

# **Frequently Asked Questions About the DCE Internship**

## ***What Is the DCE Intern Experience?***

The internship experience is twelve months of full-time field training during which time the prospective DCE graduate works closely with the pastor, congregational boards, and various age groups within the parish. The focus of the intern's efforts are in those areas in which he/she has talent and training, such as education, youth, music and evangelism.

## ***What Does the University Hope Will Happen In the Internship?***

Hopefully, both the congregation and the student will be of mutual benefit to one another. The congregation as it receives additional staff support in critical areas of its ministry and the intern as he/she: (1) attempts to clarify his/her vocational intent; (2) experiences first hand the workings of a congregation; (3) demonstrates his/her potential for DCE ministry; and (4) develops an effective style of working with Christ's people.

## ***What Is the Intern Trained to Do?***

Naturally, each intern has unique abilities and interests which he/she brings to your congregation. There is a core of skills in which they are to have at least a minimal degree of competence. This includes the intern's ability to be able to assess congregational education needs, help in the selection of education curriculum, recruit and train teaching personnel, lead a Bible class, and assist congregational boards to function effectively. In addition, most interns are able to work effectively with young people, train youth counselors, plan retreats, and give direction to a youth program. Those gifted in music should be encouraged to utilize their gifts.

## ***What Kind of Experience Should the Intern Have?***

There are two basic kinds of experience that an intern should have: the first is in learning to work with all age groups within a congregation, especially parents, congregational leaders, the elderly, and the very young. Secondly, the intern should have the opportunity to experience the joys and frustrations of leadership responsibilities, both in attempting to maintain and improve current program, and in developing new ministry activities.

## ***How Much Responsibility Should the Intern Actually Have?***

It is important to remember that the intern is still a student and as such may not fully realize how much responsibility he/she can handle. As a result, a gradual involvement with major congregational responsibility is suggested (for example, asking the student to lead a teacher's training program in the first month would not be suggested.) As the intern experiences success and satisfaction, it is expected that he/she will be able to assume more and more responsibility.

## ***What Kind of Congregation Can Have an Intern?***

Congregations, who are assigned an intern, have a pastor who is willing to: (a) enter into a significant relationship with the intern; (b) make himself available for mutual planning, sharing, and problem solving; (c) exercise patience and understanding regarding his level of expectations; (d) share the congregational ministry as

the intern develops competence; and (e) regularly contribute to the edification of the team through mutual prayer, study, and sharing. In addition, the congregation is willing to: (a) support the education and youth ministries of the parish; (b) develop board structures that can be supportive of the need to maintain, improve, and develop new ministry programs; and, (c) financially support the intern program. Congregations currently dealing with crises should not request an intern. The church should model a “healthy” ministry.

### ***When Can the Internship Begin?***

The recommended starting time for an internship is July 1st - June 30th. Exceptions to this date may be made, especially if the pastor will be absent from the parish at that time or the student is not available then. Occasionally, internships begin mid-year, starting January 1 and ending December 31.

### ***Can an Intern Remain After the Experience Ends?***

Yes, he/she can. In fact, one out of every two interns receives a call to remain at their internship site. This is possible because the vast majority of interns are seniors and have already completed their academic course work.

### ***Does the Congregation Have a Voice In Who Is Assigned?***

Yes, you do. If you are interested in an intern, Concordia will ask you to specify the kind of person that best fits with the parish and full-time staff. A follow-up visit is then made to refine these needs and preferences. On the basis of this first hand information an intern is assigned. Interviewing of potential interns by the congregation is not permitted at this point in the student's training.

### ***Is There Any Orientation Prior To the Internship Beginning?***

Yes, there is. The student is prepared for internship through various orientation meetings. In addition, the supervising pastor is brought to campus for a one day "matching" conference.

### ***How Is the Intern Supervised?***

Two kinds of supervision take place. On-site supervision of the intern is the responsibility of your pastor or DCE. University supervision happens one or two times a year and is done by a member of the university faculty.

### ***How Much Will An Intern Cost the Congregation?***

The exact cost of the internship will depend upon living costs of the area and the proximity of the congregation to the university. Minimum recommendations are made for housing and stipends, but the university encourages the congregation to consider the cost of living, and increase wages accordingly.

### **How Can a Congregation Get More Information? Or Apply For an Intern?**

Please write to DCE Program Director, Dean Hansen, at Concordia University, 2811 NE Holman, Portland, Oregon 97211, or call him at 503-493-6217. He would welcome your interest and your questions.