Drake Interfaith Toolkit

“Drake University values diversity as an institutional strength that encompasses a broad range of human differences…[and] moves past mere tolerance of diversity and creates a culture of inclusion that sees diversity of identities.”

-Drake University, drake.edu/diversity

**Terms Worth Knowing[[1]](#footnote-1)**

Interfaith the way in which one’s interactions with those who are different impact the way one relates to their religious and ethical tradition, and how one’s relationships with their own traditions impact their interactions with those who are different from themselves

Religious pluralism the achievement of respect for all parts of identity, relationships between people and communities who orient around religion differently, and common action for the common good

Worldview the foundational outlook one has on life that helps in making sense of the world

**Answering and Asking Questions[[2]](#footnote-2)**

When answering questions…

* Assume that the question is coming from a place of good intentions—the person asking the question is genuinely curious and not trying to offend you.
* Use “I” statements so as not to generalize everyone’s faith experiences based on your unique experiences.

When asking questions…

* Have the best of intentions—asking questions in an interfaith setting is not a time to spark debate or try to convert others but about trying to understand one another’s points of view better.
* Remember that your questions and tone have impact—even with the best of intentions, what you say has an impact on other people.

**Self-Reflection Questions[[3]](#footnote-3)**

On a scale of 1-4 (4 being the most), rank your confidence in or agreement with the following statements. There is no right or wrong response to these statements; this exercise is meant to encourage you to think about your comfort and confidence in various situations.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. I am aware of current national and global events that involve religion and religious diversity. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 1. I know what faiths and philosophies are represented in the student body of my institution. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 1. I know where to find resources to enhance my knowledge the religious/spiritual/secular needs of others. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 1. I am aware of topics and issues that may be divisive among religious/spiritual/secular groups. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 1. I can articulate my own religious, spiritual, and secular beliefs and values. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 1. I can communicate why interfaith cooperation is important from the vantage point of my values. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 1. I can build relationships with people from different spiritual, intentionally secular, and religious communities. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 1. I am aware of the groups/belief systems/religions I am **most** comfortable engaging. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 1. I am aware of the groups/belief systems/religions I am **least** comfortable engaging. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 1. I believe that building relationships with people of different beliefs is important to building a diverse and peaceful society. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 1. I have the desire to make the case for interfaith cooperation as a civic imperative, an element of multicultural competency, and a crucial element of a well-rounded education. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

What themes or patterns do you see in your responses? For example, do you tend to rank yourself higher in areas regarding knowledge and lower in areas regarding engagement (or vice versa)?

**Interfaith at Drake**

Students for Interfaith Progress and Service (SIPS)

SIPS seeks to provide a safe space for learning about the religious traditions, or lack of religion, of members; to foster interfaith leadership skills and knowledge among members; to provide interfaith education and engagement opportunities for the campus, especially the student body; and to foster interfaith understanding, tolerance, equity, and inclusion, and to be a visible sign of religious difference that challenges preconceptions of religious normativity and homogeneity.

interfaith@drake.edu

The Comparison Project (TCP)

TCP is a Drake University center for the practice of comparative philosophy of religion, the understanding of local lived religion, and the cultivation of interfaith literacy and leadership. TCP seeks to enrich impoverished understandings of religious diversity and to strengthen enfeebled practices of interfaith engagement.

comparisonproject.wp.drake.edu | comparisonproject@drake.edu

**Additional Resources**

Drake University Office of Equity and Inclusion | erin.lain@drake.edu

Drake University Office for Student Engagement, Equity, and Inclusion | tony.tyler@drake.edu

Drake University Religious Holidays Calendar | www.drake.edu/acad/calendar/religiousholidays/index.php

Interfaith Youth Core | www.ifyc.org |

Interfaith Leadership: A Primer by Eboo Patel

My Neighbor’s Faith: Stories of Interreligious Encounter, Growth, and Transformation by Jennifer Howe Peace, Or N. Rose, and Gregory Mobley

“To see the other side, to defend another people, not despite your tradition but because of it, is the heart of pluralism.”

-Eboo Patel

1. “Interfaith Engagement and Orientation Programs.” *Interfaith Youth Core.*  [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. “Frameworks for Interfaith Conversations.” *Interfaith Youth Core.* [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. “Interfaith Leadership: Self-Reflection Tool for Higher Education Professionals.” *Interfaith Youth Core.* [↑](#footnote-ref-3)