

Higher Education Professionals are not Prepared to Support Students'
Growth and Exploration of Religion and Worldviews

by
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April 2023

Master's Project
Submitted to the College of Education
and Community Innovation
At Grand Valley State University
In partial fulfillment of the
Degree of Master of Education



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Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Dr. Laila McCloud for her guidance throughout my entire time as a student at Grand Valley State University. Not only did her encouragement and advice help fully develop this project, but Dr. McCloud helped me to persevere through my transition into the program. Thank you, Dr. McCloud, for getting me to this point.

Abstract

Religion and worldview development is often ignored within higher education. Whether inside of the classroom or in initiatives towards diversity, equity, and inclusion, religions and worldviews are kept out. This project looks at why this is the case and uses the Interfaith Triangle as a theoretical framework to provide a possible solution to this problem. This project was completed in three chapters. The first provides an introduction into why religion and worldview identity development are left out of higher education and how this project will address the issue. The second is a literature review that uses the Interfaith Triangle to address the reasons for the lack of religion and worldview development in higher education. The third is a solution created by me and designed from the literature. This solution is a six-week professional development course for student affairs professionals. Each week of the course is centered around one of the themes that was found among the literature. The professionals taking the course will engage in discussions, reflections, case studies, and other activities to understand how and why to engage students in religion and worldview identity development. The literature shows how religion and worldview identity development is feared within higher education due to many misconceptions by faculty and staff. This project provides a course that educates professionals away from those misconceptions and provides concrete takeaways that can be applied to one's current practice.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments2

Abstract.....3

Table of Contents.....4

Chapter One: Introduction

 Problem Statement.....6

 Importance and Rationale of Project.....6

 Background of the Project.....7

 Statement of Purpose.....9

 Objectives of the Project.....9

 Definition of Terms.....10

 Scope of Project.....12

Chapter Two: Literature Review

 Introduction.....14

 Theory/Rationale.....14

 History of Religion in Higher Education.....15

 Faculty and Staff Perspective.....17

 Student Perspective.....18

 Social Justice.....20

 Christian Privilege and Secular Privilege.....21

 Summary.....23

 Conclusion.....25

Chapter Three: Project Description

 Introduction.....27

 Project Components.....27

Project Evaluation.....	30
Project Conclusions.....	30
Plans for Implementation.....	32
Conclusion.....	33
References.....	34
Appendixes	
Appendix A-The Interfaith Triangle.....	38
Appendix B-Timeline for the Course.....	39
Appendix C-Week One Materials.....	40
Appendix D-Week Two Materials.....	42
Appendix E-Week Three Materials.....	44
Appendix F-Week Four Materials.....	46
Appendix G-Week Five Materials.....	50
Appendix H-Week Six Materials.....	52
Appendix I-Course Pre-Test.....	54
Appendix J- Course Post-Test.....	56

Chapter 1: Introduction

Problem Statement

Higher education professionals are not prepared to support students in the exploration of their religion and worldview identity. Both researchers and practitioners put forth that the religious identities of college students are under examined and students are afforded little opportunity to explore questions from a spiritual view (Durant, 2017). Student affairs professionals, faculty, and administrators often view religion as a taboo topic that does not belong in a university setting. This confusion and negligence not only impacts students who are searching for and grappling with religious and spiritual matters on campus, but the entire campus community. Without a focus on religious and worldview diversity, students lack opportunities to grow in acceptance of religions and worldviews that differ from their own (Durant, 2017).

Importance and Rationale of the Project

Efforts to improve diversity and inclusion of higher education have always been vital to the work of student affairs professionals (Patel & Giess, 2016). However, Shaheen and colleagues (2021) argue that “religious diversity was never assumed to be a part of diversity efforts in general” (p. 342). The lack of attention to religious diversity does not just prevent students from being able to explore and discover different religions and worldviews. The lack of consideration of religion in diversity discussions has prevented those who actively practice a religion, especially a non-Christian religion, from benefiting from the advancements in issues of identity and social justice (Edwards, 2018) and forces these same students to advocate for themselves without much support (Hoffman & Mitchell, 2016).

There are not only challenges of religion and worldview acceptance on campuses, but these gaps will likely reach into students’ professional lives. According to Rockenbach et al

(2020), “Americans encounter religious diversity at work far more frequently than in other facets of their lives” (p. 5). Students must be prepared to work with others that do not think like them. This goes beyond having different solutions to the same problem. Working with someone with a different religion or worldview may mean that each person views the problem in a totally different, and potentially oppositional way. They could also each view the organization itself as serving two different purposes. These differences between religions and worldviews can make learning how to respect and better understand these differences more difficult. It is important for higher education professionals to intentionally provide students with opportunities to have these discussions to learn how to question respectfully, take criticism, and become more knowledgeable of others beliefs.

Background of the Project

The origins of religious diversity dates back to the very founding of the United States and the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment. Carlson (2021) states,

The First Amendment's establishment clause prohibits the government from making any law “respecting an establishment of religion.” This clause not only forbids the government from establishing an official religion, but also prohibits government actions that unduly favor one religion over another. It also prohibits the government from unduly preferring religion over non-religion, or non-religion over religion (para 1).

The clause has been misinterpreted when it comes to higher education and society in general. People assume that the establishment clause prohibits any manifestation of religion from public education (Shaheen et al., 2021) and the public sector as a whole (Edwards, 2018). This assumption has created a fear in students (Rockenbach et al., 2020; Shaheen et al., 2021), faculty (Durant, 2017), and staff (Durant, 2017; Nielsen & Small, 2019) to have these conversations.

Thus, as stated above, religion and worldview diversity has often been left out of the conversation about diversity (Shaheen et al., 2021).

Religion has also always been a part of higher education in the United States. Jacobsen and Jacobsen (2012) explain the history of religion in higher education. They show how Protestantism was at the center of many of the U.S.'s first higher education institutions. The curriculum was based on preparing Protestant ministers and preachers and students of other religions and worldviews, such as Native Americans, Quakers, Jews, and Catholics, were "abused" (p. 17). Thus, religion and worldview diversity from the beginning of U.S higher education institutions was ignored and actively punished at first. This paper will show that this outward discrimination may not be as rampant, but that this intolerance toward religion and worldview diversity is still not being addressed by current higher education professionals.

Interfaith America is a leading organization addressing this issue and bringing religion and worldview diversity into many different areas, including higher education. They provide resources, research, training, and connections to people and professionals looking to engage their communities in interfaith dialogue and exploration (Interfaith America, 2023). Interfaith America recently released the IDEALS longitudinal study (Rockenbach et al, 2020) exploring whether students are being prepared to take part in a religiously diverse society. Along with this study, Interfaith America has a plethora of research exploring this topic. Using this research, Interfaith America provides this project with the current state that higher education is in regarding religion and worldview engagement and shows the impact that higher education professionals can have by engaging students in religion and worldview development. This organization also provides a theoretical framework called the Interfaith Triangle that will guide this project.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this project is to highlight the importance of religion and worldview diversity in higher education and to provide a solution for how student affairs professionals can better incorporate this vital diversity work into their practice. This will be done by developing a six week professional development course for student affairs professionals.

This project is unique as its purpose is to provide a solution specifically for student affairs professionals. While the literature discussed could benefit those in other fields, the project will focus on a solution that will benefit the particular profession that is higher education. In addition, the term higher education professionals is used throughout the paper as the literature addresses all those who work at a higher education institution, both faculty and staff. While faculty could benefit from this professional development course, it was created by an emerging student affairs professional for student affairs professionals. So the course may not fully engage faculty since student affairs professionals and faculty interact with students in different ways. Thus, the audience is student affairs professionals, and those aspiring to become professionals but will be digestible for any professional looking to learn more about what they can do to promote religion and worldview diversity.

Objectives of the Project

There are three objectives of this project. The first is to provide a strong rationale for the importance of religion and worldview diversity. While this will be done throughout the whole paper, the bulk of this work will be done in this first chapter. After this chapter, readers should have a good understanding of how religion and worldview diversity impact higher education and will be ready to explore some of the literature on the topic as well as the specifics of the six week professional development course.

The second objective is to expose the reader to some of the literature on the topic of religion and worldview diversity in higher education. While research has been done on this topic, there are still many gaps that are under examined when it comes to students' religious identities (Durant, 2017). This objective will provide the reader with knowledge of the current work that has been done and will show the steps that need to be taken for student affairs professionals to gain a better understanding of students' religion and worldview identities.

The third objective is to provide practical takeaways that student affairs professionals can apply to their practice. The six week professional development course will provide professionals with these takeaways. Those participating in the course will learn some of the practical solutions that the literature provides. They will also engage in case studies and utilize the Interfaith Triangle to best respond to the situations involved in the case study. Thus, student affairs professionals will be able to use the theoretical framework in real life practice. Finally, those in the course will learn from each other through discussions with those in different functional areas. Everyone will be able to see how the Interfaith Triangle and practical solutions can be applied to many different areas of higher education.

Definition of Terms

There are many terms that have already been used throughout this first chapter that require a definition. When it comes to religion, worldviews, spirituality, and interfaith, there can be different ways that one views these terms. The definitions the author will be using and has used are as follows:

- **Religion:** “Religion refers to the degree to which individuals adhere to the prescribed beliefs and practices of an organized religion or a Higher Power” (Constantine et al., 2006, p. 228)

- **Spirituality:** “Spirituality refers to individuals' belief in the sacred nature of life in all of its forms and the manifestation of this belief in a quest for goodness and interconnectedness with other persons and things” (Constantine, et al., 2006, p. 228)
- **Worldview:** “A ‘worldview’ is an individual’s primary frame of reference or life philosophy and may reflect a particular religious faith or may be non-religious in nature (as is the case for those identifying as atheist, agnostic, and/or “spiritual, but not religious”)” (Bryant, 2011, p. 441).
- **Interfaith:** “Interfaith” reflects the “coming together of people who orient around religion differently.” Exchanges that are truly interfaith provoke and challenge, disrupt stereotypes and misinformation, foster empathy, and provide an avenue toward bridge-building and productive relationships (Mayhew & Rockenbach, 2021, p. 3).

Along with these terms, this project will be centered around a theory that Rockenbach et al (2016) use to look at how students engage with interfaith experiences. The Interfaith Triangle is a framework that says knowledge, attitudes, and relationships are three important pillars to create effective interfaith dialogue. Knowledge entails learning more about different religions and worldviews in regards to specific practices, tenets, holidays, and others along these lines. Attitudes means providing experiences that change students to have more positive outlooks of differing religions and worldviews. Finally, relationships bring up that effective interfaith dialogue is more than just providing knowledge or a change in attitude, but that students need to connect with others of differing religions and worldviews to truly change their perspectives. Throughout the literature review, this theory will be applied to better synthesize how higher education professionals are succeeding and failing when it comes to engaging students in

interfaith experiences.

Scope of the Project

The scope of this project is that it will take six weeks to complete the professional development course. However, if this course were to be repeated, this project would need to be slightly expanded. As with all programs, it is important to assess and modify the program to continually update and improve it. So while the scope of this project is a six week course, a full application would also see an additional month added after the course is over to review the assessments and make changes.

The project is intended for student affairs professionals. This was mentioned in a previous section, so expanding on this, it is intended for student affairs professionals at non-religiously affiliated institutions. While student affairs professionals at religiously affiliated institutions may benefit from engaging students better in religion and worldview diversity, these professionals may do so differently based on the fact that their institution is based upon a certain religious belief. This project does not take into consideration the unique challenges that this would pose.

Another piece to understand the scope of the project is to understand who I (Matt) am. I am white, cisgender, man, Catholic, a graduate student, and able-bodied. These identities afford the author a lot of power and privilege and his Catholic identity impacts the importance that he feels for this project. From these, the author may be more drawn to research that promotes the exploration of religion in higher education, especially if the focus is on Christian religion. The author is aware of these biases and has made an effort to bring the opinions and thoughts of others from the literature to critically assess their viewpoint and opinion. This is another reason why it is important to bring more people into the conversation about religion and worldview

diversity in higher education. One's religion and worldview can be an extremely personal and powerful aspect of their lives. This project allows me to challenge themselves and grow in their acceptance and knowledge of the experiences of those with differing religions and worldviews in higher education. Through this project, I will be providing this opportunity of challenge and growth to others.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Higher education institutions choose to ignore the development of students' religious identities. Unlike other aspects of student diversity, religious identity is not often examined nor are there opportunities meant to specifically engage students in this part of their identity (Durant, 2017). This chapter will explore some of the literature about this topic of students' religious identities. The first section will describe the Interfaith Triangle (Rockenbach et al, 2016) that serves as the theoretical framework for this project. The sections that follow will be broken down into themes that were found throughout the literature. The Interfaith Triangle is made up of three principles of relationships, knowledge, and attitudes. Through each section, I will discuss how the particular theme corresponds to one or more of these principles.

The first section will look into the history of religion in U.S. higher education that goes beyond what was talked about in chapter one. With a good understanding of the theory and history, the next sections look at the bulk of the literature. As this project is aimed at higher education professionals, literature discussing the perspectives of faculty and staff is explored first followed by the student perspective. The final sections then analyze how the faculty, staff, and student perspectives hinder the progress of social justice for the religion and worldview identities of students.

Theory

The theoretical framework that is integral to this project is the Interfaith Triangle (Rockenbach et al, 2016; see Appendix A). This framework is used in the Interfaith Youth Core's part II of their interfaith engagement and student attitudes study (Rockenbach et al, 2016). The Interfaith Triangle shows that interfaith dialogue is based on the principles of relationships,

knowledge, and attitudes. Each of these principles correspond with ways of increasing positive views of differing religions and worldviews. As students develop relationships with, learn more about, and gain appreciative attitudes about different religions and worldviews and about worldview development in general, these will all lead to positive regard for those differences. These principles are often in the literature talking about the importance and benefits of religion and worldview development. Whether explicit or not, one can see how relationships, knowledge, and attitudes promote religion and worldview development through this part of the literature. However, these principles are lacking in the literature that discuss the problems with current initiatives of religion and worldview engagement. I will discuss further how relationships, knowledge, and attitudes can address the issues that this part of the literature proposes.

History of Religion in Higher Education

The history of higher education in the United States cannot be separated from the history of religion in the United States. Jacobsen and Jacobsen (2012) break down this history well in their chapter “The History of Religion in Higher Education.” Protestantism dominated the early United States even before the Revolution. Thus, many of the first higher education institutions were created based upon Protestant ideals and worldviews. Oftentimes, this was at the discrimination of other religions, even those of other Christian denominations.

This centrality of Protestantism started to change in the 20th century. Religion began to become privatized in education. This came about through many different factors. The first is that there was a divide within Protestantism between the Fundamentalists and Modernists in the 1920s (Jacobsen & Jacobsen, 2012). Many Fundamentalists did not agree with the direction colleges were going. As colleges continued to grow, the new ideal that began to dominate was science and research. Religion was no longer seen as a classroom activity. Scholarship was to be

done in class and provided by the institution, and religion was still seen as an important part of students' lives but was now the responsibility of the students themselves and religious communities outside of the institution. Thus, many Fundamentalists created their own private institutions to keep religion in their classrooms.

Another factor is the adoption of the German university model. This is where the push for science and research that the Fundamentalists disagreed with came from. While the German university model did not look to get rid of religion in the classroom, the focus on research and new scientific discoveries made it difficult for religion to fit in (Jacobsen & Jacobsen, 2012). Thus, religion was still seen as an important part of students' lives but was now the responsibility of the students themselves and religious communities outside of the institution.

Then, after World War II and throughout the rest of the 20th century, there was a huge boom in students attending higher education institutions. This huge influx of students meant that there were many different religions and worldviews amongst students (Jacobsen & Jacobsen, 2012). Many colleges then further pushed specific religious practices off of campus to ensure that there would be no grievances among students of a differing religion or worldview.

Now, there has been another shift to a pluriform view of religion and education. This shift comes from two main aspects. The first is the ever diversifying student population. As more and more students gain access to higher education, there is a growing variety of students that are attending college, especially when it comes to religions and worldviews. The second factor is that students view their religious identity as very important and keeping this identity in these private settings is not enough. Jacobsen and Jacobsen (2012) conclude their chapter with this section and paint a picture that higher education is returning to a place where ideas of religion, worldviews, ethics, and morals are freely and openly discussed in classrooms and are a regular

part of students' education experience. However, much of the literature out there counteracts this.

Faculty and Staff Perspective

The attitudes principle of the Interfaith Triangle (Rockenbach et al, 2016) relates most to the faculty and staff perspective of religion and worldview engagement in higher education. The prevailing attitude is that religions and worldviews are something to be avoided. If students want to engage in religion or worldview exploration, then faculty and staff should direct students to the privatized organizations either within or outside of the institution. This is an important part that needs to change. While these conversations may be difficult, faculty and staff have always risen to the challenge to lead conversations on other aspects of diversity, equity, and inclusion (Patel & Giess, 2016). These conversations will also lead to more authentic interactions among faculty, staff, and students. One's religion and worldview is often inseparable from their core self (Mayhew & Rockenbach, 2021), so incorporating these ideas into learning opportunities allows faculty and staff to engage with students' whole selves (Small, 2015). The attitude should be that religion and worldview development is another piece that professionals need to be prepared to help students navigate through.

The attitudes of many professionals are still that they must continue to distance themselves from religion (Nielsen & Small, 2019). First looking at the faculty, this attitude often comes from a fear to bring religion and worldview discussions into the classroom. Faculty fear that these conversations can be seen as a push to indoctrination especially as faculty do not feel prepared to facilitate a discussion about religion (Durant, 2017). This lack of preparation may come from the lack of understanding around what the goal of interfaith dialogue is (Shaheen et al, 2021). This, perhaps obviously, is a misconception on the idea of interfaith dialogue. These

conversations are not meant to push students to all believe the same things but where students can acknowledge disagreements while seeking to understand more what these other beliefs are and how they can all come to some common action (Correia-Harker et al, 2019).

Staff also share in this attitude of distancing themselves from religion (Nielsen & Small, 2019). However, for staff, this attitude comes from the fact that the student affairs profession has been built upon a secular worldview (Glanzer, 2022). Secular psychology is the basis that many developmental frameworks are derived from in student affairs (Glanzer, 2022). So while there is a greater focus for student affairs professionals to engage students in conversations over difference, religion is often missing from the frameworks used to facilitate these conversations. Some student affairs professionals also have the same fear that faculty have when it comes to trying to engage students about religious topics (Durant, 2017).

Student Perspective

Regardless of the religion or worldview that students are entering into college with, students are expecting their college experiences to engage them when it comes to religious diversity and interfaith experiences (Correia-Harker et al, 2019; Mayhew et al, 2016). The original theories of religious identity development point to the college years as a time where students may begin to reevaluate the beliefs that have mainly come from their families (Siner, 2016). Students still need help with this even though they are ready and willing to engage with others of different religions and worldviews. Similar to faculty and staff, students feel they lack the skills to productively interact with others of differing worldviews (Rockenbach et al, 2020).

Higher education professionals' response to these student needs impacts how the student perspective changes throughout their college career. If higher education professionals provide students opportunities to engage in religion and worldview development, there are many

benefits. First is that students' religion and worldview beliefs are highly intersectional with their core identities (Mayhew & Rockenbach, 2021). Not only would students feel that their identity is being validated (Karlin-Neumann & Sanders, 2013), but these experiences impact their perspectives of others too. Students do not just gain a better understanding or certainty of their own worldview and identity, but they also gain an appreciation and respect for religions and worldviews that differ from their own (Shaheen et al, 2021). When providing these opportunities, higher education professionals need to be intentional about the ways they implement religion and worldview interactions. A later section will go through the best practices from the literature.

With higher education professionals avoiding religion and worldview engagement, students will lose out on more than just the benefits described above. Students may need to have separate public and private spiritual personas to navigate an institution that tries to keep religion separate (Durant, 2017). They will “pay a price in psychological wholeness” (Durant, 2017, p. 139) trying to balance their religious worldview. Not only that, but society is religiously diverse. Religious diversity is becoming a normal part of people's lives, especially in the workplace (Rockenbach et al, 2020). Institutions that do not provide these opportunities are not preparing students to engage with this part of our world (Patel & Giess, 2016).

The principle of the Interfaith Triangle (Rockenbach et al, 2016) that relates most to the student perspective is relationships. The greatest impact of religion and worldview engagement does not come from becoming more knowledgeable or a change in attitude about religions and worldviews. The commonality between these many experiences from the literature is that relationships create these changed perspectives. Interacting with and learning from other students is how students grow in knowledge and appreciation. Relationships will be integral to the solution that this project puts forth in helping student affairs professionals engage students in

religion and worldview opportunities.

Social Justice

A very important aspect of the importance of religion and worldview engagement is the role that it plays for social justice. Student affairs professionals have always fought against the discrimination that many identities experience in our society (Patel & Giess, 2016), but despite these advances, there has been little headway in the advancement of religious identity development and the fight against religious oppression (Edwards, 2018). Religious discrimination is seen on campus especially through spiritual microaggressions. Students use Jew as a derogatory term, students crossing streets or avoiding sitting next to Muslim students, students wearing a shirt saying “Recovering Catholic” are just some examples (Hodge, 2019). Buddhists, Hindus, and students of other minority religions more often feel less supported on campus (Rockenbach et al, 2020). Worldview majority students often have less appreciative attitudes towards Muslim and atheist students while worldview minority students often have less appreciative attitudes toward Evangelical Christian students (Rockenbach et al, 2016).

The conversations around religions and worldviews that are happening on campus are also not always beneficial for students. These conversations are often informal which means they are often dominated by the lack of civility that occurs within society’s public discourse (Bethel, 2022) that is often exacerbated by technology’s impact on communication (Hodge & Gebler-Wolfe, 2022). Students also have trouble navigating their biases towards specific religions and worldviews even though the student’s perspective is one of openness to engaging in religion and worldview differences (Mayhew, 2016).

Even with these problems, there are still those who are advocating for change on campus. Again, students want to engage in religion and worldview differences. However, the students that

end up fighting against religious discrimination are often the students whose beliefs are facing the discrimination (Hoffman & Mitchell, 2016). On top of already feeling less supported on their campus, these students are trying to fight an uphill battle while higher education professionals try to distance themselves from the impact these students are trying to make. In order to make the change that these students are fighting for, multiple entities of the institution must address these issues to impact the political, administrative, and cultural climate of campus (Leon, 2016).

Relationships are the key to the social justice aspect of religion and worldview engagement. The main way to combat the biases that one has for certain religions and worldviews is to develop relationships with those of differing worldviews through common experiences and activities (Correia-Harker et al, 2019). It is difficult to develop these relationships when higher education professionals are trying to distance themselves from these relations.

Christian Privilege and Secular Privilege

While Christians are afforded privilege based upon their religious identity, there is a growing body of literature discussing the limitations to the idea of Christian privilege and the reality of secular privilege within higher education. Glanzer (2022) highlights that many aspects of Christian privilege are often over-generalized and not explored fully. The history of religion in the United States has been dominated by Christians, so Christian privilege scholars are able to use this history to show how these roots in Christianity can often still be seen in society today. However, these discussions on Christian privilege do not often explore the diverse outlooks of many Christian groups nor the contributions Christian groups have made for religious plurality (Glanzer, 2022).

When talking about the importance of including religions and worldviews in the current

discussions of diversity, equity, and inclusion, it is important to understand how power and privilege work among different religions and worldviews. There is an underlying narrative that Christian faiths receive more attention and privilege than non-Christian faiths (Edwards, 2018). This Christian privilege has created an idea of Christonormativity where religion inherently means a Christian faith and other faiths are not seen as legitimate or really seen at all (Small, 2020). Even those of the Jewish faith who believe in the same God as those of a Christian faith, though Jews themselves are not Christians, are also a victim to this Christian privilege (Goren, 2014).

As it has been mentioned throughout this literature review, higher education professionals have distanced themselves from the religious, and often Christian, roots that began their institutions. And now, a secular worldview dominates much of how one thinks of education and scholarship (Hodge, 2019). Expressions of one's religious worldview in a higher education setting is often met with comments of being intolerant, narrow-minded, and pathological and are often ignored, critiqued, or disparaged (Glanzer, 2022). No matter your denomination or belief, there are many spiritual microaggressions that impact students across many beliefs (Hodge, 2019; Glanzer, 2022).

This discussion on Christian and secular privilege is not meant to defend Christianity against non-religious schools of thought. But it is meant to draw attention to the fact that religious and worldview thought as a whole is discriminated against in higher education. When trying to come up with ways to engage students in religion and worldview diversity, it is often thought that these experiences are already in place but are dominated by Christians (Edwards, 2018) when that is not the case. The principle of the Interfaith Triangle (Rockenbach et al, 2016) that best addresses this dilemma is knowledge. It is necessary for student affairs professionals to

talk about the challenges of engaging students in religion and worldview development in higher education (Small & Barber, 2019). Thus, this project is meant to give student affairs professionals the opportunity to have these discussions in a six week professional development course. The next chapter will show how this course promotes these discussions and growth for student affairs professionals.

Summary

Religion and worldview identity development is an aspect of student development that has been traditionally ignored by higher education professionals (Nielsen & Small, 2019). Through the literature, one is able to see the many reasons religion and worldview identity development has been left out of the education space.

Jacobsen and Jacobsen (2012), argue that religion used to be the governing force behind many higher education institutions but has now been shifted to a focus on science and research and the privatization of religion. The privatization of religion impacts how faculty and staff view religion and worldview development. Many faculty and staff are of the mindset to distance interactions with students away from religion and worldview topics (Nielsen & Small, 2019). There is also a lack of understanding among higher education professionals, especially faculty, behind what interfaith dialogue can achieve (Shaheen et al, 2021). Faculty especially feel that if they try to have these conversations within the classroom, students will feel that the faculty are trying to indoctrinate them into their ways of thinking (Durant, 2017). While staff share some of these same fears as faculty (Durant, 2017), the education many student affairs professionals receive often contributes to this push away from religion and worldview development. Many of the developmental frameworks that professionals learn and research are based upon secular psychology (Glanzer, 2022). While these factors push faculty and staff away from interfaith

dialogue and muddle the intentions of such conversations, the reality is that these opportunities can engage students in disagreements while bringing them together to learn more about others and build common ground (Correia-Harker et al, 2019).

Interestingly, the faculty and staff perspective is opposite of the student perspective. Many students are coming to college expecting their experience to engage them in religion and worldview development (Correia-Harker et al, 2019; Mayhew et al, 2016). Students do share some hesitation as faculty and staff do as they feel they do not have the skills to effectively navigate interfaith dialogue (Rockenbach et al, 2020). But it is important that students and higher education professionals push themselves through this hesitation as helping students with their religion and worldview identity development helps them feel validated (Karlin-Neumann & Sanders, 2013) and grow in their own respect for those of differing worldviews (Shaheen et al, 2021). Without this support, many religiously minded students will be impacted negatively (Durant, 2017), and students will not be ready to engage with a religiously diverse society (Rockenbach et al, 2020; Patel & Giess, 2016).

Religion and worldview identity development is also important from a social justice perspective. Student affairs professionals have always fought for the rights and dignity of historically marginalized students (Patel & Giess, 2016), but religious discrimination has often been left outside of these actions (Edwards, 2018). Thus, students, especially those of non-Christian religions, have been left to fight for themselves with little support (Hoffman & Mitchell, 2016). And due to the lack of support and facilitation from student affairs professionals, many conversations that students are having are inhibited with a lack of civility and bias (Bethel, 2022; Mayhew, 2016).

There is much research about how Christian privilege impacts interfaith opportunities.

Christian privilege is the idea that Christian faiths receive more attention and favor than non-Christian faiths (Edwards, 2018) and that religion is synonymous to some sort of Christian faith (Small, 2020). There are certainly many privileges that those of a Christian faith possess, but there is a diversity to Christian faith that often contribute to religious pluralism that are often overlooked (Glanzer, 2022). And within higher education, there is often a secular privilege that impacts those of any religious or spiritual belief (Hodge, 2019).

Conclusion

The Interfaith Triangle (Rockenbach et al, 2016) is a framework to develop effective interfaith experiences that can be seen throughout the literature. The core tenets of the framework are relationships, knowledge, and attitude. Building relationships is an integral piece that much of the literature addresses. As was discussed, students are ready to grow in relationships with those of differing worldviews. These relationships are key to breaking down the biases that often inhibit social justice.

Knowledge will help to address the Christian and secular privilege that are both present in higher education. As student affairs professionals become more knowledgeable in religion and worldview issues, they will be able to better understand the impact that these privileges have and how they actually show up on campuses.

Finally, faculty and staff were severely impacted by their attitudes towards interfaith dialogue. Aiding faculty and staff to develop more positive attitudes of religion and worldview development can help them towards engaging students' whole selves (Small, 2015).

The six week professional development course is meant to model the Interfaith Triangle (Rockenbach et al, 2016) for student affairs professionals. Through the course, the professionals involved will interact with each other in order to develop relationships around their religion and

worldview identities. They will participate in lectures and discussions to grow in their knowledge of practical ways they can engage students in religion and worldview development. Finally, professionals will complete a case study and other activities meant to challenge their attitudes towards religion and worldview dilemmas that students face. Thus, this project is necessary because student affairs professionals need more than just literature to better their practice around religion and worldview development. They must be engaged with each principle of the Interfaith Triangle (Rockenbach et al, 2016) to best aid students. The six week professional development course achieves that goal.

Chapter Three: Project Description

Introduction

Student affairs professionals are not prepared to help students in their religion and worldview development. This is largely predicated upon a false idea that religion and scholarship must be separate (Edwards, 2018; Shaheen et al, 2021). Thus, there is a fear that many professionals have that engaging students in religion and worldview dialogue would be seen as indoctrination to a set of beliefs (Durant, 2017).

Many of these fears are based on a false understanding of religion and worldview's place in higher education. Thus, the solution is to acknowledge and combat this misunderstanding. The Interfaith Triangle that Rockenbach et al (2016) use in their analysis of religious and spiritual climates of campuses provides a framework to educate professionals effectively. This chapter will go over how the Interfaith Triangle (Rockenbach et al, 2016) can be incorporated into a professional development course to begin aiding student affairs professionals in engaging students in religion and worldview development.

Project Components

The project is a six week professional development course. Each week is based upon the different sections from the literature review: definitions, the Interfaith Triangle, misconceptions and barriers, importance, religion and diversity, and solutions. Each week is also guided by a presentation that is located in the appendices.

For each week, there is a presentation along with different activities depending on the topic of the week. The first week starts with introductions and definitions. The course as a whole is designed around the Interfaith Triangle. The discussions and activities are centered around engaging professionals in relationships, knowledge, and attitudes which are the principles of the

Interfaith Triangle (Rockenbach et al, 2016). The introductions to each other during the first week are important for everyone in the class to begin developing a relationship with each other. Thus, in future weeks, professionals will be better able to engage in interfaith dialogue with each other. The definitions of the terms religion, spirituality, worldview, and interfaith are important because there are many different definitions contained in the literature. So it is important to grow in knowledge of different definitions as well as making sure everyone is on the same page moving forward. The materials for this first week of the course can be found in Appendix C.

The second week introduces the Interfaith Triangle. As the guiding theory for the course, it is important to have a good understanding of the framework. Large and small group discussions are used to have professionals engage with the Interfaith Triangle. After an introduction to the principles of the Interfaith Triangle, the group will talk about what principles they resonated the most with and what positives and negatives they see with the framework. They will then break into small groups and use one of the principles to design a way to engage students in religion and worldview development based on that principle. It is important that professionals have an opportunity to reflect and actively use the Interfaith Triangle to ensure an understanding that can be carried throughout the rest of the course. The materials for this week are located in Appendix D.

The third week is centered around the misconceptions and barriers to engaging students in religion and worldview development that were mentioned in the introduction. The focus of this week will be for professionals to engage in individual reflection to better understand their current attitudes towards religions and worldviews. The materials for this week are located in Appendix E.

The fourth week will involve conversations on the importance of religion and worldview development. Having been engaged in the Interfaith Triangle, misconceptions and barriers, and now the importance of these efforts, professionals will have an opportunity to bring all of this together in a case study. The case study can be found in the presentation located in Appendix F. The case study reflects all of the aspects of the Interfaith Triangle as it deals with knowledge of the Muslim faith, the relationships students have with each other and their professors, and the differing attitudes that many parties had in regards to the severity of the situation. Thus, professionals can have another experience of using the Interfaith Triangle to address a situation.

The fifth week will talk about religion and worldview's place in diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. As it was discussed in the literature review, religions and worldviews are an important yet ignored aspect of student diversity (Rockenbach et al, 2020; Edwards, 2018; Shaheen et al, 2021). Professionals will investigate a variety of institutions to see what they do, or do not do, to engage their students in interfaith dialogue. Thus, professionals can learn about some practical ways that other institutions are already engaging students in this way. The materials for this week are located in Appendix G.

The final week of the course will continue the conversation on solutions to better engage students in religion and worldview development. This week first starts off with professionals providing their own solutions that they have made based upon the activities and the reflections of each week. This is followed by solutions put forth from the literature. The course then ends with professionals setting goals for themselves. This course was just an introduction into this topic, so it is important for professionals to have solid goals to help them implement any solutions or guide them to further study of this topic. These goals will be centered around the Interfaith Triangle. The materials for this week are located in Appendix H.

Project Evaluation

Before taking the course, the student affairs professionals will complete a pre-test. The pre-test will be able to measure where professionals are at before taking the course. The pre-test asks questions that will provide both quantitative and qualitative data. This data will then be compared to the data received from the post-test. The objective of the course is for student affairs professionals to become more comfortable with engaging students in religion and worldview identity development by learning how the Interfaith Triangle can be used to overcome any barriers that currently prevent them from engaging students in this way. Thus, the pre-test will measure these three objectives of comfortability, barriers, and theory. The pre-test will use a Likert scale to measure how comfortable the professionals taking the course are with engaging students in religion and worldview identity development. The pre-test will also ask professionals what barriers prevent them from engaging students, how they move past those barriers, and if there is any theory they use to engage students. The post-test asks similar questions. The post-test has the same Likert scale, asks about barriers, and asks what the principles of the Interfaith Triangle are and how these principles can be used to overcome their barriers. The pre-test can be found in Appendix I and the post-test can be found in Appendix J.

Project Conclusions

There are a lot of misconceptions of religion and worldview development in higher education. Many of these misconceptions are based upon the false interpretation of the establishment clause that makes professionals believe there needs to be a total separation of religion from public education (Shaheen et al, 2021). This then leads faculty and staff to be fearful of engaging students in religion and worldview development (Durant, 2017). However, students want to be engaged in their religion and worldview development (Correia-Harker et al,

2019), but the lack of guidance from professionals causes them to have negative experiences that actually harm students (Patel & Giess, 2016).

Thus, it is important for student affairs professionals to be prepared to engage students in their religion and worldview development (Karlin-Neumann & Sanders, 2013; Small 2015). However, this needs to be done intentionally as current practices of interfaith dialogue are often insufficient in properly engaging students (Edwards, 2018). The Interfaith Triangle can provide professionals with a researched framework that can guide their practice.

The principles of the Interfaith Triangle are knowledge, attitude, and relationships (Rockenbach et al, 2016). For student affairs professionals, knowledge and attitude are the most important aspects to focus on for themselves. There is a lack of understanding among professionals about the place of religion and worldview development in higher education. This can be seen through the lack of research on the topic (Durant, 2017). This lack of knowledge then plays into their attitudes and creates the sense of fear that surrounds this topic. If professionals begin to do more research and acquire more knowledge, they can then come to know that they are expected to guide students through this part of their development.

This is what this project achieves. While professionals could read this paper to acquire knowledge and a change in attitude towards religion and worldview development, the professional development course is also meant to incorporate the third aspect of the Interfaith Triangle, relationships. Through the course, professionals will be able to not only engage with the material of this paper but will engage in discussions and activities with each other. These hands-on experiences will help solidify the knowledge to change their attitudes, and show them how they can engage students in building relationships around religion and worldview development.

Plans for Implementation

The project could be implemented during the summer semester. Appendix B shows a projected timeline for the professional development course. The summer is a good time to implement the project because professionals will have more time they can dedicate to the course. Student affairs professionals will not only have more time, but they will have more energy to truly engage with the material and with each other. This is why the proposed starting date is a couple weeks after most institutions will be finished with the school year. With this schedule, professionals will have some time to catch their breath before diving into the course. With the course happening at the beginning of the summer, professionals will also have the opportunity to implement what they learned into the following semester. There will still be a little under two months left for most institutions before the start of the fall semester, so professionals will be able to look at the goals that they came up with and be able to make a plan for the coming semester.

This project is a good introduction into religion and worldview development in higher education, but there are additional steps that can be taken that were not in the scope of this project. One of the ways for professionals to continue to grow in this area is to research specific trends that certain religions and worldviews face. The experience of Christian students is different from Jewish students which is different from Muslim students which is different from atheist students, and so on and so forth.

Another additional step that could be taken is to create an experience fully centered around practical ways to help students grow in their religion and worldview development. While the professional development course helps professionals come up with practical solutions through discussions, the case study, and other activities, there are parts of the literature that provide practical solutions that were not able to be fully explored with this project.

Conclusion

Religion and worldview development is an important part of students' lives. However, there are many misconceptions out there that cause faculty, staff, and students to believe that this development should not be part of the higher education experience. This project addresses these misconceptions and provides a framework for student affairs professionals to follow that will begin to change their attitudes about this topic. Students are already ready and eager to engage in religion and worldview development (Correia-Harker et al, 2019). Thus, this project is focused on getting professionals ready and eager to work with students in this capacity. Using this project as a first step, professionals can begin their journey of engaging students in the ever growing and ever important area of religion and worldview development.

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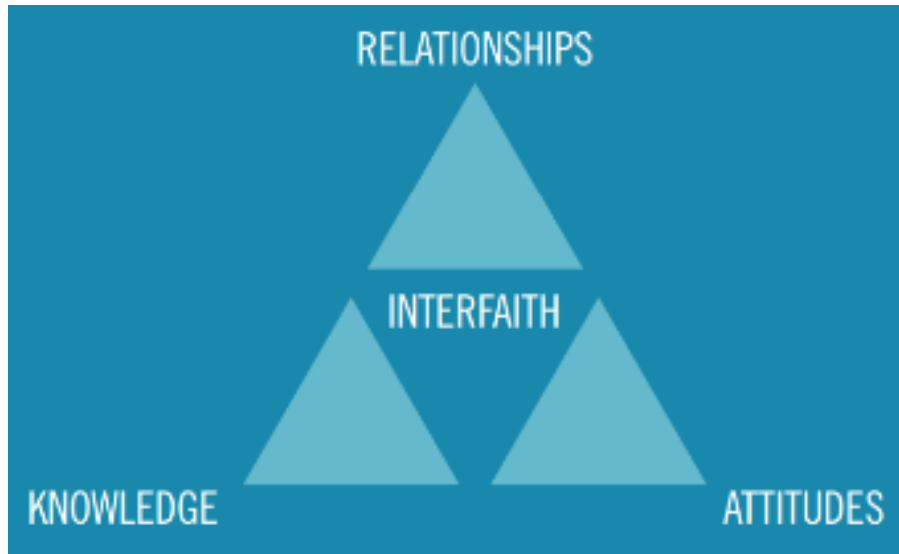
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Routledge.

Appendix A

The Interfaith Triangle

Figure 1A The Interfaith Triangle



Appendix B

Timeline for the Course

Table 1B Course Timeline

Week	Topic	Activity
5/22/2023 - 5/28/2023	Introductions and Definitions	Introductions and Presentation
5/29/2023 - 6/4/2023	The Interfaith Triangle	Presentation and Discussion
6/5/2023 - 6/11/2023	Misconceptions/Barriers	Presentation and Reflection
6/12/2023 - 6/18/2023	Importance	Presentation and Case Studies
6/19/2023 - 6/25/2023	Religion and Diversity	Presentation and Institution Evaluation
6/26/2023 - 7/2/2023	Solutions	Presentation and Goal Setting

Appendix C

Week One Materials

Figure 1C Week One Presentation Slides

<h2>Religion and Worldview Development Week One</h2> <h3>Introductions and Definitions</h3> <p>1</p>	<h2>Learning Outcomes</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> After today's session, you will be able to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Express the definition of religion, spirituality, worldview, and interfaith Differentiate between religion, spirituality, worldview, and interfaith <p>2</p>
<h2>Introductions</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is your name? What is your position/office on campus? Why are you taking this professional development course? <p>3</p>	<h2>Large Group Discussion</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How would you define the following terms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Religion Spirituality Worldview Interfaith <p>4</p>
<h2>Definitions</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Religion: "Religion refers to the degree to which individuals adhere to the prescribed beliefs and practices of an organized religion or a Higher Power" (Constantine et al., 2006, p. 228) Spirituality: "Spirituality refers to individuals' belief in the sacred nature of life in all of its forms and the manifestation of this belief in a quest for goodness and interconnectedness with other persons and things" (Constantine, et al., 2006, p. 228) Worldview: "A 'worldview' is an individual's primary frame of reference or life philosophy and may reflect a particular religious faith or may be non-religious in nature (as is the case for those identifying as atheist, agnostic, and/or 'spiritual, but not religious')." (Bryant, 2011, p. 441). Interfaith: "Interfaith" reflects the "coming together of people who orient around religion differently." Exchanges that are truly interfaith provoke and challenge, disrupt stereotypes and misinformation, foster empathy, and provide an avenue toward bridge-building and productive relationships (Mayhew & Rockenbach, 2021, p. 3). <p>5</p>	<h2>Small Group Discussion</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you feel these definitions align with the definitions we discussed as a group? Do these definitions effectively distinguish between the different aspects of religion and worldview identity? How so? What do you feel is missing from these definitions? Do you agree with these definitions? <p>* We will come back together to share our answers to these questions as a large group</p> <p>6</p>
<h2>Reflection & Wrap Up</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the next 5 minutes, write about any takeaways from today Next week <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interfaith Triangle <p>7</p>	<h2>References</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bryant, A. (2011). The Impact of Campus Context, College Encounters, and Religious/Spiritual Struggle on Ecumenical Worldview Development. <i>Research in Higher Education</i>, 52(5), 441–459. Constantine, M., Madonna, G., Miville, A., Warren, K., Gainor, M. (2006). Religion, spirituality, and career development in African American college students: A qualitative inquiry. <i>Career Development Quarterly</i>, 54(3), 227-241. Mayhew, M., & Rockenbach, A. (2021). Interfaith Learning and Development. <i>Journal of College & Character</i>, 22(1), 1–12. <p>8</p>

Figure 2C Timeline for Week One Class

- Introductions (10 minutes)
- Large Group Discussion (10 minutes)
- Definitions (5 minutes)
- Small Group Discussion (20 minutes)
- Reflection & Wrap Up (5 minutes)

Link to Week One Presentation

[Religion and Worldview Development Week One](#)

Appendix D

Week Two Materials

Figure 1D Week Two Presentation Slides

<h2>Religion and Worldview Development Week Two</h2> <h3>The Interfaith Triangle</h3> <p>1</p>	<h3>Learning Outcomes</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After today's session, you will be able to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Name the principles of the Interfaith Triangle ◦ Discuss the relationship between the principles of the Interfaith Triangle ◦ Design a program based on the principles of the Interfaith Triangle <p>2</p>
<h3>The Interfaith Triangle</h3>  <p>Rockenbach, A., Mayhew, M., Kinarsky, A., Correia, B., & Associates. (2016). Engaging worldview: A snapshot of religious and spiritual climate. Part II: Interfaith engagement and student attitudes. <i>Interfaith Youth Core</i>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase positive views of differing worldviews • Relationships with peers who orient around religion differently • Learn appreciative information about a tradition or faith community • Develop appreciative attitudes about a religion <p>3</p>	<h3>Large Group Discussion</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which principle of the Interfaith Triangle resonates with you the most (relationships, knowledge, attitudes)? Why? • What are your critiques on the Interfaith Triangle? What do you like about the Interfaith Triangle? <p>4</p>
<h3>Small Group Activity</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each table will be assigned one of the principles of the Interfaith Triangle • Your group will come up with a way for students to engage in that principle to promote religion and worldview diversity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ For example, you can create the base for an event, class, program, orientation session, etc. that helps students develop relationships with those of differing worldviews <p>5</p>	<h3>Share Out</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each group will share what they came up with • After all of the groups share, we will discuss: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Did you see any similarities between the activities for each principle? ◦ Did you feel that it was difficult to develop something for only one of the principles? ◦ Do you feel it would be possible to integrate each of the individual activities into one activity? What would that look like? <p>6</p>
<h3>Reflection & Wrap Up</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ For the next 5 minutes, write about any takeaways from today • Next week <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Misconceptions/Barriers <p>7</p>	<h3>References</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rockenbach, A., Mayhew, M., Kinarsky, A., Correia, B., & Associates. (2016). Engaging worldview: A snapshot of religious and spiritual climate. Part II: Interfaith engagement and student attitudes. <i>Interfaith Youth Core</i>. <p>8</p>

Figure 2D Timeline for Week Two Class

- The Interfaith Triangle (5 minutes)
- Large Group Discussion (10 minutes)
- Small Group Activity (15 minutes)
- Share Out (15 minutes)
- Reflection & Wrap Up (5 minutes)

Link to Week Two Presentation

[Religion and Worldview Development Week Two](#)

Appendix E

Week Three Materials

Figure 1E Week Three Presentation Slides

<h1>Religion and Worldview Development Week Three</h1> <h2>Misconceptions/Barriers</h2> <p>1</p>	<h2>Learning Outcomes</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After today's session, you will be able to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Recognize misconceptions for religion and worldview's place in higher education ◦ Recognize barriers for religion and worldview's place in higher education ◦ Illustrate how the Interfaith Triangle can combat the misconceptions for religion and worldview development in higher education ◦ Illustrate how the Interfaith Triangle can combat the barriers for religion and worldview development in higher education <p>2</p>				
<h2>Misconceptions and Barriers</h2> <table border="0"> <thead> <tr> <th>Misconceptions</th> <th>Barriers</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment clause (Shaheen et al, 2021). • Institutions must distance themselves from religion (Nielsen & Small, 2019) • Interfaith dialogue can indoctrinate students to a particular belief (Durant, 2017; Correia-Harker et al, 2019). </td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secular psychology is the basis of many developmental frameworks (Glanzer, 2022). • True Interfaith Dialogue is lacking (Edwards, 2018) • Students, staff, and faculty lack the skills to have these dialogues (Shaheen et al, 2019). </td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>3</p>	Misconceptions	Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment clause (Shaheen et al, 2021). • Institutions must distance themselves from religion (Nielsen & Small, 2019) • Interfaith dialogue can indoctrinate students to a particular belief (Durant, 2017; Correia-Harker et al, 2019). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secular psychology is the basis of many developmental frameworks (Glanzer, 2022). • True Interfaith Dialogue is lacking (Edwards, 2018) • Students, staff, and faculty lack the skills to have these dialogues (Shaheen et al, 2019). 	<h2>Individual Reflection</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are going to take some time to reflect on these misconceptions and barriers • We will then share our reflections as a group <p>4</p>
Misconceptions	Barriers				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment clause (Shaheen et al, 2021). • Institutions must distance themselves from religion (Nielsen & Small, 2019) • Interfaith dialogue can indoctrinate students to a particular belief (Durant, 2017; Correia-Harker et al, 2019). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secular psychology is the basis of many developmental frameworks (Glanzer, 2022). • True Interfaith Dialogue is lacking (Edwards, 2018) • Students, staff, and faculty lack the skills to have these dialogues (Shaheen et al, 2019). 				
<h2>Reflection Questions</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which, if any, of the misconceptions and barriers resonate with you? • Have you chosen not to talk to a student about religion or worldviews because of any of these misconceptions and barriers? • Which principle(s) of the Interfaith Triangle would best help to eliminate these misconceptions and barriers you struggle with? • Are there other barriers that prevent you from talking with students about religion and worldviews that were not talked about? <p>5</p>	<h2>Wrap Up</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Next week <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Importance <p>6</p>				
<h2>References</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correia-Harker, B., Snipes, J., Rockenbach, A., & Mayhew, M. (2019). Students' perceptions of and engagement with worldview diversity in college. In Goodman, K., Giess, M., & Patel, E. (Eds.), <i>Educating about religious diversity and interfaith engagement: A handbook for student affairs</i> (pp. 22-39). Stylus Press. • Durant, T. (2017). "Can I Talk about That?" Factors Influencing Spiritual and Religious Identity Exploration in Public Higher Education. <i>Journal of College and Character</i>, 18(2), 136–141. • Edwards, S. (2018). Critical Reflections on the Interfaith Movement: A Social Justice Perspective. <i>Journal of Diversity in Higher Education</i>, 11(2), 164–181. • Glanzer, P. L. (2022). Recognizing Christian Complexity and Secular Privilege in Higher Education: A Response to Recent Christian Privilege Arguments. <i>Religion & Education</i>, 49(2), 119–137. <p>7</p>	<h2>References</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nielsen, J. C., & Small, J. L. (2019). Four Pillars for Supporting Religious, Secular, and Spiritual Student Identities. <i>Journal of College and Character</i>, 20(2), 180–186. • Shaheen, M., Mayhew, M., Staples, A., & Fuentes, A. (2021). StateChurch: Bringing Religion to Public Higher Education. <i>Religions</i>, 12(5), 336-353. <p>8</p>				

Figure 2E Timeline for Week Three Class

- Misconceptions and Barriers (10 minutes)
- Individual Reflections (25 minutes)
- Group Share (15 minutes)

Link to Week Three Presentation

[Religion and Worldview Development Week Three](#)

Appendix F

Week Four Materials

Figure 1F Week Four Presentation Slides

<h2>Religion and Worldview Development Week Four</h2> <p>Importance</p> <p>1</p>	<h2>Learning Outcomes</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After today's session, you will be able to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Recognize at least one importance to religion and worldview development in higher education ◦ Demonstrate how the Interfaith Triangle applies to at least one reason why religion and worldview development in higher education is important <p>2</p>
<h2>Importance</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interfaith is highly intersectional (Mayhew & Rockenbach, 2021; Durant, 2017) • We live in a religiously diverse world (Rockenbach et al, 2020; Karlin-Neumann & Sanders, 2013) • Students are seeking to be engaged in religion and worldview development (Correia-Harker et al, 2019; Mayhew et al, 2016) <p>3</p>	<h2>Case Study</h2> <p>https://docs.google.com/document/d/1lrX6BjqM8hbYmWnkYSatWFzyFMzCRwuwCA_D86QQIY0/edit?usp=sharing</p> <p>4</p>
<h2>Reflection & Wrap Up</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ For the next 5 minutes, write about any takeaways from today • Next week <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Religion and Diversity <p>5</p>	<h2>References</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correia-Harker, B., Snipes, J., Rockenbach, A., & Mayhew, M. (2019). Students' perceptions of and engagement with worldview diversity in college. In Goodman, K., Giess, M., & Patel, E. (Eds.), <i>Educating about religious diversity and interfaith engagement: A handbook for student affairs</i> (pp. 22-39). Stylus Press. • Durant, T. (2017). "Can I Talk about That?" Factors Influencing Spiritual and Religious Identity Exploration in Public Higher Education. <i>Journal of College and Character</i>, 18(2), 136–141. • Karlin-Neumann, P., & Sanders, J. (2013). Bringing Faith to Campus: Religious and Spiritual Space, Time, and Practice at Stanford University. <i>Journal of College and Character</i>, 14(2), 125–132. <p>6</p>
<h2>References</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayhew, M., Rockenbach, A., Correia-Harker, B., Crandall, R., Lo, M., & Associates. (2016). Emerging interfaith trends: What college students are saying about religion in 2016. <i>Interfaith Youth Core</i>. • Mayhew, M., & Rockenbach, A. (2021). Interfaith Learning and Development. <i>Journal of College & Character</i>, 22(1), 1–12. • Rockenbach, A., Mayhew, M., Giess, M., Morin, S., Staples, B., Correia-Harker, B., & Associates. (2020). IDEALS: Bridging religious divides through higher education. <i>Interfaith Youth Core</i>. <p>7</p>	

Figure 2 F Case Study Document

The Case

In an art history course at Hamline University in St. Paul, Minnesota, professor Erika Lopez Prater showed a highly regarded 14th century painting depicting the Prophet Muhammad's call to prophecy from the angel Gabriel. The class usually meets in person, but the class was held virtually on this day. A few minutes before showing the image, Professor Prater gave a trigger warning stating that an upcoming slide will have a painting depicting the Prophet Muhammad. She stated if anyone would like to leave class as the image is shown, they can, and she will get them once the painting is no longer being shown. Professor Prater also put in her syllabus that there would be depictions of holy figures including the Prophet Muhammed, Jesus Christ, and the Buddha. She further stated in the syllabus that students who had religious concerns should contact her in advance. Aram Wedatalla, a Black, Muslim student, saw the image in class. Wedatalla states that seeing the image was traumatizing. Due to this incident, Professor Prater's contract was not renewed.

Extra Information

- Art history scholars, in widespread efforts to diversify and decolonize global survey courses, frequently include this particular painting and other Islamic artworks in their university classes.
- The painting was by a Muslim artist
- Ali Asani, professor of Islamic religion and culture at Harvard told Religion News Service, “To make blanket statements that this is prohibited, especially the image in question, is absolutely wrong. It shows illiteracy about religion.”
- Christiane Gruber, professor of Islamic art at the University of Michigan writes, “Through conflation or confusion, Hamline has privileged an ultraconservative Muslim view on the subject that happens to coincide with the age-old Western cliché that Muslims are banned from viewing images of the prophet.”
- The Minnesota chapter for the Council of American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) described the classroom incident as Islamophobic while the national CAIR organization disagreed.

Questions

- How does this situation reflect the misconceptions, barriers, and importance we have been discussing?
- How do the principles of the Interfaith Triangle apply to this situation?
- Did Professor Prater do enough to warn students of the painting? Should she have included the painting in the course at all?
- How could future incidents like this be prevented?

References

- Besst, A, & Dernbach, B. (2023, January 27). *Hamline video reveals painting of Prophet Muhammad was visible to students before trigger warning*. Sahan Journal.
<https://sahanjournal.com/education/hamline-video-shows-prophet-muhammad-painting-appeared-before-professor-warnings/>
- Patel, E. (2023, January 13). *DEI's Religion Problem: The Hamlin Debacle Demonstrates the Perils of Ignoring Religious Disagreements*. The Chronicle of Higher Education.
<https://www-chronicle-com.ezproxy.gvsu.edu/article/deis-religion-problem>
- Vroegop, A. (2023, January 13). *The Hamline University Muhammad Controversy: What Happened?*. Interfaith America.
<https://www.interfaithamerica.org/hamline-university-explainer/>

Figure 3F Timeline for Week Four Class

- Importance (10 minutes)
- Case Study (35 minutes)
- Reflection & Wrap Up (5 minutes)

Link to Week Four Presentation

[Religion and Worldview Development Week Four](#)

Link to Week Four Case Study

[Case Study](#)

Appendix G

Week Five Materials

Figure 1G Week Five Presentation Slides

<h2>Religion and Worldview Development Week Five</h2> <h3>Religion and Diversity</h3> <p>1</p>	<h2>Learning Outcomes</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After today's session, you will be able to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Recognize religion's place in diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives ◦ Evaluate an institution's practices of religion in diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives ◦ Evaluate your practices of religion in diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives <p>2</p>
<h2>Religion in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiatives</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Despite advancements over the past several decades, there has been little advancement to address religious identity and oppression (Edwards, 2018; Rockenbach et al, 2020; Shaheen, 2021) • Minoritized students doing the work (Hoffman & Mitchell, 2016) • While Christian Privilege is important to acknowledge and combat (Small, 2020; Goren, 2014), there is also evidence of Secular Privilege that discounts all religious thought (Glanzer, 2022; Hodge, 2019) <p>3</p>	<h2>Institution Review</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the next 20 minutes, groups will search an institutions website for information about religion in any kind of diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ We will have groups look at many different institutions to get a variety of outlooks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ i.e public, private, private-religiously affiliated • We will share out our results after <p>4</p>
<h2>Institution Review Questions</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did you find? • Was there anything surprising that you found? • Is there something that you found that would only work at the specific institution you were looking at? • Can you apply anything you found to your current practice? <p>5</p>	<h2>Wrap Up</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ For the next 10 minutes, reflect on your personal inclusion of religion in diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives • Next Week <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Solutions <p>6</p>
<h2>References</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Edwards, S. (2018). Critical Reflections on the Interfaith Movement: A Social Justice Perspective. <i>Journal of Diversity in Higher Education</i>, 11(2), 164–181. • Glanzer, P. L. (2022). Recognizing Christian Complexity and Secular Privilege in Higher Education: A Response to Recent Christian Privilege Arguments. <i>Religion & Education</i>, 49(2), 119–137. • Goren, S. (2014). Stuck in the middle with Jews: religious privilege and Jewish campus life. <i>Journal of College and Character</i>, 15(2), 125–132. • Hodge, D. (2019). Spiritual microaggressions: Understanding the subtle messages that foster religious discrimination. <i>Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work</i>, 29(6), 473-489. <p>7</p>	<h2>References</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hoffman, G., & Mitchell, T. (2016). Making Diversity "Everyone's Business": A Discourse Analysis of Institutional Responses to Student Activism for Equity and Inclusion. <i>Journal of Diversity in Higher Education</i>, 9(3), 277–289. • Rockenbach, A., Mayhew, M., Giess, M., Morin, S., Staples, B., Correia-Harker, B., & Associates. (2020). IDEALS: Bridging religious divides through higher education. <i>Interfaith Youth Core</i>. • Shaheen, M., Mayhew, M., Staples, A., & Fuentes, A. (2021). StateChurch: Bringing Religion to Public Higher Education. <i>Religions</i>, 12(5), 336-353. • Small, J. L. (2020). The Gap in Existing Critical Theories. <i>Critical religious pluralism in higher education : a social justice framework to support religious diversity</i> (pp. 45-60). Routledge. <p>8</p>

Figure 2G Timeline for Week Five Class

- Religion in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiatives (10 minutes)
- Institution Reflection (30 minutes)
- Reflection & Wrap Up (10 minutes)

Link to Week Five Presentation

[Religion and Worldview Development Week Five](#)

Appendix H

Week Six Materials

Figure 1H Week Six Presentation Slides

<p>Religion and Worldview Development Week Six</p> <p>Solutions</p> <p>1</p>	<p>Learning Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After today's session, you will be able to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Construct at least 2 goals to better support students in their religion and worldview development ◦ Discuss how the Interfaith Triangle applies to the topics of the previous weeks of the course <p>2</p>
<p>Course Reflection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over the past five weeks, we have looked at <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Definitions ◦ The Interfaith Triangle ◦ Misconceptions and Barriers ◦ The Importance ◦ Religion and Diversity • As you know, we reflected each day on any takeaways you had • Before we delve into solutions the literature proposes, what are some solutions y'all have been reflecting on at the end of each session or throughout these past weeks? <p>3</p>	<p>Solutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal policies (Rockenbach et al, 2020; Nielsen & Small, 2019; Shaheen et al, 2021) and curricular experience (Rockenbach et al, 2020) • Relationships (Bethel et al, 2022; Rockenbach et al, 2016) • Intentionality and Structure (Correia-Harker et al, 2019; Bethel et al, 2022; Small & Barber, 2019) <p>4</p>
<p>Religion and Worldview Development Week Six</p> <p>Solutions</p> <p>1</p>	<p>Learning Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After today's session, you will be able to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Construct at least 2 goals to better support students in their religion and worldview development ◦ Discuss how the Interfaith Triangle applies to the topics of the previous weeks of the course <p>2</p>
<p>Course Reflection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over the past five weeks, we have looked at <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Definitions ◦ The Interfaith Triangle ◦ Misconceptions and Barriers ◦ The Importance ◦ Religion and Diversity • As you know, we reflected each day on any takeaways you had • Before we delve into solutions the literature proposes, what are some solutions y'all have been reflecting on at the end of each session or throughout these past weeks? <p>3</p>	<p>Solutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal policies (Rockenbach et al, 2020; Nielsen & Small, 2019; Shaheen et al, 2021) and curricular experience (Rockenbach et al, 2020) • Relationships (Bethel et al, 2022; Rockenbach et al, 2016) • Intentionality and Structure (Correia-Harker et al, 2019; Bethel et al, 2022; Small & Barber, 2019) <p>4</p>

Figure 2H Timeline for Week Six Class

- Course Reflection (10 minutes)
- Solutions (10 minutes)
- Goal Setting (30 minutes)

Link to Week Six Presentation

[Religion and Worldview Development Week Six](#)



Appendix I

Course Pre-Test

Figure 11 Google Form Pre-Test

Religion and Worldview Development Professional Development Pre-Test

This pre-test is meant to measure where you are at currently with engaging students in religion and worldview identity development. We will use this pre-test and a post-test to measure the effectiveness of the professional development course.

 gibsomat@mail.gvsu.edu (not shared) [Switch account](#) 

* Required

On a scale of 1 to 5, rate how comfortable you are with engaging students in conversations around religion and worldview identities *

1 2 3 4 5

Very Uncomfortable Very Comfortable

What are the barriers preventing you from engaging students in religion and worldview identity development? *

Your answer

How do you get past these barriers that prevent you from engaging students in religion and worldview identity development? *

Your answer

What theory, if any, do you currently use to help engage students around religion and worldview identity development? *

Your answer

Submit Clear form

Link to Google Form Pre-Test

<https://forms.gle/c5dxxSmg3N5Wdc9j9>



Appendix J

Course Post-Test

Figure 1J Google Form Post-Test

Religion and Worldview Development Professional Development Post-Test

This post-test will help determine how effective this course was in teaching how to engage students in religion and worldview development.

 **gibsomat@mail.gvsu.edu** (not shared) [Switch account](#) 

* Required

On a scale of 1 to 5, rate how comfortable you are with engaging students in conversations around religion and worldview identities *

1 2 3 4 5

Very Uncomfortable Very Comfortable

What are the principles of the Interfaith Triangle? *

- Relationships, Autonomy, Knowledge
- Knowledge, Autonomy, Reflection
- Relationships, Attitudes, Knowledge
- Reflection, Autonomy, Divinity

What are the barriers preventing you from engaging students in conversations around religion and worldview identities? *

Your answer _____

How can the Interfaith Triangle help you get past these barriers? *

Your answer _____

Do you have any other comments about the course that do not fit in any of the other questions?

Your answer _____

Submit Clear form

Link to Google Form Post-Test

<https://forms.gle/QHHNNNH2HHPxfU1G6>