

Christian Leadership in a Multifaith World Curriculum Outline **Designed by IFYC & CCCU**

Overview

The *Christian Leadership in a Multifaith World Curriculum* explores the Christian foundation for interfaith engagement, builds students' religious literacy, and equips students to lead bridge-building activities in their communities. The curriculum is designed by CCCU and IFYC in partnership with Bethel University (MN) faculty Marion Larson, Amy Poppinga, and Sara Shady.

Overall Learning Outcomes

As a result of participating in the curriculum, students will:

- increase their understanding of the Christian theological foundation for interfaith engagement
- deepen their own religious or philosophical commitments
- be able to articulate the importance of civic religious pluralism
- increase their religious literacy
- make connections between interfaith engagement and historical movements for racial equality
- implement one bridge-building project

Introduction to Modules and Activities

The curriculum is made up of three modules:

- (1) The Christian Foundation for Interfaith Bridge-building,
- (2) Religious Literacy, and
- (3) Interfaith Cooperation and Civil Rights.

Each module includes between 6-8 activities. Each activity includes the following sections:

- Overview—A brief description of the activity.
- Learning Outcomes—What students will learn as a result of the activity.
- External Materials—Links to articles, book excerpts, audio, or video that students will engage through the activity.
- Activity Content—Framing comments or a set of ideas to share with students.
- Student Assignment Options—Suggestions for assignments instructors could give students in order to engage the content.
- Notes for Instructors—Specific notes for implementation from the curriculum designers.
- Going Deeper—Additional content if you would like to engage your students in deeper learning.

There is also a *Taking Action* activity at the conclusion of the curriculum designed to guide instructors and students as they consider ways to put their new learning into action to build bridges across diverse groups in their communities.

Modules and Activities

Module 1: Christian Foundation for Interfaith Bridge-Building

The first module introduces key concepts of interfaith cooperation, explores the Christian foundation for engaging religious diversity through a look at scripture, prompts students to begin thinking about their own faith story, and tackles questions that arise for Christians when considering how to approach religious diversity. These activities are a great place to start when introducing students to interfaith cooperation.

1.1 Introduction to Interfaith Cooperation

This activity will introduce students to key concepts of 'interfaith cooperation' (including what it is and what it isn't) and showcase concrete examples of how Christians have engaged in interfaith action.

1.2 Virtues for Engaging Religious Diversity as a Christian

In this activity students will be introduced to three key virtues that help Christians constructively navigate interfaith engagement in a manner that is consistent with their faith commitments. Students will have the opportunity to reflect on the meaning of these virtues and apply them to a real-life situation.

1.3 A Fresh Look at I Corinthians 13

In this activity students will read and analyze 1 Corinthians 13 through the lens of loving someone who orients around religion differently. Key focus is given to concepts like love, truth, faith, and hope.

1.4 A 21st Century Good Samaritan

In this activity students will revisit the Parable of the Good Samaritan, seeking to draw lessons for interfaith engagement from this familiar story.

1.5 Exploring a Biblical Foundation for Interfaith Engagement

In this activity students will explore theological and biblical reasons for Christian participation in interfaith cooperation focusing on themes of hospitality and love.

1.6 "But What About...?": Big Questions That Arise in Interfaith Engagement

In this activity students will reflect on key questions that arise when Christians engage in interfaith cooperation activities.

1.7 Stories of Interfaith Engagement, Part 1

In this activity students will encounter different stories of how people from various faith traditions connect their faith and vocation. Students will begin to write their own story of how interfaith engagement might help them serve others in their future vocation.

Module 2: Religious Literacy

Knowing basic information about diverse religious traditions is a key element to becoming an educated person, a global citizen, and a contributor to our religiously diverse democracy. IFYC defines interfaith cooperation as “respect for religious identity,” “mutually inspiring relationships across religious communities,” and “common action for the common good.”¹ In order to respect someone from another tradition and form a meaningful relationship with them, it’s important to know about their practices and beliefs. The activities in module two introduce the concept of “religious literacy” and offer students the opportunity to explore diverse religious practices and develop an approach to religious literacy that depends on asking good questions and learning to truly listen. Throughout the module, students will be reintroduced to the key virtues of *appreciative knowledge*, *narrative imagination*, and *reflective commitment* from Activity 1.2.

2.1 Introduction to Religious Literacy

In this activity students will be introduced to the concept of religious literacy. Students will learn why it is essential as Christians to develop an understanding of other religious beliefs and practices. Students will also come to understand that religious literacy doesn’t necessarily mean mastering content, but rather learning to ask the right questions and find good answers.

2.2 Seeing the Religious Diversity Around You

In this activity students will broaden their view of religious diversity in the US and begin thinking about important questions to ask when developing religious literacy.

2.3 Walking In Another’s Shoes

In this activity students will choose from two or more selected films to expand their knowledge of religious experience and practices in the US and continue to engage in empathetic thinking towards religious identities outside of their own.

¹ “What is Interfaith Cooperation?” <https://www.ifyc.org/interfaith>

2.4 [Observing Religion Through Practice](#)

In this activity students will explore a set of specific practices and expressions of belief from various religious traditions.

2.5 [Stories of Interfaith Engagement, Part 2](#)

In this activity students will encounter stories of how people from various faith traditions connect their faith and vocation. Students will reflect on what they can learn about different religious practices through personal stories.

2.6 [Sacred Spaces](#)

In this activity students will take virtual visits to sacred spaces of their choosing and reflect on differences and similarities to their own.

Module 3: Interfaith Cooperation and Civil Rights

Today we are in the midst of a national reckoning with the longstanding problem of racial inequity in our country. This module will explore the connections between interfaith cooperation and the historic movement for civil rights in the U.S. context. The activities in the module ask participants to reflect on the role they wish to play in this work, include an in-depth look at the interfaith connections behind the Selma Voting Rights Campaign, and invite participants to act on the intersections between religion and race in contemporary America. The curriculum was developed in partnership with IFYC alumna and [Faith Matters Network](#) Founder and President, Rev. Jennifer Bailey, and features a video of her discussing the intersection of interfaith cooperation and racial equity in her own life.

(Stay tuned—this module is still in development.)

Closing Activity: [Taking Action](#)

This activity is designed to guide instructors and students as they consider ways to put their new learning into action to build bridges across diverse groups in their communities.