

Association of Theological Schools (ATS) reporting requirements

The ATS Educational Standard.6.4.4 requires us to make an annual public statement of our educational effectiveness.

The 2017 graduating class included 17 students. ATS asks how many of our graduates have had “positive placements” after graduation, i.e. working in ministry, or continuing their formation process in CPE/residency or internship. We are pleased that we can report that 88 percent of our 2017 graduates (15 students) were in positive placements when they were asked late in 2017.

In the 2017 graduating class, there were:

- 8 Unitarian Universalists
- 12 MDiv students; 4 MASC students; 1 MA student
- 8 under the age of 40; 9 in their 40’s – 60’s
- 9 high-residency students; 8 low-residency students
- (all identified as men or women): 5 men and 12 women
- (with some missing data): 15 white and 2 people of color

In the calendar year 2017, there were ten Starr King alumni who appeared before our UU Ministerial Fellowshiping Committee. Nine out of ten passed!

- 6 candidates got a “1”
- 3 candidates got a “2”

We say that “Starr King School aims to educate the whole person in the service of love, compassion, and justice.” Education at Starr King always includes unlearning old habits and thought patterns. These are some of the graduating students’ heartfelt comments about what they “unlearned” at Starr King and how important that “unlearning” was.

...By the time you review my material you will find at least one incomplete and/or possibly a failed class. I am not one to make excuses and I earned those grades just as I earned the majority of passes. I earned them by choosing self-care and family over class work. I came to seminary a perfectionist and I am leaving a realist who puts family and self before work. This is the most critical lesson I have learned during the past three years and I have deep gratitude to the Starr King Community for teaching me.

...To become a wise and effective pastoral care giver, I will need to continue to unlearn the desire to provide solutions, and instead be a companion on the journey of exploration.

...As a scholar... I had been taught to discern research by looking for peer reviewed work, without considering who was included in the group of peers... The care taken by the professors I have had at SKSM to make sure that my academic experience has not been saturated with one voice and perspective of the world has altered my approach to his story, her story, and sacred story. My discernment process as I search through where we have been and where we are

going begins by looking at who is telling the story and what their motivations might be. I listen for the stories that aren't being told and why they are invisible... As I look to move further into academia, these are my guiding questions.

...Despite knowing better, I still sometimes think that there is a right answer. Sometimes there is, but for the big questions, that isn't the case. And, those answers can be informed by what is in books, but the answers are not there.

As a final piece of information for this statement of effectiveness, we use an annual threshold-based student satisfaction survey. The 2017 graduates' ratings were high. In the 14 items, 100 percent of the respondents "agreed" or "strongly agreed" with these statements, each of which began "My experience at SKSM..."

...enhanced my understanding of theological and ethical issues inherent in life and work, and the practice of ministry.

...enhanced my understanding of the role of ritual and the arts in the practice of ministry.

...enhanced my ability to conduct rites of passage, create liturgy, and lead ritual.

...enhanced my knowledge of my own religious tradition within the historical context of religious tolerance, interfaith dialogue, and multi religious engagement.

...enhanced my ability to articulate my own thea/ology and assist others in articulating their own thea/ologies.

...helped me develop my ability to guide individuals and congregations in their own spiritual growth, and to provide pastoral counseling across the life span.