

**West Ohio Conference  
Board of Ordained Ministry  
Statement of Intellectual Integrity**

## **INTELLECTUAL INTEGRITY POLICY**

I. As Christians, we are called to be the body of Christ in our world. As clergy, we are called to exhibit the highest levels of professional and intellectual integrity as part of our witness for Christ. The West Ohio Conference Board of Ordained Ministry understands plagiarism to be a violation of our covenant with one another and our covenant with God to offer the best of our gifts and grace for ministry.

*Plagiarism*, according to the *Oxford Pocket Dictionary of Current English* is: “The practice of taking someone else’s work or ideas and passing them off as one’s own.”

According to *Plagiarism.org*, all of the following are considered plagiarism:

- Turning in someone else’s work as your own
- Copying words or ideas from someone else without giving credit
- Failing to put a quotation in quotation marks
- Giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation
- Copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not.

<http://www.plagiarism.org-101/what-is-plagiarism>

We believe plagiarism is a serious offense and it will be treated as such. The Board will utilize iThenticate and/or other review methods it may determine to identify instances of plagiarism in written work submitted by candidates for ministry.

II. We recognize these levels of plagiarism in a candidate’s written materials:

1. Isolated instance(s) of unattributed material
2. Failure to provide quotation and end notes properly
3. Failure to notate paraphrases, verbatim material, or ideas taken directly from another source
4. Using so many words and/or ideas from another source that one’s own material is difficult to define
5. Substantial portions of a candidate’s written materials and/or statements of the candidate’s personal experience or belief are directly plagiarized

### Consequences of Plagiarism

III. In instances when it is found that a candidate has violated copyright, presented another’s ideas as his or her own, or otherwise failed to credit another’s work, the

Board (acting through the Executive Committee) shall take appropriate remedial or disciplinary action. Generally, in balancing the violation and the consequences, the Board may distinguish among:

1. Conduct that constitutes a failure to meet the high standards of personal and intellectual integrity expected of those set apart for ordained ministry,
2. Conduct that suggests poor academic or intellectual understanding or an unengaged attitude toward the material, and
3. Conduct that reflects low standards of care in preparing material, and poor academic discipline.

Upon discovery of any materials in work presented to the Board that raise plagiarism issues, the Board members/Office of Ministry discovering them shall promptly bring them to the attention of the Executive Committee, which shall consider and act upon the concerns as soon as reasonable. The Executive Committee will review any alleged violations in consultation with such additional Board members as the Chair may designate for that purpose. If the Executive Committee decides that an allegation does not warrant disciplinary or remedial action, then the matter shall be considered fully resolved. Otherwise, the Executive Committee may take any of the actions described below at any time before, or during the process for which the written work in question was prepared. The actions of the Executive Committee and the candidate's remediation will be documented in the Candidate's file.

With respect to candidates for Local Pastor License:

- Return the candidate to the supervision of the District Committee
- Any other action that is deemed necessary

With respect to candidates for provisional membership,

- Return the candidate to the supervision of the District Committee
- Impose conditions to be met before being interviewed by the Board
- Return the candidate to the supervision of the District Committee as they seek alternative paths to ministry
- Any other action that is deemed necessary

With respect to provisional members seeking full membership/associate membership,

- Defer the candidate, with or without participation in the interview process
- Require that coaching on plagiarism issues by an individual approved by the Board be completed by the candidate prior to full membership
- Discontinue the candidate
- Any other action that is deemed necessary

*\*We are grateful to our colleagues from the North Georgia, West Virginia Boards of Ordained Ministry for their work in first creating "Plagiarism Policies" and "Consequences of Plagiarism" which they shared with us. Our WOC policy is closely modelled after theirs.*

## INTELLECTUAL INTEGRITY POLICY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

Please read the intellectual integrity policy concerning plagiarism and sign the policy statement below when you are ready. Keep the policy to guide you in your preparation and return the signed statement to the registrar, along with your application.

I have read the policy on plagiarism and understand it. I understand that plagiarism will not be tolerated and is a violation of my Christian ethic and covenant. The work that I will submit to the Board of Ordained Ministry will be my own and I will credit sources appropriately.

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Signature

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Date

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Print Name