



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 3: Identity of an Interfaith Leader

Module 3.1: What Makes an Interfaith Leader?

In this module, students will be encouraged to explore leadership in various forms, and will learn some of the common types of personal experience that inspire others to take up interfaith work.

[Video \(2 min\)](#)

Student Learning Objectives:

- Describe the different experiences that draw people to interfaith leadership

Activities required for Canvas version of the course:

- Engage in a dialogue with someone not in this course in which you explore memorable interfaith experiences the two of you have had, and why they were significant. Without disclosing the name of your dialogue partner, post a summary of your conversation and describe what you learned from it in relation to your own emerging sense of interfaith leadership.

Additional suggested activities:

- Write an essay in which you reflect on and share personal interfaith experiences that have sparked an interest in interfaith leadership.

Readings required for Canvas version of the course:

- Selections from *My Neighbor's Faith* ed. Peace, Rose, Mobley

Additional recommended reading:

- *Faithiest* by Chris Stedman
- Selections from *Being Both* by Susan Katz Miller

Module 3.2: Interfaith Experiences in the Field

Through a series of personal interviews, students will hear from several young professionals in different fields share experiences that first drew them to interfaith work, and inspired them to identify themselves as interfaith leaders.

[Video \(12 min\)](#)

Student Learning Objectives:

- Describe 3 different paths to Interfaith Leadership
- Identity one formative interfaith experience in your own life

Discussion Questions:

- Which interview most resonates with your own experience and why?

Additional suggested activities:

- Students share their own statements regarding an interfaith experience, either through pair-share, class discussion, video posted on the forum, or written essay.
- Class interview with interfaith leader via Skype or as a guest speaker

Additional recommended reading:

- Selections from *Acts of Faith* by Eboo Patel
- "Hajj", *The Autobiography of Malcom X* by Malcom X
- "My Conversion to Inter-religious Mission" by Reverend Fonki Forba

Module 3.3: The Power of Storytelling

Story is a powerful tool for motivating social change. In this lesson, we will introduce useful strategies for transforming personal stories into inspiring public narratives that convey purpose and vision, and encourage cooperation.

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

Student Learning Objectives:

- Name one schema for sharing stories of interfaith leadership
- Describe how a public narrative differs from a story
- Evaluate the importance of storytelling and public narrative for interfaith cooperation
- Begin to construct a personal story that could develop into a compelling public narrative

Discussion Questions:

- Share your interfaith story using the Challenge|Choice|Outcome model for a story of Self. You can write the response, or upload an audio or video file. Respond to the story of at least one other student.

Activities required for Canvas version of the course:

- With examples, explain how a public narrative differs from a story.

Additional suggested activities:

- Whose personal story has made a deep and lasting impression on you? How did you hear about them, through personal relationships, biography or autobiography?
- Find the text or recording of a public narrative that exemplifies this framework of Self, Us, Now
- Describe the public narratives of what it means to be an “American” most salient from your memory. Compare these narratives to the ideals of interfaith leadership.
- In small groups, list reasons why storytelling and public narrative are important, and how storytelling supports understanding.
- Take a single, personal event and relate it first as a story; then transform it into a public narrative.

Readings required for Canvas version of the course:

- [“Public Narrative, Collective Action, and Power”](#) by Marshall Ganz

Additional recommended reading:

- [“Why Stories Matter”](#) by Marshall Ganz, March 2009, Sojourners
- *Narrative Identity and Imagination* by Paul Ricoeur
- Barack Obama’s [speech at the 2004 Democratic National Convention](#)
- [“Letter from a Birmingham Jail”](#) by Martin Luther King, Jr.
- [“The Story of Self, the Story of Us, The Story of Now”](#), *Talking About Talking*

Module 3.4: Identity of an Interfaith Leader Summary

Offering a brief review of this lesson's content, Eboo Patel invites students to reflect on the importance of developing and sharing a vision of pluralism and cooperation to establish oneself as an interfaith leader.

[Video \(1 min\)](#)

Student Learning Objectives (cumulative for Lessons 1-3):

- Evaluate the role of vision in Interfaith Leadership

Activities required for Canvas version of the course:

- Imagine yourself 20 years in a future in which your vision for interfaith leadership has been implemented. Write the headline and first paragraph of an article that features your achievements: how were you able to bring about your vision?

Additional suggested activities:

- Either in writing or as part of a discussion, articulate your own vision of interfaith cooperation.

Additional recommended reading:

- "[An Interfaith Vision for the Future of Faith](#)" *Huffpost Religion* by Jennifer Bailey
- "[Look to young people for leadership in Interfaith Cooperation](#)" by Eboo Patel