

STARR KING SCHOOL FOR THE MINISTRY

HILDA MASON TEACHING FELLOWS

Approved by the core faculty, November 2010

Hilda Mason

Recipient of an honorary doctorate from Starr King School for the Ministry, and former trustee of the school, the Honorable Hilda Mason (1916-2007), teacher, civil rights activist and city council member, was a prominent leader in Washington, D.C. In her later years, she would introduce herself as everyone's "grandmother" -- because that is how she saw herself!

Born in a split log cabin in 1916 in rural Campbell County, Virginia, Hilda Mason strove constantly to broaden access to resources for all. She first became a teacher of "colored" students in racially segregated Altavista, Virginia, in the 1930s and '40s. After moving to the District of Columbia, she taught in the public schools which, through the 1950s, also were segregated. Determined to impress upon her students high academic standards, Hilda compensated for the lack of resources in her classroom by purchasing special supplies and equipment and supporting field trips out of her own pocket.

In 1957, Hilda met Charles Noble "Charlie" Mason, Jr., a wealthy DC figure at All Souls Unitarian Church, which was then and remains a center of progressive activism in the District of Columbia. In between picketing the D.C. Transit Company to demand an end to its racist hiring practices and protesting the Whites-only membership policy of the YMCA, Hilda and Charlie engaged in a long courtship and married in 1965. Hilda and Charlie's coming together was but also a lifelong partnership in a continuing struggle to agitate and advocate for justice for the most vulnerable in our society.

Hilda's career as an educator grew and expanded. She became a staff member at the LaSalle Laboratory School and the progressive Adams Morgan Community School Project. Outside the classroom she helped organize a school chapter of the Washington Teachers Union and fought for equal treatment for Black students and teachers. In the mid-1960s, she organized a rent subsidy project and summer enrichment program for children in the neighborhood around All Soul's Church.

In 1971, Hilda was elected to the D.C. Board of Education where she fought for better access to early childhood education for poor children, reduced class sizes and parity of resources for schools in low-income neighborhoods with prosperous ones. During this time, she became an ally of Council Member Julius Hobson, a leader of the DC Statehood Party. Like so many residents of Washington, D.C., Hilda was outraged that U.S. citizens in the nation's capital did not have full voting representation in the United States Congress so she pushed for the District to become the 51st state. When Julius

Hobson died in 1977, she was elected to his at-large seat on the City Council and was reelected in 1982, 1986, 1990 and 1994. As a member of the DC Statehood Party, she was a constant advocate for home-rule for the District of Columbia.

She lost her bid for a sixth Council term in 1998 but she didn't retire from helping people. Hilda and Charlie continued their long-time practice of making "loans" to young people to help with college costs and to families struggling to buy food or pay utility bills. They were instrumental in establishing the University of the District of Columbia School of Law and were great patrons of the institution. They contributed large sums to provide scholarships for students attending the school. In 2004, the Board of Trustees of the school honoured them by naming its library the Charles N. and Hilda H. M. Mason Law Library. Her heart was always open to those who were struggling for justice; she had a profound sense of the interconnectedness of oppressions and was very supportive of LGBTIQQA issues, HIV issues, etc.. She attended as many public school graduations as she could and encouraged young people from foster homes and group homes to call her "grandma" so they felt someone loved them and was interested in their welfare.

Hilda Mason did these things because they were the right things to do. She did them because if there was an injustice, she felt compelled to dismantle it.

Student-Taught Courses at Starr King: History and Philosophy

For many decades—at least since the 1970's—Starr King degree students, under the auspices of the Curriculum Committee and the faculty, have taught courses at the school. The School views such practice teaching as an integral aspect of graduate theological education, in keeping with the understanding that professional education appropriately involves supervised practice of the profession. The School's students practice pastoral care and chaplaincy work in Clinical Pastoral Education programs and sites; they practice parish ministry in congregational internships and fieldwork; they practice community ministry and religious leadership for social change through community internships and fieldwork; they practice teaching at the School as well as in congregations and community settings.

The School also views practice teaching as an excellent mode of learning: studies show that people retain a modest percentage of what they are taught, but they retain nearly 100% of what they teach. At Starr King, practice teaching happens in many ways: student presentations and student teaching are encouraged as part of faculty-taught courses and seminars, and as part of internships and fieldwork projects. Students serve as teaching assistants in faculty-taught courses, particularly the "Educating to Counter Oppressions" seminar which engages advanced students in leading discussion groups for entering students. Student-taught courses at the School are an additional opportunity for students to practice teaching.

This document outlines the School's approach to student-taught courses that we will follow beginning with the 2011-2012 academic year and marks an evolution of our

policies, practices, and support for student-taught courses. It has been developed by the Curriculum Committee and has been approved by the Core Faculty as a guiding document for this aspect of our educational work.

Selection of Student Taught Courses

Students interested in offering a student-taught course must prepare and submit a proposal to the Curriculum Committee, following the course-proposal protocols established by the Curriculum Committee. Typically, the protocols expect a proposal to include a course title and description, a draft syllabus, and a statement of the student's qualifications and preparation to teach the course. The Curriculum Committee may also ask for additional information, such as answers to questions about the pedagogy that will be employed, the way the course will support the School's curricular commitments to counter-oppressive, multi-religious education, etc. The Curriculum Committee sets the timeline and deadlines for receiving and acting on student-taught course proposals and publicizes them on the website and to the faculty and student body.

Courses may be for 1.5 or 3 units; they may be taught in intensive format, on-line, or residentially.

Categories of Student Taught Courses

Hilda Mason Teaching Fellowship for Community Teaching

Awarded to selected Starr King degree students who have submitted a proposal to teach in a community setting or congregation, applying their theological studies to "education for wholeness and liberation" for any age group or population. Course to be designed and offered by the student in connection with a sponsoring organization/site.

Hilda Mason Teaching Fellowship for Faculty -Student Collaborative Teaching

Awarded to selected Starr King degree students who have submitted a proposal in collaboration with a Starr King Core or Regular Adjunct Faculty member, for a course to be developed and taught by the student and core faculty member in collaboration. Such courses will be offered as part of Starr King's curriculum and through the GTU cross registration system. May be for 1.5 or 3 units; taught in intensive, on-line, immersion, or residential format.

Hilda Mason Teaching Fellowship for Student-Taught Courses

Awarded to selected Starr King degree students who have submitted a proposal to teach a course that will be offered as part of Starr King's curriculum and through the GTU cross registration system. May be for 1.5 or 3 units; taught in intensive, on-line, immersion, or residential format.

Criteria for Assessing Proposals for a Hilda Mason Teaching Fellowship

In reviewing proposals for a teaching fellowship award, the Curriculum Committee will assess the student's qualifications and preparation for teaching the course, the appropriateness of the pedagogy and the course design for the setting in which it will be offered (community, congregation, or graduate level teaching), the suitability of the course in terms of Starr King's educational values and commitments, and the significance of the teaching opportunity for the student's preparation for their vocational goals. It is expected that teaching fellowships will in some way advance the integration of the student's theological program of study with their past experience and skill. Proposals that simply repeat a course or topic of instruction that the student has already had expert professional experience with generally will not meet this criteria. Proposals will not be assessed in terms of their helpfulness in filling "slots" in the school's ongoing curriculum—but if they duplicate topics that might otherwise be covered by hiring an adjunct faculty member, the Curriculum Committee may take this into account in deciding not to hire an adjunct.

Submission of a proposal for a teaching fellowship does not guarantee acceptance. The Curriculum Committee will make judgments based not only on the quality of the proposal, but also based on the financial resources available in a given year for providing a fellowship, and on the overall number of courses it feels can be successfully offered.

Hilda Mason Teaching Fellowship Award Letters

Students whose proposals are selected by the Curriculum Committee will be granted a "Hilda Mason Teaching Fellowship" by the School, and will be notified of the fellowship and its amount by a letter from the Curriculum Committee. Copies of the Fellowship Award letter will be sent to the Vice President for Finance and Administration and the Dean of Students. Fellowships will be funded by the Hilda Mason Endowed Scholarship Fund, on which a draw of 5% of the 13 quarter average will be taken annually beginning with the 2011-2012 fiscal year (at which point the endowment will have been held by the school for an initial three-year period.)

The amount of the Hilda Mason Teaching Fellowship will be determined annually by the Curriculum Committee. Initially, the Fellowships will be for \$1500 for a 3-unit course. It is expected that the Fellowships will at no time exceed the amount that Adjunct Faculty receive for teaching a 3-unit course.

The Hilda Mason Teaching Fellowships will be administered in the same way that other scholarship and financial aid grants are administered: through the office of the Dean of Students as a reduction on the student's tuition account. If the Teaching Fellow has already paid all of their tuition, the Fellowship will be awarded as a check from the school to the student during the semester that the student is scheduled to teach.

Mentoring and Supervision of Teaching Fellows

Each Hilda Mason Teaching Fellow will be mentored and supervised by a member of Starr King's core faculty. The faculty member may work with the student in the study and preparation that leads up to the course proposal. During the semester when the course is offered, the mentor/supervisor will meet occasionally with the student to reflect on their experience in teaching the class, and will offer feedback, guidance, and evaluation on the student's teaching. At the end of the semester, the mentor/supervisor will provide the registrar with an evaluation of the student's teaching to be included in their student file.

Hilda Mason Teaching Fellows will receive 3-units of course credit for teaching a 3-unit course, and may also receive credit (with the approval of the mentor/supervisor) for the preparation of the course.

Cancellation of the Course

If a Teaching Fellowship course is cancelled because of no enrollment, the Hilda Mason Teaching Fellowship will not be cancelled. The student will be encouraged to offer the course in another venue, if possible, or at another time.

Funding Source

Hilda Mason Teaching Fellowships will be funded from the Hilda Mason Endowment, held by Starr King and designated by the donor for Financial Aid. Up to 20% of the annual draw on the Hilda Mason Endowment may be annually designated for this purpose, at the discretion of the President in consultation with the Admissions and Scholarship Committee.

Updating This Document

Updates and changes to this policy and practice can be initiated by the Curriculum Committee, the Core Faculty, or the Admissions and Scholarship Committee and acted on by the Core Faculty upon the recommendation of the Curriculum Committee.