and encourage participants to do so as well if they are ordering their own. The Committee for Mission u can encourage participants to purchase curricula in several ways.

- **Bulk orders:** Order copies in bulk from amazon.com based on how many you think would be sold, and sell them at events before and during Mission u. The Conference assumes responsibility for the full cost of the books and cannot return any unsold copies.
- **Pre-orders:** Collect pre-orders for the books from your Mission u participants. The Conference will place a bulk order with amazon.com based on the number of pre-orders. The books will be distributed to and paid for by those who have pre-ordered.
- **Direct purchase:** Participants can place orders for Mission u curricula on their own by providing accurate titles and the various ways to order them through the e-store and UWFaith Digital.

Responsibilities include:

- Include information about how and where to buy the mission study books in the registration and publicity materials.
- Establish location, hours, and staffing for sales and distribution of materials at the event.
- Track sales and distribution of books and keep accurate records of financial transactions and inventory.
- In consultation with the Committee on Mission u, determine what additional resource materials should be made available at your Mission u, including:
 - Electronically accessible resources
 - Recommendations of resources from other conference agencies if you have a Cooperative Mission u
- Arrange to transfer cash, checks, and credit card transaction records to the Business Manager/Treasurer.

Evaluating Mission u

Evaluation is essential for the ongoing effectiveness of your Mission u and should be built into the planning, implementation, and follow-up process from the initial stages of your planning. Consequently, evaluation needs to occur in several places and with several groups.

Who should complete an evaluation?

Mission u participants

United Women in Faith National Office supplies a sample participant evaluation, which the conferences may use or adapt. It is important to include an assessment of the Study Leaders' effectiveness to include in the Dean's Report to the Office of Transformative Education.

In reviewing participants' evaluations, note how often they make a comment. It is important to remember that individual comments are not necessarily indicative of the experience or preference of all participants. Look for patterns that emerge in comments when considering making changes.

Study Leaders

The Conference Committee on Mission u should hold a post-event debrief meeting with the Study Leaders at the end of each Mission u event to gather comments and suggestions. You may want to consider asking Study Leaders to complete a separate evaluation form with this information. Areas to cover in a post-event debrief include:

- Feedback regarding pre-Mission u communication, information, etc.
- Experience of both new Study Leaders and those with previous experience.
- What improvements could be made to improve Study Leaders' preparedness?
- What new ideas and suggestions can Study Leaders offer for your Mission u?
- Feedback regarding the venue.

Conference Committee on Mission u

During the Mission u event, evaluation should take place through:

- Team members listening, observing, and are present to receive feedback.
- Providing a means for immediate feedback (e.g., suggestion box).

After a Mission u event, take time to look at what went well and what needs strengthening. The following questions help debrief and evaluate your event

- What went well? Why?
- What did not work? Why?
- What will we continue next year?
- What needs to be revised? How?
- What will we no longer do?
- What new ideas emerged that should be implemented next year?
- What new groups can be reached?
- Who will work on any changes?



We give to the work of United Women in Faith to make new beginnings possible for women, children, and youth. Through our Mission Giving, God is at work, and we have the opportunity to change lives around the world.

— Heidi Careaga, Board Member and Finance Committee Chair, 2020–2024, Vice-President, 2024–2028 Board of Directors

NOTES



SECTION 7

Working With Your Study Leaders

Deans are the primary contact with Study Leaders. Communication with Study Leaders should include ensuring they understand the purpose of Mission u, their role and responsibilities, and the logistics and deadlines.

Study Leader Role & Responsibilities



Mission u Study Leaders play a critical role for Mission u. As the people responsible for facilitating Mission u curricula, Mission u Study Leaders bring the curricula to life. Below are the responsibilities of Study Leaders during training and the expectations when facilitating the curricula.

Training responsibilities: To prepare Study Leaders to facilitate Mission u curricula, training is offered and includes both synchronous and asynchronous components. The synchronous component includes four two-hour sessions on Zoom with a cohort of up to 23 Study Leaders and two trainers. The asynchronous component involves completing a course on UWFaith Digital.

1. **Complete the asynchronous course on UWFaith Digital.** Before live training sessions begin, Study Leaders should complete the curriculum course on UWFaith Digital. The asynchronous course provides an opportunity to reflect on the curriculum content before the live sessions and to post responses and questions for your fellow cohort Study Leaders and trainers.
2. **Attend four virtual class sessions during the Spring Study Leader Training.** In the spring, Study Leaders join a cohort to meet for four two-hour sessions via Zoom. These live sessions are designed to be a time to grapple with the content of the curricula, bring questions about facilitation, and share insights and ideas with fellow Study Leaders.
3. **Participate fully in the Mission u Training.** We encourage trainers to participate fully in the training, including opening and closing worship, live cohort sessions, and the asynchronous course.
4. **Complete the certification requirements for leading the curriculum.** The intent of certification is to help Study Leaders prepare themselves for this task and maintain the integrity of the program. Certification typically includes the completion of the following components: a) The asynchronous course. b) Required readings and applicable learning activities listed in the online course. c) For new Study Leaders, the Mission u and Transformative Education course on UWFaith Digital.

Role of the Study Leader

1. **Use the primary content developed for this curriculum.** We expect all Study Leaders to use the Mission u curriculum as their primary content. Supplemental material is encouraged but cannot supplant the primacy of this curriculum.
2. **Engage in a variety of learning modalities.** People have different learning preferences; hence, we encourage a variety of activities based on different learning modalities to increase accessibility and engagement for all learners.
3. **Establish the learning environment.** Create a welcoming environment of mutual respect where everyone can hear different perspectives and where new learning can occur.
4. **Care for participants.** Be alert to participants who may exhibit responses that need follow-up and attention. Ask the participant if the accompaniment of a compassionate listener would be helpful. (Work with Deans to have compassionate listeners or other resources available.)
5. **Broaden the impact.** Provide help and motivation for mission study and action at the local level, recognizing that study materials are designed to be adaptable for use in local churches and other groups.
6. **Be Positive.** Share a positive, constructive attitude toward United Women in Faith, including its Purpose, the organization, and its relationships. If you have concerns about the organization or aspects of the Mission u program, bring it to the Dean or the United Women in Faith staff directly.
7. **Participate in the Mission u conference program,** especially worship, plenaries, and fellowship. It is acknowledged, however, that since leading the mission study is their primary responsibility, Study Leaders may occasionally need time to prepare for an upcoming class, which could necessitate their absence from a conference program activity.

Logistics and deadlines: What do Study Leaders need to know?

In addition to sharing the role and responsibilities of Study Leaders and the purpose of Mission u, your Study Leaders will need to know practical matters to help them decide if they can accept your invitation to be a Study Leader.

Early in your communications, you should let your Study Leaders know:

- **Dates and location:** When and where your Conference Mission u will take place.
- **Arrival and departure time:** Be clear about the expected arrival date and times, especially if the arrival date is different from the actual start date of the event. At what time would Study Leaders be free to leave at the close of the event?
- **Meeting with Mission u Planning Committee:** Do you expect Study Leaders to meet with the Mission u planning committee before the event? If so, what time and place?
- **Certification process:** Provide summary information on reading requirements, online course requirements, and attendance at the Mission u Leadership Training Event virtual sessions.

- **Dates of Mission u Study Leader Training:** Provide dates and a list of options for the cohort live sessions.
- **Expenses:** Let the Study Leader know if there is an honorarium and what expenses are covered or supplies provided (e.g., travel, food and lodging, book allowance, A/V equipment). Detailed guidelines can be sent in a follow-up communication.
- **Travel arrangements:** Will the planning team book the ticket? Or should each Study Leader make their own travel arrangements? Are there guidelines on costs? Are there specific details that would be helpful to know in making travel arrangements? For example, how far is the Mission u site from the airport?
- **Other program leadership expectations:** Are the Study Leaders expected to play a role in the plenary or worship experience? Are there other sessions the Study Leader is expected to lead, such as one-hour overview sessions or one-day sessions?
- **On-site accommodations:** What is the facility like? Hotel? College campus? Retreat center? Camp? Are the classrooms and sleeping rooms air-conditioned? Will the Study Leader have a single room?
- **Number and length of class sessions:** What is your class schedule? Study Leaders need to plan their lessons accordingly.
- **Classroom layout, A/V equipment, and materials details:**
 - How big is the room? Are there windows, tables, and desks? Are the chairs movable? Can you hang things on the wall?
 - When can the Study Leader have access to set up the classroom?
 - Will there be internet access in the classroom?
 - Will projectors be provided in each classroom for use with a computer?
 - Should the Study Leader bring her own laptop or device?
 - Are there adapters available for device and projector connections?
 - Will speakers be provided?
 - What other classroom materials will be provided? Flipchart paper? Markers?
- **Participant profile:** How many participants will there be in the class? Are there any participants with special needs that will require accommodation in learning materials or the classroom arrangement? Is there any other relevant demographic information?

Selecting Study Leaders



The term “Study Leader” is used to indicate that Mission u involves mutual learning and exploration, where all participants are viewed as both learners and teachers. As such, Study Leaders with excellent facilitation skills, who can organize the material and create a climate that enables participants to engage freely and fully, are of utmost importance.

The Conference Committee on Mission u may select Study Leaders from a variety of sources, including recommendations from the conference leadership team the national office staff or

directors. Prior Study Leaders may also be asked again; however, always keep in mind the need to develop new Study Leaders, especially among younger United Women in Faith members and members from diverse communities. Persons with experience in facilitation or teaching who demonstrate an interest in the Mission u approach to transformative education would be good Study Leader candidates.

In selecting Study Leaders, careful consideration should be given to the following:

- Identifying Study Leaders who embrace United Women in Faith's theology and values of transformative education.
- Striving for racial and gender diversity.
- Striving for a balance of lay and clergy.
- Feedback from participant evaluations for previous Study Leaders.

As a transformative education program, Mission u also emphasizes the value of multiracial facilitation teams for Mission u curricula. Conferences that assemble multiracial teams of facilitators pay half the training fee for the second member of such a team.

Committee decision

The Conference Mission u Committee decides on the number of Study Leaders required for each Mission u and creates a list of persons to invite as leaders. Once the committee makes decisions, the Dean issues the invitations. The Committee may want to have extra names in order of preference. If someone declines an invitation, the Dean can proceed to invite another person.

Finding Study Leaders Through the National Office

The United Women in Faith National Office encourages conferences to seek Study Leaders from outside the Conference to strengthen the diversity of Mission u leadership and broaden the understanding of the mission. Cultivation Funds may be available for conference members who wish to invite a National Office staff member or director to lead at their Mission u.

Staff or director invitations through the Cultivation Fund

Once each fiscal year, a conference may request Cultivation Fund support to pay for the cost of transportation of a United Women in Faith director or staff member to lead in a conference event. If the Executive Committee of the Conference chooses to use the Cultivation Fund for a director or staff member to be a Study Leader in its Mission u, the following sequence of steps should be taken:

- An invitation for a United Women in Faith staff member or director is extended directly to the appropriate person.
- In consultation with the Conference Executive Committee, the Dean fills out the Conference Cultivation Request Form, indicating the name of the desired staff or director, and obtains the required approval signatures (e.g., conference president).
- The Dean submits the completed form to the Office of the General Secretary.
- When the Cultivation Fund request is approved, a letter of acceptance will be sent to the Dean, Conference President, and the invited staff or director.

If the Cultivation Fund request is approved, the United Women in Faith National Office shall pay for the cost of travel to and from the event location. The Conference shall be responsible for hospitality (room and board) during the meeting and any necessary “in conference” travel expenses.

Study Leader Certification

The process of certification for Study Leaders strives to assure excellence in the preparation and effectiveness of each Study Leader. To maintain the quality and integrity of the Mission u program, certification takes place annually for each study.

- The Dean ensures that individuals who have made a firm commitment to become Study Leaders register for training by the due date. Deans may register Study Leaders or share the registration link with them to complete.
- The Office of Transformative Education provides the Deans and Assistant Deans with a copy of the certification requirements. It is the responsibility of the Dean or Assistant Dean to send the appropriate requirements to each Study Leader. These requirements are also available in the curriculum course in UWFaith Digital.
- At the end of the Mission u Study Leader Training, Conference Deans will be able to review the progress of Study Leaders toward certification through a certification list shared by the Office of Transformative Education.
- It is the Dean’s responsibility to follow up with the Study Leader.

To be certified, Study Leaders complete the following:

- Required readings and learning activities are listed in the curriculum.
- The curriculum course on UWFaith Digital.
- First-time (new) Study Leaders may be requested to complete an online course that provides an orientation to Mission u and Transformative Education.

Mission u Study Leaders are expected to fully participate in Study Leader training, which includes each of the four two-hour training sessions via Zoom, as well as the opening and closing worship; however, these are not required for certification.



NOTES



SECTION 8

Financial & Administrative Policies

This section identifies financial and administrative policies and procedures, noting the responsibilities managed by the Office of Transformative Education and those which are the responsibility of the Conference Committee on Mission u. The conference is responsible for the following financial assistance for Study Leaders:

Financial Obligations for Study Leaders



- **Registration fee** for the Mission u Study Leader Training
 - Deans should ask Study Leaders if they are teaching in other conferences so that they can make arrangements for shared expenses. Only one registration for Mission u Study Leader Training is required.
 - The conference that first invited the Study Leader will be responsible for ensuring that they are registered for training.
 - If, in an emergency, a Study Leader is recruited by another conference after the close of training, no retroactive co-payment of her/his registration for training shall be required.
- **Travel, room, and board** for the Conference Mission u event(s).
 - The exception is when a Cultivation Fund request has been granted. The Cultivation Fund will pay for the transportation cost to the Conference Mission u event, and the Conference Mission u is responsible for room and board.
- **An honorarium** as set by the Mission u Committee (except for United Women in Faith staff and directors). The following minimum amounts are recommended:
 - For a four to five day Mission u: \$250 - \$300 per leader.
 - For a one to three day Mission u: \$100 - \$200 per leader.
 - For samplers or overviews that are part of a separate one-day event, adjust compensation according to the time and materials needed.
 - If a person serves in multiple events in one conference, multiple honoraria should be given.
- **A recommended book allowance** of at least \$100 is provided to all Study Leaders, including staff and directors of United Women in Faith.
 - The book allowance is not vouchered and should be sent in the fall to assist Study Leaders for book/resource purchases.

- In the case of conferences sharing a Study Leader, only one book allowance is required if the Study Leader is leading the same study.
- This book allowance is not intended to cover duplicating services.
- **Copies and classroom supplies.** The conference may wish to set a maximum amount for which it will reimburse for duplication and the purchase of supplies.
 - Expenses related to copying and purchasing items that are needed for each conference (i.e., consumable items that cannot be used at the next site) must be reimbursed by each of the conferences.

Liability Insurance for Mission u Events

The United Women in Faith's National Office maintains liability insurance that covers United Women in Faith special events organized by districts, conferences, jurisdictions, and the National Office. There is no charge to the district, conference, or jurisdiction. Events of less than five (5) business days and under five hundred (500) people are automatically covered. For larger events, you must submit a Special Events Insurance Request Form to the National Office five (5) weeks before the event. You may also submit the form if you need a Certificate of Insurance for a smaller event.

Regardless of event size, you must submit a Special Events Incident Report Form to the National Office within twenty-four (24) hours of any incident or accident that occurs at your event.

Both of the forms are in one PDF, titled "Special Events Forms," available in the Dean's Folder and on the Dean's & Assistant Dean's Digital Group they are also available in Appendix E of this handbook.

Copyright Guidelines

COPYRIGHT: "the exclusive legal right to reproduce, publish, and sell the matter and form of literary, musical, or artistic work." (Webster's Dictionary).

The United Women in Faith National Office produces and provides materials for use at Mission u, most often music, liturgy, and plenary materials. This can be used without additional permission (as permission has already been secured) and with credit given as indicated in the Dean's resources for that year.

Copyright law

This law is designed to protect the interests of "authors," including the creators of print, film, and video material. Copyright protection gives authors almost complete control over the duplication of their creative works, including words, music, songs, video cassettes, television programs, printed books, magazine articles, pamphlets, etc. It also gives authors the right to regulate public performance (showings) of copyrighted DVDs.

Artistic creations are property

They are the result of someone's work. Misuse of this property is theft. Courts are now recognizing that unauthorized duplication, distribution, and showing of copyrighted material is a criminal act. No one is exempt!

In the past, churches, educators, and others working for “good causes” have felt that the end justified the means and that they would be excused somehow from abiding by the law. The availability of photocopiers and digital technology has led to increased duplication of both print and audiovisual material. Today, authors, publishers, and distributors are exercising their legal rights and are receiving liberal damage awards.

When in doubt, write to the publisher and request permission to copy the material. Many publishing companies have 800 numbers, and most have a permissions department that can give you exact instructions about getting copyright permission, including any fees charged.

Under no circumstances can all or part of a copyrighted item be sold or financially exploited without the permission of the publisher or the distributor (not the store that sells the item).

Note that copyright restrictions may differ between an in-person event, a virtual event in a “closed” setting such as a Zoom meeting, and a streamed event. It’s always better to check in advance whether additional permission may be needed.

For further information on copyright statutes and procedures, write:

Copyright Office
Library of Congress
James Madison Memorial Building
101 Independence Avenue, S.E.,
Washington, D.C. 20559

Or see loc.gov/copyright.

Offerings

Conference Mission u is an official event of United Women in Faith, and all aspects should be kept in line with the Purpose and policies of the organization. Therefore, the designation of offering should be as follows:

For Mission Giving at United Women in Faith Conference or inter-Conference Events, add the offering(s) to the Conference’s Pledge to Mission. This offering helps the Conference United Women in Faith meet or exceed their pledge. In publicizing ahead of time, emphasize the support the United Women in Faith’s Pledge provides for local and global mission work.

For Cooperative Mission u events, Designated Giving for a mission program related to the General Board of Global Ministries and/or any other church agency involved in the planning has the appeal of personalizing a project. The disadvantage is that other, more urgent, programs may not receive the funding needed.

Monies contributed in the above ways are monitored by the United Women in Faith National Office.

The Mission u Committee should decide on the offering designation well in advance of the Mission u. Registration confirmation should include information designating the offering to be collected and include when it will be taken, so participants know to bring their money or checks. Recipients of funds can be found in **response** magazine.

Beware of spontaneous offerings that spring up on-site as the result of a moving speaker.

All agencies that serve people's needs require funds. If the Mission u Program Committee invites a person from a local agency to lead a group or make a speech, ensure the purpose of the invitation is communicated, and discourage any appeal for financial support or mention of their needs. Well-meaning participants may try to collect donations or request the Mission u Committee to take a special offering. **The United Women in Faith National Office urges Mission u Committees to resist these requests.**

The organization of United Women in Faith promotes and supports programs that are the responsibility of the organization. At the conference level, the responsibility of United Women in Faith is to provide financial support for programs related to the United Women in Faith National Office.

Sale of Items

Selling merchandise is not the purpose of the Conference Mission u. Items for sale should enhance the participation of attendees in the Mission u programming and enrich the experience of United Women in Faith at the local level.

Participants may not sell items for personal gain (e.g., merchandise such as clothing, crafts, printed materials, A/V resources) or in any way use Mission u to give an advantage to individuals, groups, or causes not in keeping with the Purpose of United Women in Faith.

Persons serving as Conference Study Leaders may not sell books, tapes, or other resources at the Mission u. This rule should be made clear to them in advance. It is the responsibility of the Mission u leadership to be sure that Study Leaders adhere to this policy.

The sale of items such as Conference United Women in Faith tote bags, t-shirts, etc., Conference Mission u events is not prohibited. The Conference Executive Committee of United Women in Faith must approve the sale of anything beyond the resources in Resource Sales and must be in keeping with the Purpose and responsibilities of the organization.



APPENDIX A

Mission u References in the United Women in Faith Bylaws 2025-2028

Article IV, Section 7: Committee on Mission u/ Cooperative Mission u (page 117)

a. Membership

The members of the committee may include the president, treasurer, and others named by the leadership team. It is recommended that persons who are not conference officers be named to the committee. No person will serve in any office, including dean and assistant dean, for more than two successive years, except the registrar, treasurer/business manager, and resource room coordinator, who may serve in that office for up to four consecutive years. All officers will be elected annually.

The dean will serve as chairperson of the committee. While they are serving, they will be a member of the conference leadership team. It is recommended that the person elected to the office of dean should have served on the Mission u committee before their election.

If your Mission u is organized as a "cooperative Mission u," the responsibilities of the dean and assistant dean should alternate between persons representing the conference cooperating agency and the conference organization of United Women in Faith.

Tenure on the committee on Mission u shall be limited to a total of eight years, except for those serving on the committee by virtue of their current elected office on the conference leadership team or beyond the conference. If a woman has already completed her eight-year tenure, she may still be elected dean.

b. Functions

The committee will:

1. Plan and promote a conference Mission u, which will serve as one means of fulfilling the Purpose.
2. Emphasize the global mission of the church, which includes an integrated program of missionary outreach, Christian social action, spiritual growth, and program planning, and promote the total mission emphases of United Women in Faith.

The committee may be organized in cooperation with other conference agencies or on an interconference basis.

c. Meetings

The committee will meet as needed or as specified in the conference standing rules or Cooperative Mission u bylaws.

NOTES



APPENDIX B

Children & Mission Education

If the Conference has children at one or more Mission u events, the Conference Committee on Mission u should have a subcommittee that works directly on all aspects of the children's program. The co-ordinator of the children's program should be a member of the Mission u Committee. Subcommittee members may include persons not on the Mission u Committee who possess experience, skills, and interest in working with children. The Mission u Committee retains oversight of the primary elements of the program content, leadership, and logistics. The Conference Committee on Mission u must carefully consider the special needs of children for safety, age-appropriate programming, and their physical and emotional needs.

Defining Age Ranges

Whenever children and/or youth are part of Mission u, the age or grade ranges need to be determined and advertised. The cost and any special arrangements need to be made clear. If child care is offered, the Committee is wise to consider the extra requirements of infants and toddlers. Furthermore, expectations of adults bringing children should be clarified in advance.

Facilities

- Sleep and bathroom facilities can present challenges.
- Classroom space should be "child-friendly." Examine the walls, floor, furniture, and equipment from the child's point of view.
- Recreation is an important part of children's learning cycles. Are there fields or playgrounds for games, swimming, hiking, or other nature opportunities? Are there competent leaders for these activities?

Safety

Children are a sacred trust. All children in attendance should be accompanied by an adult who is responsible for them in "non-staff-supervised times." All care should be taken to think through both the physical and emotional needs of children. (These needs depend upon the age of the children attending.) Make sure to check with your annual conference office for specific regulations and requirements for working with children. Obtain health information and parent/guardian permission forms. Inform the parent or guardian about the necessary information regarding the children's program, including the schedule, pick-up expectations, and children's behavioral norms. If children attend on-site with a parent or guardian, the Conference usually requires the child and adult to share a room and sit together at meals.

If children are to be transported to activities off-site, consider these factors:

- Is there enough supervision?
- Are drivers competent?
- Is the activity appropriate for the children's age?
- Are the adults responsible for the children aware of the activity?
- Are there parental permission and release forms for every child?

Schedule Considerations

- "Free Time" might be scheduled with specific activities for adults and children to share.
- If adults are to pick up children, then activities for adults must end on time to ensure children are picked up promptly.
- If there are no separate evening activities for children, consider their needs when planning the schedule for adults.

Leadership

Leaders should be caring, responsible, trained, and committed to children. At least the lead teacher should have either formal training for working with children in the age group or have significant life experience with children. Training is held annually for leaders of the curriculum for children. The United Women in Faith National Office requests that at least the lead teacher attend training to receive specific curriculum instruction and exchange ideas with leaders from other conferences.

Some conferences have precise guidelines for who may be a leader. For leaders to do their job properly, the Committee on Mission u should provide:

- An adequate number of adults. For the safety of children and the protection of adults from unwanted allegations, there should always be at least two unrelated adults with children at all times.
- The opportunity for training in the study/studies for the year.
- Resources, supplies, and space to offer a creative, exciting, motivating experience for the children. Be sure to budget for these.
- Relief time. No one can be "on" all the time and do a quality job! Provide for breaks for leaders.

Program

One study is developed each year for children by United Women in Faith. Depending upon the amount of time available and the ages of the children, elements of the other studies might also be included. Mission action that stems from the study might consist of a service project, an offering for a National Mission Institution with programs for children, writing letters or cards, or sharing learnings with adults in a worship or plenary setting. Other action options are identified in the study materials. If there are any off-site activities or requests for offerings as part of the Mission u experience for children, the parent or guardian should know ahead of time. To facilitate such notification, the Registrar, well in advance, should supply to the Children's Study Leader(s) a list of names and addresses of children who are registered. When requesting items or offering to be brought by the children, please know that no child should be made to feel unworthy if they have no money or items of their own to give or to bring.

APPENDIX C

Youth & Mission Education

Many of the concerns and needs of children, such as safety, age-appropriate programming, and their physical and emotional needs addressed in the prior section, also apply to youth. In addition to engaging the content of the youth curriculum, youth can design and/or carry out significant service projects and hands-on experiences that allow them to learn and experience mission in action.

The Committee on Mission u should make a significant effort to enroll youth and young adults to help develop the youth Mission u program and to publicize the event. There must be clear communication between the youth planners and the Mission u Committee, as the Committee has ultimate responsibility for the youth program, ensuring it integrates with the total Mission u experience and meets safety and programmatic requirements.

Defining Youth Age Ranges

In many different countries and cultures, the age and definition of "youth" vary greatly. The United Women in Faith National Office defines youth as persons 12 to 17 years of age, who are generally in grades 6 through 12. The Conference Mission u Committee needs to clearly state on its registration and publicity material the age range or grade ranges for youth participation.

Program

If you have six or more youths interested in attending the Conference Mission u, you have enough to consider having a youth study group. Keep in mind that young people in junior high (middle school) grades have different developmental and spiritual needs than those in senior high school grades (usually 9th through 12th grade). Hence, larger groups should be split by age. There should be two unrelated leaders for each group.

Youth Study Leaders and Other Leaders

Youth Study Leaders are part of the attendance pattern for Mission u Leader Training Events and Conferences. They should plan on sending them to a training. Study Leaders primarily prepare and lead the study with the youth. Persons other than the Study Leaders should be responsible for chaperoning and planning extra activities outside class sessions, if such is feasible.

Safety

Adults who work with youth and have the responsibility of supervising them. They must be mature, persons of integrity, friendly, compassionate, and knowledgeable of the challenges facing today's young people. At all times, the requirements for Safe Sanctuary must be observed.

NOTES



APPENDIX D

Guide for Compassionate Listeners

Mission u provides an opportunity for transformative learning by addressing critical issues from a faith lens. Discussions in this setting sometimes have an emotional impact on individuals. Furthermore, individuals sometimes bring personal struggles to these events and find that the discussions or presentations trigger unexpected feelings or concerns that need to be addressed. When that happens, we often need someone with the compassion and the gifts to listen to us.

The planning team selects a few persons who can be available as compassionate listeners throughout the Mission u event. Compassionate listeners are not therapists, psychiatrists or psychologists. They are just good listeners who care, and they may be clergy or a layperson.

The Role of a Compassionate Listener

1. Listen with compassion
 - a. The focus is to provide a compassionate presence by listening to the feelings and concerns of the person who sought out the listener.
 - i. A few words may be important to help a person feel comforted, safe and/or understood.
 - ii. As a conversation draws to a close, the compassionate listener may need to speak in helping these persons think about possible next steps such as prayer, counseling and/or support groups, if appropriate.
2. Note any issue in a conversation that needs immediate attention
 - a. Is there something the person might need?
 - b. Is there something that the leadership needs to respond to immediately? (Refer to Safe Sanctuary training)
3. Encourage persons to reflect on appropriate resources that might be helpful after the event ends.
 - a. Support from individuals
 - b. Support from networks
 - c. Pastoral follow-up
 - d. Therapy (ongoing or new)
 - e. Grief counseling
 - f. Divorce recovery
4. Pray with the person, with their consent.

Confidentiality

Maintain confidentiality of the identity and specific concerns of any person who seeks out a compassionate listener, unless:

- Someone is in danger
- The person specifies otherwise (For instance, see #2 above.)

Debriefing for compassionate listeners should be provided, if needed. This can be informal as the need arises.

Much appreciation to Bob Hoover and Windy Minnix and the planning team for Do No Harm 2011, who willingly shared this information. Do No Harm is an intentional gathering of people recruited to promote sexual safety and to respond to sexual abuse in the United Methodist Church. For more on The United Methodist Church Sexual Ethics Task Force, go to umsexualethics.org.

Revised 10/18/24.

APPENDIX E

Special Events Forms



United
Women
in Faith

SPECIAL EVENTS INSURANCE REQUEST FORM

INSTRUCTIONS: Please enter requested information into form and email the completed form to Wayne Moy (WMoy@UWFaith.org) and Janet Rivera (JRivera@UWFaith.org) **five weeks before your event**. This form is only needed if (1) your event will be 5 or more business days, (2) your event will have 500 or more attendees, or (3) you need a Certificate of Insurance for your event.

SPECIAL EVENT INFORMATION

Name of Event: _____

Event Organized By: District Conference Jurisdiction National Office

Date(s) of Event: _____

Address of Event: _____

Event Sponsor: _____

Event Contact Name: _____

Event Contact Email: _____

Event Contact Phone: _____

Expected Attendance: _____

GENERAL INFORMATION

The United Women in Faith's National Office maintains liability insurance that covers United Women in Faith special events organized by Districts, Conferences, Jurisdictions and the National Office. There is no charge to the District, Conference or Jurisdiction. Events of less than five (5) business days and under five hundred (500) people are automatically covered. For larger events, you must submit a Special Events Insurance Request Form to the National Office five (5) weeks before the event. You may also submit the form if you need a Certificate of Insurance for a smaller event. Regardless of event size, you must submit a Special Events Incident Report Form to the National Office within twenty-four (24) hours of any incident or accident that occurs at your event.

Form Updated 11/29/2022



SPECIAL EVENTS INCIDENT REPORT FORM

INSTRUCTIONS: Please enter requested information into form and email the completed form to Wayne Moy (WMoy@UWFaith.org) and Janet Rivera (JRivera@UWFaith.org) within 24 hours of the incident or accident.

INCIDENT INFORMATION	Name of Event:					
	Event Organized By:	<input type="checkbox"/> District	<input type="checkbox"/> Conference	<input type="checkbox"/> Jurisdiction	<input type="checkbox"/> National Office	
	Incident Date and Time					
	Incident Address/Location					
	Injured Person's Name:			Phone:		
	Injured Person's Email:					
	Details of Incident: <i>(Please attach any photos or official reports)</i>					
	Injury Type:					
	Did Injury require Hospital, Physician?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No			
	Hospital Name: <i>(If applicable)</i>					
Hospital Phone: <i>(If applicable)</i>						
Hospital Address: <i>(If applicable)</i>						
Important Notes: <i>Include photos, office report, name(s) and contact information of witness(es).</i>						

REPORTER	Reporting Person's Name:			Date of Report:		
	Reporting Person's Email:			Phone:		

Form Updated 11/29/2022

APPENDIX F

Conference Cultivation Request Form



United
Women
in Faith

CONFERENCE CULTIVATION REQUEST FORM UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

Partly at the expense of United Women in Faith National Office*

Name of Conference: _____

Person Requested: _____

For What Purpose: (Please place an "X" after the appropriate choice listed below):

Mission u Study Leader

Spiritual Growth/Retreat Leader

Keynote Speaker

Guest Speaker

Trainer

Other

Date(s) of Event: _____

Location: _____

Mission u Dean: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

(if request is for Mission u)

- Has the Conference Executive Committee approved this request? _____
- Did a United Women in Faith director, staff or study leader visit your conference last year at the expense of United Women in Faith National Office? _____
- If yes, whom and for what purpose? _____

Conference President's Name _____

Conference President's Signature _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

*The United Women in Faith national office pays for travel to and from the place of meeting. The Conference is invited to be responsible for Hospitality (lodging and meals) during the meeting and any necessary "in conference" travel.

Return this form to: Robin Johnson | United Women in Faith @ RJohnson@uwfaith.org