

**GENERAL CONVENTION OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH 2009  
ARCHIVES' RESEARCH REPORT**

**RESOLUTION NO.:** 2009-A181  
**TITLE:** Amend Canon III.15.2(a)  
**PROPOSER:** General Board of Examining Chaplains  
**COMMITTEE:** Ministry

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**Directly Related:** (attached)

2006-A082 Amend Canons in Title III.[Ministry]  
2006-C036 Convene Task Force to Review the General Ordination Examinations (GOE)  
1997-B006 Request a Study of the General Ordination Exam  
1985-D053 Commend Guidelines for Theological Education for Use and Evaluation

**Indirectly Related:**

1982-B053 Request a Report on the Ordination Exams and Prepare Supplementary Educational Guidelines

*In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions of General Convention for the period 1976 through 2006, selecting "direct" resolutions that have a substantive bearing on the proposed legislation. Committee members who are interested in obtaining copies of "indirectly related" resolutions, legislative history before 1976, or who require other research assistance should contact the Archives at 800-525-9329 before Convention or at Convention in the General Convention Secretariat.*



**Resolution Number:** 2006-A082  
**Title:** Amend Canons in Title III.[Ministry]  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Concurred as Amended  
**Final Text:**

[*Resolved, That Canon III.8.5(h) is amended to read as follows.*]

**Sec. 5. Preparation for Ordination**

**(h) Preparation for ordination shall include training regarding**

- (1) prevention of sexual misconduct.**
- (2) civil requirements for reporting and pastoral opportunities for responding to evidence of abuse.**
- (3) the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church, particularly Title IV thereof.**
- (4) the Church's teaching on racism.**

**Citation:** Canon III.8.5(h) is excerpted from the Final Text of the revision to Canons Title III.5 through III.13. See Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Columbus, 2006* (New York: General Convention, 2007), pp. 583-630.



**Resolution Number:** 2006-C036  
**Title:** Convene Task Force to Review the General Ordination Examinations (GOE)  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Concurred as Amended  
**Final Text:**

*Resolved, That the 75th General Convention request the Standing Commission on Ministry Development (SCMD), in consultation with the Presiding Bishop, to convene a task force to review the purpose of the General Ordination Examinations (GOE), including how the examinations are constructed, administered, evaluated, and scored, with attention to cultural bias and diverse ministry contexts. This task force will also seek to determine whether the examinations and the examination process meet the needs of the church today; and be it further*

*Resolved, That this task force solicit information from the General Board of Examining Chaplains (GBEC), the seminaries, diocesan Commissions on Ministry (COMs), diocesan ordination programs, and the House of Bishops, among other appropriate entities; and be it further*

*Resolved, That this task force report its findings to the Standing Commission on Ministry Development which will report to the 76th General Convention.*

**Citation:** General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Columbus, 2006* (New York: General Convention, 2007), pp. 512-513.



**Resolution Number:** 1997-B006  
**Title:** Request a Study of the General Ordination Exam  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Concurred as Substituted  
**Final Text:**

***Resolved, That the General Board of Examining Chaplains, with information resources such as bishops, seminary deans, Commissions on Ministry, and any other sources it may deem necessary, study and evaluate the timing, function, and purpose of the General Ordination Exams. The General Board of Examining Chaplains shall report its study and evaluation, along with any recommendations and/or canonical changes, to the 73rd General Convention.***

**Citation:** General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Philadelphia, 1997* (New York: General Convention, 1998), p. 272.



**Resolution Number:** 1985-D053  
**Title:** Commend Guidelines for Theological Education for Use and Evaluation  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Concurred As Submitted  
**Final Text:**

*Resolved*, the House of Deputies concurring, **That this 68th General Convention receive the Guidelines for Theological Education prepared by the General Board of Examining Chaplains with the assistance of an Advisory Committee;** and be it further

*Resolved*, **That these Guidelines be commended to this Church, particularly its bishops, theological seminaries, and other programs of education and Commissions on Ministry, for their use and evaluation during the next triennium;** and be it further

*Resolved*, **That the Board for Theological Education be requested to develop the means whereby responses to these Guidelines may be received, collated, and shared with the General Board of Examining Chaplains, whose responsibility it will be to revise the Guidelines and submit them to the 69th General Convention of this Church for approval.**

**Citation:** General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Anaheim, 1985* (New York: General Convention, 1986), p. 603.

TOPIC/TITLE: Canons: Amend Canon III.15.2(a)  
 PROPOSER: General Board of Examining Chaplains  
 C&C PAGE: 116  
 BB PAGE: 755

1 *Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That Canon III.15.2 (a) is hereby amended to  
 2 read as follows:  
 3 **Sec. 2(a)** The General Board of Examining Chaplains, with professional assistance, shall  
 4 prepare at least annually a General Ordination Examination covering the subject matter  
 5 set forth in Canon III.8.5 (g) ~~and (h)~~, and shall conduct, administer and evaluate it in  
 6 respect to those Candidates for Holy Orders who have been identified to the Board by  
 7 their several Bishops.  
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EXPLANATION:  
 Canon III.8.5 (g) identifies the seven academic areas proficiency in which is considered necessary for ordination. The General Ordination Examination assesses proficiency in those areas through a half-day essay question on each taken over a week's time. Canon III.8.5 (h) identifies four policy and technical areas (prevention of sexual misconduct, civil and church requirements for responding to possible abuse, the Constitution and Canons, especially the discipline canons, and the church's teaching on racism). These four areas do not lend themselves to assessment by essay exams. The civil and diocesan reporting requirements are subject to sufficient variation by jurisdiction that a national examination would be difficult to craft. Seminaries and dioceses are already providing and requiring training in these areas. It appears more appropriate to assess the individual candidate's understanding of these areas at the local level through other assessment tools than a written exam. In addition, adding four more questions would (1) unreasonably lengthen the current testing period; (2) require additional board members with different expertise than is currently provided for in the Canons; and (3) require more readers or a longer reading period to evaluate the results, thus increasing expenses. The General Board of Examining Chaplains therefore recommends deletion of this cross-reference from its canonical mandate.