

**University of New Hampshire  
Division of Student Life  
Chaplain and Spiritual Life Association**

### **1. Purpose**

UNH is home to several campus ministries representing a variety of world religious and spiritual traditions. To meet the spiritual needs of our students, it is recommended UNH establish a volunteer chaplain position to provide spiritual guidance upon request to faculty, students, and staff and provide non-denominational, non-sectarian invocations/benedictions at University events. The chaplain will establish and work with the UNH Chaplain and Spiritual Life Association, a team of associated chaplains which consists of trained religious practitioners. The members of the UNH Chaplain and Spiritual Life Association may be asked to serve students seeking a particular religious perspective or who are seeking spiritual guidance and counsel. The Chaplain and Spiritual Life Association would help students stay connected with their faith traditions, as well as coordinate on-campus worship opportunities, and help students find off-campus congregations and organizations.

### **2. Mission**

The UNH Chaplain and Spiritual Life Association is a spiritual community of associated chaplains, representing many of the world's religious, spiritual, and faith traditions, who share a collective commitment to serving the spiritual needs of the students, faculty, and staff of The University of New Hampshire.

We seek to:

- create structures of inclusion for the diversity of faith traditions present on campus;
- create and support a rich diversity of caring communities in which students, faculty, and staff can explore and nurture their deepest convictions, and engage in honest and respectful conversation around questions of ultimate meaning, purpose, and value;
- cultivate and embody our respective traditions within the larger campus community through practices, celebrations, observances, and opportunities for reflection;
- offer programs and events across the University that promote religious, spiritual, and moral life;
- foster an intellectual life at the University that articulates thoughtful, diverse religious and spiritual voices that encourage spiritual literacy and interfaith understanding;
- model for the wider community how people who may come from profoundly different religious and spiritual perspectives can live cooperatively in community and appreciate and learn from each other's differences;
- collaborate with other professionals within the University to encourage healthy practices, relationships, and ways of living that promote the overall intellectual, physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being of the community and its members;
- provide pastoral support and guidance to members of the University, both in times of crisis and of celebration;
- create awareness throughout the campus community so that students, staff, faculty, and others will recognize the Chaplain's office as the place to turn in times of need and crisis; and
- hold each other accountable in mutually supportive ways to the very highest standards of University chaplaincy.

### **3. Student Learning Outcomes**

As a result of engagement with Chaplain & Spiritual Life offerings, students (as well as participating faculty & staff) will....

1. Be aware of the needs of our students, staff, and faculty in order to offer pastoral care and support.
2. Be engaged in conversations about the meaning of their lives.
3. Be encouraged to grow spiritually, emotionally, relationally, and intellectually.
4. Gain a deeper understanding of their own faith traditions.
5. Expand their awareness of beliefs, traditions, and practices from other religious and spiritual traditions.
6. Identify the Chaplain's Association as a place where those in our community may turn during a crisis.

### **Metrics**

- Online campus surveys and focus groups
- Increase in worship services, lectures, dialogue circles, and other sponsored events hosted by the Chaplain and Spiritual Life Association
- Chaplains' response to those in distress by contacting, visiting, inquiring, referring, and follow-up.
- Through small groups and one-on-one meetings where students are guided to grow in their faith.
- Students and others in the campus community are seen weekly by the University Chaplains who offer compassionate listening, spiritual care, insight, and guidance during seasons of difficulty, often making referrals to Psychological and Counseling Services and Health and Wellness.

### **4. Appointment and Term**

The Assistant Vice Provost of Student Life or designee will appoint an ordained religious practitioner from Durham or the surrounding community to serve as a volunteer university chaplain and associate chaplains for a two-year renewable term. The university chaplain will meet with the Assistant Vice Provost of Student Life or designee on an as-needed basis or at least once per semester.

### **5. Function and Role of University Chaplain**

The University Chaplain will serve as the University Chaplain who will work closely with the Associate Chaplains as a convener in order to:

- a. Provide spiritual guidance on request to students, faculty, and staff.
- b. Provide brief nondenominational, nonsectarian prayers at convocation, commencement, and other invited university events. (E.g. Honors Convocation, ROTC Commissioning, Nurses Pinning, OT Commissioning, Baccalaureate, Commencement, university-sponsored memorials for faculty, staff, and students.)
- c. Identify trained religious practitioners willing to provide spiritual guidance and counsel to students seeking faith perspectives to serve as associate chaplains and refer them to the Assistant Vice Provost for Student Life for appointment recommendation.
- d. Refer students, faculty, and staff to the Associate Chaplains as need be.
- e. Convene Chaplain Association regularly (at least once a semester).
- f. Coordinate the use of the MUB Memorial Room in cooperation with the MUB Director or their designee.

## **6. Background check, training**

The chaplain and associate chaplains will be subject to a background check pursuant to USNH policy. USY.V.C.4.2 (<https://www.usnh.edu/policy/usy/v-personnel-policies/c-employment>). The chaplain will complete the UNH online Illegal Harassment Prevention and Conflict of Interest training programs.

## **7. Email Account and Webpage**

The chaplain or associate chaplains will not be eligible for wages, salary, or other benefits from UNH or the University System. UNH will provide a volunteer appointment letter to the Chaplain and Associate chaplains and the SVPSL or designee will assist in providing private space in the MUB Memorial Room as required for the chaplain and associates to meet with students. The University shall provide a “@unh.edu” email address and access to University secured wireless access, contingent upon the chaplain’s adherence and compliance with the University’s “Acceptable Use of Computing Resources Policy” and all other University policies. The SVPSL will sponsor a webpage for the chaplain and the associate chaplains under the Division of Student Life website where they are able to post a membership roster and describe the services offered.

## **8. Event Access and Liability Coverage**

The Chaplain and Associate Chaplains will have access to UNH-sponsored events, programs, and facilities at the same cost as faculty and staff. They will be covered as additional insureds under the USNH General Liability Policy. They are covered for liability if sued individually when performing on behalf of the University

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### **Process for designating University Chaplain and Associate Chaplains:**

- The University, through the Office of Student Life, extends an invitation to selected religious/spiritual practitioners to recognize and designate them as University Chaplain and Associate Chaplains with an emphasis on representation from a diverse group of religious and spiritual communities.
- In most instances, the designation would be to those religious/spiritual practitioners affiliated with a seacoast area religious or spiritual community.
- The Assistant Vice Provost of Student Life is responsible for establishing and carrying out certain guidelines and procedures for the designation of those to serve. (See below.)
- The final designation of such individuals will be made by the Assistant Vice Provost of Student Life with final approval by Senior Vice Provost for Student Life and Human Resources.

### **The University Chaplain will work with the Senior Vice Provost for Student Life or designee to coordinate the application and onboarding of Associate Chaplains.**

The process is as follows:

- Cover letter submitted from the person requesting the appointment.
- A resume/CV particularly highlighting pastoral training and experiences.
- Letter of support from the religious or spiritual community served by the practitioner who is seeking to be an associate chaplain.
- Review of all documents by the University Chaplain.
- Submit all documents to the Assistant Vice Provost for Student Life for review.
- If approved, the Senior Vice Provost for Student Life will issue an appointment letter.