

**Unidos en Cristo — 2010 Policy Task Force
Recommendations for Implementation**
(as accepted by UEC Council May 25, 2010)

These recommendations are presented as the following sections:

1. History of the Policy / The Task Force
2. Definitions / Clarifications / Language
3. Allocations Process / Application Revision
4. Sponsorship
5. Follow-up for new Cursillistas
6. Clergy

The recommendations are numbered and appear in bold and italics with explanation given otherwise.

Section 1: History of Open Attendance Policy / The 2010 Policy Task Force

History of the Open Attendance Policy

In 2005, the Long Range Task Force recommended “opening the door wider to participants from non-Unidos churches.” The recommendation at that time was to change policy so that the pastor of a new church was not required to attend first, before anyone else in the church could attend.

In 2008, the UEC Council made it possible for people from new churches to attend with a blessing from the pastor stating that UEC involvement in his/her church is acceptable. Pastors were encouraged to attend, but no longer required to attend.

Also in 2008, Trace James visited the Council with a plea to open up UEC allowing all Christians to attend a weekend. Trace exposed the Council to the many Christians who are involved in churches unaffiliated with UEC, who are involved in home churches or fellowships that may not be main line denominational churches, who are, by choice, not attached to an organized church but who are very active in the Christian Church at large, or who are in ministry otherwise.

At the March 2009 Council meeting, after a couple months of consideration and discussion, the UEC Council voted unanimously to accept a policy proposed by Dick Hamblin that reads (as stated in the Minutes), “... **any 4th Day member may sponsor another Christian whether or not the Sponsor or Weekender belong to a UEC church.**” Recognizing that many UEC policies and procedures would be affected by this change, the Council chose to delay implementation of the **new** policy until details for implementation could be thoroughly considered.

In October 2009, the Council appointed a task force to discuss and then recommend implementation ideas to the Council. What has come to be called **2010 Policy Task Force** began meeting in late January, 2010.

2010 Policy Task Force

The following members accepted appointment to and have been an integral part of the work of the task force: Trace James, Pamela Jensen, Dick Hamblin, Dennis Miller, Polly Olson, Kathy Walker, and Steve Wilson. These people represented lay people and clergy, men and women, a variety of age, a variety of experience in UEC, and various positions for or against the initial policy.

The **PURPOSE** of the task force was to “discuss and develop the implementation of the policy ... and to present recommendations for implementation to the UEC Council.”

The **GOAL** of the task force was to “discover how to implement the policy in such a way that moves UEC into the future represented by the policy while retaining important aspects of the cursillo method.”

Almost immediately, it was agreed that our first recommendation would be:

Recommendation #1

This policy should be implemented provisionally, on a trial basis for 1-2 years before it is permanently adopted.

Section 2: Language / Definitions / Clarifications

Early task force discussions underlined a need to clarify current UEC language, definitions, etc.

A. What is the “cursillo method?”

We are not attempting to clarify the purpose of UEC here. We believe the Mission Statement does this very well. We are instead defining what the cursillo method is in light of how it has developed in UEC. It was agreed that the cursillo method consists of “a structured weekend designed to be a tool for Christians to introduce others to the life-transforming grace of God in an environment conducive to the working of the Holy Spirit. It is not just a schedule or method of events, but a spiritual encounter with God’s grace.” We also agreed that this includes the follow-up structure that currently exists (local 4th Day Community, Ultreyas, Renewal Groups, etc.).

B. What is “Christian?”

We decided that if we were going to allow any Christian to attend, then we should define “Christian” in light of the cursillo method and UEC. We feel that the UEC Faith Statement is sufficient for definition for UEC purposes.

Recommendation #2

We recommend adding a checkbox on the application where an applicant can state that they agree with our Faith Statement.

Recommendation #3

Since many churches already involved in UEC are not “creedal” churches, we recommended eliminating connection to the Apostle’s creed where it currently exists (web site, documentation). The Faith Statement is sufficient.

C. Would some kind of church affiliation still be required?

Based on the current UEC Mission Statement, we agreed that the application should determine that there is an “active participation in a Christian Church or Christian Faith Community. If no church affiliation is given, the sponsor / applicant should be questioned. Accepting someone without church affiliation defeats the Mission Statement.

Recommendation #4

We recommend adding a checkbox on the application where an Applicant can state “I am an active participant in my Christian Church or Christian Faith Community”.

D. What is a “church” or “faith community?”

We felt this should be well defined for the benefit of the Allocations Coordinator. This definition would not need to be widely published (perhaps in the Allocations document that can be downloaded from the web site), but it should be available to **leadership**.

Recommendation #5

We recommend that “Christian Church or Christian Faith Community” be defined like this: For UEC, church participation will include any Christian church (i.e., main line Christian denominational church), house church (led by an ordained Christian clergy), and emergent church (i.e. Upper Room, Solomon’s Porch, The Rock, etc.) or faith community. It will NOT include recovery or support groups (i.e. AA, Alanon, Narcotics Anonymous, etc.), small groups or renewal groups, Bible studies (i.e. BSF, CBS, etc.), or similar ‘get-togethers’.

Recommendation #6

We recommend accepting all applications from Christian pastors, missionaries, unassigned clergy, etc. who are currently not affiliated with a church or who are affiliated with a Christian gathering in another part of the world.

Recommendation #7

We recommend trusting the Allocations Coordinator to handle situations not mentioned in Recommendations #4 - 6 by personal discernment and communication with the UEC Executive Committee, the UEC Council Clergy Coordinators and the UEC Council, as needed.

E. What is “active participation?”

Recommendation #8

We recommend allowing the Applicant and the Sponsor to define this for themselves. If the Applicant checks the box that states, “I am an active participant in ...”, then we recommend trusting that self-assessment.

F. What is a UEC Church? What is a non-UEC Church?

When implemented, the Open Attendance policy will broaden the possible levels of church affiliation with UEC. Some will be completely active with participating clergy, liaisons, communities, etc. Some will have a single Cursillista. Some will have Cursillistas with no pastor, even where the pastor may be supportive. Some will have Cursillistas with no supportive pastor. We discovered 6-7 categories.

The language of UEC Church and non-UEC Church is confusing and exclusive, not inclusive. It divides. It does not unify us. The Task Force feels it would be best to minimize our use of these terms in our communities.

We also realized that the requirement for a clergy “blessing” would no longer be required if we will be accepting people regardless of pastoral participation.

We discussed the list of UEC churches as it appears on the web site. Potential Weekenders cannot get an accurate picture of UEC’s active church affiliates. We know that people have used the list for church shopping, wanting to find a UEC church ... only to get there and find that they don’t have an active community. The Task Force decided to recommend that the listing be taken off the web site. Instead, we recommend showing an overview of the types of churches that participate, similar to the overview given on the DVD. In addition, we recommend suggesting that those looking for a church where UEC is active call a member of the UEC Council. The Council is generally knowledgeable about which churches currently have active 4th Day Communities.

We recognized that it is important to know who the active/supportive churches are, to be able to use them in Weekender follow-up, to call upon them for Spiritual Directors, to help people connect with active 4th Day Communities, etc.

Recommendation #9

We recommend that we continue to define the UEC Church for administrative purposes, but that we drop the language in our communities. For the community, there are simply churches that have UEC and churches that do not (yet).

Recommendation #10

We recommend changing the definition of UEC Church, dropping the middle part. So ... "any Christian church with a Clergy member who has attended a cursillo-type weekend and one or more Cursillistas."

Recommendation #11

We recommend dropping the church listing from the web site and instead suggesting contacting a Council member if looking for a church with UEC. The web site might also include general information about what types of churches are involved.

Section 3: Allocations Process / Application Revision

Application Priority

Recommendation #12

We recommend that applications continue to be accepted in the order that they are received, provided they are "complete". We recommend that a complete application include completion of information, Applicant agrees with our Faith Statement, Applicant checks that they are an active participant in a Christian church, and that if Applicant is the first Weekender from a church – the clergy be notified (i.e. Applicant's pastor has filled out the pastor portion of the registration and Allocations Coordinator has notified New Church Coordinator who has made contact with the pastor). If all these requirements are met, the application is complete and can be put into the queue. If these items are not complete, then other complete applications may be put into the queue before the incomplete application.

Application Deadline

The Allocations Coordinator already has a challenge the week preceding a weekend to process last minute applications. Allowing applications from a wider range of churches and individuals will increase this challenge. So, the re-instatement of an earlier deadline was discussed. There was both advocacy for the "11th hour application" being an act of God and advocacy for a 2 week deadline with consideration for both the Allocations Coordinator and the Rector / Rectora of the weekend.

Recommendation #13

We recommend a published application deadline of two (2) weeks prior to the beginning of any given weekend. We recommend that the Allocations Coordinator check early on with the Rector/a to ascertain their comfort level with accepting last minute applications if there is room. We recommend continuing the practice of inviting Sponsors to check with the Allocations Coordinator to see if space remains after the application deadline. This would give the Allocations Coordinator the opportunity to say NO (if the week is already full, or if the R/R are not comfortable with accepting last minute applications) or YES. And, if YES, the opportunity to carefully instruct the Sponsor that the application must be complete, including the notification of Clergy if the Weekender is the first from their church. We recommend that last minute acceptance be at the discernment of the Allocations Coordinator, with the goal being to fill the weekends without last minute challenges. To further clarify, that means that if the R/R have stated they will take last minute applications, the weekend is not yet full and an application is accepted that is complete, acceptance may certainly be made.

Application Revisions

Recommendation #14

We recommend that the Weekend Application be revised as attached.

Here are some notes regarding the Weekend Application.

- It is no longer an application. It is a registration to gather information. Thus, the name change.
- The ideas of the Weekender signing a statement of faith and the Sponsor signing a Sponsor covenant have come up several times previous to the task force and at task force meetings. Our answer to that is a more mild approach ... checkboxes to certain covenant-type statements within the Applicant and Sponsor sections; a signature will indicate that the statements have been read and agreed upon.
- Notice there is still a Pastor area, but it has shifted from a Pastor's signature giving permission for attendance to a multi-level invitation to the Pastor: support of their member, introduce the pastor to UEC, recommend attendance to the Pastor and gather information for follow-up which will be made by the New Church Coordinator.
- Of note, there was much discussion regarding those who attend UEC weekends who simply shouldn't be there. Sponsors don't always understand that UEC is not a place for people with mental issues or those having recently experienced trauma or are in rehab. The task force Clergy emphasized the need to better address this; both to prevent it from happening as well as direct these people to appropriate help. After discussion, we decided to add a statement with a checkbox to the Weekender portion of the application and to revise the statement on the back of the application. We also agreed that it is not appropriate to place the responsibility for judging whether someone is emotionally or spiritually able to attend a weekend on UEC, the Liaison or the Sponsor and that Clergy cannot and most will not divulge that someone is NOT able to attend due to both confidentiality and the need to retain trust for future ministry to that individual. So, we must rely on good education of our Sponsors and trust the Weekender's self-assessment regarding attendance.
- Under Weekender and Sponsor sections, we chose to add a little more room to the "Why you want to attend" and "Why you want to Sponsor" questions partly because this information may be helpful to the R/R, Clergy and Leadership Team, but mostly because it forces the Weekender and Sponsor to perhaps think a little deeper about what and why they are approaching a UEC weekend as Weekender or Sponsor.
- Finally, we agreed that EVERY application should be accompanied by the revised "Ministry of a Sponsor" piece in hopes that Sponsors could be better educated.

Section 4: Sponsorship

"Duties of a Sponsor" Revisions

Recommendation #15

We recommend that the Duties of a Sponsor sheet be revised as attached.

Here are some notes regarding the Duties of a Sponsor sheet.

- The name had to change ... "Ministry of a UEC Sponsor" is recommended.
- A checklist style was preferred. We agreed that it would then, perhaps, be used as a checklist.
- The point that involves the Sponsor staying in close personal contact with the Weekender after the weekend until they have sponsored, are involved in a Renewal group and have served on a team was revised specifically keeping in mind the many Weekendenders who will now be coming to us with no 4th Day Community to return to at their home churches.

Recommendation #16

We recommend that all Weekend Applications given away or downloaded include the "Ministry of a UEC Sponsor". They should become one piece, not separate from each other.

Sponsor Training

It became clear that because people learn differently, Sponsor Training could be developed to improve Sponsor effectiveness. Visual people are able to follow steps provided an outline such as the Duties of a Sponsor. Auditory learners may benefit more from an oral presentation or group discussion on Sponsorship. A session could be simple and casual, and discussing the “Ministry of a UEC Sponsor” page step by step in a little more depth and offering a Q & A time. It could also help educate people about the Allocations process. The only question remains “Who would do this training?” It makes sense that it would be the Allocations Coordinator or Co-Convenor or Convenor Advisor. Sponsorship Training could be a place where for deeper discussions on any Sponsorship situation.

Recommendation #17

We recommend that Sponsor Training be offered at 3:00 pm before all Men’s Clausuras, open to anyone who wants to attend. We suggest advertising it as “How to be the BEST possible Sponsor you can be!”

Follow-up for Sponsors

Recommendation #18

We recommend sending a follow-up letter to Sponsors one week after the weekend to remind them of their follow-up ministry with their Weekender and to ask them to encourage their Weekender to attend the weekend Ultreya. This should be done by the Council (Secretary, perhaps?) and include a thank you and an encouragement to complete the checklist on “Ministry of a UEC Sponsor” by fulfilling the follow-up guidelines.

Another conversation emphasized a need for better guidelines for the weekend Ultreya. We would like to encourage Sponsors that while the Ultreya is meant as a reunion of team and Weekenders, they are also welcome to accompany their Weekender, particularly if the Weekender is single, physically challenged in some way or might not otherwise attend the weekend Ultreya. We also noted that this should be clarified on the flyer about the Ultreya that goes into team and Weekender Palanca bags.

Section 5: Follow-up for New Cursillistas

Follow-up by Sponsors

Discussion made it clear that Sponsors are the PRIMARY follow-up and need to be educated and encouraged to follow-up with the new Cursillistas they have sponsored. Thus, Recommendation #18. However, it was felt strongly that a follow-up phone call to each new Cursillista would also be encouraging. As we believe most Rectors / Rectoras already do this, we chose not to write a recommendation for it ... but ask that someone makes sure this is recommended in Day 1 Training or in their manuals.

Regional / Annual Ultreyas

Regional Ultreyas have been discussed in UEC Council for 10 years. The Task Force feels they are an excellent idea but likely very difficult to orchestrate from the Council level. The Task Force also remembered what fun the 25th Anniversary Celebration was 4 years ago and began discussing the idea of an annual statewide UEC Ultreya ... every March or April.

Recommendation #19

We recommend that the UEC Council encourage all 4th Day Communities to consider working with other 4th Day Communities in their area to host or attend a Regional Ultreya at least once per year. UEC Council can help connect Liaisons and can give recommendations, but will not plan or facilitate the Ultreya. (Example: Hosanna! Hosts “South of the River” Ultreyas twice/year in conjunction with four other ‘South of the River’ 4th Day Communities and they even open up these Ultreyas to people who have never attended and who are interested in finding out more about UEC. They keep it simple and worshipful.)

Recommendation #20

We recommend that a UEC wide Ultreya be held once per year ... every spring.

Encourage Liaisons to Open their Community to New People

Recommendation #21

We recommend encouraging and educating Liaisons to help their 4th Day Communities be open and accepting of Cursillistas from churches in their areas that do not have active communities. This would include adding them to their e-mail and phone lists, inviting them to Ultreyas, including them in Renewal Group offerings and encouraging them in the same way they would encourage members of their local 4th Day Community.

Section 6: Clergy

The discussion of how this policy would affect the clergy aspect of UEC began as a huge discussion and became actually quite small as it was somewhat worked into the other recommendations.

The main concerns included:

Keeping clergy informed whether they are UEC clergy or not

Keeping clergy involved ... a) supportive of their UEC members b) service as Spiritual Directors.

Keeping Clergy Informed

Keeping clergy informed about Weekenders was addressed on the Weekend application. This works well for Applicants coming to us from UEC churches with pastors who are familiar with UEC. The Allocations Coordinator will recognize the name of the pastor from a list and accept the application. If the pastor's name on the Weekend Registration is not recognized, we feel it is important to contact that pastor. He/she already knows that a member of their congregation is attending a weekend, so the contact will not be cold. The purpose of contact would be to connect, inform, answer any questions, provide materials, and especially highly recommend and invite personal attendance for better understanding. The Allocations Coordinator would pass the name of this pastor on to the New Churches Coordinator who would proceed with contact as currently done for New Churches. The process is already in place.

Recommendation #22

We recommend that ALL New Pastors/Clergy who complete contact information on an application be contacted to connect, inform, answer questions, provide materials and recommend attendance. The New Churches Coordinator should do this initially; who will, if theological questions arise, Council Clergy or same-denomination UEC Clergy will be asked to make an additional connection with the pastor. It would be the responsibility of the Allocations Coordinator to notice a new pastor and to pass contact information on to the New Churches Coordinator.

Recommendation #23

We recommend that the UEC Council contact all who have not attended a weekend, but who's church a number of Cursillistas are attending. We recommend the New Church Coordinator do this in the same manner as described in Recommendation #22.

Recommendation #24

We recommend that the Speakers Bureau (needs to be renamed) be formed and that the New Church Coordinator employ these people to help with the calling as sited in Recommendation #22 and #23.

Keeping Clergy Involved

Recommendation #25

We recommend that Council Clergy contact every pastor in our database every 3 years to encourage, invite service as SD, ascertain health of 4th Day Community at their church, offer resources / attendance.

New Clergy Recruitment

Recommendation #26

We recommend that all clergy who attend a weekend be contacted by Council Clergy shortly thereafter (within 3 months) to discuss their experience, thank them for their support, offer our support in helping strengthen their 4th Day Community ... and invite them to serve as SD within 3 years of their attendance.

The end.