religion on campus

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introduction to religion on campus
Religion on campus

- Religion, a part of a broader concept of human spirituality, plays an important role in the everyday lives of most people (Gallup Poll, 1988).

- The Student Personnel Point of View (American Council on Education, 1949), one of the first documents to set forth principles for the practice of student affairs, stated that the “concept of education [should] include attention to the student’s well-rounded development—physically, socially, emotionally and spiritually, as well as intellectually” (p. 1).
Despite recent attention to spiritual development, the literature of higher education, research, and practice has consistently neglected this aspect of student’s development (Anderson, 1994).

This lack of attention is especially apparent in public universities where there are serious questions associated with the separation of church and state (Anderson, 1994).
Growing research shows that, while student’s question the role of traditional religion in providing a framework for spirituality, religion plays a major part in student’s moral and spiritual development (Temkin & Evins, 1998)
Religion and students

- The influence of religion on overall moral and social development of college students is positive: religiously involved students display higher standards of academic integrity (Sutton & Huba, 1995);
- they adjust to college better (Low & Handel, 1995);
religion and students

- they have healthier patterns of social drinking (Lo & Globetti, 1993);
- and they are generally in better health (Frankel & Hewitt, 1994)
This suggests that religious involvement provides rich opportunities for student development (Temkin & Evans, 1998)

However, cooperation between student affairs staff and campus-based religious personnel (if there is any) is virtually nonexistent.
religion on campus

- Campus organizations:
  - Intervarsity Christian Fellowship
  - Campus Crusades for Christ
  - Brothers Under Christ (BYX)
- International students
  - Islam
  - Hinduism
  - Buddhism
Religion on campus

- Colleges with a distinct religious identity are flourishing these days: new Catholic colleges are being established, while enrollments at Christian colleges and universities increased by two-thirds in the decade between 1992 and 2002.
Many believe the modern university has lost its way in a world crying out for attention towards values and beliefs.

Others believe we need to redefine the role of religion and spirituality in higher education.
OSU’s Campus religion
suggestions? Thoughts?

- How do we deal with someone like Preacher Bob or Preacher Armstrong?
- As annoying and sometimes comical as they might be, do they have a place on campus?
- Is it necessary to promote religion on campus the way the Student Personnel point of view suggests?
issues that arise

- Higher percentage of gay and lesbian groups is a flash point for religious conservatives.
religion in the residence halls

“Students are naturally drawn to concerns about religion and spirituality because the college years are, for most of them, a time of great personal reflection and transition in beliefs, values, and commitments” (Dalton and Crosby, 2007).
• “Theories developed by Fowler (1981) and especially by Parks (1986) can provide a strong theoretical basis for the involvement of student affairs staff in the development of students’ faith.”

• Parks (1986)
  • Young Adult stage between adolescence and adult
  • Mentoring community > Residential hall > living learning community
- Programming Models
  - OSU focuses on engagement, citizenship, wellness, and academics
  - Spiritual development and religion could be included but are generally avoided
  - “Sensitivity to the spiritual needs of students on the part of the residence life staff will result in a living environment that provides a greater sense of community.” (Temkin, Evans)
Opportunities for discussion and education of different religious and spiritual practices

- Focus groups/cell groups, open dialogue sessions

Opportunities to create experiences, activities and environments that enhance overall growth for students

- Recognize spirituality in every day lives

Promote healthier lifestyles

- Alcohol awareness, personal hygiene

- Students teaching students
Graceland University

- Based on the Christian values of human dignity, mutual respect, and social responsibility, Graceland welcomes persons of all faiths. It actively supports the counsel of its sponsoring denomination, the Community of Christ, to seek learning even by study, and also by faith; and indeed offers tangible expression of the church’s commitment to the open and free pursuit of knowledge through higher education.
Graceland’s faith community is one of openness and warmth where students from almost every religion can feel comfortable exploring their beliefs. Named as one of America’s Best Christian Colleges, Graceland takes pride in the diversity of religious life around campus, and although we are sponsored by the Community of Christ (about 50 percent of our students are members), our Campus Ministries team is happy to connect you with other faith communities. We also offer a Community of Christ Leadership Program for students who desire to serve as Community of Christ leaders now and in the future.
Campus Ministers directly under Dean of Students

- Meet with Student Life department on weekly basis
- Meet with Campus Ministries team on weekly basis and with individual committees
- Hold 3 weekly services for students - worship planning teams
  - Student participation - bands, sermons, testimonies
• Advises CHC President and house Chaplains
• Small Cell group meetings
• Personal Counseling
• Focus groups
• Prayer at the Bell
• Sponsor student clubs (Outreach International, Gospel Choir, CFA)
• Religious Celebrations and Presentations (Christmas, Hindu Holi Festival, Ramadan)
• Renaissance Week
- House Chaplains

- Campus ministries representative on each house

- House Inclusion Philosophy

- Elected by members of house to serve on house council and campus wide Council of House Chaplains (CHC)

- CHC President on Graceland Student Government and Campus Ministries team

- Floor devotions, Wednesday services, resource for students, prayer requests/concerns, communicate student religious and spiritual needs to Campus Ministries and Student Government
• CCLP - scholarship program
  • Required involvement with choices for students
    • Semesterly retreats, leadership role, team meetings, internship
  • Church Leadership minor
  • Return service for each year
The Controversy

- Conservatives vs Liberal Community of Christ Christians
  - Campus ministry team = liberal
    - Is the campus ministry team a clique?
  - Solutions
    - Dialogue sessions and integrating more traditional aspects to services
    - Is separate service the answer?
Discussion Questions

• How do you accommodate the needs of the various religious perspectives from one department?
  
  • Conservative vs Liberal? At a Christian school? At a public school?

• How would programs like this work in a public or state institution? What about at a religious school that was not willing to promote other religions? Would they work?

• How can spiritual development be made a bigger priority on public campuses?
**references**
