**CPE and the Office of Supervised Ministries**

Clinical Pastoral Education is not required by YDS. It is a national program that is entirely independent of YDS, except that you could receive some financial aid from YDS while you do it, and you can receive academic credit for taking it.

* The Director of OSM is simply the liaison with CPE programs.
* Anyone can take CPE. Most MDiv students take CPE. Many denominations or regional bodies require CPE for ordination.
* Because it can be quite demanding (spiritually, emotionally and physically) and because it plays a significant role in your formation for ministry, we want to help make it the best experience possible—by doing what we can to

- Prepare you;

- Accompany you in thought and prayer;

- Support your transition to coursework afterwards.

**Choosing a Site**

CPE programs must be accredited by the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE). Their website ([www.acpe.edu](http://www.acpe.edu)) lists accredited centers and contacts, and has the universal application form and answers to frequently asked questions (FAQ).

**What to expect**

CPE helps students become more aware of themselves as ministers and of the ways they affect those to whom they minister.

* Most programs are in clinical settings (hospitals, nursing homes, hospice); however, there are a few alternative settings like congregations, military, or prisons.
* 1 CPE unit = 400 hours and includes patient care, group & individual supervision, and didactic sessions
* CPE is accredited by the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE) or its counterparts: the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) or the Canadian Association for Spiritual Care (CASC).

**Credits and Requirements**

* 1 CPE unit = 6 hrs of transfer elective credits at YDS
* CPE can fulfill the MDiv requirement for supervised ministry, if you choose to designate it as such.
* Summer units ~10-12 wks; extended (part-time) units vary, from 6-9 mos; all are 400 hrs.
* You can receive credit for up to 15 hours of supervised ministry toward the MDiv degree.
* Many supervisors and students advise you take a pastoral care course before CPE, but it is not required.
* **Procedure** to receive academic credit: a 10-15 minute interview with the Director of Supervised Ministry and a copy of (the first summary page of) your CPE evaluation.

**Financial Aid**

* CPE programs charge tuition, which varies widely from, say, $300-$1000. The student is responsible for this payment.
* A few CPE programs offer stipends or housing.
* YDS has a unique arrangement that allows students to apply for work-study funding (up to $4,000 dollars) to help cover living expenses during the time of CPE (i.e., submit weekly timesheets; paid weekly or semimonthly; employment taxes withheld). YDS does not pay the tuition that each program charges; that is the student’s responsibility.
* You are eligible for YDS funding only if you are using CPE transfer credit hours toward your degree.
* **Procedure** for aid: submit a copy of your acceptance letter and an Application for CPE Funding (available on the OSM website) to the OSM at least two weeks before starting CPE.

**CPE Application Process**

Students apply directly to each program--as early as Oct./Nov. for summer programs in competitive areas (e.g., Boston). Apply before February for all sites; there are usually spaces available through April but fewer options. There may be an application fee.

* Allow sufficient time to complete the lengthy application.
* Common application questions:
* A reasonably full account of your life.
* A description of your spiritual growth.
* A description of your work (vocational) history.
* An account of a “helping incident” in which you were the helper.
* Your impressions of Clinical Pastoral Education.
* References: 1) academic, 2) denominational, 3) personal
* Some sites have additional requirements for paperwork or references.

All programs require an **interview**. Distant programs may use Skype or have a local supervisor conduct the interview and send the results to them. A CPE interview is not like a job interview. Supervisors tend to demonstrate their style in the interview. They might probe and push the student a little to see how they respond. The criteria for selection are aimed at “assessing the applicant’s readiness and openness for learning.”

Criteria for selection

* Self-awareness in terms of one’s personal and professional identity;
* Pastoral skill and competence: level of empathy, and ability to provide spiritual care that respects the patient’s faith tradition;
* Emotional maturity and availability;
* Ability to admit what you don’t know and when you make mistakes;
* Ability to be vulnerable with others in seeking consultation and feedback.

Questions you might ask a Supervisor to help you select a program:

* Whether the person interviewing you will be your CPE supervisor
* Describe a typical day.
* Type of on-call schedule—when, how often, alone or with others
* How are departments assigned (do students choose or do they rotate through several, etc.)?
* When are chaplains called in by hospital staff (are they well integrated with hospital staff?)
* Number of professional chaplains on staff
* How the supervisor does group sessions
* How they establish trust and community, or increase self-awareness
* Their description of theological reflection
* What other occasions for learning—seminars, didactics, etc.

**Post-CPE**

The OSM provides opportunities for interested students to gather during the semester to compare and continue processing their CPE experiences.