

PURPOSE OF THE COUNCIL



The purpose of the District credentialing council is to understand and evaluate all aspects of the candidate's life, ministry and beliefs (calling, character and theology [which includes an ability to handle the Scriptures well]). The candidate's doctrinal position shall be in full harmony with the EFCA. The paper should cover the areas listed on the Certificate of Christian Ministry (CCM) or the Certificate of Ordination (COO) or the Transfer of Ordination (TOO) Paper Requirements. The candidate will be questioned about the content of the paper and other items listed in the Paper Requirements not included in the paper. The council will also ask questions to clarify issues that are unclear or inadequately answered. Supplementing the local church's recommendation of the candidate's calling and character, the council will ask questions directed at personal holiness as it pertains to "issues related to lifestyle." The council is seeking to determine if the candidate upholds the high doctrinal and moral standard such that the candidate can be recommended for a Certificate (CCM, COO or TOO).*

The council is not to determine what other council members believe, but what the candidate believes. The responsibility of the council is to recommend or not recommend the candidate for a credential in the EFCA. (Please use the "Motions To Be Passed By District Credentialing Councils" document.) The actual decision to grant the Certificate will be made by the national Board of Ministerial Standing (BOMS).

It is important to remember that the thoroughness of this process will determine the biblical and theological fidelity and vitality of the EFCA and its pastors. The process is intended to ensure the EFCA remains orthodox and retains its distinctives.

*The focus is on the council for the Certificate. The licensing council, which grants a candidate a five year renewable license, has a similar purpose, though the requirements for the paper and the theological expectations are different. Generally in the license the expectation/requirement is theological competency and alignment with the EFCA, in the CCM the expectation/requirement is theological competency and in the COO and TOO the expectation/requirement is theological proficiency.

COUNCIL MAKE-UP



Council Make-Up

For Ordination, Certificate of Christian Ministry and Transfer of Ordination credentials, the council must consist of a minimum of . . .

- Five EFCA pastors, three must be EFCA ordained
- Five laypersons, two must be from the candidate's local church
- At least five EFC churches must be represented by the members of the council with no more than three voting council members from any single church including the candidate's church

In some instances, local districts may elect permanent credentialing councils as their chosen method of examination, but these councils shall also meet the above criteria. For other credentials (License) the composition of the council will be determined by the district.

Approved by the EFCA Board of Ministerial Standing- January 2012

GUIDELINES FOR COUNCIL MEMBERS



Congratulations! You have been asked to be a part of something very significant within the EFCA. God's call in a person's life to Himself and to vocational ministry is certainly personal and individual. But that calling to and gifting for ministry is affirmed and confirmed by the people of God, the body of Christ. Thank you for being willing to be a part of that process.

We realize that if this is your first time serving in this capacity there can be many questions. This document is designed to help you know what your role will be as well as to help you find other documents that will clarify the process. We take credentialing very seriously as a movement and our congregational nature requires that we take very seriously the role of the local church in this process. You are an important component. A helpful document for understanding the rationale for credentialing may be found at: <http://go.efca.org/resources/document/credentialing-rationale>
Frequently asked questions about the process are answered on another document: <http://go.efca.org/resources/document/credentialing-faq>

Council Make-up

There are three types of members required for the District Board of Ministerial Standing (DBOMS) council. <http://go.efca.org/resources/document/credentialing-make-council>

For Certificates (Ordination, Certificate of Christian Ministry, and Transfer of Ordination), the council must consist of a minimum of:

- Five EFCA pastors, three must be EFCA ordained;
- Five church members, two must be from the candidate's local church;

At least five EFC churches must be represented by the members of the council, with no more than three voting council members from any single church, including the candidate's church.

Non-voting guests or pastors may attend the council as well. These can be relatives, friends or others that come at the invitation of the candidate or the council.

Council Member's Responsibility

1) Familiarize yourself with the purpose of the council. You can find the purpose at the following link: <http://go.efca.org/resources/document/credentialing-purpose-council>

2) Familiarize yourself with the EFCA Statement of Faith. It can be found within the body of the candidate's paper or at this link: <http://go.efca.org/resources/document/statement-faith>

3) Read the Guidelines for Council Moderator document so that you will have a better understanding of what will happen in the council itself: <http://go.efca.org/resources/document/credentialing-guidelines-moderators>

4) Familiarize yourself with the requirements for the type of paper presented. <http://go.efca.org/resources/document/credentialing-documents-and-forms>

Read the paper carefully considering these requirements. The requirements will help you to know what the candidate will be expected to have addressed in his or her paper.

5) Prepare questions in advance that will help bring understanding to unclear areas. Primarily these questions will focus on doctrine, practice, and lifestyle. These questions can be ascertained through reading the requirements.

6) Take great care to come prepared not to teach what you believe rather to understand what the candidate believes.

7) Listen carefully and prayerfully to the questions and answers during the council session. We have been given the challenge to determine the calling and character of the candidate as well as his or her ability to handle the Scriptures well. Some of the things we are trying to determine are not limited to but should include:

- Was Scripture used accurately to support statements?
- Does the candidate truly agree with the Statement of Faith?
- Is there an area of doctrine in which the candidate struggles or is unclear?
- Is there an area that was not addressed?
- Does the candidate major on the majors?
- Was the candidate able to interact with the major doctrines with ease?

8) Familiarize yourself with the various motions for recommendation and be prepared to vote accordingly. (See pages 8-14 for possible motions.)

9) Be prepared to evaluate the worthiness of the candidate if asked by the moderator. (Only voting members may ask questions during the council, but non-voting members may be asked for input during the deliberation process).

10) Read and be familiar with any other documents that are provided by the moderator such as church recommendation letter or application.

It is highly recommended that you read and be familiar with *Evangelical Convictions*.

Additional Information

Plan that the total council time will last about 2-3 hours for a License and 4-6 hours for Ordination Certification. The council that you are part of will make a recommendation to the National Board of Ministerial Standing. They take your recommendation very seriously and highly value this process. However, they are charged with making the final decision and granting the credential. The credential is owned by the EFCA.

GUIDELINES FOR COUNCIL MODERATORS



MODERATOR

The moderator for the council of a candidate seeking a Certificate of Ordination (COO) or Certificate of Christian Ministry (CCM) shall be appointed by the District Superintendent and/or the Chair of the District Board of Ministerial Standing (DBOMS).

MODERATOR'S RESPONSIBILITY

1. To make sure that the candidate's paper meets the paper requirements and the candidate is prepared for the council (this guidance or preparation is often done through a mentor).
2. To ensure that the proper number of qualified members make up the council (See document Council Make-Up). Some districts have permanent credentialing councils.
3. To establish the date, time and place of the council.
4. To ensure that a well-prepared secretary/scribe is present to take appropriate minutes for the council, and to ensure that an audio recording of the council is made.
5. To educate the council members of their purpose prior to the council.
6. To convene the council, remind members of the purpose of the council, set the proper spiritual framework for the council and lead the council through the entire process to its conclusion.
7. To guide the questioning process in such a manner that a clear understanding of the candidate's position will be understood by all.
8. To evaluate questions so that those determined to be unnecessary or unanswerable are redirected or rephrased or determined to be inappropriate and therefore not requiring an answer.
9. To keep the council from debating with itself and becoming teachers of the candidate. Inquiry, not teaching, is the main intent of the council. However, there are times, albeit exceptions, the candidate may be uncertain on a major doctrine where input is important and essential.
10. To budget the time of the council so that everything required is completed. This means one must keep an eye on the clock to avoid spending too much time on one article or issue as that will take from the necessary time to address another article. (Generally the CCM council is three hours and the COO council is four hours.)
11. To recommend (or not) the candidate to the Board of Ministerial Standing. If not, ensure the right follow up is determined by the council so the candidate knows the next steps in the process. (See document "Motions To Be Passed By District Credentialing Councils".)

SECRETARY/SCRIBE AND MINUTES



General

The moderator (or the District Superintendent or the District Board of Ministerial Standing [DBOMS] Chair) ensures that a well-prepared secretary/scribe (recruiting and training must be done prior to the council) is present to take appropriate minutes for the council, and he also ensures that an audio recording of the council is made. Since it is difficult to engage in the council discussion and record good minutes, it is best if the secretary/scribe focuses on recording the minutes and not attempt to be a part of the council dialogue.

The minutes from credentialing councils serve a vital role in the credentialing process as they provide the only means that the national Board of Ministerial Standing (BOMS) can evaluate a candidate's oral interaction with Scripture and the doctrine espoused in the Statement of Faith. Additionally, these minutes provide the record for any other future reference.

Specifics

1. The secretary/scribe shall record all of the members of the council and the churches they represent in the minutes. (To ensure that the proper number of qualified members make up the council, see "Guidelines For Council Members").
2. The secretary/scribe shall take minutes of all the proceedings of the council. This will include all questions and answers between the council members and the candidate. Minutes of both the questions and answers must be complete enough so that a reader can understand and make accurate decisions about the candidate's understanding and grasp of the biblical, theological, pastoral and personal issues. As the goal of the Council is to determine the beliefs of the candidate, so the goal of the secretary/scribe is to record the candidate's responses accurately. Include the words and expressions used by the candidate, even if the candidate misspeaks on a theological issue. For the Certificate of Christian Ministry (CCM), Certificate of Ordination (COO) and the Transfer of Ordination (TOO), complete and thorough minutes must be taken with transcriptions included in areas where the candidate experienced difficulty. Please see below for an example of council minutes.
3. The secretary/scribe will record the council's discussion and deliberations, final recommendations and the motion passed. (Please use the document "Motions To Be Passed By District Credentialing Councils.") As part of the final recommendations for the Certificate, the council will determine any pertinent issues that need to be transcribed. A summary of the council's discussion and deliberations, the final recommendations and the motion passed will be communicated with the candidate.

4. The secretary/scribe will send the minutes to the moderator who will proof them prior to sending them to the District office. After the District office has received all the materials required by the candidate, the material will be sent to the national office for processing by BOMS.

Example of Council Minutes

Q: Please explain the doctrine of the Trinity.

A: Though the word is not found in the Bible, the truth of the Trinity is taught throughout the Bible, both implicitly and explicitly. The Trinity is a reference to the biblical teaching that God is one and yet eternally exists in three Persons. The Father is God, the Son is God and the Holy Spirit is God. Though each person is fully God, there are not three gods, but one God. Theology is doxological, and that is especially true with the doctrine of the Trinity. The hymn writer got this right when he concluded his excellent hymn with these words: "God in Three Persons, Blessed Trinity."

Q: How would you defend the teaching of the Trinity from the Bible?

A: The truth of the Trinity is taught throughout the Bible. This truth may be more implicit in the Old Testament – but even in the beginning of the Old Testament, Genesis 1:2, there is a reference to the Spirit – but in God's unfolding plan of redemption it becomes explicit in the New Testament. The Father is God – in the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6:9, prayer is addressed to "our Father." The Son is God – in John 20:28 when Thomas sees the risen Jesus Christ he exclaims "my Lord and my God." And the Holy Spirit is God – in the early church Luke writes in Acts 5 that Ananias lied to the Holy Spirit, to God. This truth is also evidenced in Jesus' baptism as recorded in Matthew 3:16-17, and in Jesus' command to his followers in Matthew 28:19-20 to baptize in the name of – note the singular – the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Q: What is a contemporary heresy regarding the Trinity?

A: Modalism is actually an early church heresy that was condemned, which still exists today. Teachers so emphasized the oneness of God, they did so at the expense of His threeness, which denied that there are three distinct Persons. There is only one person who appears in different modes or manifestations at different times. When He appears as Father, he is not the Son or the Holy Spirit. When he appears as the Son, he is not the Father or the Holy Spirit. Modalism teaches "distinct modes;" orthodoxy affirms "distinct Persons." Today the United Pentecostal Church is referred to as Oneness Pentecostals or by the motto "Jesus only," since they baptize in the name of Jesus only, not the trinitarian Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

MINISTRY LICENSE (Vocational and Non-Vocational)

POSSIBLE MOTIONS



RECOMMEND

Motion: To recommend (name) for a License. The paper is complete and represents the quality of a Licensing paper. The candidate has given an oral defense of biblical issues at a level required for a License.

Please include recommendations for further study.

RECOMMEND CONDITIONAL UPON

Motion: To recommend (name) for a License. However, the paper or oral defense must be corrected per issues raised in the council and approved by the council chairman (or a sub-group of the council) before this recommendation and the rewritten paper can be passed on to Board of Ministerial Standing (BOMS).

Please include recommendations for further study.

NOT RECOMMENDING

Motion: Not to recommend (name) for a License at this time. The candidate will be encouraged to study the areas identified by the council, rewrite the paper to reflect this additional study, and prepare for another council exam.

NOTE: It is recommended that the district assign a mentor for this time of additional study.

Approved by the EFCA Board of Ministerial Standing- January 2012 and updated August 2013

MOTIONS TO BE PASSED BY DISTRICT CREDENTIALING COUNCILS CERTIFICATE OF CHRISTIAN MINISTRY



Requirements:

- involved in church/institutional ministry,
- demonstrated an acceptable level of biblical and theological training for their area of ministry (formal and/or non-formal)
- completed requirements of a ministerial license,
- approved by an examining council,
- demonstrated gifts in ministry
- involved in a qualifying ministry

For a full statement of requirements see “Ministerial Credentialing in the EFCA.”

Please pass one of the following motions to clearly state the desires of the examining council. Other motions may be added following the main motion if the situation requires other decisions of the council.

RECOMMEND

Recommend without reservation

Motion: To recommend ... (name) ... for a Certificate of Christian Ministry. His/Her doctrinal paper is complete and meets the requirements for a Christian Ministry credential. He/She has given an oral defense of biblical issues at a level required for a Certificate of Christian Ministry.

RECOMMEND CONDITIONAL UPON...

Recommend conditional upon making minor corrections to the paper approved by the council chairman

Motion: To recommend ... (name) ... for a Certificate of Christian Ministry. However, the paper presented must be revised per issues raised by the council and revisions approved by the chairman of the council before this recommendation and revised paper can be passed on to the Board of Ministerial Standing (BOMS). He/She has given an oral defense of biblical issues at a level required for a Certificate of Christian Ministry.

Recommend conditional upon additional study approved by council chairman

Motion: To recommend ... (name) ... for a Certificate of Christian Ministry. His/Her doctrinal paper is complete and meets the requirements for a Certificate of Christian Ministry. However, his/her oral defense was not adequate in certain areas identified by the council. He/She must study the topics and address the items raised by the council in an oral explanation to the council chairman. The council chairman may approve the explanation and will then pass along to BOMS the paper, council interview and a statement of his approval of the additional work done by the candidate. 2 EFCA, 901 East 78th Street, Minneapolis, MN, (952)854-1300, credentialing@efca.org
EFCA.credentialing.ccmcouncilmotionstobepassed

Recommend conditional upon major rewrite of sections of paper and approval by a council committee

Motion: To recommend ... (name) ... for a Certificate of Christian Ministry on a conditional basis as the paper presented must be rewritten addressing issues raised by the council. The rewritten paper must be approved by three members of the council before this recommendation and the rewritten paper is passed on to BOMS. He/She has adequately spoken to the biblical issues at a level required for a Certificate of Christian Ministry.

Recommend conditional upon further study and oral defense with approval by a council committee

Motion: To recommend ... (name) ... for a Certificate of Christian Ministry. His/Her doctrinal paper is complete and meets the requirements for a Certificate of Christian Ministry. However, his/her oral defense was not adequate in a number of areas identified by the council. He/She must study these topics and address the items raised by the council in an oral explanation in a meeting with the three members of the council. The three members of the council may approve this explanation and will then pass along to BOMS the paper, council interview and a statement of their approval of the additional work done by the candidate.

NOT RECOMMENDING

Not to recommend at this time

Motion: Not to recommend ... (name) ... for a Certificate of Christian Ministry at this time. He/She will be encouraged to study the areas identified by the council, rewrite the paper to reflect this additional study, and prepare for another council exam. (NOTE: It will be helpful if the person is assigned a mentor for this time of additional study.)

Approved by the EFCA Board of Ministerial Standing (2004, Updated 2010)

MOTIONS TO BE PASSED BY DISTRICT CREDENTIALING COUNCILS CERTIFICATE OF ORDINATION



Requirements:

- Male
- Involved in pastoral ministry,
- Demonstrated an acceptable level of biblical and theological training for ministry (formal and/or non-formal)
- Completed the requirements for a ministerial license,
- Approved by an examining council,
- Demonstrated gifts in ministry
- Involved in a qualifying ministry

For a full statement of requirements see “Ministerial Credentialing in the EFCA.”

Please pass one of the following motions to clearly state the desires of the examining council. Other motions may be added following the main motion if the situation requires other decisions of the council.

RECOMMEND

Recommend with no reservations

Motion: To recommend ... (name) ... for a Certificate of Ordination. His paper is complete and represents the quality of an ordination paper, and he has given an oral defense of biblical issues at a level required for a Certificate of Ordination.

RECOMMEND CONDITIONAL UPON...

Recommend conditional upon making minor corrections to the paper approved by the council chairman

Motion: To recommend ... (name) ... for a Certificate of Ordination. However, his paper must be corrected per issues raised in the council and approved by the council chairman before this recommendation and the rewritten paper can be passed on to Board of Ministerial Standing (BOMS). He has adequately provided an oral defense of biblical issues at a level required for a Certificate of Ordination.

Recommend conditional upon additional study approved by council chairman

Motion: To recommend ... (name) ... for a Certificate of Ordination. His paper is complete and represents the quality of an ordination paper. However, his oral defense was not adequate in certain areas identified by the council. He must study these topics and address the items raised by the council in an oral explanation to the council chairman. The council chairman may approve this explanation and will then pass along to BOMS the paper, council interview and a statement of his approval of the additional work done by the candidate. April 2012 EFCA, 901 East 78th Street, Minneapolis, MN, 55420 (952)854-1300, credentialing@efca.org EFCA.credentialing.certificateofordinationcouncilmotionstobepassed

Recommend conditional upon major rewrite of sections of paper and approval by a council committee

Motion: To recommend ... (name) ... for a Certificate of Ordination, but he needs to rewrite sections of his paper as identified by the council. The rewritten paper must be approved by three members of this council before this recommendation and the revised paper is passed on to BOMS. He has adequately provided an oral defense of biblical issues at a level required for a Certificate of Ordination.

Recommend conditional upon further study and oral defense with approval by a council committee

Motion: to recommend ... (name) ... for a Certificate of Ordination. His paper is complete and represents the quality of an ordination paper. However, his oral defense was not adequate in a number of areas identified by the council. He must study these topics and address the items raised by the council in an oral explanation in a meeting with three members of the council. The three members of the council may approve this explanation and will then pass along to BOMS the paper, council interview and a statement of their approval of the additional work done by the candidate.

RECOMMEND INSTEAD...**Recommend for Certificate of Christian Ministry Credential**

Motion: to recommend ... (name) ... for a Certificate of Christian Ministry because his paper, oral defense, and ministry position meet the requirements for the Certificate of Christian Ministry. The candidate will be informed that he may choose to accept this recommendation or request the council to advise him on steps he can take to receive a Certificate of Ordination.

NOT RECOMMENDING**Not to recommend at this time**

Motion: Not to recommend ... (name) ... for a Certificate of Ordination at this time. He will be encouraged to study the areas identified by the council, rewrite his paper to reflect this additional study, and prepare for another council exam.

(NOTE: It will be helpful if the person is assigned a mentor for this time of additional study.)

Approved by the EFCA Board of Ministerial Standing (2004, Updated 2010 and 2012)

MOTIONS TO BE PASSED BY DISTRICT CREDENTIALING COUNCILS TRANSFER OF ORDINATION



Requirements:

- Male
- Involved in pastoral ministry,
- Demonstrated an acceptable level of academic preparation for ministry, such as completion of a M.Div. degree or its equivalent,
- Approved by an examining council,
- Demonstrated gifts in ministry
- Involved in a qualifying ministry. For a full statement of requirements see “Ministerial Credentialing in the EFCA.”

Please pass one of the following motions to clearly state the desires of the examining council. Other motions may be added following the main motion if the situation requires other decisions of the council.

RECOMMEND

Recommend with no reservations

Motion: To recommend ... (name) ... for a Transfer of Ordination. His paper is complete and represents the quality of an ordination paper, and he has given an oral defense of biblical issues at a level required for a Transfer of Ordination.

RECOMMEND CONDITIONAL UPON...

Recommend conditional upon making minor corrections to the paper approved by the council chairman

Motion: To recommend ... (name) ... for a Transfer of Ordination. However, his paper must be corrected per issues raised in the council and approved by the council chairman before this recommendation and the rewritten paper can be passed on to Board of Ministerial Standing (BOMS). He has adequately provided an oral defense of biblical issues at a level required for a Transfer of Ordination.

Recommend conditional upon additional study approved by council chairman Motion: To recommend ... (name) ... for a Transfer of Ordination. His paper is complete and represents the quality of an ordination paper. However, his oral defense was not adequate in certain areas identified by the council. He must study these topics and address the items raised by the council in an oral explanation to the council chairman. The council chairman may approve this explanation and will then pass along to BOMS the paper, council interview and a statement of his approval of the additional work done by the candidate.

January 2010

Recommend conditional upon major rewrite of sections of paper and approval by a council committee

Motion: To recommend ... (name) ... for a Transfer of Ordination, but he needs to rewrite sections of his paper as identified by the council. The rewritten paper must be approved by three members of this council before this recommendation and the revised paper is passed on to BOMS. He has adequately provided an oral defense of biblical issues at a level required for a Transfer of Ordination.

Recommend conditional upon further study and oral defense with approval by a council committee

Motion: to recommend ... (name) ... for a Transfer of Ordination. His paper is complete and represents the quality of an ordination paper. However, his oral defense was not adequate in a number of areas identified by the council. He must study these topics and address the items raised by the council in an oral explanation in a meeting with three members of the council. The three members of the council may approve this explanation and will then pass along to BOMS the paper, council interview and a statement of their approval of the additional work done by the candidate.

RECOMMEND INSTEAD...

Recommend for Certificate of Christian Ministry

Motion: to recommend ... (name) ... for a Certificate of Christian Ministry because his paper, oral defense, and ministry position meet the requirements for the Certificate of Christian Ministry. The candidate will be informed that he may choose to accept this recommendation or request the council to advise him on steps he can take to receive a Certificate of Ordination.

NOT RECOMMENDING

Not to recommend at this time

Motion: Not to recommend ... (name) ... for a Transfer of Ordination at this time. He will be encouraged to study the areas identified by the council, rewrite his paper to reflect this additional study, and prepare for another council exam.

(NOTE: It will be helpful if the person is assigned a mentor for this time of additional study.)

Approved by the EFCA Board of Ministerial Standing (2004, Updated 2010)