### New York University

### Wagner Graduate School of Public Service

Multifaith Leadership in the 21st Century UPADM-GP 254

# Spring 2024

Thursdays, 2:00pm-4:30pm

194 Mercer St Room 306B

Professor Chelsea Garbell

Email: chelsea.garbell@nyu.edu

Office: 238 Thompson Street, Suite 491

Office Hours: Thursdays 12-1pm, and by appointment

# Course Description and Objectives:

In the context of an increasingly polarized American society, this course seeks to train students to mobilize diverse faith communities together for the greater good. Unleashing the power of their own story, students will articulate their values and explore the ways it can be shared. The course will draw on case studies from historical and contemporary faith leaders who have achieved success in creating sustainable change, as well as interrogating relevant current affairs as they arise. Students will learn to recognize how stories are used to motivate action, to recognize the ways that race, power and privilege play a role in elevating and downplaying stories and to identify the role values play in motivating action.

**Shared Agreements:** I approach each class, student, and topic as an invitation to be present with candor, curiosity, compassion, and care. Please join me in this invitation.

# Course Requirements

## Required texts

Patel, E. (2016). *Interfaith leadership: A Primer*. Beacon Press.

Peace, J. H., Rose, O. N., & Mobley, G. (Eds.). (2014). *My neighbor’s faith: Stories of*

*interreligious encounter, growth, and transformation*. Orbis Books.

All other readings will be listed in Resources on Brightspace or sent via email. Our class discussions will be based on the assigned readings and will be much richer if you come prepared.

## Weekly Readings & Responses

Each week students will post a response to the readings and a question for further consideration in the Discussion Section of Brightspace. In addition to your own post, you will respond to the question posed by a colleague.

## Discussion Leaders

Each week, two students will lead part of the class discussion, bringing questions from the readings to direct the conversation.

## Assignments

* **About Me**
	+ Submit a paragraph sharing a bit about yourself or anything you’d like me to know.
* **Paper 1: Story of Faith**
	+ To be discussed in class. 3-4 pages in length.
* **Paper 2: Spiritual Ethnography**
	+ To be discussed in class. 3-4 pages in length.
* **Paper 3: Interfaith Theology/Ethic**
	+ To be discussed in class. 3-4 pages in length.
* **Final Presentation: Public Narrative**
	+ To be discussed in class. 5 minute presentation.

# Assignments and Grading

Attendance, Participation, Discussion Facilitation 30%

Paper 1 20%

Paper 2 20%

Paper 3 20%

Final Presentation 10%

# Attendance Policy

It is of utmost importance that students attend class consistently, and this is reflected in the grading rubric. If you need to miss class for any reason, please let me know as soon as possible, and we will discuss reasonable accommodations. Regular unexcused absences will have an impact on your final grade.

# AI Policy

Since personal reflection and critical thinking are part of the learning outcomes of this course, all writing assignments should be prepared by the student. AI may not play a role in your ideation, and you may not submit any work generated by an AI program as your own. Doing so will be treated as plagiarism.

## Henry and Lucy Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at NYU

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please visit the [Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) website](https://www.nyu.edu/students/communities-and-groups/students-with-disabilities.html) and click on the Reasonable Accommodations and How to Register tab or call or email CSD at (212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are strongly advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.

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## NYU’s Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays

[NYU’s Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays](https://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/university-calendar-policy-on-religious-holidays.html) states that members of any religious group may, without penalty, miss class when required in compliance with their religious obligations. Please notify me in advance of religious holidays and/or observances that might coincide with exams, assignments, or class times to schedule mutually acceptable alternatives.

# Wellness Resources:

As a University student, you may experience a range of issues that can interfere with your

ability to perform academically or impact your daily functioning, such as heightened stress,

anxiety, difficulty concentrating, sleep disturbance, strained relationships, grief and loss,

personal struggles. If you have any well-being or mental health concerns please utilize the Wellness Exchange. You can call the 24-hour hotline at **(212) 443-9999**, chat via the Wellness Exchange app anytime, [make an appointment](https://www.nyu.edu/content/nyu/en/students/health-and-wellness/services/counseling-services/counseling.html), or arrange a [same-day Urgent Counseling session](https://www.nyu.edu/content/nyu/en/students/health-and-wellness/services/counseling-services/counseling/urgent-counseling.html) to speak with a certified counselor about any day-to-day challenges or health concerns, including medical issues, stress, depression, sexual assault, anxiety, alcohol or drug dependence, and eating disorders. Furthermore, please approach me if you feel comfortable doing so. This will enable me to provide any resources or accommodations that I can.

# Course Outline:

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| **Date** | **Class Topic** | **Readings (Due by corresponding class)** |
| 1/25 | Introduction  | * Review of Syllabus
* [What Leaders Really Do](https://hbr.org/2001/12/what-leaders-really-do)
 |
| 2/1 | Narrative Identity  | * [Paul Ricoeur on Refigurative Reading and Narrative Identity](https://www.artsrn.ualberta.ca/symposium/files/original/8ce9575105e6c32982faef20f10e07d4.PDF)
 |
| 2/8 | Story of Self Workshop | * *Interfaith Leadership*, pp.1-37
* Marshall Ganz, [What Is Public Narrative: Self, Us & Now](https://dash.harvard.edu/bitstream/handle/1/30760283/Public-Narrative-Worksheet-Fall-2013-.pdf) (2009)
* Marshall Ganz, [Public Narrative, Collective Action, and Power](https://marshallganz.usmblogs.com/files/2012/08/Public-Narrative-Collective-Action-and-Power.pdf)
 |
| 2/15 | The Danger of a Single Story  | * Robert P. Jones, [*The Hidden Roots of White Supremacy* (2023), Prologue: Before America](https://web-p-ebscohost-com.proxy.library.nyu.edu/ehost/ebookviewer/ebook?sid=77d88dce-4863-431a-a497-22171f82d294%40redis&vid=0&format=EK)
* *My Neighbor’s Faith*, pp. 3-41
* Simran Jeet Singh, *The Light We Giv*e (2023), pp. xi-68

<https://thedecisionlab.com/biases>  |
| 2/22 | What is Pluralism?  | * Robert Putnam, [E Pluribus Unum: Diversity and Community in the Twenty-first Century](https://www.puttingourdifferencestowork.com/pdf/j.1467-9477.2007.00176%20Putnam%20Diversity.pdf) (2007)
* Abraham Joshua Heschel, [No Religion is an Island](https://utsnyc.edu/wp-content/uploads/Heschels-No-Religion-is-an-Island.pdf) (1991)
* *Interfaith Leadership* pp.41-66
* [Beloved Community](https://thekingcenter.org/about-tkc/the-king-philosophy/)

**Due: Story of Faith** |
| 2/29 | The Nature of Prejudice  | * [Intergroup Contact Theory: Past, Present, and Future](https://tedcantle.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/092-Intergroup-contact-theory-explained-Everett-J-2013.pdf)
* *My Neighbor’s Faith*, pp. 43-77
* Case Study
 |
| 3/7 | What is Faith?  | * *Interfaith Leadership* pp.67-86
* *My Neighbor’s Faith,* pp. 79-124
* Ariel Ennis, *Teaching Religious Literacy (2017),* Ch. 1-2
 |
| 3/14 | Interfaith Theologies  | * *Interfaith Leadership* pp.109-132
* bell hooks, *All About Love* (1999), pp.71-83
* Shawn Copeland (2022) [#BlackLivesMatter As Public Theology](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pylZZpLVRr8)
* [Identifying a Theology or Ethic of Interfaith Cooperation](https://www.interfaithamerica.org/resources/identifying-theology-or-ethic/)
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| **3/21** | ***Spring Break*** | ***Spring Break*** |
| 3/28 | Story of Us | * [If faith leaders want to reach Gen Z, meet them in the streets](https://religionnews.com/2021/10/21/if-faith-leaders-want-to-reach-gen-z-meet-them-in-the-streets/)
* [What Churches Offer That ‘Nones’ Still Long For](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/06/28/opinion/religion-affiliation-community.html?smid=nytcore-ios-share&referringSource=articleShare)
* *My Neighbor’s Faith*, pp. 125-162

Guest Speaker: Chris Woods, Senior Director of Inclusive Policy and Director of the NYU LGBTQ+ Center**Due: Spiritual Ethnography 3/31** |
| 4/4 | Ritual & Leadership | * Casper ter Kuile, *The Power of Ritual* (2021),readings tbd
* *My Neighbor’s Faith*, pp. 163-203
 |
| 4/11 | What is your Work?  | * *The Light We Give,* readings tbd
* *My Neighbor’s Faith,* pp. 205-240

**Due: Interfaith Theology/Ethic**  |
| 4/18 | Community Organizing as Multifaith Leadership | * *Interfaith Leadership* 135-170
* *My Neighbor’s Faith,* pp. 241-266
* Martin Luther King, Jr., [Letter from a Birmingham Jail](https://www.csuchico.edu/iege/_assets/documents/susi-letter-from-birmingham-jail.pdf)
 |
| 4/25 | Story of Now | Final Presentations |
| 5/2 | Closing | **Final Presentations**  |