

Centre for Christian Studies

Student to Student Welcome Kit

version 1.0 September 2010

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Introductory Statement

Welcome to CCS student life! This kit was designed for students entering their first Theme Year (in the four year diploma program or one year certificate) to help answer some of your questions about CCS student life (e.g. How do we keep in touch? How do I prepare for learning circles?), and to impart some particular information about the how the student body functions together (e.g. What is student governance? What is the travel pool?).

There is a lot of information in these pages! Some of it is ‘helpful’, some of it is a handy ‘reference’, and some of it is ‘essential’ and will directly affect you (financially, if nothing else). We suggest that you start by skimming the whole document to familiarize yourself with its contents and then going back to read it in more detail as you have time and necessity. This kit will surely not answer all of your questions. While the staff at CCS are a great help in providing welcome and orientation, we also hope you will reach out to other students to ask what you don’t find here. It is never too early to make connections with current students, especially if some are in your geographic region. This kit intentionally does not cover academic or program information, as CCS provides these in your theme year and field placement kits and the website.

As you have no doubt already discovered, CCS is a unique program and community, quite unlike your average school or university. Distance learning, its theology and values, and the size and diversity of the student population all contribute to this experience. As we only gather as a learning ‘community’ in person twice a year, there are many ways we organize ourselves to maintain connections throughout the year and make the most of our time together in Winnipeg. This is sometimes tricky, but it is a learning experience in how to build community, to practice hospitality, and to celebrate diversity. As a student community, we covenant with each other. We agree to support each others’ learning - both in the academic program as well as in our community life. Practicing diakonia, we each take on shared tasks as we are able and ready, and together we make decisions and policies that uphold each person’s unique gifts and place in the circle. For some, this is a process of ‘unlearning’ competition and individualism. For some, this is similar to other experiences; in churches, in community organizations, in volunteering or work. For some, this way of organizing ourselves is radically different, and a steep learning curve.

Just as the student body is forever changing, as a reflection of the living body of Christ, so too are we forever learning new ways of being and working together. If you have suggestions and ideas, please raise them; on the listservs, at Student Forum, or informally in conversation with other students. Welcome - the table is set, your place is ready, let us begin!

Blessings on your journey,

The students of CCS

Student Governance

Who is a student / types of students

Students participate in the CCS program in a variety of ways. As you likely know by now, everyone starts with an LDM (Leadership Development Module). Some leave it at that, while others explore the many possibilities from there; one year certificate, full four year diploma, reflection years, further discernment, or a combination of these. Many students take longer than the four years to complete the program - choosing a reflection year, or two, or three, at some point for personal reasons or to complete the external courses.

For the purposes of this book and student governance, the 'student body' is made up of anyone who is currently registered in a theme year, integrating year, or reflection year. While those taking the LDM as a stand-alone program are 'students', they are not considered part of the 'student body' until registered in a year or more long program. This prevents complications with policies and participation in decision-making.

CCS does not have a student government or student council. Instead, the whole student body is responsible for the functioning of the community and individual students take on specific tasks and roles. Some of these tasks are internal (among the students), and some are external (representing the student body to different parts of CCS). We encourage you to consider your gifts and areas you would like to learn about by trying something new. There is not often competition to take on these tasks, and first year students are encouraged to participate fully.

Current internal student committees and roles:

Electronic Communications

- Responsible for moderating the CCS students yahoo website and for collecting student correspondence mailed to CCS.
- 1 student - Two year term

Pastoral Communications

- Responsible for preparing cards to mark significant events in the lives of students and staff, on behalf of the student body.
- 1 student - One year term

Nominations Committee

- Responsible for student nominations and for finding students to fill any outstanding vacancies on committees needing student representation
- Will communicate over e-mail and if possible, during learning circles.
- All members are students. Two must be going into the upcoming theme year.
- Standing committee
- One year term, renewable twice

Current external committees:

Central Council

- Oversight and responsibility for operations of the Centre
- Meets once face to face in March (3 days) plus six conference calls over the course of the year – 2 hours on Thursday evening/afternoon
- 16 members – 5 ACC appointees, 5 UCC appointees, **2 students**, 4 friends
- standing committee
- 3 year appointment – renewable once

Awards Committee

- Chooses scholarship recipients and Companion of the Centre
- Meets 1-2 times a year
- 3 members of which **1 is a student**
- standing committee
- 2 year appointment – renewable twice

Communications Committee

- Responsible for communication strategy and direction (newsletter, brochures, website, promotion projects, etc.)
- Meets every 6-8 weeks, by conference call
- 6 members – **1 student**
- standing committee
- 2 year appointment

Finance Committee

- Responsible for oversight of financial management and policy
- Meets every month in Winnipeg (usually a supper meeting)
- 3 members - treasurer, **1 student** (preferably someone living in Winnipeg but not required)
- standing committee
- 2 year appointment, renewable twice

Development Working Group

- Works with Community Relations Coordinator to develop ways and means to enhance public awareness of CCS and to help raise funds essential for the CCS budget and its financial sustainability
- Accountable to Central Council through Finance Committee
- 3 - 5 members - including **1 student**
- Meets as needed up to 6 times a year by telephone or email
- 2 year term, renewable twice

Program Committee

- Responsible for program overview, policy and implementation (program and curriculum evaluation, admission and appeal procedures, etc.)
- Meets every 8 weeks, usually by conference call

- 4 members – **1 student**
- standing committee
- 2 year appointment – renewable twice

Library Working Group

- Responsible for an overview of the library, its collection and set priorities
- Works with Program staff
- 5 members - **1 student**
- Meets monthly for 2 hours in Winnipeg
- Two year, renewable twice

Development Committee

- Responsible for development strategy and direction (fundraising, nurturer of graduate community, etc.)
- Meets 6-8 times a year, by conference call
- 5 members - **1 student**
- standing committee
- 2 year appointment, renewable twice

Student Forum

At each learning circle, some formal time is designated as Student Forum. Staff do not participate, but all students are expected to be there. It is our time to have discussions and make decisions as a gathered student body. Unfortunately, reflection year and integrating year students are not present, but in some cases decisions are brought back to them for consideration.

Usually there are three main agenda items;

- reports from student representatives to various CCS committees,
- a review of current policies and consideration of others
- a review of current vacancies or end of terms on internal/external committees and elections.

Other agenda items might include student perceptions of the program or staffing structure, brainstorming new ways to reach out to current or prospective students, etc.

Student Forum is co-facilitated by the students using a task-divided team model. By dividing the tasks, more people participate and get experience in the process, and those in roles are also able to speak as themselves without compromising the meeting. Students volunteer to take on the roles of:

- facilitator
- speaker's list keeper
- time keeper
- recorder (minute taker)
- heart monitor (one who takes the emotional pulse of the group and suggests ways to support a safe/r space).

At Student Forum, and whenever the student body makes formal decisions, we do so by consensus. Consensus is a model of decision making that includes the participation of the whole group and strives to value the voice of each participant.

When consensus is facilitated well it can be a very powerful and affirming process. When it is not, it can seem to bog down forever or railroad those who don't agree into a decision they don't want to make. If you have never worked by consensus before, we suggest you take the time to do some reading about it (from one of the websites below), or talk with other students about their experience. Everyone has their own opinions, but like the travel pool, it is a commitment we make together based on a shared valuing of community and collaboration.

<http://www.ic.org/pnp/ocac/>

<http://www.seedsforchange.org.uk/free/consens>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Consensus_decision-making

In our practice, we use the three options of Agree - Block - Stand Aside/Can Live with It.

Community Consultation

The community consultation is also built into the learning circle agenda. However, this time block includes the staff and the agenda is often staff-driven. It is a time to share opinions suggestions and concerns about the program in general, student-staff communication, and community norms.

Student Communication

Because we are scattered across the country, student communication is mostly done through the list serves (Yahoo Group Site) and direct email. It is very important that you are - or become - used to checking your messages on a regular basis (daily or every few days). Sometimes messages require a short turn around time for responses. Most people have listserv messages forwarded to their usual email address rather than having to login to Yahoo Groups to make this easier.

There are multiple list serves that you will be asked to join. You are probably currently on one for the LDM. You will also be asked to join one for your theme year, or if you are take a reflection year, there will be one for that. Each year of those CCS-administrated list serves will change as you change theme years, or go on or off of reflection year. The one list serve you will be on for your entire CCS school life is the “CCSStudents” list serve.

The list serves are there for easy information sharing and discussion. As well as messages, students and staff post files so that everyone on the list may access/reference them throughout the year. The CCS-administrated lists are primarily used by staff to communicate to a subset of students at once, and for those students to discuss theme-specific topics.

The CCSStudents list serve is meant for communication between the whole student body (theme years, reflection years, integrating year). Staff are not on the CCSStudents list serve. Topics might include sharing flight arrival times to Learning Circles so to possibly split cab fare, comments or inquiries into external courses (remember, your staff person has to approve any course before you take it), or sharing information that is important to our student life (policy changes, student representative reports, denomination-specific news).

You will be invited to join the student list serve by the person who has been elected to over see it. Once they have your e-mail address s/he will send you an invite to join. Follow the steps in the invite to access the list serve. You will need a Yahoo account, but can sign up for one while you are signing up for the list serve. Any questions or problems with the list serve should go to the CCSstudents list serve administrator.

Etiquette

The list serve is not meant to be used as MSN messenger, or facebook, or texting conversation, for example. Remember, if you hit ‘reply’ your message will go to all students (and staff) enrolled on that list serve. Ask yourself; who needs to hear my answer? If it is only the sender, then email them directly. When replying with personal information make sure you do not send it to everybody unless you want everybody to see it. Same goes for answering survey questions from the staff people. This also helps cut down on the ‘volume’ of messages that we all need to sift through.

When replying to the list, please ‘delete’ the copy of the last message that is attached at the bottom - we’ve all seen it and it’s more unnecessary text to sift.

Avoid using icons in email if possible. People who access computers with screen readers will not be able to read them.

Student-run Policies

The Travel Pool Policy

Following a March 2009 Central Council decision to rescind the CCS travel pool policy, the students of that theme year discussed the travel pool issue and decided that we would continue participating in a travel pool as in the past (regardless of the involvement of CCS).

A task group discussed the issue in depth and have provided the following text for clarification and for communication to future LDM and theme year students.

RATIONALE for the travel pool:

The student community exemplifies caring for all its members. Our world view usually includes personal fulfillment and individual rights. In our assumptions about human life, we no longer begin with a strong sense of solidarity to others.

The travel pool takes us outside of our cultural norms. It is countercultural and anti-empire. While it is designed to work collectively, it can sometimes work to the detriment of the individual. It is grounded in a radically different viewpoint and it challenges us to develop trust in and commitment to this community model. We recognize that we must trust in each other to honour our commitment to travel as cheaply as possible, given our individual circumstances.

Education for diaconal ministry is unique and is only available in one location. There is an inherent degree of marginalization for diaconal students and for CCS. Without a travel pool, we are in danger of further marginalizing diaconal ministry, especially in terms of geography. We would be increasing the likelihood that students traveling the greatest distances to the Centre (i.e., P.E.I, northern prairies, etc.) may decide to pursue ordination based on economics.

We also recognize that the travel pool can never be 'perfect'. But we as a student body, hereby recommit to the travel pool as it stands. We make this commitment to honour decisions of past student bodies, as well as for the benefit of future diaconal students.

The Details of how it works:

1. Student Travel Pool is the responsibility of the student body. CCS has no direct involvement.
2. Students are expected to arrange for the most economical travel possible, within reason of personal life circumstances. If they choose to use another more expensive option, only the most economical will be credited in the pool. (For example, if someone decides to drive from Saskatoon and that costs \$497 (829x2x.30/km) while air travel Saskatoon/Winnipeg is \$300, they would only get the \$300 credit for the cost of their travel, as in this case a flight would have been more economical).
3. All those attending a gathering (LDM or learning circle) participate in the travel pool for that gathering. Regardless of where they are in the program, their plans to continue, or where they live.
4. One or two folks agree to take on the role of travel pool organizer (TPO) for each gathering, preferably those who like to deal with numbers!

5. Each person advises the TPO what their travel costs were to get to and from the gathering within the first few days - this includes door to door travel such as any costs to/from airports, etc.
6. The TPO adds up all of the individual costs and divides that amount by the number of participants in the travel pool - this is the average amount per person.
7. The TPO then produces a list of everyone participating, with how much they paid for travel and whether they owe money to someone else, or someone else owes them money - so that in the end, each person is paying the same amount for their travel expenses.
8. Before the end of the gathering each person is expected to pay the appropriate amount according to the calculations. Should a student owe money and be unable to pay their share to their designated other student, they may negotiate a timeline with said student and/or contact the CCS Office Administrator/Registrar to discuss bridge financing.

If you would like to know more about the travel pool and its historical roots, a document is posted on the CCSstudents listserv.

The Common Pot

The Common Pot is a silver box containing a small amount of ‘shared money’, that belongs to the student body. It is brought to every learning circle (in both integrating and theme years) and is the collective responsibility of students. The Common Pot was created so that everyone could participate in community activities (such as going out for a group dinner or on a student-initiated field trip). If there’s an activity taking place during your time at the circle and you don’t have the funds to participate, the Common Pot is an option you can use. Those who are able to donate to the Common Pot are encouraged to do so and those who need some help from the Common Pot are encouraged to take money from it. There is no formal record keeping or sign out process; it runs on a discrete honour system.

Please Note: the Common Pot and the Travel Pool are to be kept separate. Travel Pool money you are paying to other students cannot come from the Common Pot and Travel Pool money you receive from other students should not be put into the Common Pot.

Coffee Fund

The Coffee Fund is separate from the Common Pot. It is to pay for hot beverages (coffee, tea, tisane) during Learning Circles. If you drink these as provided, please contribute. If you are on hospitality duty, you may use money from this fund to buy coffee, tea, and supplies (like cream and sugar). If you wish to provide snacks, they are a voluntary contribution, as we don’t really need them and are not expected. If there is coffee money available at the end of circle, we will give it to CCS to pay for the snacks they provide from time to time.

Photography Norms

Please let people know if you planning to take a picture, so they can choose to opt out of being in it. Group photos are the same. Please refrain from taking pictures during worship.

You are reminded that we have agreed in the privacy policy of the school to have photos used in promotional material for the school.

Learning Circle Logistical Information

Meeting spaces

CCS Learning Circles are held at one of a variety of venues around Winnipeg, depending on the size of the learning group and availability of space. The most common venues are:

The Centre for Christian Studies
Woodsworth House
60 Maryland Street
204-783-4490

Or

The Faculty of Theology,
University of Winnipeg,
515 Portage Avenue
204-786-9390

Or

St. Matthew's Anglican Church
641 St. Matthew's Street (corner of Maryland and St. Matthew's)
204-774-1846

Other meeting spaces have included St. Benedict's Retreat & Conference Centre, Stella-North End Community Ministry, Crescent Fort Rouge United Church, etc. Please consult the cover letter of your student info package to find out where your Learning Circle will meet.

Accommodations

You are welcome to make any accommodation arrangements that you wish (friends, hotel, etc.) and are responsible for making your own reservations. If you're unfamiliar with Winnipeg and want a place to start, here are some nearby possibilities. Booth College, The University of Winnipeg Housing office and International Guest house are all aware of the Centre's programs and will try to group you with other CCS students. Booth is the most popular, the Guest House least satisfactory for cleanliness.

William & Catherine Booth College 447 Webb Place Winnipeg, MB R3B 1P2 Phone: (204) 947-6701 Contact: Rochelle Amy Ext. 854 (Hospitality) email: hospitality@boothcollege.ca	\$22.50 plus tax/night <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Salvation Army facility about 5 minute walk from University, 20-25 minute walk from CCS• single bedrooms (double on request)• laundry facilities with purchase of smart card (\$10.00 minimum) (usually shared)• microwave, kettle, fridge/sink on each floor in common room• full kitchen on third floor• CCS students have some dishes for sharing• computer lab, internet and printer access.• gymnasium with team sport equipment.
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<p>University of Winnipeg Office of Housing and Student Life Phone: (204) 786-9900 Fax: (204) 774-5519 Contact: Jennifer Logan or Melanie Unrau email: ehousing@uwinnipeg.ca, l.kelsch@uwinnipeg.ca, jknox@uwinnipeg.ca Contact Liette Kelsch or John-Paul Knox Application forms found online here: http:// uwincampuslife.wordpress.com/apply/ Prices for various buildings: http:// uwincampuslife.wordpress.com/pricing/residence- pricing/</p>	<p>One large building and various houses within about 5 minutes walk from the University, 20 minutes walk from CCS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • private bedroom (most with private bath) shared kitchen & common room. • Linen rental: \$50 or provide own. If you wish to cook, bring your own housewares. • Laundry cards available. • No internet access at any building for non-UW students. Guests can log on as visitors on the main campus only. Instructions can be found here: http:// www.uwinnipeg.ca/index/tsc-wireless-airport
<p>Guest House International 168 Maryland Street Winnipeg, MB R3G 1L3 Phone: (204)772-1272 e-mail: backpackerwpg@hotmail.com website: http://backpackerswinnipeg.com</p>	<p>\$25/night (tax included) for shared room</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 minutes walk from CCS, 20-25 minutes walk from University of Winnipeg • kitchen, games room, AC, TV/VCR/videos, internet access, BBQ.
<p>Holiday Inn Hotel 360 Colony Winnipeg, MB R3B 2P3 Phone: 1 877 660 8550 website: www.holidayinn.com</p>	<p>\$124 plus tax/night</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hotel about 5 minute walk from University, 20-25 minute walk from CCS • single or double bedrooms available • laundry service available • indoor pool and fitness facilities • restaurant

There are many Bed and Breakfast homes in Winnipeg. You can find a list at www.bbcanda.com (a national site, follow the links to Winnipeg).

Estimated walking distances are given above to give you a general idea – however, if you prefer not to walk, there is excellent bus service between Woodsworth House (and the Maryland Street hostel and guest house) and the University.

Transportation in Winnipeg

You will be responsible for getting to your accommodation and to the Learning Circle meeting space on your own.

Winnipeg has an international airport (www.waa.ca). The Greyhound bus terminal is also located at the airport. Taxis are available from the airport (about \$15). The #15 Mountain bus would take you from the airport to the University/Booth College area (or check with the driver about transferring to a #17, #20 or #29 for Maryland Street). The #11 bus runs along Portage Avenue between the University area and Maryland. The #29 runs south down Maryland.

Bus Fare on Winnipeg Transit is \$2.35 cash per trip for adults but tickets and other options are available. Fare and schedule information is available at www.winnipegtransit.com.

A map of the area is enclosed.

Parking

There is some street parking near Woodsworth House, but it is time-limited (and cars parked on Maryland during rush hour will get towed). There is a parking garage adjacent to the University with a daily rate in excess of \$5.00. Very limited street parking is available in the area and it requires regular meter feeding.

Fitness

The YMCA-YWCA offers a monthly pass for \$29.40 (fulltime students) which provides access to the pool, hot tub, weight room, classes and other facilities. You will be required to prove you are a student, preferably with a letter from the CCS. <http://www.ywinnipeg.ca/downtown.html>.

Meals

You are responsible for getting your own meals. There are a number of restaurants and grocery stores in the area. (See partial list below.) Usually CCS students have the opportunity to gather for a shared meal on the last night, as well as occasional other times.

Grocery Stores

- Food Fare - 115 Maryland (at Westminster)
- Food Fare - 905 Portage (between Arlington and Burnell)
- DeLuca's -950 Portage Avenue
- The Bay - Memorial and Portage
- Safeway - Sargent (between Sherbrook and Maryland)
- Giant Tiger - 345 Donald Street (at Ellice)
- Tall Grass Prairie Bread Co. & Deli Inc. - 859 Westminster Ave.
- Organic Planet Worker Co-op, 877 Westminster Ave. (vegan)
- Halal Meats and Specialty Foods, 206 Maryland Ave. (excellent samosas)

Restaurants

Near CCS and the Maryland Street guest house:

- Stella's (*café & bakery*) 116 Sherbrook
- The Nook (*diner*) 43 Sherbrook St. (at Wolseley)
- Wanabees Diner (*breakfast*) 639 Broadway St. (at Langside)
- Bella Vista (*Italian*) 53 Maryland St. (at Wolseley)
- Bistro Dansk (*Danish*) 63 Sherbrook (between Wolseley and Westminster)
- Cousins Deli 55 Sherbrook St. (at Wolseley)
- The Common Ground Café 79 Sherbrook (between Wolseley and Westminster)
(*vegan, vegetarian, & other*)

- Charisma (East India) 83 Sherbrook (between Wolseley and Westminster)
- Fork & Cork (*fondue & other*) 218 Sherbrook (just south of Broadway)
- Champion Restaurant 226 Sherbrook (just south of Broadway)
(*Chinese & Vietnamese*)
- McDonald's 644 Portage (at Sherbrook)
- Tim Horton's 255 Maryland (just south of Portage)

Near the University of Winnipeg and Booth College:

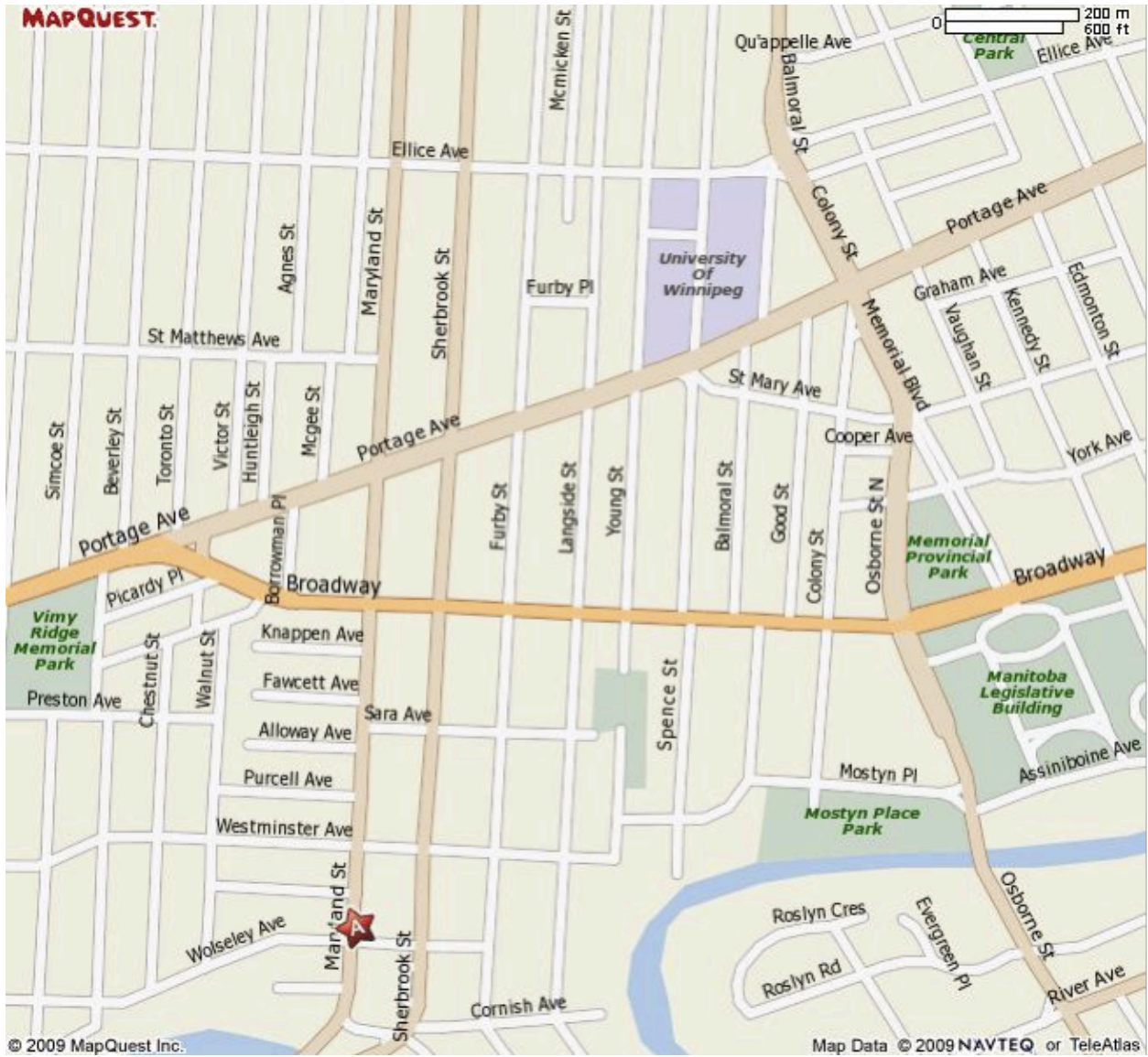
- Dalat Restaurant (*Chinese & Vietnamese*) 661 Ellice Ave.
- Sorrento's (*Italian*) 529 Ellice Ave.
- Homer's (*Greek*) 520 Ellice Ave.
- A Taste of India 510 Sargent Ave.
- Subway 508 Portage Ave.
- Junior's (*burgers, fries*) 558 Portage Ave.
- Tim Horton's Portage Place
- Partners Portage Place
- Food Court Portage Place
- Extreme Pita 491 Portage Ave.

What to Bring

While we won't provide you with a clothing list, there are some non-academic things that have been appreciated by other students:

- extra duotang / small binder / file folders - for daily agendas and handouts
- musical instruments
- favourite worship resources (as you will be asked to lead at least once)
- favourite music / CDs to play
- a study bible
- a 'memory stick' / flash drive
- some blank paper for printing (esp. if staying at Booth College)
- a pre-paid calling card
- slippers for residence or at CCS
- hat and mitts for the walk to school (Winnipeg can be cold, especially in the mornings)
- a sturdy backpack or small wheeled bag for traveling back and forth to class
- some food for the first few meals / non-perishables, made-ahead meals brought frozen
- a travel mug
- lunch box dishes if you plan to bring your lunch daily.

**Map of central Winnipeg
including Centre for Christian Studies (star)
and University of Winnipeg**



Studying and Organizational Suggestions

This is a very demanding program, so these pearls of wisdom are shared from previous students. Everyone is different and unique so these insights and suggestions may not work in every case. Nevertheless, these recommendations are shared with the intention of offering learning and guidance from those who "have gone before." It is also a document in process.

Remember this is a full-time program! Several graduates advised that if not working outside the home is a possibility, ... "go for it." Many recommended that working more than half time is very hard and energy zapping. One person said, don't skimp just because you're only away 2 weeks at a time.

Part of the learning is a theology of "saying no." Limit your outside commitments. Always ask yourself "is what I'm saying yes to a life-giving opportunity." With a theology of abundance we can accept that other opportunities will arise. The demand on students can be quite overwhelming and time consuming. So...

- Make time for recreational & family activities.
- Invest in an "anytime/any day" or "evening/weekend" long distance phone plan.
- Develop trusted networks within the circle.
- Hang a 4-month at a glance wall calendar in a prominent spot. It is a helpful "time management tool" and it also provides a visual image for you and for partner and/or family members of when busy/congested times will be.
- Be patient with yourself, and your loved ones... this is a transformational, more-than-book learning experience not only for yourself but for everyone who loves and supports you.
- Use email, and the list serves, etc. to check in with other students

Before the Learning Circle

Staff Letter

- Read the pre-learning circle letter, noting or marking with highlighter any "to do's" in the letter.
- Know what to bring and how many copies.

Student Led Sessions

- Begin to prepare for your student led session ahead of time
- Start researching your topic.
- Gather resources and watch videos related to the topic.
- Brainstorm ideas for your session - like music, movies, scripture, etc.
- Ask others for input into your topic (learning facilitator, mentor, local committee, etc.)
- For each student led session topic, develop questions that can be re-written as learning goals.

Readings

- The best time to begin to prepare for Learning Circles is 1-2 weeks after returning from last circle. BUT, a reasonable time to begin is 6 weeks before. It is possible to do it in 3 weeks, but only if you don't have much else going on in your life or are an exceptionally fast reader, writer and generally creative individual!

- Do the readings! It is not just a requirement of the program. Your learnings will be deeper and the circle less stressful if the readings are completed before arriving. In a community learning program, if you do not do the readings you are cheating others as well as yourself.
 - Many find it helpful to first prepare the readings with the reading list in front of them.
 - Write the topic in the top corner (in case you lay the article down under your bed and forget about it for 2 weeks, and wonder where it came from when it is re-discovered).
 - Some suggest putting all the readings for one topic in a single, multipage, plastic sleeve (Avery 50-page sleeves are tough. One student re-used the same ones for 3 years without even one tearing!)
 - Check to make sure you have all the readings listed.
 - Plan ahead! It is estimated that completing the readings before the learning circle takes about 80 hours but many students need more time.
 - Make a schedule!
 - One popular technique is to sort your readings into 2 piles: the "still to do" pile and the "done" pile. The visual of one pile getting smaller and the other growing is helpful to many.
 - Another popular system: figure out the number of readings per day that you need to do to be finished before the Learning Circle. That way you'll know when you are getting behind or when you can afford a day off
 - Some simply check off their readings on the reading list as they are completed
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- Consider the possibility of forming an online study group
 - One group divided the reading topics amongst themselves and created a schedule for discussing the topics in an online conference (available through Yahoo). Each person was responsible for preparing summaries for their assigned readings and distributing them to others before the scheduled discussion time. (The discussion was scheduled for the same time each week.) This helped some of the students get through the readings during very busy and stressful times. It worked best when all involved were able to commit to and honour the arranged schedule.
 - A scaled down version with a learning partner is another version
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- Before reading a whole article, focus on the big picture.
 - Read the first and last paragraphs to discern the direction and main arguments of the author.
 - Flip through the pages to see if you can ascertain the structure of the article. Having an outline in mind when you are reading can help maintain focus and attention.
 - After reading an article, make notes on your reading. These notes can be written on the front or back of the article or on a separate piece of paper which you can attach to the article.
 - Note the main point.
 - Summarize the structure of the article.
 - Write down a quote or two that affected you.
 - Indicate your critique and analysis of the author's position.
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- After reading the articles for one whole section, write down what the general "points" were about the topic.

- Suggest questions that remain for you (possible assignment topics!)
- State what do you want to learn as this topic is discussed in the circle.
- If you are a student who requires the readings in an alternate format such as electronic text, Braille or MP3, be sure to connect with the CCS staff as to how you might achieve this. Check with the Financial Aid office at your local college or university as they are aware of grants for students with disabilities which will enable you to purchase the necessary equipment. It might also be helpful to go and talk to the Disability Services office at your local college or university to see what other services are available. Try to connect with other CCS students who required the readings in an alternate format to see what suggestions they have for you.

During the Learning Circle

- Go into the learning circle prepared and rested by doing as much ahead of time as possible.
- Laugh. A lot.
- Be intentional about welcoming, connecting & getting to know students who were not with you at your Leadership Development Module or your previous theme years.
- This is an opportunity to be in ministry by offering hospitality
- This is an opportunity to broaden your perspective and experience
- Be open to view everything that happens in circle time and community living time as 'preparation for ministry'.
- View the circle as a learning lab; a place to test out new ideas, new skills, and stretch beyond your comfort zone.
- Try to be open to a whole new way of being in community. You may be surprised by how much you grow and share during circle.
- Practise self-care. Take every opportunity to get extra sleep during the learning circle. Be conscious of eating well.
- Get some exercise if this is a possibility for you. Try to take a break at sometime each day - get some fresh air.
- Endeavour to live or participate in community outside of "class time." The opportunity to digest and integrate the day's learnings in conversation as you go along can be helpful.
- Know when you simply need time to yourself and take the time you need. It is easy to feel as if you have to participate in everything that goes on in community. This is a good way of practicing setting boundaries.
- Be open to feedback as much as you can. Remember everyone in the circle is a co-learner!
- Keep notes during the Learning Circle - record AHA's, Further Work, as they happen and find some way to make these "leap out" as you flip through your journal, (e.g. stars in the margins, or mark AHA!). It helps with Review of Learnings, assignment ideas, and the Integrating Paper at the end of the year.
- It also helps to keep a section of your journal available for notes on others in your Review of Learning group. Good feedback involves specifics and it is hard to remember all the incidents during an intense learning circle without making notes.

After the Learning Circle

Know that the transition back to life at home after the intensity of a learning circle may be rocky. Here are some things that can help:

- If possible, build in a couple days of "down time" upon returning from learning circles. Avoid booking meetings, appointments, and work for the days immediately following the circle.
- Let colleagues, family, and friends know ahead of time (before you leave) that you will need some transition time when you return.
- Some find that transition is easier if they keep in closer touch with family or friends while away. Others find the circles easier, however, if they don't have much contact with home and could focus just on school for a couple of weeks. Find what works best for you and your significant relationships.
- Be prepared to hear "you are different when you come back." It may scare those who share your life. They may need some reassurance that they are still important and interesting to you, too.
- Ask your mentor, learning facilitator or members of your Local Committee for support as you transition back to being at home. Some students find it helpful to put supports in place before leaving for circle or during the learning circle as things come up for them.

Assignments

- Deadlines serve students well, providing structure and external motivation. Deadlines serve staff well, enabling them to set schedules of work and self-care. Out of an ethic of respect it is hoped that every attempt will be made to adhere to deadlines for assignments and submitting necessary documents.
- Understand that when assignments are sent in late, someone else's workload is affected -both for staff and learning partners.
- Do not request extensions unless absolutely necessary... bottle necking of assignments is very stressful.
- Return documents like the Field Placement learning logs and Review of Learnings forms, on time. It is easier to do it right away and know that you have submitted it. It also saves the CCS staff from having to chase down the paper work.
- Check your student and field kits regularly to check up on deadlines and mark them on your calendar.

External Community

- Take the opportunity to be involved in the diaconal community, when possible.
- Find out if there are organizational meetings for diaconal ministry in your area.
- Check out ecumenical diaconal connections, as listed at the end of this kit.

Learning Partners

- Develop strong and trusting relationships with learning partners.
- Being intentional about nurturing the relationship, and learning to be open with each other provides support beyond simple feedback on assignments. Learning partners can be helpful

when reviewing readings, re-entry at home, when new awakenings start to confuse or upset. Put effort into online or telephone conversations. Nurturing the partnership has longstanding relationship rewards. This relationship has the potential to offer tremendous support and stretching in ministry.

Financing Resources

Going to school is expensive; tuition, travel, accommodations, external courses, etc. - not to mention that it is a full-time program and so can be difficult to balance with paid work. Sometimes it's difficult to ask for money, or to believe that what you are doing is 'worth' asking for - especially when there are so many places with shrinking budgets. Remember that your education does not just benefit you, but contributes to the education of the community - church and society. Recognizing this, there are many organizations and government levels that offer grants, bursaries, and scholarships. In general;

- a grant is money based on an application describing what you are doing and why,
- a bursary is money based on an application describing your financial need,
- a scholarship is money based on an application describing how well you are doing in school.

However, many people use these terms interchangeably, so don't be constrained in your search.

There are also student loans - both from governments and from private corporations like banks and credit unions. Government loans are usually interest-free until you graduate, but may require more paperwork. Also, because CCS is not a degree-granting institution, for some of the provincial loans you may need to be co-registered at the University of Winnipeg or St. Stephens. It may be helpful to check with others in the program from your geographic region.

If you are a candidate for ministry, often your Education and Students Committee or Bishop's desk will have leads on locally available funds. It's worth asking. We have provided a list of the most common places people have sought out educational funding. This is an ever-evolving list and we welcome additions or more detailed information.

Funding Available through CCS

scholarships : <http://www.ccsonline.ca/Resources/Scholarships/scholarships.htm>

bursaries : <http://www.ccsonline.ca/Students/Bursary/bursaries.htm>

Student Loans

- <http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/goc/cslp.shtml>

This website contains information about applying for a Canada Student Loan

- You can borrow from 'yourself', by borrowing from your RESPs or RRSPs, if you have them.

You can borrow ten thousand dollars a year, up to a lifetime amount of twenty thousand dollars.

Clearing Houses

National Educational Association of Disabled Students

Rm. 426, Unicentre, 1125 Colonel By Drive

Carleton University

Ottawa, Ontario, K1S 5B6 Canada

Telephone: 613-380-8065

Toll-Free: 1-877-670-1256

Fax: 613-369-4391

E-mail: info@neads.ca

www.neads.ca

This website has information about financial assistance, accessibility, in-class accommodations, jobs, on-campus groups, and other information relevant to students with disabilities. It is run by students with disabilities and is a good resource for advocacy. The NEADS website also contains information about government grants and funding for students with disabilities.

Information regarding federal and provincial funding programs and grants for students with disabilities can be found at the following website:

<http://www.disabilityawards.ca/>

www.studentawards.com

This website provides information about student awards in the form of bursaries and scholarships. One must fill in a profile to be matched with potential awards.

Other Bursaries:

- Order of the Eastern Star (Eastern Star Training Awards for Religious Leadership -ESTARL), The Order of the Royal Purple, or the Masonic Lodge
 Contact the chapter closest to you for information. Membership not necessary.
- Unions and insurance companies often have bursaries if your family or yourself are a member.
- Women's organizations such as the UCW and ACW. Membership not necessary.
- Conference, Diocese, or Presbytery discretionary funds.
- Many universities have internal bursaries that you may be eligible to receive for external courses. It is always worth asking.

Widening the Diaconal Circle

While there is a Diaconal community at CCS, this community and identity extend far beyond the school. We encourage you to consider making connections with the wider Diakonia and exploring how others live out this calling and how you can be involved.

Association of Anglican Deacons in Canada

<http://www.anglicandeacons.ca/index.html>

Diakonia of the United Church of Canada



<http://www.ducc.ca>

DUCC is an organization of diaconal ministers within The United Church of Canada. Membership is also open to diaconal students, as well as other ministry personnel who understand their work as an expression of the diaconal ministry of Education, Service and Pastoral Care.

It is our hope that the website will be a resource for diaconal ministers, and for all who are seeking information about Diaconal Ministry in the United Church of Canada.

DUCC members are eligible to attend the regular gatherings of both these associations. Those who have participated at this level have found the community building invaluable, especially as it pertains to the feelings of solidarity and hopefulness gained in the experience. One comes away from the gatherings knowing that we are not alone in the work of Diakonia.

Diakonia of the Americas and Caribbean (DOTAC)

<http://www.dotac.diakonia-world.org>

World Federation of Diaconal Associations and Diaconal Communities

(Diakonia World Federation)

<http://www.diakonia-world.org/en/index.shtml>