



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 6: Ethics and Theologies of Interfaith Cooperation

Module 6.1: What is an ethic or theology of interfaith cooperation?

The third area of knowledge for interfaith leadership is what we call an ethic or theology of interfaith cooperation. This personal ethic, derived from the texts, figures, history, and art of one's own tradition, is explained in detail in this lesson. We will also identify how this ethic or theology can and should be used by interfaith leaders in different contexts.

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

Student Learning Objectives:

- Explain in your own words what is meant by an ethic or theology of interfaith cooperation
- Explain how an ethic or theology of interfaith cooperation can be used by interfaith leaders to mobilize groups of religiously diverse individuals
- Identify potential sources for developing your ethic or theology of interfaith cooperation

Discussion Questions:

- Return to your Story of Self from module 3.3. Which, if any, elements from your Story of Self come directly from your religious or ethical tradition or background? Could these elements also be sources for developing an ethic or theology of interfaith cooperation? Explain.
- Read other participants' responses to the previous question and select one post that has helped you develop appreciative knowledge of another's tradition or worldview. Explain why.
- Identify someone in your own tradition who engages in this work. Can you discern an ethic or theology of interfaith cooperation in how they do the work they do? Do their reasons resonate with you? What are other things from your tradition that motivate you to do this work that they don't mention?

Activities required for Canvas version of the course:

- Define in your own words an ethic (or theology) of interfaith cooperation.
- Given an example of how an interfaith leader might draw on an ethic or theology of interfaith cooperation in order to mobilize a group of religiously diverse people.
- Return to the "[Rivers of Faith](#)" article and note the various traditions described on the site. Identify three particular resources here which could be useful to you in developing your own ethic or theology of interfaith cooperation.

Additional suggested activities:

- Created an annotated bibliography of potential sources for developing an ethic or theology of interfaith cooperation from your own tradition.
- What particular aspects of "Toward a Global Ethic" or "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" might help you to identify and articulate your own core identity, and could be useful to you in developing your own ethic or theology of interfaith cooperation?
- Recalling King's concept of a World House, and drawing from resources from your own religion or worldview, brainstorm another concept or metaphor for the goal of interfaith cooperation.

Reading required for Canvas version of the course:

- "[Rivers of Faith](#)" from the Pluralism Project
- [IFYC resource](#) on developing an ethic or theology of interfaith cooperation

Additional recommended reading:

- United Nations "[Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#)"

- Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions, "Toward a Global Ethic"
- Selections from *Acts of Faith* by Eboo Patel
- Selections from *Memoirs of a Jewish Extremist* by Yossi Klein Halevi
- *Dignity of Difference* by Jonathon Sacks
- Selections from *Faithist* by Chris Stedman
- "Spirit and Spirituality Beyond the Boundaries: Can Interfaith Cooperation Be Legitimate?" by Ken L. Burres

Module 6.2: Ethics of Interfaith Cooperation from the Field

In this series of interviews, young professionals will share their individual ethics and theologies of interfaith cooperation, and share with students how and when they have used these in their own interfaith leadership.

[Video \(13 min\)](#)

Student Learning Objectives:

- Describe possible ethics/theologies of interfaith cooperation from 2-3 other religious and ethical traditions
- Compare the ethics/theologies of interfaith cooperation shared by others to your own experience
- Begin to articulate your own ethic/theology of interfaith cooperation

Discussion Questions:

- Of the stories and examples shared in the video, identify 1-2 stories you had not heard before that helped you to build your appreciative knowledge of another religious tradition.

Activities required for Canvas version of the course:

- Return to one of the two to three traditions you explored in module 4.2. Name three aspects of that tradition that someone who identifies with that tradition might use in developing an ethic or theology of interfaith cooperation.

Module 6.3: Building Relationships across Difference

One of the most important and most difficult skills of interfaith leadership is facilitating dialogue. In this module, students will be introduced to several skills necessary for successful dialogue facilitation and participation, creating safe spaces for diverse identities, and tools for moving dialogue into action. We will also cover what constitutes a good opening question for interfaith dialogue, and how we can use good questions to build relationships with others of different religious orientations.

[Video \(9 min\)](#)

Student Learning Objectives:

- Demonstrate ability to identify shared values between yourself and someone of a different religious or ethical background
- Explain the criteria for interfaith-friendly questions
- Identify two practices for moving dialogue into action

Discussion Questions:

- When and how is it appropriate to address issues of radical difference even within shared values? What is the appropriate balance between acknowledging differences on the one hand and commonalities on the other?

Activities required for Canvas version of the course:

- Recalling the ethics/theologies of interfaith cooperation from video interviews from the previous module, identify 2-3 values that are shared between at least two specific religious or ethical traditions. Explain.
- Craft three interfaith-friendly questions for a dialogue between people from the two traditions you named in the previous question.
- Identify two practices for moving dialogue into action.
- In one paragraph, reflect on a situation when you engaged with someone of a different identity. In retrospect, would you say that you applied what you now understand to be principles of Interfaith Leadership? If not, how might interfaith principles have improved the situation's outcome?

Additional Suggested Activities:

- Role-play dialogue facilitation in which you demonstrate how to identify shared values and use interfaith-friendly questions.
- Reflecting on Rabbi David Rosen's article, can you cite an example of "holy envy" either from your own experiences or dialogue with others, or from what you have studied so far in this course? Why did you select this example? What else from this article advances your own thinking about how best to build relationships across difference?

Reading required for Canvas version of the course:

- *The Im-Possibility of Interreligious Dialogue* by Catherine Cornille; "Hospitality Toward Difference" pp.197-210
- [Dialogue Principles from the Dialogue Institute and the Journal of Ecumenical Studies](#)

Additional recommended reading:

- Rabbi David Rosen, "[The Power of Interfaith Dialogue](#)"
- "[Guidelines for Interfaith Dialogue](#)", Religion Communicators
- "Storytelling as a Key Methodology for Interfaith Work" by Eboo Patel, April Kunze, and Noah Silverman, *Interfaith Dialogue at the Grassroots* ed. by Rebecca Kratz Mays, pp. 35-46.

Module 6.4: Ethics and Theologies of Interfaith Cooperation Summary and Reflection

In this summative module, students will review the concept and purpose of ethics and theologies of interfaith cooperation, and reflect on how the skills needed to facilitate dialogue and build relationships with others will influence and help grow their interfaith leadership.

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

Student Learning Objectives:

- Evaluate your ethic or theology of interfaith cooperation

Discussion Questions:

- Building on what you have done throughout this lesson, post a one-to-two paragraph draft of your own ethic or theology of interfaith cooperation. Respond with a comment to three ethics/theologies shared by your peers.

Activities required for Canvas version of the course:

- Share your ethic or theology of interfaith cooperation with someone who identifies as the same religious or ethical background. Write one paragraph that captures what you learned from this interaction. You might address questions such as: What resonated with that person? What challenges did they offer? How were you able to apply dialogue facilitation skills in this exchange? How might you use this feedback to reshape your message?

Additional suggested activities:

- As you think deeply about your own developing theology or ethic of interfaith cooperation, re-read what you posted in the first module (Pinterest) in light of your developing ideas in this course. What would you add as a source of motivation? What, if anything, changed? What might you have learned from another participant in this course or a story from the video?