**Religious Life and Community Services**

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**Office of Religious Life and Community Services**

The Office of Religious Life and Community Services of Dickinson College assists students, community members, faculty and staff to build connections, explore complexity of identity and values, and identify community needs. This occurs in reciprocal relationships whereby understanding of one's strengths, values, and contribution to the community is fostered. Through these we aim to increase engaged citizenship, sustainable community partnerships, and responsibility through the office's direction and programs.

**Community Services**

Dickinson students participate in a variety of service endeavors that help younger students, Carlisle residents, and people in Arizona and Jamaica and beyond. Listed below are a number of our offerings, from a day of service to full immersions.

**Thursday Thoughts** - Every week, students from the community service office offer their reflections on service, leadership, and academic orientation.

**Day of Service** - A first taste of service through a one-time project that meets the most current community needs. These opportunities are aimed as first time service experiences and opening student’s eyes to see needs of the community beyond the limestone walls. Students, faculty, and staff join together to recognize the interdependence of Dickinson and the Carlisle community.

**Commserv** - organizations that are committed to various aspects of service to the community on a weekly basis.

**Immersions** - Trips to various areas, such as New Orleans or Guatemala, to fully immerse a group of Dickinsonians in service in a new culture. These vary from a weekend to two weeks. Service trips immerse students and staff in communities throughout the US and abroad that seek to confront underlying societal needs by asking questions, seeking connections, and serving in various cultures and communities. Intentional reflections that explore intrapersonal ideals before service, intrapersonal values amongst peers and neighbors during service and community values after service aim to increase engaged citizenship in all who participate.

**Bonner** - Bonner Leaders serve at local agencies, applying the education they have learned in the classroom in a practical way in the community. They are leaders who build a bridge between the Carlisle community and the Dickinson campus by promoting change in their fields of interest. The Bonner Leaders Program is a program of the national Corella and Bertram F. Bonner
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Foundation of Princeton, NJ. At Dickinson, it is supported by the Office of Religious Life and Community Services. Bonner Leaders serve at local agencies, applying the education they have learned in the classroom in a practical way in the community. They are leaders who build a bridge between the Carlisle community and the Dickinson campus by promoting change in their fields of interest. Bonner Leaders complete 450 hours of community service during a calendar year period. This breaks down to 8-10 hours per week during the academic year and 150 hours over the summer (which may be completed in a student's hometown). Bonners are placed at a local agency, such as the YMCA or Project S.H.A.R.E., where they work alongside the staff while providing services to Carlisle residents. Bonner Leaders participate in reflection and training activities.

Service placements are available to touch all aspects of life and are chosen by the Bonner Leader. Some examples of possible placements include:

- Working with at risk populations (elderly, homeless, etc)
- Tutoring and Mentoring children
- Working with animals
- Conducting Community Based Research
- Supporting the environment

**Community Partners** - community leaders and organizations which have partnered with the Dickinson Office of Religious Life and Community in order to provide for the community

**Religious Life**

During college, many students explore and celebrate with their faith communities in Carlisle. Student groups meet regularly for fellowship and worship in many different traditions on campus.

**Religious Life Clubs** – There are a number of student clubs and organizations on campus that cater to religious needs. A list of religious life clubs is available online at (www.dickinson.edu/departments/commserv/organizations.html).

**Campus Worship** – The Office maintains a calendar of opportunities for on-campus worship, which is available at www.dickinson.edu/departments/commserv/campusworship.html.

**Faith Communities Near Dickinson** - information on the wide array of different faith communities located near campus and welcoming to students is available online at www.dickinson.edu/departments/commserv/faithcommunities.html.

**Religious Holidays Policy**

Dickinson College is fully committed to tolerance, understanding and support of the diverse faith traditions to which members of our community adhere. While classes will still be held, the administration and faculty will make every effort not to schedule College-wide and/or public events on major religious holidays. The traditional calendar already recognizes many major Christian holidays. In addition, the College calendar will also include Rosh HaShanah,
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Yom Kippur, the first evening of Passover, Eid-al-Fitr, and Eid-al-Adha. Notations will be made on the CASE calendar to designate the official beginning and ending times of these and other major religions’ holidays. Students of any faith who observe these religious holidays or others that typically restrict their participation in regular activities may also be excused from academic, athletic, and other responsibilities on those days by following the guidelines in the policy below.

The College (offices and departments) will not schedule public and/or college-wide events on the following major religious holidays: Rosh HaShanah, Yom Kippur, the first night of Passover, Eid-al-Fitr, and Eid-al-Adha. The College calendar already excludes events on Christmas and Easter. Students must make arrangements with their faculty members in advance when an exam (including quizzes), papers, and other work are due on major religious holidays. A student will not be penalized for missing class or not handing in work on a holiday due to religious observance. However, students must notify faculty, in writing, reasonably in advance of the holiday if they will be absent from class for religious observance. Likewise, students who observe these holidays must notify, in advance, their coaches should they have athletic practice or scheduled competition at a time of religious observance. While faculty and staff are expected to be sensitive to the needs of observant students of all faiths when planning lectures, field trips, work and other curricular activity that might conflict with observance of a major religious holiday, any course work or other obligation that is missed remains the student’s responsibility to complete. Faculty members are expected to make reasonable arrangements for students to complete missed work; students must make up the work.

A calendar of selected religious holidays celebrated by Dickinson students is available online at www.dickinson.edu/departments/commserv/religious.html.

Related Information

History/Revision Information

Responsible Office/Division:

Effective Date:

Last Amended Date:

Next Review Date:

Also Found In: Office of Religious Life and Community Services Web Site (www.dickinson.edu/departments/commserv)