



Introduction to Interfaith Leadership

Interfaith Youth Core and Dominican University are delighted to share this curriculum for the course entitled *Introduction to Interfaith Leadership*. This complete curriculum is available for faculty to use in their classrooms, either through a blended learning cross-institutional course site on Canvas, or through these downloadable resources. There is no fee to use these materials, though we may contact you to learn more about how you are using them, and to measure their strengths and weaknesses. This project was made possible by generous funding from the Henry Luce Foundation.

This curriculum was designed to be adaptable to meet the needs of faculty in diverse disciplines and settings. Each lesson consists of 3-5 modules, each of which includes videos, discussion questions, classroom activities, and readings. We believe that this curriculum functions best when these various components are used together, and therefore strongly encourage you to integrate both video content and associated activities in your classes where appropriate. You are invited to use this curriculum even if you are only using select modules, rather than the curriculum in its entirety. In order to showcase what we believe is the optimal version of this course, we have indicated which activities and readings are required in the Canvas version of the course administered by Dominican University. We have also included a variety of additional suggested and recommended activities and readings throughout the curriculum.

If you have any questions about content or how to use this curriculum in an upcoming course, please email Carr@ifyc.org.

Lesson 1: Introduction to Interfaith Leadership

Module 1.1: Defining Interfaith Leadership

This first module defines Interfaith Leadership, citing historical examples, and highlights the civic relevance of Interfaith Leadership for today's world.

[Video \(4 min\)](#)

Student Learning Objectives:

- Begin to identify one's own source of motivation to be an interfaith leader
- Name the three components of interfaith leadership

Discussion Questions:

- What ideas in the video introducing Interfaith Leadership excited you? Surprised you? What was the most revealing?
- Take a moment to self-assess: where do you think you are in your development as an interfaith leader vis-à-vis the three components: vision, knowledge, skillset?

Activities required for Canvas version of the course:

- Quiz: Select one of the readings and identify the vision, knowledge, or skills of interfaith leadership shared or represented.

Additional suggested activities:

- Read what other students have written about their own interest in this course and respond on the class discussion board.
- Share sources of your commitment to cooperating with people who are different from you and your motivations for interfaith leadership by creating a [Pinterest](#) board and posting a link to the discussion board.
- Begin to describe some of the conditions that motivate you in your life right now.
- Complete all four readings and identify the vision, knowledge, and skills for each.

Reading required for Canvas version of the course:

- Martin L King: [Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech](#)
- "[Gandhi and Comparative Religion](#)" by Manisha Barua
- Dalai Lama, [Selections from *Toward a True Kinship of Faiths*](#)
- Dorothy Day: "[The Mystery of the Poor](#)"

Additional recommended reading:

- "[Pilgrimage to Nonviolence](#)" by Martin Luther King, Jr.

Module 1.2: What is Interfaith?

The term “interfaith” is defined and students are introduced to the different ways this term has been applied in different contexts. Since this course will focus on people of different religious orientations coming together for cooperative action, this module covers how this differs from other applications of the term “interfaith”.

Video (4 min)

Student Learning Objectives:

- Define “Interfaith” and explain its components
- Explain the way in which your orientation around religion intersects with other dimensions of your identity

Discussion Questions:

- What are some of the experiences or aspects of your background that shape your relationship with your religious and/or non-religious identity?
- Which type of interfaith work discussed in the video is the most important to you? Why?
- Are there other types of interfaith work not represented in this module that you have witnessed or participated in?

Activities required for Canvas version of the course:

- Complete an identity-wheel. This is a pie chart that shows your identities, with the size of each pie piece relating to how aware you are of each identity on a daily basis. (No submission assignment).
 - Drawing on the identity wheel you created, choose two significant aspects of your identity and explain how they may shape your engagement with this course.
- Use the internet to identify 1-2 interfaith organizations; in which type of interfaith work do they engage? (May be useful to start with Pluralism.org) Write a short response that identifies one or two interfaith organizations, name the type of work (reconciliation, sharing, or cooperative action) and briefly give an example explaining how that organization does that kind of interfaith work.

Reading required for Canvas version of the course:

- *A New Religious America*, “Chapter 1: Introduction to a New Religious America” by Diana Eck
- Deborah J. Levine, “The How and Why of Religious Diversity Training”

Additional recommended reading:

- Selection from *Sacred Ground* by Eboo Patel (discussion guide)
- *International Journal of Leadership Studies*, “Intersectionality and Leadership” by Agnes Richardson and Cynthia Loubier

Module 1.3: Course Structure

Eboo Patel, founder and president of IFYC, will summarize the ideas shared in this first lesson and walk students through the upcoming seven lessons. This module lays out a map of the course, and points to some of the larger cumulative learning outcomes that students will achieve upon completion of the course.

[Video \(5 min\)](#)

Student Learning Objectives:

- Describe how interfaith leadership fits into the goals of the course you are taking on your own campus

Discussion Questions:

- What is one specific question that you hope the Interfaith Leadership course will address for you?
- This lesson presented four important leaders as interfaith leaders. Think back to your previous understanding of King, Day, Gandhi, and the Dalai Lama and how you may have been taught about them in school up to this point. How is this representation of any one of them different from your previous understanding? What might you conclude about the place of religion in education (or the larger world) today?
- As you think about the cohort with which you are taking this course, do you see the world house that Dr. King describes represented? Who is missing? How do you think that might influence the dynamic of the course?