



**2023 / 2024 SCHOOL YEAR
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

WHAT IS ARSOM?

ARSOM is a district sponsored and operated ministerial training program that enables individuals to complete the educational requirements of the fellowship for credentialing.

ARSOM uniquely combines home study, classroom instruction, the student's relationship with a mentor, and active involvement in ministry to set their ministerial formation.

ARSOM seeks to provide the student with the highest quality instruction and resources possible in a practical and cost-effective way.

ARSOM gives educational direction, sets an atmosphere for the impartation of the Spirit, and guides the student's spiritual development to equip them for effective, full-time ministry.

The Lay Leadership track (level 1 classes only) allows students to take the same classes, without the mentoring requirement or the credentialing process, in order to enrich their Biblical knowledge.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF ARSOM?

Builds a strong biblical foundation

Establishes spiritual formation

Builds lasting relationships

Develops ministerial character, ethics, and integrity

It is time-measured and cost-affordable

It is academically accountable

It is practical in structure

It is flexible and expandable in format

It instills discipline of study, time, and lifestyle

It is a direct, hands-on involvement in ministerial training.

NOTE:

All sections of this policy manual are to be reviewed, understood, and agreed to by students enrolled in ARSOM. Questions about any information contained herein should be directed to the ARSOM office.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Arkansas School of Ministry (ARSOM) is a vital support to the ministry endeavors of churches and pastors. Knowledge gleaned from the classroom experience becomes a valuable tool that the Holy Spirit can use to further the purpose of God. Clergy and laypersons who understand not only “what to do” but “why to do it” will be far more effective than those who “just do it.”

ARSOM integrates spiritual formation, relationship building, and academic achievement to provide a unique learning experience. Students not only acquire knowledge necessary for obtaining ministerial credentials, but also develop character and skills essential for effective ministry.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Arkansas School of Ministry (ARSOM) exists to provide training for those sensing a call to ministry, whether as credentialed ministers of the Assemblies of God, or as equipped laypersons within the local church. The school seeks to promote a unified purpose for ministry within the Fellowship, providing doctrinal and practical instruction based upon common core values and shared ministry goals.

The Arkansas School of Ministry (ARSOM) subscribes fully to the Statement of Fundamental Truths of the Assemblies of God and commits itself to proclaim and support the principles and polity of the Assemblies of God. Additionally, the school commits itself to provide training courses that meet district and General Council educational requirements for ministerial credentials.

IS BIBLE COLLEGE A BETTER ALTERNATIVE?

This is a question only you and God can answer. God's will for your life may, or may not, include a formal educational experience. To determine the answer to this question, you should seek wise counsel from your spiritual advisors and then submit the issue to God through prayer and study of God's Word.

Education can take a formal or non-formal route. A ministerial formal education is done through a college or seminary, which issues a formal academic degree at the end of the process. A non-formal education is usually done outside of formally organized schools and results in a diploma or certificate.

ARSOM is a non-formal route designed to deliver the elementary and necessary levels of education required for the credentialing process of the Assemblies of God. However, ARSOM is not an inferior education when understood as to its purpose. Even though ARSOM follows a non-formal approach, it is based on sound educational principles and goals. ARSOM endeavors to maintain the highest integrity standards in both students and instruction and is to be considered an advanced education process.

Optimally, ARSOM is designed to engage the student in the process of becoming a life-long learner. Professional ministry, such as being a pastor/teacher, generally leads one further and further along the quest for knowledge. Students who begin with ARSOM may one day seek more formal education to enhance and augment their educational experience.

****Note: Completion of ARSOM courses does not automatically qualify one for credentialing. There are additional steps, applications, interviews, and processes to complete in seeking credentials.***

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

ARSOM is a unique ministerial training opportunity operating in the District and is guided by the following principles:

ARSOM is NOT a college or university. Individuals who are able to attend college or seminary are strongly encouraged to attend an endorsed A/G college or seminary for the absolute best in ministerial training! Our ARSOM staff can provide more information on options that may be available.

ARSOM is NOT an accredited school. Students must not expect that their ARSOM courses will be accepted by any A/G college, Bible school, or other accredited college. ARSOM does not accept government financial assistance for students such as scholarships, etc. and provides no income tax benefit or learning credit.

ARSOM is NOT the same as Berean or Global University correspondence education. ARSOM satisfies the same credentialing requirements, but Global University students can earn college credit and a diploma. Berean offers students correspondence courses that can be taken at any time and at the student's own pace (www.globaluniversity.edu). ARSOM courses are only available at specific times.

ARSOM is NOT the same as credentialing. ARSOM certainly helps applicants meet the educational requirements for credentialing. Credentialing within our Fellowship is an altogether different process with its own exams, paperwork, and interview. Students interested in seeking credentials should contact the district secretary's office for additional information.

ARSOM IS about helping those who want to grow in their understanding of the Bible and ministry. It provides the instruction, interaction, accountability, and relationships that are not available through correspondence courses.

ARSOM IS for those who need to complete their educational requirements for credentialing within the Assemblies of God.

ARSOM IS for laypersons who may not be interested in credentials or full-time ministry but who want to learn more about the Bible and improve their ability to serve Christ and their church. (Level 1 classes only)

ARSOM IS for credentialed ministers who want to improve their skills and participate in an outstanding continuing education process.

ARSOM Lay Leadership track (level 1 classes only) provides the same study, without the mentoring or credentialing processed, to give valued-added instruction for those who wish to enhance their personal lives, and gain knowledge and practical experience.

FOCUSED LEARNING

ARSOM offers courses for those who are seeking ministerial credentials with the Assemblies of God, and for those who want to improve their ability to minister or are interested in their own spiritual growth and understanding of God's Word.

ARKANSAS SCHOOL OF MINISTRY DISCLAIMER

The Arkansas School of ministry is a non-accredited Bible institute. ARSOM is endorsed by the Executive Presbytery of the General Council of the Assemblies of God, approved by the Arkansas District Presbytery, and is a member of the Association of District Schools of Ministry.

Completion of the courses would not automatically qualify for college credit. For information on possible credit from ARSOM courses toward transfer hours at Southwestern Assemblies of God University, students should contact a member of the ARSOM staff.

Classes offered by the Arkansas District School of Ministry meet the educational requirements for credentials with the Assemblies of God. However, participation in and completion of the classes does not assure, nor give advantage, for the granting of credentials, and does not give preference to applicants in the credentials process.

The credentialing process must be followed as determined by the Arkansas District. Final decisions to the awarding of credentials are made by the Assemblies of God General Council Credentials Committee upon the recommendation of the District Credentials Committee. Persons desiring to be credentialed with the Assemblies of God should contact the Arkansas District Secretary's office for further information.

Completion of any of the courses by those enrolled in the Lay Leadership track does not qualify a person for any type of ministry credential with the Assemblies of God, nor does it fulfill the complete educational requirements for any level of credential the student may decide to pursue. Lay Leadership courses are offered only for level 1 courses.

Any student on the Lay Leadership track who decides to pursue ministerial credentials at some point would be required to complete the mentoring requirements beginning at level 1 and go into the regular credentialing process. Completion of the ARSOM study material for any level of credential does not automatically guarantee a student will be granted a credential. ***Credentialing is a separate process.***

STRUCTURE (TIMES/HOW IT ALL WORKS)

Classes are conducted once a month, eight times a year (nine for level 1), in a two-semester format. Courses are offered each month of the semester, one for each corresponding credential level (certified, licensed, ordained) as outlined in the school calendar (www.araog.org/arsom). Lay leadership classes are only available for level 1 and does not include mentoring.

Classes are on Saturday only from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on the scheduled weekend and are held at the District Office in Little Rock. A student must attend the entire day to receive credit for the class. Students should be present to be ready for the prompt start time of 9:30 a.m. The first part of the morning will be the review of the study guide, followed by a brief break, and then the test will be given. Lunch is provided in the cost of the registration. This lunch is provided for the student only. Following lunch, the instructors will present extended practical application teaching material on the subject.

Grades will be provided to students following the class.

Prior to class, each student is required to work through the course text and study guide. **A minimum of 10 hours of preparatory work is necessary.** With the classroom time, students will have invested 16 hours or more per course.

The classroom instruction provides an overview of the material, practical applications, and opportunity for questions and discussion. Instructors use personal experience and a variety of teaching methods.

Faculty members become natural mentors as they build relationships and share experiences with their students. Faculty advisors are available to provide accountability and guidance for the students.

GENERAL RULES

No visitors are allowed at ARSOM at any time. This is for liability issues for all students. Students are not to invite visitors to come for any reason. The only persons who should be on campus are registered students, staff, faculty, and special guests invited by the ARSOM director.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

ARSOM **does not accept or participate in any public- or privately-funded formal scholarship or grant programs or government funded educational programs.**

Students must enroll for the current school year in order to establish a record of classes. This includes students who have previously taken ARSOM classes. All registration is to be done through the online registration portal. A link to both the enrollment and class registrations will be found on the ARSOM page of the district website (www.araog.org/ARSOM)

ARSOM does not award scholarships except under certain circumstances. Students who receive scholarships or financial assistance

from a source such as family or church, should contact the ARSOM office for details on how to make this work with the registration system.

There are no refunds on class fees.

STUDENT POLICIES

ALL students must observe the registration deadline set for each class. THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS made to the published deadline and students should access the online calendar to be aware of registration deadlines and class dates, and plan accordingly.

All registration is to be done online through the araog website and the link to Webconnex.

There will be NO EXCEPTIONS TO REGISTRATION DEADLINES, METHODS, OR PAYMENT REQUIREMENTS.

Students must be a senior in high school to enroll in ARSOM. Any student who has not reached the age of 18 by the time they have completed level 1 classes and are ready to start the credentials process must wait until they turn 18 to apply for the level 1 credential. This age limit is set by the General Council and cannot be altered or changed by the Arkansas Assemblies of God or the Arkansas School of Ministry. Students under the age of 18 who complete level 1 cannot advance to level 2 until they have turned 18 and started the credentials process.

Students are required to complete a minimum of 10 hours of preparatory self-study in advance of the class session. Students are required to read the course textbook(s) and to complete the course study guide prior to class.

Study guides are to be downloaded at the time of online registration. A link to the study guide is provided immediately upon class choice. It is the student's responsibility to make sure they have the study guide.

All students should complete the study guide for their class and return it via email as an attached Word or PDF document (these are

the only accepted formats – no Google docs) before the study guide submission deadline. The study guide will be graded prior to class.

Students will then bring a copy of the study guide with them to class to use in the review time and to ask questions as needed. The study guide is a useful tool in studying for the written test.

Please note that all study guides must have typewritten answers and be submitted by the grading deadline for each class. Failure to comply will result in a deduction of five points from the study guide grade.

Students must attend all class sessions, complete the required assignments, and successfully pass the course exam in order to receive credit for the course. (Final grade– Study Guide, 50% - Exam, 50%)

If a student enrolls in but cannot attend the session, for any reason, the student can apply the unused class fee to any future course within one year of the original absence. Students should advise the ARSOM office if they cannot attend a session. A \$15 fee will be assessed upon use of the credit when a student is enrolling for another class. This fee will not be assessed if the credit is used to pay for the mentoring. Students using credits must request a credit code to use on the registration portal. Contact arsom@araog.org in order to receive a credit code to apply to another month's registration.

Due to the limited amount of classroom time of the ARSOM program, it is imperative that students adjust their personal schedules to ensure that they are able to attend the sessions in their entirety. Students are expected to attend all class sessions for ARSOM courses in their entirety to participate in and receive credit for courses.

However, we all know that emergency situations may arise making it impossible for a student to attend one or both class periods. To clarify the matter of student attendance and absences, the following policies have been developed and implemented.

EMERGENCY ABSENCES

If a student cannot attend a class due to an unforeseen emergency—such as illness, family crisis (injury or death), or church/ministry crisis (injury or death), occurring immediately prior to an ARSOM weekend, **he/she should notify the ARSOM office by phone or in writing as soon as possible.**

If an emergency such as illness, family crisis or church/ministry crisis occurs **during an ARSOM session**, the student is **NOT to leave campus without talking with a member of the ARSOM staff (the instructor is not necessarily a member of the staff. Student should make sure to let a staff member know before leaving)**. The student must complete an extra assignment provided by the ARSOM Director and submit the completed assignment within 30 days of the class date in order to receive credit for the course. If the student fails to submit the required extra assignment by the required deadline, he/she will have to take the course again through either ARSOM or Berean

NON-EMERGENCY ABSENCES

If a student has to miss a portion of an ARSOM class for a non-emergency reason, they may do so ONLY under the following conditions and terms:

- 1. Student must give notice to the ARSOM Director BY EMAIL (cculbreth@araog.org) by Monday prior to class. If student fails to do so, credit will not be given for the course, tuition will be forfeited, and the student must take the course again either through ARSOM or Berean School of the Bible. *Phone notification is not sufficient.***
- 2. The student will receive an email response from the director. This response MUST BE PRINTED OUT AND BROUGHT TO CLASS. Before leaving, the student must give the email copy to the instructor, who will sign it, date it, and make a notation of the time. The instructor will give the form to the director at the end of class.**
- 3. The student must complete an extra assignment provided by the ARSOM Director and submit the completed assignment within 30**

days of the class date in order to receive credit for the course. Failure to submit the extra assignment means the student will have to take the course again through ARSOM or Berean.

Any student who makes a pattern of asking for non-emergency absences, will no longer be granted the privilege of non-emergency absences. Absences should be taken only in extremely rare circumstances.

Class dates are published well in advance to allow students to plan their personal schedules around ARSOM weekends. It is the student's responsibility to plan accordingly. When a student is unable to attend ARSOM, courses may be completed through Berean School of the Bible (www.globaluniversity.edu), the self-study ministry training program of the Assemblies of God. Students may also arrange to attend a School of Ministry in another district. For more information on this option, student can contact the ARSOM office. While this option is certainly a viable option, it is often the most difficult to accomplish, since the distance and time is often a mitigating factor. However, students will find that other district schools are accommodating of students from another School of Ministry.

NOTIFICATIONS - INCLUDING WEATHER RELATED INFORMATION

Each month students enrolled for a school year will receive an emailed newsletter specific to the upcoming class weekend. Students should anticipate these emails and pay close attention to any important announcements. If a student is not receiving emails from ARSOM, it is very important to check with a member the staff to make sure the current email address is on file.

Any ARSOM closures or weather-related issues will be posted on the ARSOM Facebook group, and if possible, sent by e-mail for those who have e-mail addresses on file (all students are to have a valid email address, and advise of any changes in email address). Closure notices

will be posted on the Facebook page and the web site at araog.org and on the district office phone message (501.455.5444).

Special announcements and information will be posted to the ARSOM Facebook group, sent by email, or announced on the araog.org/arsom website.

Students who use Facebook should request to join the Arkansas School of Ministry Facebook group as soon as possible after enrollment.

STANDARDS OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Registration in the Arkansas School of Ministry (ARSOM) requires adherence to basic standards of academic integrity. Any violation of these standards may result in disciplinary action ranging from lowering a grade to dismissal from ARSOM, depending on the severity of the infraction. In addition, a notation of the violation will be placed in the student's permanent file, which is reviewed by the credential committee and by the Presbytery, during the credential processing with the Arkansas District Council of the Assemblies of God.

The following examples represent some basic types of behaviors that are unacceptable. (This is not an exhaustive list.)

- Submitting work done by someone else as your own, including married couples who submit two copies of the same study guide, or friends who share study time and complete one guide but copy it and share for more than one student.
- Copying or paraphrasing someone else's essays, projects, study guides, or other work and submitting it as your own.
- Obtaining or giving an unfair advantage by sharing completed study guides.

ARSOM is a Christian ministry development program serving to equip men and women to fulfill God's calling on their lives. Christian conduct and character are expected among students and faculty and should guide all written and verbal communication and assignments.

Students are expected to complete the required course assignments **by their own efforts. It is essential that each student's work be his or her own endeavor. Students should not combine their study results to make a common line of thought that appears identical on multiple pre-class session study guides.** Study guides that appear to be copies of the work of other students will be brought to the attention of the school's administration and will be investigated to determine if discipline is warranted.

COPYRIGHT NOTICE

All ARSOM materials are the property of Arkansas School of Ministry and **may not be used in part or in their entirety** without the express written permission of the President of ARSOM.

ADMISSION AND REGISTRATION

All persons desiring to take classes through ARSOM must enroll for each school year including students who have previously enrolled in earlier school years. The enrollment application is accessed through the website (www.araog.org/arsom). This is required of both new and returning students one time per school year and is a no-cost online process.

Students who will not reach the age of 18 by the end of the ARSOM school year will only be allowed to take the level 1 courses and cannot do the mentoring internship or proceed into the credentials process. The General Council requires that a person be 18 years of age in order to apply for level 1 credentials. ARSOM must strictly abide by this policy regarding age limits.

All enrollments and class registrations are processed through the online registration portal, a link to which is found on the ARSOM page of the district website. (www.araog.org/arsom)

NO EXCEPTIONS TO REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS, DEADLINES OR PAYMENT METHODS WILL BE MADE.

Students are to download the study guide for their class during the registration process. It is the student's responsibility to download the study guide and complete it prior to the grading deadline, and then submit it in accordance with submission guidelines.

PREPARATION

A **minimum** of 10 hours of preparatory study is required prior to the class session. A basic knowledge of the information covered in the textbook is expected when students arrive on campus. Secure the textbook, register for class, download and the study guide as soon as possible, and prior to published deadlines. The goal is to learn the material, learn from the material, interact with ministry peers and leaders and gain knowledge from the instructor to best prepare for the ministry, or grow in ministry experience. The goal is not to simply do the work, pass the test, and complete the class.

Plan ahead to arrive for class at the designated location, prepared and ready to learn. Classes begin promptly at 9:30 a.m. on ARSOM Saturday. Bring a copy of the study guide for use during the review time, and for additional study prior to the test.

Check in upon arrival at ARSOM.

Arriving late to the classroom causes the student to miss valuable information and causes disruption for the class and the instructor. Students who arrive late and unprepared may be sent home.

COST

Class fee is \$55. This includes lunch. This does NOT include the textbook. All textbooks are the responsibility of the student. Students must make sure they have the correct textbook for the class. Go to www.araog.org/arsom and click the textbook information link for further assistance. The study guide also lists the correct textbook, but it is advised that students secure textbooks well ahead of the class deadline in the event of a backorder. Electronic textbooks are acceptable.

Registration and class fees are non-refundable. Class fee is transferable to another course for up to 1 year with a \$15 fee assessed for enrollment in another class. Contact the ARSOM office for a coupon code.

ORIENTATION REQUIREMENTS

All new level 1 (credential track and lay leader track) students are **required** to attend the credentials orientation held at the beginning of the school year, or level 1 students entering ARSOM during the year are required to attend the second semester orientation. The orientation dates and times will be listed on the ARSOM official schedule on the website and will be communicated through both the Facebook page, and the monthly e-newsletter.

All level 1 credential track students are to attend a mentoring orientation prior to enrolling in the mentoring process. Any credential track student beyond level 1 may attend or should contact the mentoring director if they have questions.

CODES AND RESTRICTIONS

Personal dress sets the tone and attitude of the student. Casual attire is acceptable for classes, however, all students are expected to dress and groom themselves neatly. ALL SHORTS MUST BE NO SHORTER THAN 2" ABOVE THE KNEE. Abbreviated attire, pajama pants, or ripped/torn clothing or leggings not properly covered by a longer top would not be considered appropriate for the classroom.

Students should not attend if running a fever, coughing, or have a virus, or have been exposed to someone with a virus or viral symptoms. Students should maintain good hygiene by hand washing, using sanitizer, and following any other restrictions that may be in place.

The ARSOM campus is a no-smoking/no-vaping campus. Students who smoke or vape are not to do that on campus at any time. Please note that students who use tobacco or vaping products in any form are not eligible to apply for the credentials process. For more information, please contact the district secretary's office.

FORMER INMATES OF PENAL INSTITUTIONS

Anyone who has been in a penal institution shall re-establish himself/herself in society for at least one year prior to the date of application to enroll in ARSOM. The following guidelines will be followed:

No court cases may be pending; Repeat felons may not be admitted; Following a judgment of probation, a student may apply to enroll at ARSOM after a period of one year; Following imprisonment, a one-year period of rehabilitation/re-establishment is required prior to submitting an application for enrollment.

Consideration will be given to waiving the aforementioned stipulations if an individual has successfully completed a spiritual rehabilitation program with Teen Challenge or another faith-based program, and can provide a positive reference from the director.

Extensive character references will be required with any application submitted by a convicted felon. Registered sex offenders will be disqualified for consideration for admission. In addition, persons with felony or misdemeanor convictions involving sexual abuse, such as lewd conduct, sexual battery, sexual exploitation, rape, and statutory rape will be disqualified.

MENTORING (CREDENTIAL TRACK STUDENTS ONLY)

The ARSOM mentoring strategy enables students to confirm God's call, develop the Christ like character, gain the competencies of ethical and effective ministry and develop the personal disciplines essential to successful life and ministry. The strategy uses guided "hands on" ministry experiences, interaction with qualified Mentors, and the exercise of personal spiritual disciplines to accomplish its mission.

Pre-requisites:

Complete at least four (4) ARSOM course at the appropriate level before beginning the mentoring program. Possible completion of courses

through Berean may also be acceptable. Check with the mentoring director. Attend a mentoring orientation (given twice a year through ARSOM)

Mentoring registration is done through the same link as the course registration. Go to www.araog.org/arsom, which will take you to the registration link for mentoring. The mentoring fee is \$55.00. A credit from an unused class may be used to pay for mentoring without the additional \$15 fee being assessed. Contact the ARSOM office for a coupon code.

Mentoring Objectives/Goals:

Exposure to a variety of ministry methods, skills and practices

Develop effective people and conflict resolution skills

Ethical standards of ministry

Fulfill the Assemblies of God General Council mentoring requirements

Minister effectively within the fellowship

Seek “best practice” experiences and exposure to effective ministry systems and structures

Help students develop skills and gifts for maximum effectiveness in ministry

Help students develop the disciplines of effective servant leadership

Mentoring Characteristics/Values:

Student Value: Equip students for effective ministry.

Student Participation: Students actively participate in the design and fulfillment of these standards and objectives.

Cooperative Fellowship: Value ministry within the Assemblies of God in a way that faithfully fulfills the vision of a “voluntary cooperative fellowship”.

Biblical Fidelity: Students develop ministry that is faithful to biblical teaching, values, principles and world view.

Encourage Development: Students value and develop the skills needed to pursue spiritual, personal and professional development throughout their life.

Rewards/Achievements:

As a result of completing this mentoring program the student will achieve the following results:

Meet the Assemblies of God-General Council mentoring requirement for the credential level.

Develop significant relationships and knowledge of resources that will enhance their future ministry through practical learning projects.

Be better equipped for effective, efficient, ethical and God honoring ministry.

Develop a clearer understanding of their personal gifts, abilities and areas needing further development.

Develop personally, professionally, relationally and spiritually toward the high calling of "Christ-likeness" in all they are and do.