

Cornell College
CHAPLAIN & SPIRITUAL LIFE OFFICE Assessment Plan
Mission Statement, Learning Outcomes, and Learning Opportunities

Person Submitting this Form:	Catherine Quehl-Engel
Date:	April 2014

Mission Statement:

Provide spiritual guidance, support, exploration, growth, voluntary devotional expression, and opportunities for manifesting love and healing peace in our individual and collective lives on campus and in the world.

Program Goals:

- Provide spiritual accompaniment, care, and healing amid occasions of personal, campus, national, and global brokenness.
- Teach contemplative wisdom and related practices from diverse spiritual traditions.
- Foster interest in spiritual practices and growth, not only for personal renewal, stress reduction, solace, exploration, and strength, but also:
 1. to awaken awareness of inter-connective oneness and loving communion between self, others, creation, and for many, though not all, the Divine.
 2. to consciously live, love, lead, and serve as instruments of healing peace.
- Help students and others explore and clarify their sense of meaning and purpose.
- Deepen appreciation of how religious traditions and spiritual practices contribute to moral courage, compassionate service, and social justice.
- Offer opportunities for inter-faith exploration and understanding for expanding love, dismantling religious-based discrimination and fear, and enriching intercultural knowledge, global citizenship, and peace. This includes inter-spiritual literacy—awareness of shared values, beliefs, wisdom, and practices amid our differences.
- For those desiring it, foster the deepening of faith with a disposition of relinquished trust and reliance upon a higher power however each person understands it.
- Instill the importance of mindfulness; being present to Presence.
- Provide multi-disciplinary perspectives on spirituality such as scientific research on psycho-physiological and psycho-social benefits of meditation/interior prayer.

Intended Student Outcomes (Items being assessed are emphasized in bold):

As a result of their experiences in our program, students, faculty, staff, and others will...

- learn the healing wisdom of stillness, silence, and related contemplative practice for their busy and often over-extended, multi-tasking lives, not only for spiritual, emotional, and physical wellbeing but for improved communication and relationship skills.
- **increasingly respond to brokenness, weakness, fear, and non-life giving thoughts about themselves and their life circumstances with compassion, non-aggression, humble acceptance, as well as return and surrender to indwelling life force or Spirit for assistance. This response leads to the experience of both personal and social transformative healing.**
- increasingly relinquish and re-align with Indwelling Spirit or life force energy as one's Deepest, Truest Self rather than with the tyranny of over-identifying with the ever changing pleasant and unpleasant thoughts which "hook" us. This relinquished shifting of awareness, including while in the midst of the daily life activity and encounters, not only heals but also empowers one for the demands and difficulties of loving service, leadership, and engaged citizenship.
- enlarge their understanding of diverse religious beliefs, spiritual wisdom, values, and practices, including what is shared in common.
- deepen their sense of meaning and purpose.
- **expand ability to enter non-dual awareness ("God consciousness"; "unitive consciousness"; "Buddha mind"; "putting on the mind of Christ"; mysticism; tuning in to "the field.>"). The result is increased awareness of inter-connective oneness and loving communion between self, others, creation, and (for those who seek it) the Divine.**
- **increase conscious living as an instrument of peace as ones transmitting Divine life/life force energies of love, light, appreciation, and healing wholeness into the world**

Learning Outcomes and Opportunities:

How do the specified outcomes support the College’s Educational Objectives; and where are students provided opportunities that will help them achieve these outcomes.

Cornell Learning Objectives: 2. Possess intercultural knowledge and recognize global perspectives; be cognizant of their responsibility for individual, civic, and social choices. Cornell's Educational Priorities: Communication, intercultural literacy, ethical behavior, citizenship, wellbeing, knowledge

Curriculum Map:

Introduce (I), reinforce (R), and/or emphasize (E) the skills/abilities necessary to achieve intended outcomes.

	<u>Intended Outcome 1</u> Learn the healing wisdom of stillness and silence for their busy and often over-extended, multi-tasking lives, not only for spiritual, emotional, and physical wellbeing but for improved communication and relationship skills.	<u>Intended Outcome 2</u> Increase awareness of inter-connective oneness and loving communion between self, others, creation, and (for those who seek it) the Divine.	<u>Intended Outcome 3</u> Increase conscious living as an instrument of peace as ones transmitting Divine life/life force energies of love, light, appreciation, and healing wholeness into the world.
Deep Abiding Program	I, R, E	I, R, E	I, R, E
Friday Meditation Group	I, R, E	I,R,E	I,R,E
Monastic Retreat	I	I	
Fall Retreat		I, E	I
Christian Mysticism Course	I, R, E	I,R,E	I
Peace Vigils	I	I	
Chapel programs	I, R	I,R	I, R
Spiritual care and guidance (individual & group work)	I,E	I,E	I

	Intended Outcome 4 Deepen their sense of meaning and purpose	Intended Outcome 5 Increasingly relinquish and re-align with Indwelling Spirit or life force energy as one's Deepest, Truest Self rather than with the tyranny of over-identifying with the ever changing pleasant and unpleasant thoughts which "hook" us. This relinquished shifting of awareness, including while in the midst of the daily life activity and encounters, not only heals but also empowers one for the demands and difficulties of loving service, leadership, and engaged citizenship.	Intended Outcome 6 Enlarge their understanding of diverse religious beliefs, spiritual wisdom, values, and practices, including what is shared in common.
Inter-faith Dialogue & Exploration programs	I		I, R, E
Deep Abiding Program	I, R, E	I, R, E	I, R, E
Friday Meditation Group	I, R	I, R, E	I, R, E
Monastic Retreat	I, R	I	I
Fall Retreat	I, R	I, E	I, E
Christian Mysticism Course	I, R	I, R, E	I
Peace Vigils	I, R		I, E
Chapel programs	I, R, E	I	
Spiritual care and guidance (individual & group work)	I, R, E	I, E	I
Visiting lecturer (creative writing, religion, & kinesiology classes, and with athletic teams and Writing Studio training)		I	

	<p><u>Intended Outcome 7</u> Increasingly respond to brokenness, weakness, fear, and non-life giving thoughts about themselves and their life circumstances with compassion, non-aggression, and humble acceptance combined with return and surrender to indwelling life force or Spirit for assistance. This response leads to the experience of both personal and social transformative healing.</p>
Inter-faith Dialogue & Exploration programs	
Deep Abiding Program	I,R,E
Friday Meditation Group	I,R,E
Monastic Retreat	I
Fall Retreat	
Christian Mysticism Course	I,R,E
Peace Vigils	I
Chapel programs	I,R,E
Spiritual care and guidance (individual & group work)	I,R,E

Cornell College
CHAPLAIN & SPIRITUAL LIFE OFFICE Assessment Project Design

Person Submitting this Form:	Catherine Quehl-Engel
Date:	June 2014

Project and Outcome(s) Being Assessed:

The Cycle II assessment project will use the Deep Abiding program created in 2013 which uses compassion meditation/heart focused interior prayer and related wisdom from diverse spiritual traditions.

The program being assessed is intended not only for participants' personal healing, wellbeing, and empowerment. The program also relates to the College's learning objectives of inter-disciplinary knowledge, intercultural literacy, moral courage, civic engagement and social responsibility. In other words, the program seeks the original purpose of many Western and Eastern contemplative traditions: to live, love, lead, and serve as instruments of healing peace, and to awaken awareness of our inter-connective oneness.

Beyond learning a formal as well as an informal version of the practice that occurs while in the midst of daily life activities and encounters, six learning sessions addressed the following topics:

- Diverse religious and cultural understandings of indwelling life force energy or Spirit, and heart-focused contemplative practice throughout human history;
- Growing scientific research on both psycho-physical and psycho-social healing benefits of meditation/interior prayer;
- Wisdom from mystics, sages, and activists/social justice leaders on
1) healing peace and empowerment through self-surrender, compassionate embrace of one's weakness, and identification with indwelling life force energy or Spirit as one's deepest Self; 2) the relationship between contemplative practice and compassion, empowered action, leadership, and awareness of our inter-connective oneness as a human species and planet.

Intended Learning Outcomes being accessed:

- 1. Increasingly respond to brokenness, weakness, fear, and non-life giving thoughts about themselves and their life circumstances with compassion, non-aggression, and humble acceptance, combined with return and surrender to indwelling life force or Spirit for assistance. While this response leads to personal healing and empowerment, assessment focus will be upon**

transformative social healing.

- 2. Increase awareness of inter-connective oneness and loving communion between self, others, creation, and (for those who seek it) the Divine.**
- 3. Increase consciously living as an instrument of healing peace transmitting Divine life/life force energies of love, light, appreciation, and healing wholeness into the world.**

Assessment Question(s):

The chaplain will give participants a Qualtrics web-based software survey taken before the program (Survey A) that acts as a baseline and control group. This is compared with a second survey taken immediately after the program ends (Survey B). Chaplain also gives participants a form to fill out during session one in which each person identifies a non-life giving habitual thought about themselves, as well as someone who troubles them. A short answer questionnaire is also completed (and discussed) at the final session of the program. It includes reflection on how things are with the non-life giving habitual thought and relationship with those who trouble them identified at the start of the program.

The following questions for are asked using one or more of these methods to address intended outcomes:

Intended Outcome #1:

- In Survey B ask if and when participants engaged in the interior prayer of the heart/compassion meditation practice amid daily life encounters for this communal healing purpose. For example, did they turn to this practice during occasions of fear, disappointment, or inability to control a situation?
- In questionnaire taken at end of program ask if the program and its spiritual practices improved relationships with family, co-workers, friends, and community members. If answer is yes, ask for examples.
- In surveys ask about feelings/attitudes toward Cornell College. Ask the question several different ways. Note whether there were consistent increases in positive feelings/attitudes by the time the program ended.

- Compare Surveys A and B asking participants to what extent they are able to:
 - 1) recognize when they are over-identifying with a non- life giving anxious thought or feeling;
 - 2) accept and respond to fears, imperfections, or anxious thoughts/ feelings with tender mercy;
 - 3) experience spiritual solace and strength during times of sorrow, difficulty, or loneliness;
 - 4) experience their being housing a peace, tender mercy, and strength greater than my own;
 - 5) The ability to experience surrender/relinquishment in life giving ways;
 - 6) Likewise, experiencing positive transformation, healing, and new life by loosening the tight grip of trying to remain in control;
 - 7) The ability to ask for help when in need.

Intended Outcome #2:

- A.** Explore whether there is increased consciousness of, and cooperation with, the grace and flow of Indwelling Spirit amid everyday life activities. Do so by asking how often, if ever they experience:
 - Awareness of indwelling Spirit/life force energy amid activities;
 - Oneness with the Sacred amid daily life;
 - "Flow" states (define).
- B.** Explore whether there is an increase in experiences of being led by, or entwined with, some larger mystery. Do so by asking how often, if ever they experience:
 - Meaningful coincidences (define);
 - Their being influenced or guided by a spiritual force greater than self;
 - Their physical being housing a peace, tender mercy, and strength greater than their own.
- C.** Explore whether there were reported increases in mystical awareness of inter-connective oneness with other people and creation. Do so by asking how often, if ever they experience:

- oneness with other people and creation in a way that words can't convey;
- approaching relationships with others through an awareness of Spirit or universal life force energy working in and through their being;
- increased reports of approaching encounters with other people and creation with awareness of the Sacred or universal force dwelling in and through them.
- Increased reports of approaching relationship with self via an awareness of Spirit or universal life force energy in and through one's being.

Intended Outcome #3:

- Ask participants if they engaged in the informal practice of sending out healing, compassionate intention to others while in the midst of everyday life activities and encounters. If so, when? If so, how often for the following occasions:
 - A) When wanting to send healing, gratitude, respect, or compassionate intention to someone.
 - B) When wanting to be a healing presence.
 - C) In moments like hearing an ambulance, seeing someone struggle, or witnessing suffering in the news.
 - D) Wanting to send healing and compassionate intention to those who trouble me.
 - E) Wanting to send healing and compassionate intention to people passing by or in a public space (i.e. while in meetings, class, restaurants, the Commons, airports, or while walking on the Ped Mall).
 - F) I'm not engaging in this practice at all.

Intended Uses of the Assessment:

Results will help improve quality of Deep Abiding Program, the ongoing weekly meditation group, retreats, and workshops.

Gathering and Analyzing Evidence:

Method to Collect Evidence	Method to Analyze Evidence	Assessment Question Addressed	Timeline
Survey A (baseline/ control group survey) and Survey B (end of program survey) sent out by chaplain using Qualtrics.	Chaplain compares baseline (control group) survey with survey responses given at end of program. Ask same question a couple different ways to strengthen interpretation of data. Have another set of eyes or two verify findings. Look for patterns or repeating themes in written responses. To what extent do they resonate with learning objectives and themes found in wisdom from contemplative traditions?	All	Prep surveys in November. Launch program end of January 2015. Chaplain analyzes with another set of eyes confirming sometime in spring or summer 2015.
During Session One participants identify a non-life giving habitual thought about themselves, as well as someone who troubles them.	During final session ask participants to briefly reflect in writing their relationship seven weeks later with that non-life giving habitual thought and relationship with the one who troubled them.	All	same
Written reflections during last session using questions from 2013	Look for patterns or repeating themes. To what extent do they resonate with learning objectives and themes found	All	same

	in wisdom from contemplative traditions?		
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Interpreting Evidence:

What strategy will we use to make meaning of the results? How will we ensure we use the information? Our plan for interpreting the results and using them to inform our practice is:

Follow guidelines used in the academic study of spirituality: compare participant responses in quantitative and qualitative data with key themes in at least one spiritual tradition which utilizes meditation/interior prayer. FYI that intended outcomes being measured are based on key spiritual themes found in Franciscan, Carmelite, Vedanta, AA, and several other Eastern and Western spiritual wisdom traditions.

Adapt program if assessment results do not confirm intended outcomes.

Involvement:

Who will be involved in this assessment project? What role will each of us play?

Work with Elizabeth to wisely adapt the Qualtics surveys used in 2013.

Participants: Interested students, faculty, staff, and community members.

Assessment: Use student, faculty, or staff colleague to verify my data.