

Interfaith Council Meeting

Date: October 6th, 2026

Time: 11:00 AM- 12:00 PM

Location: The Gathering Space

Facilitator: Dr. Kathryn Hidelberger

Note Taker: Zoe Seaver

ATTENDEES

Dr. Heidelberg, Dr. Vespa, Zoe Seaver, Malak, Dr. Beidler, Dr. Lewinson, Dr. Lidke, Ahmon, Sahr Mbirwa, and Victoria

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes from the previous meeting were reviewed and approved.

REPORTS

Welcome and sharing: If you could invite everyone at Berry to experience a tradition from your life for a day, what would it be?

- Vespa: I would love to show everyone the hikes here at Berry. I love taking people to my favorite trails.
- Malak: Inviting everyone to spend a day of Ramadan to experience fasting and enjoy meals as a community.
- Victoria: A day of what we do for Christmas in my family.
- Dr. Beidler: There is a tradition my husband does, with our friends. They make crafts together, and it is cool to see how the artist work.
- Lidke: A tradition I love is chanting. It does not have to be a particular language or tradition, but a collection of people to come together and sing.
- Dr. Heidelberg: As a Christian, we often talk about finding every moment holy. The holiest moment of my day is reading books with my child. It is magical and special about my child interacting with the holy word.
- Sah: My family and culture is West African. We love to dance and will dance to any celebration.
- Dr. Lewinson: The festival of the Harvest, Sukkot. Our synagogue celebrated by building the temporary dwelling that the members built and decorated. The celebration of the harvest is a celebration of the glory of food and shelter.

- Zoe: The celebration of Pascha and the after-mass feast is special. Specifically, cracking eggs together to celebrate the resurrection is a great experience.

1. Old Business

a. Debrief Solidarity Week events

i. Interfaith Candlelight Reflection

1. The event had a good turnout of students.

ii. Speed-faithing

1. The opening comments by Dr. Hiedelberger were very eloquent and impactful.
2. A good number of the students showed up to participate. Roughly 30-40 students.
3. Reflections of Dr. Heiberger's students were positive and enlightening to them. They said it was a valuable opportunity.

b. Revising IFC bylaws – thoughts on [Strategic Plan](#) and current [bylaws](#)?

i. For reading / reflection: [Habits of Successful Bridgebuilders](#)

1. We should change the current bylaws to reflect on the new strategic plan and make updates.
2. The KPIs of the strategic plan regarding religion:
 - a. Increase student participation in spiritual life, high-impact events, and programs to foster faith expression, enrichment, and exploration
 - b. Invest in the culture of mentoring by designing and implementing a spiritual mentoring program.
 - c. Encourage a broad and diverse range of campus ministry opportunities and strengthen relationships with local churches and places of worship.
3. A document we could complement with the strategic plan is “The Mission of Values Statement.”
4. The new plan does not have much about navigating differences. The closest to that concept is KPI 1.
5. We have a good opportunity to hold a nurturing of faith, intercultural knowledge, and navigating differences. We should

not have these concepts lost due to the lack of these in the strategic plan.

6. We should have KPI 1 be directly referenced in our bylaws.
 7. We should have at least one representative from SGA in the meetings. Reach out to Lindsey Norman for more information.
 8. Include a student rep from the Office of Belonging, Chaplin's Office, and possibly from the Department of Religion and Philosophy. Possibly bring Lifeworks into this council to create jobs?
 9. Shifting our name to "office" to create more visibility and student involvement as a possibility.
 10. Dr. Hedeilberger said that she talked to Chaplin Huggins, and there is a talk about creating a multi-faith area that has an interfaith prayer room.
- c. Matt Kaemingk and Shaïd Hamid book tour – proposal submitted to Templeton Pluralism Fellowship
- i. Chaplain's Office has agreed to officially co-sponsor
 1. Want to have the Provost and President to promote this as well.
 2. We are waiting to hear back from the fellowship about the proposal.
 - ii. Total budget estimate (honoraria + meals): \$2300
 1. We could use our budget for their book as a council reading.
2. New business
- a. Programming for 26-27
 - i. Latif Bolat – Dr. Lidke got in touch and recommended a Fall 2027 visit to campus
 - ii. Hassan Hussain at the University of North Georgia – I emailed him to inquire about availability for a calligraphy workshop this year
 1. We do not see hands-on CE often, and students will find it intriguing.
 - iii. Other ideas to pursue? From our Sept. meeting:
 1. Intercultural celebration with food
 - a. Doing an interfaith potluck
 - b. Possibly doing it in the spring during Lent and Ramadan
 2. Nature + faith walk
 - a. Partner with the Department of Recreation for a bigger turnout.
 3. President chat/coffee house events

- a. Students have expressed interest to have the president do a CE.
 - b. This could be done in November if possible.
- 4. Dialogue piece regarding Berry Circle.