

## **ETHICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **The Ethical Framework for Religious and Spiritual Life at Syracuse University**

Chaplains, religious and spiritual group advisors, and recognized student religious and spiritual groups and chaplaincies function within *the Ethical Framework for Religious and Spiritual Life at Syracuse University* and operate in alignment with the mission, vision and values of Hendricks Chapel.

Each group's status at Syracuse University requires adherence to the specified conduct norms indicated in this document.

Violations of conduct norms place the person or group at risk of de-certification/loss of status, as determined by the Dean of Hendricks Chapel. It is expected that all participants within the religious and spiritual life of the University will identify with the broad aspirations and spirit articulated below.

The Framework has been reviewed and endorsed by the Chaplains, Staff and Dean of Hendricks Chapel, and stands in congruence with other University statements of mission, policy and procedure.

## **PROVISIONS OF THE ETHICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **Maintaining Commitment to Faith and to the University**

***When promoting their group to the campus community, all chaplains, religious and spiritual group advisors, and staff must clearly identify themselves as an affiliated group of Hendricks Chapel.***

When acting in the name of Hendricks Chapel or the University as a whole, groups must do so in an inclusive manner from the acknowledged foundation of the religious or spiritual group they represent.

Those professionals or volunteers who gain affiliation with Hendricks Chapel, whether as chaplains or religious or spiritual group advisors, are encouraged to speak openly about their particular religious or spiritual commitment under appropriate circumstances and to work actively to build their particular community on campus. Expressing doctrines, voicing opinions, and carrying on religious practice is considered an appropriate part of a group's behavior. It is understood that chaplains, religious and spiritual group advisors, and their affiliated staff and volunteers will represent specific religious and spiritual traditions and that their primary commitment is to serve the welfare of their own campus group, even while they are called upon simultaneously to serve the welfare of the entire Syracuse University community.

### **Balancing Particularity and Inclusiveness**

***Religious and Spiritual groups must be open to general participation by any interested student.***

They may, however, specify requirements for holding a leadership position and/or participating in a particular religious ritual.

### **Following University Policies**

***Chaplains, religious and spiritual group advisors, and staff must ensure that their groups follow the Syracuse University Code of Student Conduct.***

Chaplains, religious and spiritual group advisors, students, and staff should oversee that their groups follow the Syracuse University Code of Student Conduct. Religious and spiritual groups are expected to comply with all University policies, including but not limited to those that pertain to hazing, harassment, academic integrity, sexual and relationship violence, registration of student groups, use of campus facilities, and conduct of students.

### **Promoting Religious Freedom**

***A student must be able to freely participate in or leave a religious or spiritual group without being subject to harassment or procedures that compromise the student's autonomy.***

Chaplains, religious and spiritual group advisors, staff, and their student groups will support religious freedom on campus, enabling students to believe, or not, any particular teaching or idea. Syracuse University religious and spiritual groups should strive for a campus climate that honors the individual autonomy of each person, encourages open exploration, stimulates intellectual as well as spiritual inquiry, and supports the University's devotion to truthfulness and search for knowledge.

### **Respecting Religious and Spiritual History and Ancestral Connection**

***Chaplains, religious and spiritual group advisors, staff, and student groups should support the University's goal of making every student feel as much at home as possible, a goal which requires respect for the religious and spiritual convictions and /or ancestral identification of each student.***

The University supports the presence of a wide range of religious and spiritual groups, encouraging the formation of new groups to serve newly emerging religious/spiritual/cultural constituencies. Chaplains, religious and spiritual group advisors, and their staff should inform themselves of the varieties of religious expression available on campus and within central New York, to help students learn about the religious setting of their heritage. Of course, students are free to explore religious or spiritual options or embrace a religious tradition other than that in which they were raised, and chaplains, religious and spiritual group advisors will generously facilitate their process of exploration.

### **Upholding Religious Diversity and Civil Discourse**

***In public statements and activities, chaplains, religious and spiritual group advisors, staff, and student groups must avoid denigrating or de-legitimizing any religious group that has gained recognition at Syracuse University.***

Chaplains, religious and spiritual group advisors, staff, and student groups should cultivate respect for, and understanding of, the range of world religions, spiritual perspectives and secular thought. Such respect will be strengthened by open dialogue and discussion among two or more groups. Proselytizing by undermining another religious or spiritual community is considered a violation of good practice, and even sincere conversation should not be sought through deprecating other groups.

Chaplains, religious and spiritual group advisors, and their student groups should share their perspectives and commitments with others in a manner that avoids harassing, demeaning, or disregarding the integrity and freedom of other persons in making their own decisions in matters of religious faith and identity. They should avoid language that foments hatred or prejudice, or which otherwise undermines the community of respect and trust which is essential to free academic discourse and to a democratic society.

### **Respecting the University's Academic Mission**

***Chaplains, religious and spiritual groups advisors, and staff must not engage in any actions that (a) seriously compromises a student's academic standing, (b) removes students from campus by pressure or force or without their full consent, (c) places undue financial pressure on students, or (d) exploits the sexual or other vulnerability of students.***

Chaplains, religious and spiritual group advisors, and their staff are expected to respect the goals and purposes of the University, avoiding programs or efforts that obstruct the achievement of those goals, especially regarding students. They should responsibly support the University's pursuit of the educational goals which form its foundation.

The overall programming calendar pursued by a religious or spiritual group advisor, or followed by their student group, should not be so demanding as to make it difficult for students who are committed members of the group to meet the academic obligations that constitute the primary purpose for University enrollment. While attending to potential conflict of interest with the University on this overall level, chaplains, religious and spiritual group advisors, and their staff are also encouraged to inquire as to the academic status of, and current demands on, individual students involved with groups.

### **Acknowledging Students' Relationships with their Families**

***Chaplains, religious and spiritual group advisors, and their staff are encouraged to be sensitive to the relationship between students and their families, and to be as open as possible with concerned parents while respecting the confidentiality of communication and individual autonomy of students as adults.***

In cases of uncertainty or conflict, the chaplain or religious or spiritual group advisor will confer with the Dean of Hendricks Chapel.

### **Publicizing with Integrity**

***In publicizing their group and its programs, chaplains, religious and spiritual group advisors, staff, and students must create and distribute only materials that clearly convey their affiliation with Hendricks Chapel (either with text or use of the Chapel logo), who they are, the focus of their group or program, and any connections to off-campus organizations.***

The name of the sponsoring group needs to be large enough to be easily read by anyone encountering the item, whether a flyer, poster, newspaper advertisement, or banner. The name “Hendricks Chapel” or “Syracuse University” may not be used in publicity without the knowledge and consent of the Dean. Use of the University’s seal must conform to the guidelines established by the University.

### **Honoring Confidentiality**

***Chaplains, religious and spiritual group advisors, and staff, whether clergy or lay, function as religious and spiritual professionals and therefore must honor the confidentiality of students and others who they guide and counsel.***

Such confidentiality governs unless specifically waived or as covered under specific legal provisions. Likewise, student religious groups should be educated to maintain an atmosphere where the personal communication encouraged by a religious setting is respected as confidential.

### **Dealing with Disagreements**

***When chaplains, religious or spiritual group advisors find themselves in disagreement with the University administration, fellow chaplains, or religious or spiritual group advisors, they should handle this disagreement as an internal matter.***

Should claims of conscience bring a chaplain, religious or spiritual group advisor to publicly disagree with established University policy or procedures, the chaplain, religious or spiritual group advisor should notify the Dean of Hendricks Chapel, preferably in advance of the situation. In cases of conflict among chaplains, religious group or spiritual group advisors, those involved will try to work with one another to achieve a resolution. If a solution is not reached at this level, those involved should seek counsel with the Dean of Hendricks Chapel, who may bring the matter to a meeting of the Hendricks Chapel Advisory Board, Human Resources, or other University personnel.

### **Conduct and Status**

**Departures from The Ethical Framework will initially be handled through discussion with the Dean of Hendricks Chapel and, if appropriate, other relevant University personnel.**

In the case of egregious or continuing violations by a religious or spiritual leader, the individual will be asked to relinquish the Syracuse University identification card, syr.edu e-mail, parking pass, etc. gained through the Office of the Dean of Hendricks Chapel.

Before termination stage is reached, the Dean will confer with the religious or spiritual supervisor(s) within the sponsoring organization or denomination and/or, as appropriate, other University personnel. In the case of egregious or continuing violation by a student organization, recognition will be withdrawn, as determined by the Dean of Hendricks Chapel.

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