The Office of Interfaith Campus Ministries

Annual Report 2008-2009

The College of Wooster
Master of time, we gather in this season of change to begin a new school year.  
In recent days we have rushed and we have dawdled,
Shared greetings and farewells,
Felt the rush of anticipation and the dread of routine,
Prepared and organized - procrastinated and made messes,
Been kind and gracious, thoughtless and curt.
So much has taken place in our own lives and in our world that it is impossible to hold it all.

And so we give you thanks for holding each life and all events both large and small in your compassionate and passionate embrace.

We give thanks for those whom we may not have taken time to really notice -
  staff who have prepared thousands of meals and served them with a smile,
  workers who tend the grounds and clean our messes,
  faculty and staff who have been preparing for this year for years,
  administrators who seek to rise above the details to cast a vision,
  administrative personnel who tend to the details, schedules, and spreadsheets.
And we give thanks for those whose generosity make this College a place of learning, laughter, and growth - trustees, parents, families, and friends.

Widen the angle of our vision and refocus our attention that we might use this year wisely.
Distract us from the frantic pursuit of individual goals - in the pause to catch our breath, allow us to hear one another’s dreams and see one another’s contributions - and in so doing, contribute to loftier goals than any one of us could ever imagine.
Derail delusions of grandeur, replacing them with humble awareness of finitude and daily dependence upon strangers, enemies, and the more-than-human world.
Shatter our protective habits and attitudes, opening each of us to a world of difference that both challenges and enhances our sense of justice and mercy.

Give to this College community the will to see with clarity our unique identity.  Allow us to claim both our gifts and limitations.  Bind us together in this time of change that we might see and understand who we should be - individually and together - in this time and place.

In a spirit of deep gratitude for all of the blessings and opportunities that we have been given, we pray.  Amen
From The Chaplain

Dear Reader,

Once again, I am honored to present the annual report for The Office of Interfaith Campus Ministries. The 2008-2009 academic year has been rich and we are eager to share it. Each year the student groups are more committed to an important balance of nurturing religious and spiritual particularity and growing in interfaith proficiency and outreach. In a world that is painfully aware of the challenges and risks posed by religious diversity, we at Wooster are working together to experience both the similarities and the differences among our traditions and to build skills and passions for creating places of dialogue.

As a staff and student community, our objective is now to field two major interfaith events each semester. This year we offered an interfaith fast that accompanied the observance of Ramadan and a multifaith eco-reflection trip in the fall. In addition, several student groups collaborated to raise over $1,000 for homelessness in the first annual "sukkathon" sponsored by Hillel. The Spring programs were a viewing and discussion of the film "Encounter Point" (a documentary about peace efforts in Israel and Palestine) and our annual spring Leadership Summit.

In addition to the collaborative efforts, students and staff meet regularly for a wide range of programs that seek to reach more particular needs and religious orientations. I am pleased to report that the number of students involved continues to grow with Overholt visitors up to approximately 3,060 this year from 2,400 last year and sacred space visitation at 2,046 which is up almost 1,000 from 1,057 last year. OICM staff have contributed to the wider campus life in a number of ways, including teaching courses, serving on committees and task forces, and offering pastoral care in times of loss.

As always, I welcome your thoughts and reflections on our shared ministry and its future.

Reverend Linda J. Morgan-Clement,
Campus Chaplain and Director of Interfaith Campus Ministry
The College of Wooster

"Maybe Wooster didn’t have a building dedicated to Hillel, but Wooster emphasized interfaith dialogue and the importance of knowing and respecting individuals with religious beliefs other than one’s own. I have had wonderful opportunities to not only learn about other religions, but to teach others about Jewish traditions and practices."

OICM

Advisory Board
2008-2009

Paul Edmiston
Assoc. Prof. of Chemistry/Biochemistry & Molecular Biology

Michelle Johnson
Assoc. Prof. of Communications

Lisa Kastor
Director of Career Services

Amyaz Moledina
Assist. Prof. of Economics

Ryan LeBlanc ‘10
Chaudhry Sharif ‘10
Sarah Tarbell ‘09

Staff

Linda Morgan-Clement
Chaplain & Director of Interfaith Campus Ministry

Molly Dowell Baum
Chaplaincy Intern

Joan Friedman
Campus Rabbi & Assoc. Prof. of Religious Studies & History

Karen Hahn
Catholic Campus Minister

Annie Michaels
InterVarsity Staff

Nancy Jackson
Administrative Assistant & Bldg. Manager
Sixteen students participated in OICM’s first Interfaith Camping Retreat, held on October 3-4, 2008. The idea for such a retreat came from Sarah Uschak (*‘11), the 2008-09 spiritual life coordinator for Catholic Student Association, who hoped that the retreat would be an opportunity for students to explore the ways in which God can be experienced in nature and the wisdom of different faith traditions on environmental stewardship.

The retreat was held at nearby Mohican State Park, where the group set up camp along the river and settled in for some fun and reflection. The first evening of the retreat included roasting hot dogs, time for the participants to share some of their spiritual experiences involving the outdoors or nature, campfire songs, and prayer. Rain came during the night, but most of the retreatants stayed warm and dry and awoke refreshed for the morning hike ahead.

The hike followed a trail along the river, and the group stopped at various points along the path to listen to a prayer or words of inspiration focusing on the beauty of the Earth and our responsibility to care for our environment. Later that afternoon, the students engaged in a discussion on environmental justice issues, participated in a movement meditation, had time for silent reflection or prayer, and discussed ways to take action on environmental issues on campus. Students who were involved in different groups on campus that didn’t often collaborate had the opportunity to engage in dialogue and plan ways that they could work together on issues of shared concerns.

Several of the students who came on the retreat had not participated in campus ministry programs before and enjoyed being introduced to OICM through the Interfaith Camping Retreat. Staff and students alike would like to continue this program in the future, particularly for its value in giving students who consider themselves to be spiritual but not religious the chance to reflect and share perspectives with others from different traditions or views.
On Saturday, March 7, thirteen College of Wooster folks (ten students, Linda Morgan-Clement (Chaplain), Nancy Anderson (Director of the Wellness Center), and Molly Dowell Baum (Chaplaincy Intern)) departed from Cleveland for Sehithwa, Botswana. In actuality, the service/reflection trip to the small village in northwestern Botswana began years ago. Over the years students and staff involved in Interfaith Campus Ministries’ international service/reflection trips have raised money and placed a small amount aside for a future year. Thanks to the dedication and vision of four previous groups, OICM had enough money (when combined with funding from OICM’s general budget and student activities budgets) to make the trip.

Our goal is for a small group of Wooster students to develop a community that can plan and successfully execute an international trip where they are exposed to people, cultures, needs, and talents outside of their regular experience. We seek to engage the group in a ‘praxis’ (action/reflection/action) experience that deepens their awareness of global and human interdependence and connection. The reflection component brings into play a range of resources including those from the various faith traditions represented by the group and by our hosts.

For the students, the trip began in late September of 2008 when they were chosen and made the commitment of time and money. Over the next five months, students met for almost forty hours to form a community, plan for the trip, learn about our destination, and raise approximately $4,500. While in Botswana we lived in tents and worked with a program called Warm Hands, which is a daycare and support center for orphans and vulnerable children. In a country where over 50% of the population is impacted by HIV/AIDS, the impact on children is staggering. The program director, Israel Tjakahara, asked us to paint walls in the school building, help clear tall grass from the playground, and play with the children. The team accomplished all three endeavors with great enthusiasm.

More important than the work that we did were the relationships and experiences that we gained. Walking in the town as Israel introduced us to several members of the community, we were able to gain a sense of the generational impact of colonization and the challenges of developing a healthy and viable community. Playing with children and talking with members of the town, we could not help but experience the common human bonds that we all share. And singing and dancing around the campfire accompanied by feelings of awe at the star-studded expanse of the sky, left an indelible sense of our finitude and our interdependence. We have returned to Wooster with a sense of hope that the very real differences of our worlds do not mean that we cannot find new possibilities for living together.
Sukkathon

By Joan Friedman, Campus Rabbi

The Jewish holiday of Sukkot lasts seven days and celebrates the fall harvest season in the Land of Israel and also recalls the temporary dwellings of the Israelites in their desert wanderings after leaving Egypt. (Lev. 23:39-43)

This year Hillel put up its sukkah, a temporary structure in which Jews eat meals and even sleep during the holiday, as usual, but with a new twist: Students were encouraged to fulfill the Torah’s injunction to “dwell” in the sukkah. This year the efforts raised funds to help the homeless. For every hour they spent in the sukkah, friends and relatives pledged funds that we sent to the Interfaith Hospitality Network of Greater Cleveland, a group that shelters homeless families in churches and synagogues while helping them with schoolwork, job hunts, housing searches, and more.

In addition to raising nearly $1000, Hillel’s new 9’ x 12’ sukkah sheltered a number of intrepid students for several nights and was the scene for various group dinners and even an open mike night. The participation of students from En Route, Catholic Student Association, Peace By Peace, and Wooster Christian Fellowship made this joyous holiday another opportunity for Wooster’s diverse religious population to demonstrate their respect for the integrity of each other’s traditions as well as their commitment to working and celebrating together as communities of faith.
“Worthy Questions helps students step back for a bit and reflect on how things are going in their lives,” says quester Ben Welbourne ’11, “It definitely fosters relationships that might not develop otherwise.” Graduating senior, Natalie Offen ’09, agrees. “The people in the group are not people I’m normally around, who I’m constantly eating dinner with or in classes with. It’s great to talk about ideas with a bunch of different people.”

Groups of nine to twelve student “questers” gather together weekly with an adult small group facilitator. “I come to small group because it allows for emotional and mental release,” says Jill Lee ‘11. Students have the chance to “check-in” with each other, sharing the happenings in their lives and the questions they are wrestling with, and have conversation loosely centered around the semester’s theme.

Our theme for 2009 is **Who Am I? Exploring Identity.** We welcomed twenty-one new questers and their mentors to the program at the opening retreat in January. This spring, we explored **Vocational Identity: What’s Career got to Do with it?; Going Home: New Identity, Old Environments; and, Who am I as I leave Wooster?** We will continue this theme in the fall semester, with topics such as **Identity Construction, Public vs. Private Identity, our Racial/Ethnic Identities and our Identities in Relationships.**

Questers are also assigned an adult mentor from the community or the College’s staff or faculty. Mentors and questers meet a minimum of three times per semester, but many pairs meet weekly or twice a month. John Hopkins ‘10 describes the mentor relationship as “an adult that you can confide in about anything.” Emily Howard ’11 adds, “it’s an adult perspective who’s not there as an authority figure, but someone you can trust. It’s been a really helpful relationship for me to have in college so far.”

“All too often, I feel as though the ‘Wooster Bubble’ keeps me disconnected from those outside the college,” comments Meghan O’Brien ’11. “Through interactions with my mentor, I’ve become more knowledgeable about Wooster and Wayne County generally. I’ve been introduced to a variety of individuals in the immediate area, people I likely would not have met in other ways.”

About once a month, the whole Worthy Questions community gathers as a large group—all questers and their mentors are invited—to explore the theme through interaction with a guest speaker, or other activity, and have intergenerational conversation. Student interns help to plan and lead large group meetings, as well as develop new themes, brainstorm speakers, communicate with questers and mentors, and provide student feedback to the program coordinator. This year our student interns were Emily Howard ’11 and Laura West ’11.

We will kick off the fall program on August 29, with an afternoon featuring Anne Morrison Welsh, recent author of *Held in the Light: Norman Morrison’s Sacrifice for Peace and His Family’s Journey of Healing.* Norman Morrison, Anne’s first husband, immolated himself outside the Pentagon in 1964, during the Vietnam War. Anne will share her story and invite the group to consider Thomas Merton’s “False & True Self” and how courage, grief/loss, & forgiveness are at play as we answer the question "Who am I?"

We look forward to another year of conversation, reflection, and growth starting in the fall. Laura Pine ‘12 reflects, “I have realized that this organization has been good for both my intrapersonal and interpersonal growth this semester. I’m hoping that this growth will continue next year.”

For more information, please check out our webpage at [http://www.wooster.edu/campusmin/Worthy_questions.php](http://www.wooster.edu/campusmin/Worthy_questions.php).
Educational Outreach

Educational & Leadership Development

Academies of Religion
Covenant Network Conference
FYS Mentor Program
Montreat Collegiate Conference
Pre-Ministry Program
RELS26921-I Feminist Theology: Africa & Asia
Weekly Bible study
Weekly Torah Study
Worthy Questions

Publications

Communities of Faith Brochure
Reflections & Reminders Bulletin
Sacred Space Brochure
The Wooster Advocate
Unpacked Brochure
Website

Services to Individuals

Letters of Reference
Mentoring
Pastoral Counseling

In lab, I think about God, and in church, I think about lab. Wearing the ‘wrong’ hats in the ‘wrong’ situations provides regulation for me that resets balance.

Institutional/Public Outreach

Advising Center Task Force
Baccalaureate
Church ‘Fair’ for Local Congregations
Family Weekend
National Speaking Engagements
Orientation
Presbyterian Students & Family Reception
Presbyterian Chaplains Association
President’s Diversity Task Force
Residence Hall Programs
Residential Life Staff Training
I am on a constant spiritual journey, always looking for new perspectives on life; I am much happier wandering the woods than keeping to the trail.

Groups & Programs

Spiritual Life
Ash Wednesday
Busy Student Retreat
Catholic Mass
Football team pre-season worship
Friday Muslim prayer
Hillel Seder
Interfaith Camping Retreat
Interfaith Shared Fast
Jewish Holy Day observances
Ramadan Fasting
Sacred Spaces
Shabbat Dinners
Spiritual Direction
Sukkathon
Sunday@ Seven
WCF, O.A.S.I.S.

Social Justice
BreakAway, W. Va. service trip
Drop Beats not Bombs
Hiroshima Exhibit
InterVarsity, Urban Plunge
InterVarsity, Child Slavery Awareness Week
Open Eyes-Iraq war display
SOA Protest
Service/Reflection Trip to Botswana
WVN, Hurricane Relief Trip
WVN Program Houses

Student Groups
Break Away
Canterbury Club
Catholic Student Association (CSA)
En Route
Fellowship of Christian Anyones (FCA)
Hillel
Muslim Student Association (MSA)
Peace by Peace
Sisters in Spirit
Wooster Christian Fellowship-InterVarsity
Wooster Volunteer Network (WVN)

Leadership Development
CSA, Campus Ministry Leadership Institute
Employment Opportunities
InterVarsity, School of Leadership Training
Leadership Development Workshops
Orientation Open House
Pre-ministry group
7 Retreats
2 Field Trips
Morris Endowment, Programs for Religion & Society

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Program</th>
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<td>OICM Programs</td>
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OICM Program Budget

- Student Programs: $9,000
- Worthy Questions: $1,200
- Presbyterian Outreach: $800
- Worship: $1,200
- Student Interns: $800
- Resources: $800
- Orientation: $800
- Overholt Building: $500
- Staff Retreat/Work Days: $1,500
- Professional Expenses: $500

**Total**: $17,100
Religious Dimensions of the College of Wooster

Self-Reported Religious Affiliation of Students at the College of Wooster

This data includes 412 students associated with OICM programs and was collected from 2004-2009. The term "Other" includes students identifying themselves as Unitarian Universalist, Buddhist, "spiritual," or "multifaith." The term "Other Christian" includes students self-identifying as Orthodox, Quaker, Moravian, Christian Scientist, or an unspecified Christian tradition.

OICM ........

Weekly activities for groups serving approximately 244 individuals each week

Overholt House space serves approximately 3060 visitors each year

Sacred Spaces serve approximately 2046 visitors each year
Companion God, we come before you this morning, having traveled from near and far.
Gathering in this place in the midst of an ending,
On the edge of a beginning;
Facing one of life’s many times of transition and transformation . . .
We pause with gratitude, awe and anticipation in your presence.

Gratitude, for all you have given, Generous One.
For the people –
Friends and families to companion us through life’s journey;
Mentors and peers who speak truths that help us to see ourselves more clearly;
Teachers, writers, and leaders who impart information that helps us understand our world more complexly;
Spiritual guides and courageous role models whose example offers a vision of full and compassionate living;
And experienced, gracious persons whose deep wisdom makes paradox seem plausible.
For the experiences that have filled our minds, hearts, and bodies with vivid memory –
The power of birth and the impotence of death,
The intensity of intimacy and anger’s chill,
Strangeness that startles and familiarity’s calm.
For the complexity and diversity of our lives which shapes and molds us into communities and into persons with distinct possibilities and decided limitations.

Mysterious Silence, we find ourselves frozen in awe – and praise you for
The grandeur of the natural world with its rich array of texture, scent, sound, and sight with infinitesimal details and breathtaking design:
For life, which is simultaneously resilient and fragile:
For all that we cannot comprehend;
And for that which is so simple or so beautiful that it takes our breath away.

Aware of the many ways our world in is need of healing and transformation, we ask for the power of your mercy in our midst. Restrain our selfish tendencies to hoard, devour, and betray. Calm the fears that lead to violence and domination. May our vast knowledge be accompanied by careful choices on behalf of societies and structures that are sustainable for all and may our wealth enrich the hungry, the weary, the sick, and the hopeless.

As this class of 2009 steps forth we ask a special blessing for each of them. Give them challenges enough to lift them beyond themselves and companions true enough to press them deeply into themselves; that they might become healers, singers and dancers, prophets, parents, artists, teachers, and leaders in the dreaming and crafting of a shared future that embraces goodness and compassion.

Hear our prayers and send us forth. Amen
OICM Mission Statement

The Office of Interfaith Campus Ministries at The College of Wooster exists to encourage and support the spiritual and religious development of students, faculty, and staff. In the midst of a diverse, multifaith people, Interfaith Campus Ministries seeks to provide possibilities and alternatives for spiritual growth, peacemaking, social justice, interfaith dialogue, and leadership development for individuals and the community.