

CORNELL COLLEGE
Chaplain & Spiritual Life Office Assessment Plan
Program Goals, Learning Opportunities, and Outcomes

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PROGRAM GOALS:

- #1: As students undergo adversity, acquire and analyze knowledge, and expand awareness of diverse and often conflicting theological and socio-political perspectives, the Chaplain & Spiritual Life Office provides support, spiritual guidance, mentoring, and exploration through the often disorienting human and faith development journey as they question, quest, and recompose their sense of meaning, beliefs, values, and relationship with others, world, and the Sacred (God/Higher Power/Ultimate Reality).¹
- #2: Increase understanding of shared universal spiritual wisdom while honoring the gifts of our differing sacred pathways and perspectives—the aim being to lessen the blinders of ignorance, prejudice, fear, and hate, while cultivating an expanded consciousness, reconciling virtue, love, humility, peacemaking, awareness of interdependent oneness amid plurality, and citizenship within a diverse, global society.
- #3: Provide pastoral care, spiritual healing and counsel, and devotional opportunities.
- #4: Offer contemplative wisdom and practice (i.e. meditation/centering silent prayer) so students, faculty, and staff can: a) develop a more skillful relationship with stress, fear, annoyances, and desires; b) live more fully in the present moment; c) deepen compassion and sense of oneness with God and all beings; and/or b) expand God consciousness/awareness of Ultimate Reality.
- #5: Provide instruction on the relationship between mysticism and action (contemplation in action), the aim being: a) To revere, see, and serve the Sacred dwelling in all life including oneself; b) to live and work from within—from one's deeper Self rather than ego-mind's surface level self with its shifting emotions, thoughts, fears and grasping desires; c) to make one's life, love, and work an offering or prayer; and d) to face the demands and difficulties of daily life and servant leadership through relinquishment and tapping into an interior peace, Presence, and Eternal life force larger than oneself and circumstances faced.

¹ This departmental goal connects with Cornell College Learning Objectives #1, 2, 4, & 5. College Objectives are listed on page 7.

THE 3 INTENDED STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES BEING ASSESSED:

As a result of engagement with Chaplain & Spiritual Life offerings, student (as well as participating faculty & staff) will have...

1. Explored, expanded, deepened, and/or clarified their self-knowledge, beliefs, values, and sense of meaning and purpose.
2. Explored, expanded, and deepened awareness of interconnection between self, others, world, and the Sacred.
3. Familiarity with meditation and related spiritual wisdom from Christian and Eastern contemplative traditions to assist with 1&2 above, and for what neuroscience and psychology point to as physiological benefits. Students learn how meditation is used to ...
 - Calm and lessen suffering caused by restless mind. Train the brain to relate to stress, depression, fear, impermanence, uncertainty, aversions, and attachments with greater skill.
 - Notice and non-attach from our ever shifting thoughts and feelings which cloud our perception of reality.
 - Know we are not our thoughts/feelings. They come and go. If we practice not getting hooked by them, they dissipate.
 - Live more fully in the present moment.
 - Increase concentration, joy, the ability to make mindful choices, and the aligning of emotions in service of the task at hand (a performance, work, etc.) so as to experience what sports psychology calls “flow.”

For those with Sacred desire, they learn how this practice and related East/West spiritual wisdom also helps:

- Increase God consciousness amid daily living and/or awareness of Ultimate Reality which are otherwise veiled by the “mind stuff” and illusions of ego-mind thoughts/feelings.
- Increase compassion, mercy, and Unitive awareness--non-dual levels of thinking, seeing, and being in the world in which one senses oneness with God and all beings.
- Likewise to cultivate “Namaste”/an Incarnational lens for recognizing, revering, and serving the Sacred dwelling in yet also beyond all beings.
- Cultivate awareness of Indwelling Presence—one’s Deeper or True Self vs. surface level self.
- To work, lead, and live from within. Relinquish/relax/surrender/loosen/let go so as to live by grace in a very wu-wei way from one’s Deeper Self--the “Not I but God in me” (Atman, Christ, Spirit, Chi in me) approach of tapping into an energy, peace,, strength, and Life Force larger than one’s own exhausting, gear grinding, over efforting, fear, etc.

GATHERING EVIDENCE OF STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Educational Opportunity	Method For Gathering Evidence	Assessment Questions Addressed	Timeline
<p>Spirituality & Vocation Institutional Research Study Simply participating in these assessment instruments is a pathway for students to explore, expand, clarify, and reflect upon their beliefs, unfolding spiritual and human development process/journey, and all that's named in <u>student learning outcomes # 1& 2.</u></p>	<p>Both an on-line campus wide survey and focus groups led by Institutional Research</p>	<p>Adaptation of UCLA Spirituality & Vocation HERI study for survey. Outcomes 1 & 2 given in question format for focus groups (How has Cornell helped you...?; What steps have you taken to use your education for...?"</p>	<p>Spring 2010. Repeat study every few years as advised by Institutional Research.</p>
<p>Weekly Ecumenical Chapel, other worship forms, and the semi-monthly inter-spirituality series focusing on values, wisdom, and spiritual practices shared by our differing religious traditions.</p> <p>These offerings are an expression of all department goals, and learning outcomes #1&2.</p>	<p>Gather evidence in both verbal and written form simultaneous with the Spiritual Life Leadership Team assessment. Use a scribe other than chaplain. 1. Color tube & comment sharing method (see # I below) 2. Written responses (see II below)</p>	<p>See I & II.A below</p>	<p>Occurs annually @ Spiritual Life Leadership meeting the 1st Monday of Term 8.</p>
<p>Spiritual Life Leadership Team (Soul Friends & Interfaith Understanding) Group of 20+ students who assist in leading and/or participating in a wide variety of departmental programs, worship services, major lectures, dialogue circles, and other offerings.</p>	<p>Same as above.</p>	<p>See I & II.A below</p>	<p>Same as above</p>

<p>Meditation, Mindfulness, & East/West Spiritual Wisdom</p> <p>Weekly meditation, mindfulness, and contemplative prayer practice when classes are in session. Also includes periodic wisdom teachings for self-reflection sent out via email</p> <p>Departmental goals #2, 3, 4, & 5 Student learning outcomes #1, 2, & 3</p>	<p>1. Gather evidence in verbal form using color tube & comment sharing method. Use a scribe to record comments other than chaplain.</p> <p>And/Or</p> <p>2. Send survey to regulars on what is/isn't of interest or helpful (see list under learning objective 3 below); ask what directions they would like to see this group go in for the future.</p> <p>Use a graduate student intern if available for survey and/or focus groups.</p>	<p>Remind folks of what we've covered thematically (see list in learning objective 3).</p> <p>For method 1: Set out papers with differing words which represent these different themes. Then use color tube as described in #1 below.</p>	<p>Method 1 done annually, either in Jan. or spring.</p> <p>Method 2. done 2nd semester 2010-11 or at a later time <u>only if</u> grad is available. Would combine with other Contemplative offerings.</p>
<p>Monastic Retreat @ New Melleray Abbey</p> <p>Departmental goals #1, 2, 3, 4, & 5 Student learning outcomes #1, 2, & 3</p>	<p>1. Possibly color tube method using themes and experiences based on monastic wisdom, spiritual practices, and other experiential learning</p> <p>2. Written or verbal intake on "what I found/experienced/ wisdom I will take with me. Group sharing on that.</p>	<p>See II.C below</p>	<p>Annually</p>

<p>Meditation & Mindfulness 5-Week Workshop for Stress Reduction Departmental Goals 1, 4, & 5 Student learning objectives 1, 2, & 3</p>	<p>Same as Med/Mindfulness</p>	<p>See III below</p>	<p>Only if time to offer this in 2011-2012 or 2012-2013</p>
<p>REL368 Namaste: Mysticism, Meditation, and Servant Leadership (Contemplative & Service Learning in India) Fall 2010 & again in 2013-2014</p> <p>Departmental Goals 1, 2, 4 & 5 Student learning objectives 1, 2, & 3</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Color tube method & sharing 2. Circle and Written – reflection method as used by Spiritual Life group (II.B). 3. Spiritual mapping exercise 4. Final essay exam. 	<p>Use I (integrating themes listed under learning objective #3) and II.B below.</p> <p><u>Spiritual mapping exercise</u> placing heavy emphasis upon the years right before college, during college, and during this class. Categories: One’s idea of God, values, peak spiritual experience, how handle stress, etc. @ each developmental stage.</p> <p><u>Final essay exam questions</u> are basically a reframing of the 3 learning objectives in light of their encounter with course readings and experiential learning.</p>	<p>Term 3, 2010. If find a grad student intern, do a follow up assessment 2nd semester via survey, individual interviews, and/or focus groups</p>
<p>REL363 Suffering & the Sacred</p> <p>Departmental Goals 1&2 Student learning objectives 1 & 2</p>	<p>Same as REL 368</p>	<p>One final exam question will specifically ask how the course assisted them with learning objectives 1 & 2</p>	<p>Probably not offered again until 2012-13 or later</p>

ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS:

I. (Alice Povey Color tube method): Students place differing colored tubes on representations of specific components of the class/program/ departmental offering .YELLOW = a new insight; meaningful; GREEN= I want to explore further or grow more in this direction; RED=yuck; doesn't work for me; BLUE=doesn't work for me but helps me identify how it is helpful to other people and/or traditions. Have a scribe other than me record comments.

II.A Written reflection: Hand out a year long summary listing the various categories of departmental offerings (worship, pastoral care, interfaith understanding, social justice, pre-seminary advising, etc). Have students circle all the learning experiences they helped lead and/or engaged in.

They are then instructed to notice which category of offerings had the most circles, noting how this can give them insight into their spiritual "type" (i.e. mystic, thinker, feeler, social action, healer/peacemaker) and gifts, including the ways the most readily connect with the Holy at this time in their life.

Next phase: Ask:

- A. In what ways--if any, have two or three of the items you circled helped you explore, deepen, or expand your sense of meaning, purpose, values, and/or self-knowledge?
- B. " " " "...help you explore, expand, deepen or clarify your sense of interconnection with self, others, world, and the Sacred?
- C. In what aspect of your spiritual life do you seek further growth [this helps them with setting intentionality around their own spiritual journey and growth, and helps me discern program offerings for the future]?

II.B Similar to II.A Hand out a summary listing of the various categories of learning which occurred during class (topics read and/or discussed, specific readings, contemplative exercises, other experiential and service learning, places of travel, etc.).

They are then instructed to notice which category they had the most circles, noting how this can give them insight into the spiritual pathway they are naturally drawn toward(i.e. raja yoga-meditation, karma yoga – work and right action, bhakti yoga – love and devotion). Also notice how you responded to jnana yoga—Self-Inquiry/discerning true vs. false self

Next phase: Ask:

- A. In what ways--if any, have two or three of the items you circled helped you explore, deepen, or expand your sense of meaning, purpose, values, and/or self-knowledge?
- B. “ “ “”...help you explore, expand, deepen or clarify your sense of interconnection with self, others, world, and the Sacred.
- C. In what aspect of your spiritual life and musings about meaning and purpose do you seek further growth?

II.C Similar to II.A and II.B. Hand out a summary of the various categories of learning experiences which occurred. Circle the experiences that were meaningful (choices: silence, liturgy of the hours, intro to contemplative prayer; talk given by monk; Mass; community conversation over meals; other: _____).

Next ask:

- A. How was the item circled meaningful?
- B. Has this retreat allowed you to search, explore, deepen, expand, or clarify your spiritual journey? Your faith and/or relationship with the Sacred? for their spiritual life, followed by collecting written responses

CORNELL COLLEGE'S LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

One: Be able to acquire, analyze, interpret, and communicate knowledge; possess skills including, but not limited to, writing, reading comprehension, critical thinking, quantitative reasoning, information literacy, and oral communication

Two: Understand the methods and practices of the natural sciences, social sciences, arts, and humanities:

- as a result of their experiences with various methods of inquiry, graduates will recognize and apply different disciplinary and interdisciplinary forms of thinking;
- as a result of their experiences with a major or concentration, graduates will possess depth of understanding and research skills in at least one method of inquiry;

Three: Possess intercultural knowledge and recognize global perspectives;

Four: Integrate and transfer knowledge and skills from one setting to another;

Five: Be cognizant of their responsibility for individual, civic, and social choices.