

# Preliminary Report

*as of March 2022*



**Multifaith Strategic Planning Committee**

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## Significant Preliminary Findings

Our survey data on questions of identity and connections indicated that:

- Elon's population is overwhelmingly Christian, with sizable populations who identify as Spiritual but not Religious, Agnostic, Atheist, Secular, and Jewish.
- More than half (55%) of students report that their religious, spiritual, secular identities are moderately to extremely important to them.
- Among student and employee survey respondents, off-campus spaces were the most cited source of religious/spiritual/secular connections; and a fair number of respondents see no particular spaces or programs that provide sources of connection.

Our survey data on questions of climate, bias, and suggestions for improvement indicated that:

- When asked about bias at Elon, concerns about antisemitism were overwhelmingly the top area of concern for survey respondents.
- Anti-Muslim bias and ignorance of Islam were also areas of concern, but these were reported twice as frequently by faculty and staff as students.
- Experiences of religious/spiritual/secular bias are most likely to occur either online or in person in settings outside of class.
- There are strong differences of opinion among employees as to whether Elon's climate is characterized more by Christian privilege or anti-Christian bias; by contrast, few students see any anti-Christian bias on campus.
- Christian students report especially high levels of belonging, welcome, inclusion, safety, and feeling understood in relation to their religious identities.
- The students who feel the least welcome, included, understood, and safe (in relation to their religious/spiritual/secular identities) include a disproportionate number of students from minoritized religious groups.
- According to qualitative survey data, there is widespread support across campus for improving the experiences of minoritized religious populations at Elon.
- Survey respondents among students and employees indicate interest in more opportunities (or requirements) to learn about religion.

Our scan of campus and benchmarking exercises revealed that:

- Many areas of campus do not reflect a consideration of religious/spiritual/secular identity when considering issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Elon's co-curricular programs parallel those of leading schools with a couple of gaps (for example, programming around race and religion, Black religion, and harms caused by religion).
- While Elon has excellent academic programs for the study of religion, there are significant areas for potential growth, including within the Religious Studies department (whose dependence on part-time faculty and need for full-time faculty in Religion and Race is noteworthy) and within professional schools.
- One significant area where Elon does not lead is in the examination of the intersections of race, religion, identity, and spirituality.
- Elon is less religiously diverse than many other institutions at which we looked for benchmarking purposes.

## Background and Process

In February 2020, Elon University released its Boldly Elon strategic plan to achieve several goals supporting multifaith engagement. The plan seeks to:

- create structures and learning opportunities that engage all students, faculty, and staff in advancing their intercultural and multifaith learning and competencies
- strengthen support networks dedicated to the success of historically marginalized groups and increase representation from underrepresented groups
- ensure that graduates are creative, culturally agile, ethically grounded, and well-prepared to address questions of societal importance

Provost Aswani Voley and Vice President Jon Dooley tasked the 2021-2022 Multifaith Strategic Planning Committee to develop a new five-year multifaith plan that will advance the goals of Boldly Elon in line with the charge below:

1. make Elon a more religiously diverse, equitable, and inclusive campus and community
2. support opportunities for multifaith engagement for all members of the Elon academic community (regardless of their spiritual, religious or secular identity, tradition, or worldview), including:
  - a) the development of knowledge and skills for navigating local and global intercultural and multireligious contexts
  - b) spiritual formation and the expression of religious, spiritual, and secular identities, values, and practices (defined in broad, inclusive, and intersectional terms)
  - c) the examination of the historical, political, legal, economic, social, cultural, and artistic significance of that which can be categorized as “religious” or “spiritual”
  - d) disciplinary and interdisciplinary research and scholarship on religion
  - e) experiential and engaged learning about religion
3. engage an expanded circle of stakeholders among students, faculty, and staff across Elon’s campus and delegate responsibility for the success of the plan

4. articulate the value and importance of multifaith learning for all constituents, including prospective and current students and parents, faculty and staff, and our broader local, national and international audiences

During the Fall 2021 semester, the committee conducted an environmental scan of related campus resources and existing data, identified schools for benchmarking purposes, and administered campus-wide surveys to understand better the experiences and the religious, spiritual, secular, ethical, and cultural identities of faculty and staff. The next step is to analyze and make meaning of the data.

The committee completed this preliminary report in December 2021 (now updated in January 2022) and will submit a final report by early May 2022. The final report will include recommended curricular and co-curricular programs, staffing and ongoing advisory committees or other structures to ensure community engagement, resources needed, a communications plan, learning outcomes, and a suggested timetable for implementation. Finally, this report will include questions and considerations that will extend beyond the requested five-year plan.

## **Multifaith Strategic Planning Committee**

Kirstin Boswell, co-chair, University Chaplain and Dean of Multifaith Engagement

Geoffrey Claussen, co-chair, Associate Professor of Religious Studies, Lori and Eric Sklut Scholar in Jewish Studies, and Chair of the Department of Religious Studies

Brian Pennington, co-chair, Director of the Center for the Study of Religion, Culture, and Society and Professor of Religious Studies

Randy Williams, co-chair, Vice President and Associate Provost for Inclusive Excellence and Associate Professor of Education

Eleanor Finger, Assistant Vice President for Student Life, Dean of Campus Life, and Assistant Professor

Joel Harter, Former Associate University Chaplain (Fall 2021)

Alena Jain, Class of 2024

Baris Kesgin, Associate Professor of Political Science and Policy Studies, and Associate Coordinator of the International and Global Studies Program

Laké Laosebikan-Buggs, Director of Inclusive Excellence for Graduate and Professional Education

Andrew Monteith, Assistant Professor and Distinguished Emerging Scholar of Religious Studies

Barjinder Singh, Associate Professor of Management

Maddy Starr, Class of 2023

## Multifaith at Elon Now

Among the primary stakeholders in the Multifaith Strategic Planning process are the Truitt Center for Religious and Spiritual Life, the Center for the Study of Religion, Culture, and Society, and the Department of Religious Studies. While each of these units has overlapping responsibilities, each possesses its own distinct character and mission. The Truitt Center is concerned most with lived religious and spiritual practice and relationships among different communities; the Religious Studies Department develops curriculum and provides disciplinary expertise within a liberal arts context; and the Center for the Study of Religion, Culture, and Society provides a center for research and education, drawing upon resources both within and beyond the university.

### Truitt Center for Religious and Spiritual Life

The Truitt Center is a safe place for religious, spiritual, and ethical growth and interfaith exploration. Its mission is to encourage students to honor the spiritual dimension of life, be vitally connected to a faith tradition, embrace the present responsibly and the future with hope, and live the principles they value. In that spirit the Center serves the university by offering the resources for spiritual growth, education, and practice among diverse religious communities. It creates spaces and opportunities for students, faculty, and staff to gather, deepen, and observe these faith traditions and enables members of the Elon University community to learn more about other faith traditions and worldviews, and to live lives of purpose.

The Truitt Center fulfills its role through:

- Providing pastoral care and counseling.
- Providing opportunities for spiritual exploration within and across traditions, and spiritual formation in the practices of specific religious communities.
- Serving as a liaison between the university and various student and community organizations and helping them relate to each other.
- Resourcing and supporting many vibrant, religiously and spiritually oriented student organizations (including Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, and Hindu), secular, multi-



faith groups, as well as those exploring and practicing Mindfulness, Yoga, and Meditation.

- Attending to campus traditions and rituals.
- Facilitating learning and conversation, social justice action and reflection, and multifaith dialogue among the different communities who orient around issues of faith/non-faith and diverse world-views.
- Fostering relationships with diverse communities of faith on and off campus.
- Developing student leaders in multifaith engagement programs. (e.g., Multi-faith Interns and Spirit and Pride Interns)
- Working with the service-learning community to develop and expand multi-faith opportunities and projects on campus and in the Alamance community and beyond.

## Department of Religious Studies

As an academic department within the College of Arts and Sciences, the Department of Religious Studies at Elon University: 1) introduces students to the role of religion in political, social, cultural and historic contexts; 2) educates students in the scholarly approaches to the study of religion; 3) encourages an understanding of and respect for religious diversity as essential to the development of global citizenship; 4) contributes to the discipline of religious studies through a commitment to scholarly inquiry, research, and dialogue.

The Department of Religious Studies fulfills its role through:

- Providing disciplinary expertise for understanding religion, as well as understanding particular religious traditions.
- Researching and publishing in religious studies and related fields.
- Devising and implementing curriculum.
- Contributing to Elon's Core curriculum.
- Connecting with colleagues in other disciplines on research, course development, and programming.
- Mentoring undergraduate research on religion.
- Providing academic expertise on religion to the campus and public.
- Housing academic degree programs, including a multidisciplinary minor in Interreligious Studies.

The faculty of the Department of Religious Studies are accomplished teachers, mentors, and scholars who explore a wide variety of traditions through a wide variety of approaches. Traditions in which they specialize include Buddhist, Islamic, Hindu, Jewish, Christian, and irreligious and secular traditions, as well as other African and East Asian traditions; the methods that they use include historical, philosophical, textual, and anthropological methods, among others. Their work considers gender, sexuality, visual culture, ethics, politics, current events, popular culture, literature, ritual, science, economics, and many other areas of human experience.

The department is deeply committed to mentoring undergraduate research. From 2015 to 2021, members of the department have supervised roughly 141 credit hours of undergraduate research. Department mentees during this period have included sixteen Multifaith Scholars, ten Honors Fellows, nine Elon College Fellows, eight Teaching and Learning Apprentices, and four Lumen Scholars.

Approximately 900 seats are filled in Religious Studies courses each year. The department has consistently struggled to staff courses with full-time faculty, however: 46% of Religious Studies courses taught from 2017-2021 have been taught by adjunct faculty, a rate much higher than most other departments at Elon. The department also has a less racially diverse faculty than other departments at Elon—at present, all permanent Religious Studies faculty are white—and has identified a particular need for a faculty member with expertise on issues of race and religion.

## The Center for the Study of Religion, Culture, and Society

The Elon Center for the Study of Religion, Culture, and Society (CSRCS) highlights and promotes the interdisciplinary study of religion. This faculty-led center engages with scholars from disciplines across Elon's campus together with students, staff, community members, and experts from the region and beyond. Center initiatives foster teaching, scholarship, and dialogue that cultivate intellectual community and civic action. Pursuing fulfillment of Elon's commitment to multi-faith education and engagement, the CSRCS convenes and facilitates dialogue that advances the understanding of the role of religion in society with intellectual rigor and academic integrity.

The CSRCS fulfills its role through:

- Promoting and resourcing faculty development in the area of religion.
- Convening and planning events and programs to educate Elon and the public about religion.
- Highlighting and promoting interdisciplinarity in faculty research on religion.
- Hosting scholars from outside Elon and connecting them with Elon students, faculty, and staff.
- Promoting undergraduate research on religion.

Signature programming in the CSRCS includes an interdisciplinary bi-annual scholarly symposium, the Multifaith Scholars (MFS) program, two other undergraduate research programs, and a full calendar of events like speakers, films, and panels. It provides direct support to faculty teaching and scholarship by the development of course materials and content, the arrangement of guest speakers for classes, and funding and logistical support for faculty scholarship and publication.

The Multifaith Scholars program is a two-year undergraduate research and community engagement program for juniors and seniors. Five new juniors are welcomed every year and provided with a \$5000 scholarship for each of two years to support their mentored research project or other education costs. Student projects focus on the role of religion in society and MFS have included students from a wide variety of majors including journalism, computer science, film and television arts, international and global studies, and many more. Originally funded through an Arthur Vining Davis Foundation grant, MFS has attracted a significant amount of national recognition for its distinctive design and for the accomplishments of its scholars such as peer-reviewed publications, post-graduate fellowships, online publications, and fellowships for graduate study.

Staffing for the CSRCS currently includes its Director, the Director of the Multifaith Scholars program that is housed in the center, a faculty scholar who serves a two-year term, and a part-time Communications Intern from the School of Communications. The Director teaches a 1/3 load in Religious Studies and the MFS Director and CSRCS Scholar each receive two course releases per year. It shares a Program Assistant with the Truitt Center and Hillel, but that position has been vacant since March 2021.

## Scanning the Campus

As part of its preparatory work, members of the Multifaith Strategic Planning Committee undertook an “environmental scan” of Elon University programs and units to understand where—outside of the Truitt Center, Religious Studies, and the CSRCS—work or commitments that we might build on or gaps that call for our attention might emerge. Among our findings are these:

### Academic Calendar

Elon’s academic calendar, like the academic calendars of almost all universities in the United States, is oriented around a Gregorian Christian calendar. The university’s winter break coincides with Christmas. Not only is the university closed on Easter Sunday, but the university is also closed on the day following Easter (“Easter Monday”), ostensibly to allow travel during the Easter holiday. The university seldom schedules major university events on Sundays, and more often schedules major events for Saturdays (e.g. New Student Convocation, Family Weekend Faculty Meet-and-Greet), although Saturdays are marked as a sabbath day by a fair percentage of the Elon community.

In 2018-2019, however, the university took two significant steps regarding Saturday events: the University stopped holding final exams on Saturdays; and the University moved commencement from Saturday to Friday.

### The Kernodle Center for Civic Life

#### Mission

The Kernodle Center inspires, educates, and prepares students and campus to partner with diverse communities to address local and global challenges, and gain a deeper understanding of their responsibility to actively contribute to civic life. The center serves as the convener of community-based engaged and experiential student learning opportunities in collaboration with faculty, staff, and community partners to address the common good.

## **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Statement**

The Kernodle Center for Civic Life strives to be a model of inclusion across Elon's campus. We believe that a genuine appreciation of diversity and intentional inclusion are essential to the fulfillment of our mission. We are deeply committed to advancing a community of engagement where students, faculty, staff, community members, and other stakeholders can interact with each other across differences in political beliefs, socioeconomic status, religious backgrounds, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, ability level, race, ethnicity, or nationality. We will create and cultivate an environment where authentic dialogue is valued, differences are welcomed, and engaged community stakeholders can interact.

## **Community Partners**

The Kernodle Center for Civic Life has established a number of community partnerships including schools, nonprofits, government agencies and some have a religious affiliation or were founded under religious auspices.

## **Student Engagement Opportunities**

Alternative Breaks: Immersive service experiences that are designed to help students address domestic and global social issues while introducing them to introduce students to new communities while deepening their relationships with each other through the shared experience

Elon Volunteers (EV!): This is Elon's hub for students interested in opportunities to engage in service through regular programs, one-time events, and Alternative Breaks. They target six social issue clusters and provide diverse engagement opportunities within these clusters that could include, but is not limited to, cooking & delivering food, building houses, tutoring, mentoring, and supporting programs and activities.

- Affordable Housing & Food Security
- Civic Engagement
- Education and Youth Development
- Health, Wellness and Belonging
- Human Rights and Advocacy
- Alternative Breaks

## **Kernodle's Connection with the Truitt Center**

Most of the connections between the Kernodle Center and the Truitt Center have been planned between the Associate Director of Kernodle and the Multifaith Coordinator roles. There is keen interest from both centers to expand this relationship especially as Boldy Elon highlights civic life with campus and community partners being an area for further development.

### ***Examples of previous collaborations include:***

Planning for Alternative Breaks on a joint alternative break experience. Truitt and Kernodle staff have offered ideas. One example has been the plan to take students to the Pine Ridge reservation in South Dakota for an Alternative Break, however it is on hold due to COVID.

This past spring Kernodle partnered with a local program that incorporated interfaith and the environment with local partners in Hillsborough and Raleigh. In previous years the Kernodle staff have also partnered with Hillel staff on Alternative Breaks.

Both Truitt and Kernodle were awarded a grant this past summer through the non-profit Interfaith Youth Core, which they are still working on developing. They received funds to assemble a team of students (who got paid via a stipend) to do work on COVID hesitancy and educational outreach. There were some roadblocks but they had some success this summer having students table at various community events in Alamance County to share information about the vaccine.

There is interest in embedding a service project as part of the Ripple Conference for the future.

Kernodle is interested in expanding their community partner base to potentially include faith-based organizations. Both Truitt and Kernodle support and engage students in contemplative practices and this could provide greater access in ways that have not been previously utilized.

As community-based learning gets expanded with more community partners, the Kernodle Center for Civic Life looks forward to engaging more faculty through Religious Studies and the Center for Religion, Culture and Society but also across disciplines at Elon as other possible partners for purposeful work.

## **Center for Leadership**

The mission of the CFL aligns well with multifaith efforts: "Recognizing that leadership happens in many contexts, the Center for Leadership collaborates with colleagues and departments all

over campus to ensure students' leadership development is infused where they find meaning and purpose in their passions." The program emphasizes social justice aspects of leadership and fosters "the desire and ability to work collaboratively within diverse communities of people." The website's social change page includes resources from the CFL, CREDE, Kernodle Center, and Council on Civic Engagement, but not from the Truitt Center or other religious/multifaith organizations or partnerships. There is a rich and untapped opportunity in the CFL's annual Intersect Diversity and Leadership Conference. This student-led is dedicated to the exploration of diversity and inclusion more broadly but with no specific emphasis on multifaith engagement or religious diversity. The Intersect Conference has collaborated with the Truitt Center in the past, but there is no longer a partnership between the CFL, CREDE, and Truitt Center specifically for the conference. The Religious Studies Department and the CSRCS are aware of opportunities that the Intersect Conference presents but there has been little capacity in those units for pursuing them. There is an opportunity for more collaboration on both the Intersect Conference and the Truitt Center's Ripple Conference. Staff from the CFL and Truitt Center are beginning conversations on possibilities for engaging students in interfaith leadership practices and opportunities that may spearhead some of this collaboration between the two offices and train some attention on interfaith components of leadership.

## Residence Life

The Residence Life mission statement suggest rich possibilities for multifaith engagement: "Elon University Residence Life supports students' holistic development by integrating academic, social and residential experiences, developing dynamic, inclusive, and intellectual living communities, and encouraging students' growth as active global citizens." It offers explicit commitments to the value of diversity and inclusion and pledges that inclusivity will be an integral part of the development of the living-learning experience for all students, faculty and staff in each neighborhood.

Residence Life has had some ongoing connections with the Truitt Center:

- ***Professional and Student Staff Training: Regular Programming:*** The office of Residence Life has worked with Truitt in the past to assist with student and professional staff trainings often on topics such as mindfulness or supporting students and communities with care when there has been a student loss as part of building support and sharing resources.

- ***Interfaith House*** at Station in Mill point: ~8 students – 4 in each apartment was in place for ~ approximately 6 years and it targeted juniors and seniors but after a period of time, interest shifted among the students, so Truitt and Residence Life staff discussed a proposal for a sophomore floor. The proposal was submitted in 2020 but paused due to COVID as well as the search for a new Chaplain and Dean. Truitt wanted to reconsider how a revision of the scope of the LLC could draw more interest. This would be coordinated through Truitt's Multifaith Coordinator and an Associate Director in Residence Life. Residence Life is still interested in this concept, but the question is going to be if there is enough interest among students.
- ***Ongoing Programming Experiences:*** Currently, Residence Life does not have a formal structure in place that promotes regular, sequential connections between the department and the Truitt staff. Individual programming ideas have been implemented if student or professional staff have had interest, but these have been limited in number. Students are encouraged to attend Numen Lumen and to get involved in many ways which include in spiritual and religious life on campus.

## **Ideas for the Future**

- ***Chaplain Connected to Each Neighborhood:*** This has been a conversation since 2017, however it has not gotten traction. There is interest, but there would need to be some educational marketing done to highlight the many ways Chaplains serve the community in their engagement with students, faculty and staff so that students do not automatically reject the idea if the Chaplain in their neighborhood doesn't share their religious faith identity. What could this look like? Could it be like the assigned police officers to each neighborhood who come to different programs and events and mingle to forge relationships with the residents? Some neighborhood offices have space for onsite office hours.
- ***Community Development Model:*** At the core of their work, Residence Life staff are focused on building community, providing resources and developing genuine relationships that provide a sense of belonging. Elon's residential neighborhoods have been designed to be a progressive experience for our students that match their developmental process and staff programming keeps this in mind. Students have opportunities to explore how they make sense of their values, practice decision-making and find interests and connections that enable them to act with purpose. This could be an



intentional way to introduce spiritual and Multifaith exploration into the neighborhood planning with the live in faculty and staff.

- ***Contemplative Experiences:*** There is interest in piloting a dialogue series in one or two neighborhoods that could focus on Hillel's Ask Big Questions or other bigger spiritual, religious, ethical questions.

Residence Life is positioned well to partner with the Truitt Center, and to explore new ways to bring this connection into the neighborhood experiences as an integrated learning practice.

## Student Care and Outreach

Student Care and Outreach hosts 1-1 meetings with students as they consult with them around their goals. As part of these conversations, they provide individual referrals around religious, spiritual, and cultural matters when these topics are salient. They do not host programs or create other spaces where meaning-making around these identities is a central theme.

## Mental Health and Counseling

Mental Health and Counseling partners with the CREDE to co-facilitate inT/HERsections, a space for ALANAM folks that identify femme-of-center to connect, build community, and offer support. They hope to soon resume their partnership in co-facilitating the masculine-of-center group counterpart: Masculinities in ALANAM (MIA). There is no specific conversation about religion or spirituality.

Beyond those specific groups, individual therapy and group therapy naturally present students with space to explore areas like religion and spirituality, but there is no concrete data about how frequently these types of conversation arise.

## Gender and LGBTIA Center

Spirit and Pride is a genuine co-creative collaboration with Truitt Center, and as it develops, the speaker series and other resources are a good opportunity to highlight LGBTQIA+ voices from different religious, secular, and spiritual traditions. Queer and Divine podcast also highlights (mostly) student stories about intersections of Queer-identity and faith/spirituality (broadly conceived). One challenge for the podcast is more BIPOC guests and more guests who are not from Christian backgrounds. The GLC highlights Spirit and Pride events in its newsletter and via social media, and in part because of Spirit and Pride, the Truitt Center in recent years has done a better job sharing GLC events. There is no mention of religion/spirituality/multifaith or

Spirit and Pride on the GLC website. One challenge is that many students don't want to formally engage religion or spirituality; many have experienced religious trauma, many are eager to find ways to integrate LGBTQIA-identity and faith or spirituality, and many are seeking alternative spiritualities that are not tied to religions experienced as harmful. GLC staff have worked with students in recent years interested in earth spirituality, and Truitt Center and GLC just partnered on an event with Way of Belonging. The GLC and Truitt Center are also working together to create ally training for religious folks and faith communities. We might consider a focus group with LGBTQIA students and hear their experiences with religion, spirituality, and multifaith.

## Office of Sustainability

Truitt Center and Sustainability have collaborated in recent years around religious and spiritual intersections with nature and sustainability. Emerging efforts around earth spirituality with Way of Belonging (involving Truitt Center and GLC) are also notable. While not directly stated, this year's [Campus Sustainability Week](#) included multiple events with spiritual resonance. Iron Tree Blooming also hosted a meditation in the garden. There appears to be increasing interest in non-religious spirituality and connection to nature.

## Admissions

There is no robust information about religious identity or communities easily locatable on the admissions website. Their "diversity and inclusion" section includes a subsection titled "inclusive excellence" which has a statement about respected identities (this list includes "religion"). A brochure in this section about inclusive excellence lists the Truitt Center as a site for religious diversity, mentioning Catholic, Protestant, Muslim, and Jewish chaplaincy as one of its strengths. It identifies interfaith events as another feature of Truitt Center. It also identifies an interfaith Learning-Living Community as one of Elon's 25 living-learning communities. Committee members met with Admissions staff in Oct. 2021 including the Dean and VP and are pursuing ideas about recruiting for religious diversity.

## Dining

The Elon Dining website contains some content on sustainability, health, and wellness.

In the meal plan FAQs, there is one answer to the 'dietary restrictions' question that omits any references to religious concerns or restrictions. At certain times of year, they will seek to

offer appropriate menus for Ramadan or Jewish high holidays. Social media accounts announce the extension of hours to accommodate Ramadan. The staff reports that they seek to work with student organizations, Hillel and the Truitt Center. During Ramadan 2021, only one student contacted Dining Services to about meals during the month. Staff can tag menu items “Kosher” or “Halal” but have not been asked to do so thus far.

Food labeling is not visible inside the dining halls, but it is online and on the digital screens. Most online labeling directs students to the webpage for the ingredients. Elon Dining asks that conversation on these issues go through [Dining Engagement](#). Communication may be initiated by the Truitt Center, Hillel, or student organizations.

When Clohan Hall first opened an all-vegetarian dining space in spring 2014 (under the name “Green World”), it was described by Elon Dining as an effort to better meet the need of religious dietary requirements, including kosher requirements. Elon Dining worked with the Director of Elon Hillel and with Dr. Geoffrey Claussen to ensure that the food served in the space would be prepared on utensils that were not also used to prepare meat, such that the dining space could better meet kosher standards, but the space was never brought under kosher supervision. More recently, at the start of the 2021-2022 academic year, Clohan Hall became an all-vegan dining hall, but then reinstated meat options in response to student concerns. In the [FAQ](#) on the Elon Hillel website, the question of “Is there kosher food on campus?” has the following response:

*Yes. At “Green World,” in Clohan Dining Hall, all food is vegan/vegetarian and is prepared with pots and pans that are used only for vegan and vegetarian food. Paper plates and disposable cutlery are also available. Although the kitchen and dining halls are not under rabbinic supervision, Chair of Religious Studies Professor Rabbi Geoffrey Claussen has met with Elon Dining and reviewed recipes, ingredients, and food preparation procedures. Grab-and-go strictly kosher options are also available in select dining halls.*

*The Sklut Hillel Center boasts a dairy kitchen (meat-free) where students can come and grab delicious foods from the stocked pantry and fridge. This food is provided free of charge to our students thanks to the “Fill the Fridge” campaign supported by generous Jewish parents. Hillel also has an outdoor grill used to prepare kosher meat. Although not every single item in our kitchen has a heksher, we do not permit any treif in our house.*

*During Passover, the main dining halls offer matza and kosher-for-Passover style foods, and Elon Dining Services chefs also prepare kosher-for-Passover home-cooked meals at the Sklut Hillel Center in our carefully kashered kitchen.*

## Global Education Center

Staff positions include an Associate Director of Global Diversity and Inclusion. International Student Support Services reports very few collaborations with multifaith efforts, although some with the Truitt Center are evident, and the GEC just engaged in a promising dialogue with Truitt Center staff. DEI is included in outbound programming; some program officers are designated for spiritual growth. GEC staff have considered ways to help students to interact with “others” in study abroad locations. On the re-entry side, not much has been accomplished yet. DEI efforts are focused on six historically minoritized groups, including religious minorities. Their DEI framework guides the GEC on inclusive excellence and on outbound programs. The office has not historically taken the religious identities or needs of student travelers.

The GEC has offered one predeparture orientation session put together by the CSRCS Advisory Committee called, “Where in the World is Religion? Strategies for Encountering Religious Diversity from Australia to Zimbabwe.” The GEC invited the CSRCS to run it several times but there was no consistent scheduling of the session, and it is no longer offered

## Athletics

There is little documentation about religion on the Elon Athletics website. The student-athlete handbook includes a number for the chaplain and the same statement about inclusion that appears in the admissions brochure. Athletics had a diversity training workshop for all of their staff (including coaches) in August 2021, and religion was one of the topics that came up. They have no internal policies about religious diversity. Students are informed about how to report bias incidents via the handbook. In the past staff have discussed how to approach religious holidays, such as Yom Kippur or other holidays. Game schedules are always difficult. Athletic has seen “a handful” of incidents in the past ten years, which come up either in the student-athlete exit interviews or when a student brings something to a staff member’s attention. Those were dealt with individually in every case, but also sometimes in addition to this the matter was brought to a head coaches’ meeting or administrative meeting. Athletics includes religion within

their “sportsmanship announcement,” a diversity document drafted by the CAA. This is read before sporting events and spectators are asked to support this sportsmanship pledge. Invocations are often requested before athletics events, and recently, the Chaplain Boswell had an introductory session with the entire Athletics staff to begin to engage them in further dialogue about religious and spiritual support and diversity on campus.

## Honors

The Honors program works towards greater diversity, equity, and inclusion in a number of ways, for example in having a student serve as [Honors Diversity and Inclusion Director](#). The position description, however, does not make particular mention of religious diversity.

Residential learning communities may plan events around religious holidays or worship events. Program directors are attentive to planning around religious holidays. The optional, winter-term, travel course includes intentional religious diversity elements. Religious identity may be part of conversations at the admissions stage when prospective Honors students are looking more closely at Elon. There is probably more religious diversity among students in the program than the larger student body, and we do note that the Honors program has been very intentional with food items selected at Honors events.

## Campus Recreation and Wellness

We are not aware of ways in which Campus Recreation and Wellness currently considers religion or spirituality, although the A-B-C framework contains one mention of spiritual wellness. The frontpage of the RecWell website also mentions religious exemptions for the vaccine requirement. Student Wellness Programs mentions mental wellness but not spiritual wellness. Similar approach with the Mind-Body Connection Space, where the only mindfulness resource is a link to Headspace App.

There may be potential for more collaboration with the Truitt Center and for more conversation and education around spiritual wellness and for encountering the religious/spiritual roots of meditation and yoga. There is also potential for collaboration with Elon Outdoors.

Questions to pursue: Will the coming Integrated Wellness Center include a prayer room? Will there be other ways that Truitt Center can be represented and connected to the Center and to wider university efforts around Wellness?

## Elon Core Curriculum

Many students engage in the academic study of religion through Core Curriculum requirements. While the University no longer requires students to take a course in Religious Studies, the Core Curriculum requirement to take two “Civilization” courses (generally courses in Religious Studies, History, World Languages, or Art History) encourages many students to take courses that focus on religion, with approximately 900 seats in Religious Studies courses filled each year.

Some students encounter issues related to religion in their COR capstone. At present, four COR capstones are listed in the [Diversity Course Database](#) as engaging with the category of religion: COR 4040, Africans and African Development; COR 4420, Food, Health, and Society in Global Perspective; COR 3330, Religion and Art of Asia; and COR 3570, Rome.

Students may also encounter issues related to religion in COR 1100, whose course description says that students will “examine personal and social responsibility in domestic and global contexts. In developing their own view of the world and its many peoples, societies, and environments, students will evaluate the complex relationships that may both promote and obstruct human interaction. The course emphasizes critical thinking and creativity focused on contemporary and salient issues as informed by their historical contexts.” In 2020, University Chaplain Emeritus Jan Fuller (leading a team that included Naeemah Clark, Randy Williams, Deandra Little and Rochelle Ford) received a [Teaching and Learning for Campus-wide Interfaith Excellence Implementation Grant](#) (from the Interfaith Youth Core and the Association of American Colleges and Universities through the generosity of the Arthur Vining Davis Foundations) that sought to infuse discussions of interfaith issues into the Elon Core Curriculum, with a particular focus on working with COR 1100 instructors. But while the grant supported the creation of some presentations and discussion prompts developed by the Religious and Spiritual Life Committee, we are not aware of any concerted effort to focus on these issues in COR 1100.

## Undergraduate Schools and Colleges

### Love School of Business

A scan of the school of business was conducted to understand the current initiatives, programs, and structures within the Love School of Business that accommodate, facilitate and support religious and spiritual needs of the students. After discussions with the dean we discovered that at present there are no school-wide initiatives that have been undertaken to

address religious/spiritual needs. However, after communicating with the department chairs we found that most instructors do explicitly acknowledge religious observance as an excused absence and include a statement in their syllabi to accommodate religious observances and offer make-up opportunities.

In addition, in some of the courses, especially within marketing, management and economics departments, professors also discuss course content as it relates to religion. For example, in principles of management class, discussion on diversity is often centered on deep-level and surface-level issues, and within this realm, religion and spirituality do get discussed. Similarly, in marketing, religion is a subject that is raised in the form of how religious institutions such as churches and temples market themselves. In economics, while discussing gender and development in microfinance, the influence of religion is also discussed. Also, there are faculty members in the school of business who conduct research in the area of religion and spirituality, and they also use open-source tools (such as religiosity index) in their research.

There is ample room for growth in the business school.

### **School of Communications**

The School of Communications offers some support and infrastructure for the objectives of the multifaith strategic plan. Several faculty mentors of student research possess expertise and interests in the intersections of religion and spirituality with media. The school offers a regular and popular course, COM 3330: Religion and Media. It also possesses a robust infrastructure, in the form of studio resources, media and publication outlets, and organizations, that can support student expression, analysis, and opinion. There is considerable untapped potential and untapped interest in the Comm School right now.

### **Williams School of Education**

Three EDU courses are listed in the [Diversity Course Database](#) as engaging the category of Religion: EDU 2110, School and Society; EDU 4500, Teaching Diverse Learners in Middle and Secondary Grades; and EDU 4510, Teaching Diverse Learners in Elementary Grades.

Undergraduate research in the School of Education occasionally engages questions of religion. It is not clear how the School of Education's Intercultural Learning Certificate Program engages with questions of religious diversity, but we note that the School of Education's website references religious diversity as an important aspect of diversity in its statement of [values](#). Its [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion homepage](#) also references religion along with other categories:

“We value diversity, equity, and inclusion and understand our experiences in the world are shaped by many factors, including age, ethnicity, family structure, sex, gender identity, nationality, ability, race, religion, sexual orientation, and socio-economic background.” Among the School's DEI goals are: “to foster in students, faculty, and staff a deeper understanding of their respective identities, an appreciation for and examination of others’ identities, and an understanding of how identities are interconnected to power, prejudice, privilege, stereotypes, oppression, and discrimination” and “to provide students, faculty and staff with resources (inside and outside the classroom) to perform their roles in a sound intercultural, anti-racist, anti-bias, culturally responsive, and equity-based manner.” Addressing these issues would seem to open up opportunities to collaborate with others engaged with issues of religion on campus, and there may also be opportunities for collaboration in addressing issues of teaching about religion in public schools in the US.

## College of Arts and Sciences

A wide range of courses are taught in the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) that give significant attention to religion. In addition to [all of the courses taught in the Religious Studies department](#), the following CAS courses are listed in the [Diversity Course Database](#) as engaging with religion:

ANT	3250	Culture, Health, and Illness (Medical Anthropology)
ANT	2300	Folklore
ANT	1120	Intro to Cultural Anthropology
ANT	3820	North American Indian Cultures
ANT	3120	North American Indian Cultures
ANT	3290	Women, Culture and the World
ARB	2210	Intermediate Arabic I
ARH	3410	African Art
ARH	2110	Cathedrals to Conquest
ARH	2100	Gods and Emperors
ARH	3420	Issues in Islamic Art
CHN	1210	Elementary Chinese I
CHN	1220	Elementary Chinese II
ENG	2040	Language in Society
ENG	3350	Latin American Literature and Culture
ENG	2600	Literature and The Law
ENG	3850	Middle Eastern Literature
ENS	1100	Humans and Nature



FRE	3230	Current Events in The French and Francophone World
FRE	2210	Intermediate French I
FRE	2220	Intermediate French II
FRE	3520	Perspectives on Modern France
FRE	3530	The Francophone World Outside the Hexagon
FRE	3630	The French Cinema
GEO	3100	Development & The Environment in Latin America, Africa & Asia
GEO	3600	Geography of North America
GEO	3450	Global Environmental Change
GEO	3460	Natural Disasters
GEO	1310	The World's Regions
HST	3390	A History of the Holocaust
HST	3910	American Indians in the 20th Century
HST	3380	Germany: War, Democracy, and Hitler, 1914-1945
HST	3270	History of the Roman Republic and Empire
HST	3180	Russia, 1801 to the Present
HST	1200	The United States and North Carolina Since 1865
HST	1230	The United States and North Carolina Since 1865
HST	3690	Topics in American Indian History
HST	1220	United States History Through 1865
HST	1210	United States History Through 1865
PCS	1220	Collaborative Conflict Resolution
PCS	1210	Conflict Mediation Skills
PHL	3520	Eastern Philosophy
PHL	3390	Martin Buber and the Eclipse Of God
PHL	3660	Marx, Darwin and Freud
PHL	3560	Restorative Justice
PSY	2410	Social Psychology
PSY	3240	Stereotyping & Prejudice
SOC	2200	Social Issues and Problems in the Local Community

A number of these and other courses also serve as electives within the minor in Interreligious Studies. Though most courses that count towards the minor are in the Religious Studies department, courses from outside Religious Studies that count towards the minor include:

ARH	2100	Art History of the Ancient World
ARH	2110	Art History of the Medieval And Premodern World
ARH	3330	Jewish, Christian, & Islamic Cultures: Contact & Conflict
ENG	3840	Middle Eastern Literature
GER	3040	Germany in the New Millennium

GBL 2320	Ethiopia and Tanzania: An Exploration of History, Culture and the Natural World
GBL 2860	India's Identities: Religion, Caste And Gender in Contemporary South India
HST 3390	A History of the Holocaust
SPN 3590	Colonial Encounters
SPN 4550	Religion, Idolatry and Conquest: From Medieval Spain to the New World
GBL 2440	Spain and Morocco: Historical & Contemporary Encounters
GBL 2060	Hawaii: Nation or State? In Search of Hawaiian Identity
GEO 3630	Global Migration
GEO 3640	Middle East: People and Place
POL 3660	Middle East Politics

The **Elon College Fellows (ECF)** program promotes the intellectual benefits, the formation of community, and the mentorship opportunities available through students in ECF. Program requirements do not include intercultural or multifaith engagement, and information about those opportunities at Elon is not highlighted for students developing research topics. Students report that within the ECF intellectual community, there is little to no acknowledgement of religious difference in the cohort but that professors in the are supportive of religious exemptions. There are important opportunities for growth in this program, perhaps connected to Elon's anticipated mentoring initiatives.

## Graduate Programs

### Law School

A Prayer Room and a Meditation Room were established in September 2021 at the request of Muslim students looking for a place to pray. The timing of the prayer and meditation rooms seems to demonstrate a commitment to being mindful of the spiritual/religious needs of our student body. Some students may feel like the "profession" is not particularly accommodating to their faith. For example, some interview programs are held on Saturdays, and there are some all-day interview programs that could not be easily accommodate students who need to pray at specific times during the day.

There is one faculty member who specializes in law and religion and several who have some expertise in First Amendment issues. There is one 2-credit course LAW 754 First Amendment: Religion in the catalogue and LAW 823 on Employment Discrimination whose course description mentions religious discrimination. The frequency with which either is taught is unclear.

## **iMedia**

Dean Ford leads a series of conversations in the fall Proseminar class that help students understand identity and difference, including religious identity. There is a fall class (Theory and Audience Analysis) that has a significant emphasis on ethics, including ethical frameworks that might be informed by religious traditions. IMedia students typically study away in the J-Term, and so time is devoted to preparing to communicate across differences, potentially including religious difference.

## **School of Health Sciences**

An exploratory conversation between CSRCS Director Brian Pennington and Dean Becky Nieduski this fall has identified rich potential for the development of instructional components and stand-alone initiatives that highlight the intersections of religion, faith, and spirituality with care-giving settings and the healthcare professions. Dr. Pennington has begun work with Asst. Prof. of Nursing Jeanmarie Koontz and the first class of Accelerated Bachelor of Nursing students to develop materials to promote intercultural and interreligious fluency in the nursing program, beginning with NRS 2200 Health Assessments. DPT 600 Psychosocial Aspects of Healthcare has been identified as a course for which support for course development may be desirable.

## Benchmarking Elon's Multifaith Initiatives

The Multifaith Strategic Planning Committee members were tasked with identifying and researching educational institutions and non-profit organizations that are engaged in informative or ground-breaking work in the realm of religious, spiritual, cultural, and secular engagement. Recognizing that no program in its entirety could be mapped onto Elon's specific campus climate, culture, and circumstance, the hope was that aspects of the work in which these peer and aspirant organizations have engaged could serve as a model for Elon, or a spark to ignite future thinking, planning, and goal setting.

The institutions were initially selected based on committee members' individual knowledge and experience. Members then engaged in further research to gain more information, and to develop and refine the list. The list is not exhaustive, and the sense is that as the committee works to define its goals over the coming semester, this list will become a document in progress.

### Oberlin College, Connecticut College, Muhlenberg College, Binghamton University, Brandeis University, Pace University, and CUNY: Academic Calendars

Most universities in the United States orient their calendars around Christian calendars in a variety of ways. We have reviewed academic calendars from six universities (Oberlin, Connecticut, Muhlenberg, Pace, Brandeis, and Binghamton) as well as one large university system (the City University of New York, CUNY) that, unlike other universities, also cancel classes on non-Christian holidays. The holidays that are marked on these academic calendars are mostly Jewish holidays, except for at Pace University and at one CUNY campus.

Given the policies around Jewish holidays at these institutions, and the availability of data on Jewish undergraduate populations thanks to [Hillel International College Guide](#), we note the percentages of Jewish undergraduates at these institutions on the table below. Oberlin, Muhlenberg, Brandeis, and Binghamton have higher percentages of Jewish undergraduates than Elon, although Elon has more Jewish students than Oberlin and Muhlenberg. Connecticut College, Pace University, and the CUNY System have lower percentage of Jewish students.

	Number of Jewish undergraduates	Percentage of Jewish undergraduates	Religious/Ethnic Holidays on which classes are canceled <i>other</i> than Christmas and Easter Sunday
<a href="#">Elon University</a>	800	13%	Easter Monday
<a href="#">Connecticut College</a>	170	9%	Yom Kippur (over two days, including the <a href="#">evening of</a> Yom Kippur)
<a href="#">Oberlin College</a>	650	23%	Yom Kippur (over two days, including the <a href="#">evening of</a> Yom Kippur)
<a href="#">Muhlenberg College</a>	550	24%	Yom Kippur
<a href="#">Pace University</a>	500	8%	Yom Kippur, First Day of Passover; classes also canceled for Diwali, Lunar New Year, Eid Al-Adha, Good Friday
<a href="#">Brandeis University</a> (See also <a href="#">here</a> and <a href="#">here.</a> )	1300	35%	Two Days of Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, first day of Sukkot, first day of Shemini Atzeret, first two days of Passover, Good Friday
<a href="#">Binghamton University</a> (See further <a href="#">here</a> and <a href="#">here.</a> )	3700	26%	Both days of Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and the first two days of Pesach (spring break is always timed for the first 2 days of Passover)
<a href="#">CUNY</a> (all campuses) (See further <a href="#">here.</a> )	16000	7%	Both days of Rosh Hashanah, and Yom Kippur; at least one CUNY campus also closes for the <a href="#">Lunar New Year.</a> <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> We also note the current discussion about Eid Al-Fitr and Eid Al-Adha at CUNY. In March 2021, the CUNY University Student Senate unanimously adopted a resolution calling for CUNY to close for Eid Al-Fitr and Eid Al-Adha, as the New York City public school does. A petition calling for this change notes that “with CUNY honoring holidays including Lunar New Year, Christmas, Rosh Hashanah, and Yom Kippur - honoring Eid Al-fitr must be the next step. We cannot allow Muslim students to be excluded.” (See [here](#), and discussion [here](#). On related questions for public school districts across the country, see [here](#).)

## Brandeis, Oberlin, Hillel International and Colgate University: Religious Holiday Absence and Campus Events Policies

Unlike Elon, none of the universities discussed above appear to require students to fill out a special form for missing classes on additional holidays, but instead ask them to let their instructor know and to regard absences for religious holidays as excused. Brandeis, for example, offers [guidelines](#) that include the following:

- A student may have a legitimate reason for missing a class, whether the holiday is formally recognized in the university calendar or not.
- Should a student need to miss class for religious reasons, the absence should be excused. Classes missed for travel plans are not considered excused absences. Only the dates of the holidays themselves are considered excused absences.
- If an instructor believes that a student's request cannot be accommodated, the student must be notified prior to the date in question in writing or by email. Any disagreement over expectations for class attendance and/or coursework should be brought to the attention of the department or program chair.

[Oberlin's guidelines](#) include the following:

- Students wishing to observe recognized religious holidays are excused automatically from classes that occur on these dates.
- Faculty are to make it possible for students observing recognized holidays to make up any work they miss, provided arrangements have been made in advance.

This year, a team from Elon (Betsy Polk, Jon Dooley, Jeff Stein, Randy Williams, Brian Pennington, Kirstin Boswell, and Geoffrey Claussen) is participating in Hillel International's Campus Climate Initiative, which has offered the following guidelines for Religious Holiday absence policies:

- As academic calendars are typically structured around Christian holidays, administrators and faculty should proactively support Jewish and other religious minority students in observing their own religious holidays, including Shabbat.
- Religious holiday course absence policies should be adopted and clearly communicated to all members of the campus community, especially faculty.
- Strong procedures are important to ensure policies are enforced.
- Effective holiday course absence policies:
  - a. State the college or university's commitment to supporting students' diverse religious identities and practices
  - b. Create a consistent approach for requesting a holiday absence and making up missed work or a missed exam before or after the holiday
  - c. Trust students to identify their own religious needs and request an absence from faculty in advance
  - d. Do not require students to provide documentation or explanations of their requests
  - e. Are clearly communicated to faculty and students by the senior administration, with a request that major assignments or events are not scheduled on major religious holidays when possible
  - f. Require the holiday policy to be included in all course syllabi, to make clear to students how they can make these requests and that they will be accommodated when they do so

For planning campus events, the Campus Climate Initiative offers the following guidelines:

- Avoid scheduling major campus events on major religious holidays observed by a meaningful proportion of the campus community. This involves:
  - a. Determining which holidays constitute "major religious holidays" based on the demographics of the campus community.
  - b. Considering events such as the first day of classes, key admissions events, student organization fairs, family weekend, etc.
  - c. Communicating this clearly to all departments and campus leaders.
- Clearly acknowledge that any holiday list will not be exhaustive, and that some religious holidays observed by students may not be included in a list of major religious holidays. Depending on the campus, this may impact Jewish or other religious minority students whose holidays are not included because they are a demographically small part of the

campus community. It may also impact students from traditions whose major holidays are included, but who also observe additional holidays that are not included.

Example: There are up to 13 holiday days a year in which some Jewish students may not do academic work or attend campus events, so even with a strong policy in place that avoids events on major religious holidays, conflicts between campus events and the religious holiday requirements of some students are likely.

- Offer reasonable accommodations and communicate them proactively for students who need to miss events due to their holiday observance.

As an example of a good policy concerning religious holidays, the Campus Climate Initiative has pointed us to the language that Colgate University has in [their student handbook](#). Of particular note in that policy is the development of a list of holidays linked to the demographics of the current student body, and a policy that states that there should be no exams or papers due on these holidays or on the following day, and that major university events should not be scheduled on those days:

*“In order that no student at Colgate incur academic penalty because of their conscientious observance of a major religious holiday, it is important that faculty members follow a uniform policy. Exams should not be scheduled, and papers should not be due, on any major religious holiday or on the subsequent day. In addition, every effort will be made not to schedule major college events on these days. For scheduling purposes involving the student body, Colgate recognizes as major religious holidays the following: Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, the first two days of Passover, Good Friday, Easter, and the first days of Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha.”*

## NCCJ: Interfaith Calendar

The NCCJ publishes an extensive [interfaith calendar](#) of key holidays and festivals for the following traditions:

Bahá’í, Buddhist, Hindu, Interfaith, Jewish, Mormon, Muslim, Orthodox Christian, Protestant Christian, Roman Catholic, Sikh, and Wiccan/Pagan.

The calendar provides dates of major holidays and festivals for each of these traditions, and also notes and educational descriptions of each.

## College of Charleston: Dining Services

The College of Charleston has made an interesting effort to create a vegan/vegetarian/kosher/halal dining hall, located at the university’s Jewish Studies



center/Hillel, seeking to be accommodating to those from a variety of traditions (Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Jain, secular vegetarians and vegans, etc.) who would value a meat-free dining space.

- Hopes to attract prospective Jewish students (that may or may not keep Kosher)
- Portrays a message that the school is paying attention to the lives and needs of its Jewish students – serves as a symbol that the university values its Jewish students
- Allows prospective Jewish students to feel like they would be seen if they attended CofC
- Displays the diversity of people who attend the school and draws prospective students in
- Will help reach out to vegan and vegetarian students too and physically portrays their attention to diversity and efforts to be more inclusive of students with different food preferences
- Combining Jewish, Hindu, and halal-observant Muslim needs (as well as others with ethical commitments to veganism/vegetarianism)
- Part of the school's dining services but also open to the public for a la carte meals, and so connect the College and its Jewish community as part of the broader Charleston community
- Food certified by Charleston's Kosher Commission
- Reservations by some because it is more difficult to find Kosher meat than vegetarian food, and the dining hall is strictly vegetarian
- Following suit of other schools offering Kosher vegetarian options
- Place where people from diverse backgrounds can come together through food
- Caters to the diverse needs of students of different cultural and religious backgrounds
- Because it covers such a wide range of needs, it may not adhere to more specific challenges (e.g. those seeking kosher/halal meat)
- Unlike Clohan Hall, utensils are completely separate from the rest of Dining Services, and so meet standards for being certified as kosher. (Clohan is also [not entirely vegetarian](#), at least as of Fall 2021; current utensils and systems would need to be replaced at Clohan in order to bring it under kosher supervision.)
- How does location play a role? (Clohan's location as the closest dining hall near Danieley and its distance from Global, Historic, Oaks, etc. neighborhoods has made it less popular and accessible as it could be. )
- How could we create the same symbolism and effect by having Kosher, vegan, and halal options at all dining halls? Possibility of specific stations at the dining halls with separate utensils just used by that station; to meet widespread standards for kosher certification,

however, utensils used to prepare food at those stations would need to be kept entirely separate from utensils at other locations, which would be difficult.

- Questions about dining options focused on recruiting future students versus adhering to the needs and desires of current students.
- The symbolic nature does not matter as much if it is not achieving its desired ends.

## Hartford International University for Religion and Peace

In October 2021, the former Hartford Seminary announced a change in its name and mission. Now [Hartford International University for Religion and Peace](#), its Board of Directors jettisoned the word “seminary” as part of their name to reflect that fact that they no longer offered a Master of Divinity (the traditional seminary degree) and had a longstanding reputation for interfaith dialogue, particularly around Muslim-Christian relations and, more recently, Judaism. Following a strategic planning process, the new name is intended to reflect a focus on international peacebuilding and interreligious studies.

### Degrees

- [MA in Interreligious Studies](#), with specializations in Interreligious Studies, Islamic Studies, and Ministerial Studies. In the Ministerial Studies program, students can choose a Cooperative Ministry track in which they learn alongside students of other religious traditions
- [MA in International Peacebuilding](#), a one-year, residential program
- [MA in Chaplaincy](#), a two-year program with a track in Islamic Chaplaincy
- [PhD in Interreligious Studies](#): the only doctorate in this new field currently offered in the US, this program follows a traditional PhD training model, including foundations seminars, other coursework, comprehensive exams, and a dissertation

In its degree programs, Hartford’s focus is on Christian and Muslim traditions. They have recently begun to develop some faculty strength in Jewish Studies.

### Certificates

Hartford offers [certificates for clergy and community leaders](#) in Black Ministry and Women’s Leadership as well as a 12-credit [Graduate Certificate in Interreligious Studies](#)

**Executive and Professional Education**

Hartford offers [workshops and trainings](#) on religious diversity for the workplace, healthcare, education, and religious organizations

**Research**

Hartford houses the [MacDonald Center](#) for the study of Muslim/Christian relations and the [Hartford Institute for Religion Research](#), which conducts grant-funded, social-science inflected studies of religiosity and congregations in the US. Both programs are long-standing and widely respected. MacDonald publishes *The Muslim World* journal and the Hartford Institute is one of three publishing partners of the *Journal of Interreligious Studies*.

**Visiting Research Scholars Program**

A [robust program that hosts scholars](#) who bring their own funding and conducts an international exchange program for faculty.

**Partnerships**

Hartford maintains active [partnerships](#) with Gratz College (an independent and pluralistic college for Jewish students) and participates in a set of consortia for theological education

## The University of Southern California: Office of Religious & Spiritual Life

- Interfaith Council: membership of this council consists of mainly students from a diversity of faiths across campus. It is open to all to attend, and the purpose is for students to share faith traditions and learn from each other. The Council sponsors events such as Multi-Faith Week, the Prayer Reading-Burning ceremony, Souljourning trips to visit faith communities in LA, and Conocimiento - Alternative Spring Break Trip.
- *SOULJOURNS*: A unique way for all USC students to discover and explore the spiritual treasures of Los Angeles. Within the vicinity of USC there are places of worship that represent most religions of the world and each semester, students visit different temples, churches, or mosques around USC a part of SOULJOURNS. The idea of SOULJOURN stems from a novel by USC's associate Dean for Religious Life, Jim Burklo, and is a recommended reading for students.

- *CONOCIMIENTO*: Alternative spring break trip and experience in service, advocacy, learning and spiritual reflection. At CONOCIMIENTO 2022 in the Tucson area, students will work with faith-based groups focused on human rights and immigration reform and undocumented migrants, Border Patrol officers, local politicians, and rabbis and pastors working for immigration reform.
- Interfaith Scholars Program. This is collaboration between the Joint Educational Project and the Office of Religious Life. Interfaith scholars engage in intentional interfaith experiences and engage in reflective writing assignments to better understand how issues of faith, belief, and practices may influence their personal development, future careers and relationships. Upon completion they are awarded:
  - Interfaith Scholars Certificate & honor cords presented at year-end party
  - Once-a-semester lunch with a Dean of Religious Life at Good Karma Café
  - Acknowledgment at Baccalaureate Ceremony, upon graduation
- Baccalaureate Ceremony: Each year, as part of USC's Commencement celebrations, the Office of Religious Life hosts USC's annual Baccalaureate Ceremony, it is a multi-faith celebration led by USC's religious directors, student leaders, musical groups, and university dignitaries, with keynote speakers and readings from a wide range of religious traditions and concludes with a benediction over the graduating students.
- Other events: The Office of Religious Life hosts several events to bring together people of many faiths from throughout Southern California, like concerts, speakers, conferences, and workshops that inform and inspire people in Los Angeles and the wider region. There are nearly 90 campus organizations representing all of the major and many of the lesser-known faiths of the world.
- They do have an On-Campus Multi-Faith Events news service: RELIGIOSITY e-news.

## NYU: Of Many Institute for Multifaith Leadership

The [Of Many Institute for Multifaith Leadership](#) is a pioneering initiative devoted to educating and inspiring religious and spiritual leaders to utilize multifaith dialogue and service as a force for positive social change.

[Spaces](#): Jewish Life Center, Catholic Center, Hindu Center, Mediation, Muslim, and Multifaith Prayer Rooms and Office of Global Spiritual Life

[Spiritual Life Advisors](#): Global Spiritual Life at NYU hosts 70 spiritual life advisors representing various faiths, denominations, and groups on campus.

**Multifaith Student Groups:**

- Multifaith Advisory Council – diverse interfaith student organization meeting weekly.  
This group organizes events for multifaith engagement on campus and in the community
- MuCh – facilitates discussions between Muslim & Christian communities on campus
- Bridges – Jewish Student Life and the Islamic Center work together to engage in constructive and comparative discussions on faith
- Mosaic – opportunity for students of color whose missions or identities are linked to spiritual and/or faith-based pursuits. Used for networking and solidarity building initiatives
- [List of spiritual life clubs](#) focused on specific faith, religion, or spirituality. This includes a group for atheist, agnostic, freethinker, and secular organizations, mindfulness, etc.

**Notable Programming:**

- Faith Zone, Jewish & Muslim Ally Zone, Living on Purpose: Mindful Life Skills & Deep Dialogue [trainings](#)
  - Faith Zone is a workshop designed to promote religious and spiritual literacy and dialogue (there are two levels to this)
- [MindfulNYU](#) – award-winning meditation, mindfulness, and contemplative life initiative that promotes wisdom, compassion, and well-being on campus. Host yoga classes, group meditation, large scale events, and mindfulness workshops for students, faculty and staff.
- [Summer Higher Ed Leadership Program Fall Institute](#) 4-day course for chaplains, social workers, educators, administrators, non-profit leaders & mental health advisors
- [Queering Faith](#) – Collaborative with the NYU LGBTQ+ Center to explore intersections of faith, non-faith, spirituality, gender and sexuality

**Academic Partnerships & Opportunities:**

- [Minor in Multifaith and Spiritual Leadership](#) – joint program co-sponsored by the Silver School of Social Work and the Wagner School of Public Service. Classes include subjects on social justices and nonviolent peacemaking, service learning, and leadership in the 21<sup>st</sup> century
- [EdD in Higher Education Administration](#): Focus on Campus Religious Life

**Other:**

- [Multimedia projects](#) – film “Of Many” focused on the tension between Jewish and Muslim students on college campuses and “Multifaithful” podcast which is about the impact of religious diversity on religious and spiritual identities.

## Stanford University: Office for Religious & Spiritual Life

- Stanford publishes an online [Comprehensive Calendar of Observances](#) for university students and employees to consult.
- [Grieving At Stanford](#) - The VOICES section really captures examples of the many ways students respond and work through grief.
- [Queerness, Spirituality, and Religion Speaker Series](#)
- [Stanford Associated Religions \(SAR\) Student Groups](#) include a number of sorts of groups not found at Elon.
- [Meeting the Moment](#) - monthly theme in a repeatable, 1-unit class called Meeting the Moment: Inner Resources for Hard Times. The Meeting the Moment Fellows are a diverse group of seven Stanford undergraduate and graduate students hailing from a variety of spiritual and ethnic backgrounds. The Fellows host the monthly events, curate and create the monthly resources, and assume rotating leadership roles in the 1-credit class - which will be offered fall through spring quarters.
- [Avoiding Unhealthy Religious Organizations](#) - pamphlet and website providing practical tools for avoiding unhealthy groups.
- [Interfaith Opportunities](#) include a fellowship and a scholarship for interfaith work:
  - The [Rathbun Fellowship for Religious Encounter](#) brings together faith leaders of different traditions to discuss their communities, core beliefs, practices, and challenges.
  - The [Spirituality, Service, & Social Change Fellowship](#) integrates spiritual exploration with service to communities in the Bay Area. The fellowship invites students from diverse religious and spiritual traditions to explore the intersections of faith and justice.

## Brown University: Office of the Chaplains and Religious Life

### **Programs:**

- Religious Literacy Program—Non-credit course that focuses on increasing students’ basic literacy around many religious traditions. The goal is for participants to gain a basic understanding of religious and cultural traditions that they may encounter in the world.

**Staffing:**

- Brown has a centrally positioned University Chaplain and Associate University Chaplains that represent the Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, and Muslim communities, which are their largest populations. They are also looking to add an Associate Chaplain for the Buddhist and Hindu communities. This structure can create some challenges to be sure, but the strength is that the Associate Chaplains are all university funded positions (except the Jewish Chaplain, which is shared with Hillel), which means that although they are representing specific faith communities, they are committed to the central mission of the university through their reporting structure (through the Office of the Chaplains and Religious Life), and not to the mission of outside organizations
- All affiliated ministry leaders sign a comprehensive affiliation agreement with Brown and as a part of their right to operate on campus, agree to training (anti-bias, Title IX, etc.). They also engage in quarterly meetings with the Office of the Chaplains and Religious Life to keep them abreast of industry trends and campus policies.

## Wake Forest University: Department for the Study of Religions

Wake Forest is a peer institution with a Religious Studies department (recently renamed “Department for the Study of Religions”) that resembles Elon’s in some respects, but which offers some distinctive features.

Among the features of Wake’s department is its racially diverse permanent faculty. Five of its fourteen permanent faculty members are people of color. (By contrast, none of Elon’s eight permanent faculty members in Religious Studies are.)

Wake’s department also includes a specialist on race and religion in the United States, and offers courses related to race and religion and African-American experience each semester (e.g., “African-American Religious Experience,” “Black Messiahs and Uncle Toms,” “Race, Myth, and the American Imagination,” “Race, Religion, and Film”).

Wake also offers a unique program, a “[Religion and Public Engagement](#)” concentration “open to Religious Studies majors and minors, who want explore the world and make a difference. Students are able to take what they learn in the classroom and apply it to the real

world by engaging in public work through research projects, service-learning opportunities, and internships for academic credit. These internships take our concentrators all over the world, from downtown Winston Salem to south-central Chile—from Washington, DC to South Africa.” In addition to requiring an internship, the concentration requires a 300-level course titled “Religion and Public Engagement” which “examines the interface between religious communities and the public sphere, and the potential for social change in contemporary global and local contexts.”

## Dartmouth College: Race and Religion

Programs in the study of religion at Dartmouth have adopted explicit long-term objectives to build anti-racist curricula and to examine the intersections between race and religion. These initiatives include:

- The [Forum on Race and Religion](#): a series of panel discussions and colloquia focusing on the role that religions have played in encouraging and legitimating racial and ethnic oppression as well as how religion has inspired resistance to and critique of racial injustice.
- [Focus on Race](#): a curricular initiative to develop new courses and revise existing ones that will analyze the intersections of race and religion

## UC Berkeley: Antisemitism Education

A major Antisemitism Education Initiative started in 2019 is coordinated by the Chancellor’s Committee on Jewish Life and Campus Climate, the Center for Jewish Studies, the Berkeley Institute for Jewish Law and Israel Studies, Berkeley Hillel, and the Magnes Collection of Jewish Art & Life. Faculty and community leaders work closely with university administrators and student leaders to promote antisemitism awareness and education through workshops, speakers, and online trainings for new student orientation. In 2021, the center produced a short film called “Antisemitism in Our Midst: Past and Present” for use at colleges and universities. <https://jewishstudies.berkeley.edu/antisemitism-education/>



## Elon Campus Surveys

Our committee gathered data about student, faculty, and staff identities, experiences, and suggestions through three surveys in Fall 2021:

- a survey of all juniors and seniors (3090 students) as part of the 2021 Fall Student Survey, opened by 434 students;
- a survey made available to 390 other students at Elon (first-year students, second-year students, and graduate students) who had indicated a minoritized religious identity to the university, to which 18 students responded;
- a survey made available to all Elon employees, opened by 276 employees.

These three surveys used the same questions (with only very slight changes to question wording in the survey for employees).

### a) Student surveys: Quantitative Results

To make our results easier to understand, we have combined the numbers from the two student surveys in this report, combining the data from the 434 respondents to the Fall Student Survey with the 18 additional respondents.

Quantitative student survey results appear on the following pages.

Gender		
Woman	76%	270
Man	20%	70
Non-binary	3%	9
Prefer not to disclose	1%	4
Transgender	<1%	1
Not listed	<1%	1
Total	100%	355
Race/Ethnicity		
White	85%	300
Asian	7%	25
Black or African American	6%	23
Hispanic or Latino	4%	14
Prefer not to disclose	3%	10
Not Listed	1%	3
American Indian or Alaska Native	1%	2
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	<1%	1
Total	100%	354
Sexual Orientation		
Straight (Heterosexual)	68%	241
Bisexual	15%	52
Queer	4%	13
Prefer not to disclose	3%	12
Asexual	3%	10
Lesbian	3%	9
Questioning or unsure	3%	9
Pansexual	1%	5
Gay	1%	3
Not listed	<1%	1
Total	100%	355
Disability <sup>2</sup>	%	Count
No	81%	285
Yes	14%	48
Prefer not to disclose	6%	20
Total	100%	353

<sup>2</sup> Do you have a condition (e.g., physical, visual, auditory, emotional or other) that substantially limits one or more of your major life activities (e.g., your ability to see, hear, or speak, to learn, remember, or concentrate)?

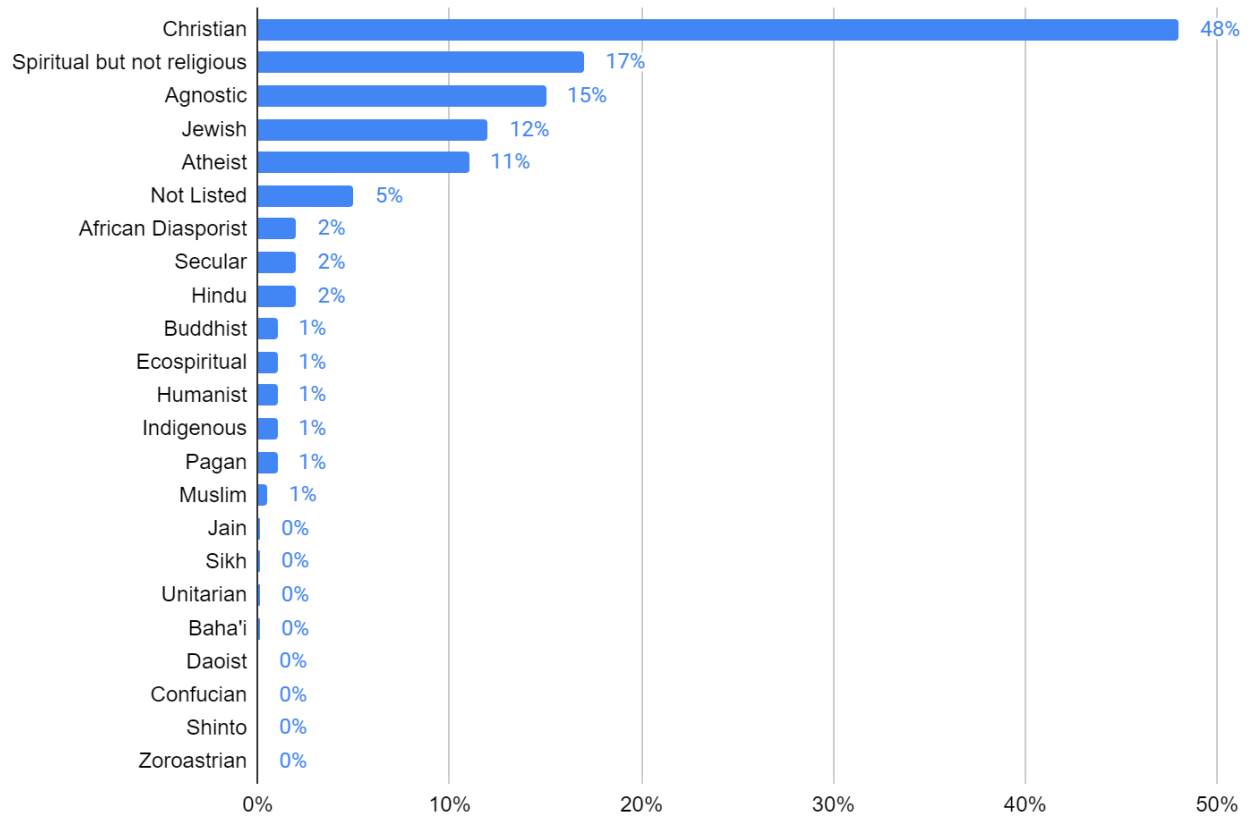
Quantitative results from the survey were as follows:

WHICH OF THESE WORDS WOULD YOU USE TO DESCRIBE YOUR IDENTITY? (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)

WHICH OF THESE WORDS WOULD YOU USE TO DESCRIBE YOUR IDENTITY? (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)	% Total (out of 452 students)	Count Total
Christian	48%	218
Spiritual but not religious	17%	75
Agnostic	15%	70
Jewish	12%	53
Atheist	11%	50
Not Listed	5%	24
African Diasporist	2%	9
Secular	2%	8
Hindu	2%	7
Buddhist	1%	6
Ecospiritual	1%	5
Humanist	1%	4
Indigenous	1%	4
Pagan	1%	4
Muslim	1%	3
Jain	0.20%	1
Sikh	0.20%	1
Unitarian	0.20%	1
Baha'i	0.20%	1
Daoist	0	0
Confucian	0	0
Shinto	0	0
Zoroastrian	0	0

(Note that respondents were able to check more than one identity.)

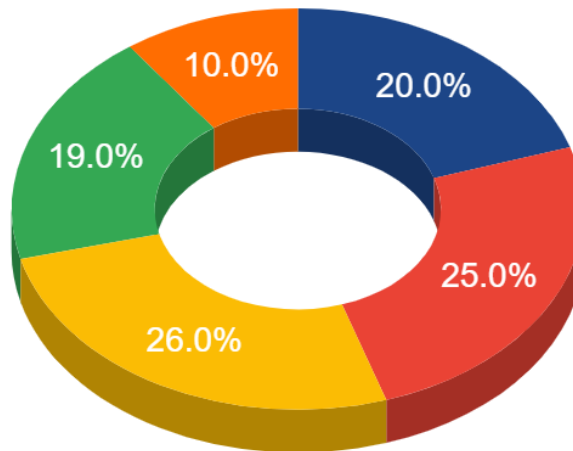
Which of these words would you use to describe your identity? (Select all that apply)



## HOW IMPORTANT ARE THE IDENTITIES YOU SELECTED IN THE PREVIOUS QUESTIONS TO YOU?

How important to you are the identities you selected in the previous question?

- Not important
- Slightly important
- Moderately important
- Very important
- Extremely important

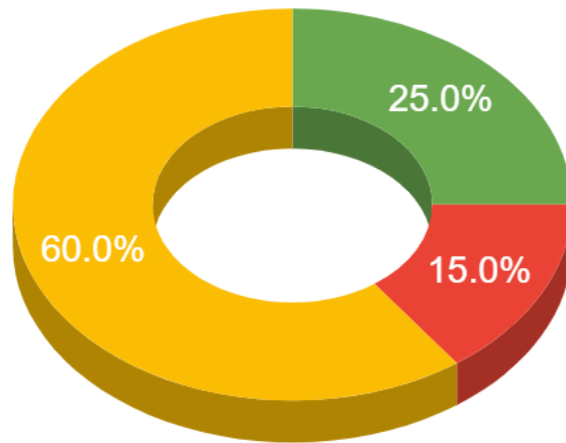


HOW IMPORTANT ARE THE IDENTITIES YOU SELECTED IN THE PREVIOUS QUESTIONS TO YOU?	% Total	Count Total
Not important	20%	90
Slightly important	25%	114
Moderately important	26%	117
Very important	19%	87
Extremely important	10%	44
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>452</b>

## DO YOU HAVE A SPIRITUAL OR RELIGIOUS PRACTICE OR GROUP THAT YOU ENGAGE WITH?

Do you have a spiritual or religious practice or group that you engage with?

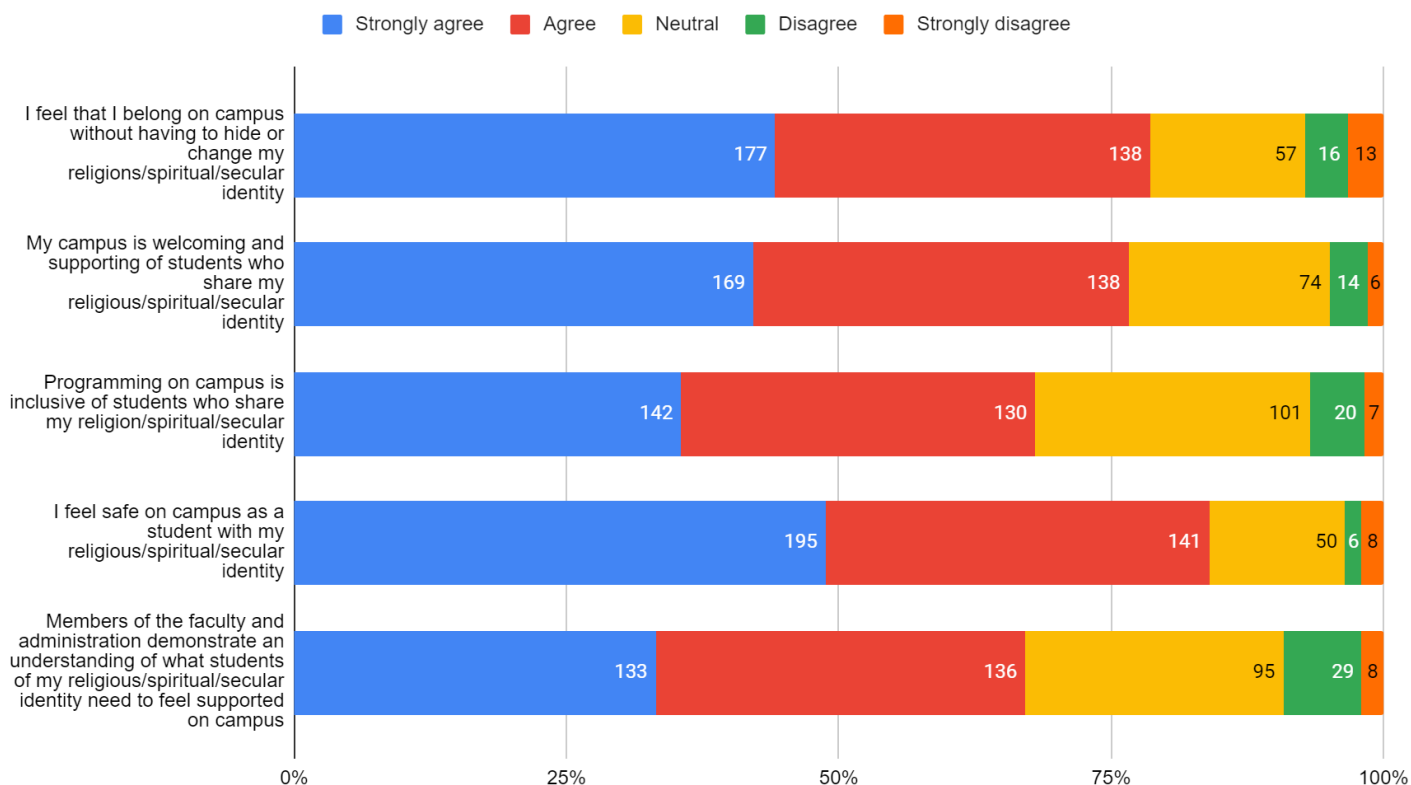
- Yes, but not regularly
- Yes
- No



DO YOU HAVE A SPIRITUAL OR RELIGIOUS PRACTICE OR GROUP THAT YOU ENGAGE WITH?	% Total	Total Count
Yes, but not regularly	25%	118
Yes	15%	67
No	60%	277
<b>TOTAL</b>	100%	462

PLEASE INDICATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH YOU AGREE WITH EACH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS BASED ON YOUR EXPERIENCES WHILE ENROLLED AT ELON:<sup>3</sup>

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements based on your experiences while enrolled at Elon:



PLEASE INDICATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH YOU AGREE WITH EACH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS BASED ON YOUR EXPERIENCES WHILE ENROLLED AT ELON	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel that I belong on campus without having to hide or change my religions/spiritual/secular identity	177	138	57	16	13
My campus is welcoming and supporting of students who share my religious/spiritual/secular identity	169	138	74	14	6
Programming on campus is inclusive of students who share my religion/spiritual/secular identity	142	130	101	20	7
I feel safe on campus as a student with my religious/spiritual/secular identity	195	141	50	6	8
Members of the faculty and administration demonstrate an understanding of what students of my religious/spiritual/secular identity need to feel supported on campus	133	136	95	29	8

<sup>3</sup> Although prompted to respond with regard to their religious/spiritual/secular identities, we note that some students may have answered these questions with regards to aspects of their identities that are not obviously connected to these categories.

ADDITIONAL ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES TO CAMPUS CLIMATE QUESTIONS (“PLEASE INDICATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH YOU AGREE WITH EACH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS BASED ON YOUR EXPERIENCES WHILE ENROLLED AT ELON”)

<b>Overall Frequencies (means, median and mode) for 5 Items Related to Experience at Elon among Juniors and Seniors</b>			
<b>Item</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Median</b>	<b>Mode</b>
Belong on campus without having to change (n=151)	3.87	4	5
Campus is welcoming and supportive (n=179)	3.98	4	5
Programming on campus is inclusive of people like me (n =197)	3.86	4	5
Feel safe on campus (n=212)	3.96	4	5
Faculty demonstrate understanding (n=234)	3.91	4	4



<b>Frequency Analysis for the 5 Items Related to Experience at Elon among Juniors and Seniors</b>		
<b>Frequency Analysis</b>	<b>1, 2, 3 (%)</b>	<b>4 &amp; 5 (%)</b>
Belong on campus without having to change	52 (34)	99 (66)
Campus is welcoming and supportive	53 (30)	126 (70)
Programming on campus is inclusive of people like me	66 (34)	131 (66)
Feel safe on campus	59 (28)	153 (72)
Faculty demonstrate understanding	76 (33)	158 (67)

### Comparison of Means by Religious Affiliation among Juniors and Seniors

<b>Items</b>	<b>Christian (n=201)</b>	<b>Agnostic (n=70)</b>	<b>Spiritual but not religious (n=46)</b>	<b>Atheist (n=40)</b>	<b>Jewish (n=23)</b>	<b>African Diasporist (n=9)</b>	<b>Hindu, Buddhist, Baha'i, Sikh, Indigenous, Muslim, or Pagan (n=16)<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>Other (n=31)</b>
Belong on campus without having to change	Mean:4.03 Median:4.24	Mean:3.92 Median:4.18	Mean:3.93 Median:3.90	Mean:3.44 Median:3.60	Mean:3.50 Median:3.50	Mean:4.50 Median:4.50	Mean:3.67 Median:3.83	Mean:3.56 Median:3.50
Campus is welcoming and supportive	Mean:4.25 Median:4.43	Mean:3.90 Median:3.95	Mean:3.83 Median:3.82	Mean:3.75 Median:3.75	Mean:3.67 Median:3.71	Mean:4 Median:4	Mean:3.89 Median:4	Mean:3.50 Median:3.56
Programming on campus is inclusive of people like me	Mean:4.06 Median:4.25	Mean:3.73 Median:3.76	Mean:3.78 Median:3.71	Mean:3.71 Median:3.86	Mean:3.91 Median:4	Mean:2.50 Median:2.50	Mean:3.56 Median:4	Mean:3.93 Median:4.10
Feel safe on campus	Mean:4.20 Median:4.36	Mean:4.12 Median:4.23	Mean:3.83 Median:3.92	Mean:3.53 Median:3.63	Mean:3.92 Median:3.89	Mean:3 Median:3	Mean:3.40 Median:3.6	Mean:3.56 Median:3.67
Faculty demonstrate understanding	Mean:4.08 Median:4.22	Mean:3.91 Median:3.91	Mean:4.10 Median:4.13	Mean:3.63 Median:3.56	Mean:3.69 Median:3.82	Mean:3.20 Median:3.50	Mean:3.45 Median:3.5	Mean:3.82 Median:4

Christian students report especially high levels of belonging, welcome, inclusion, safety, and understanding in relation to their religious identities.

<sup>4</sup> We combined these numbers due to very low numbers within each group and confidentiality concerns.

<b>Religious/Spiritual/Secular Identities of Students with Negative Experiences</b> Students <sup>5</sup> who feel lowest level of belonging, welcome, inclusion, safety, and understanding (with an average score on these five indicators below 3.00)	
<b>Identity</b>	<b>Number of students</b>
Christian	9
Agnostic	2
Spiritual but not religious	0
Atheist	4
Jewish	2
African Diasporist	1
Hindu, Buddhist, Baha'i, Sikh, Indigenous, Muslim, or Pagan <sup>6</sup>	5
Ecospiritual	1
Other/Not Listed	1

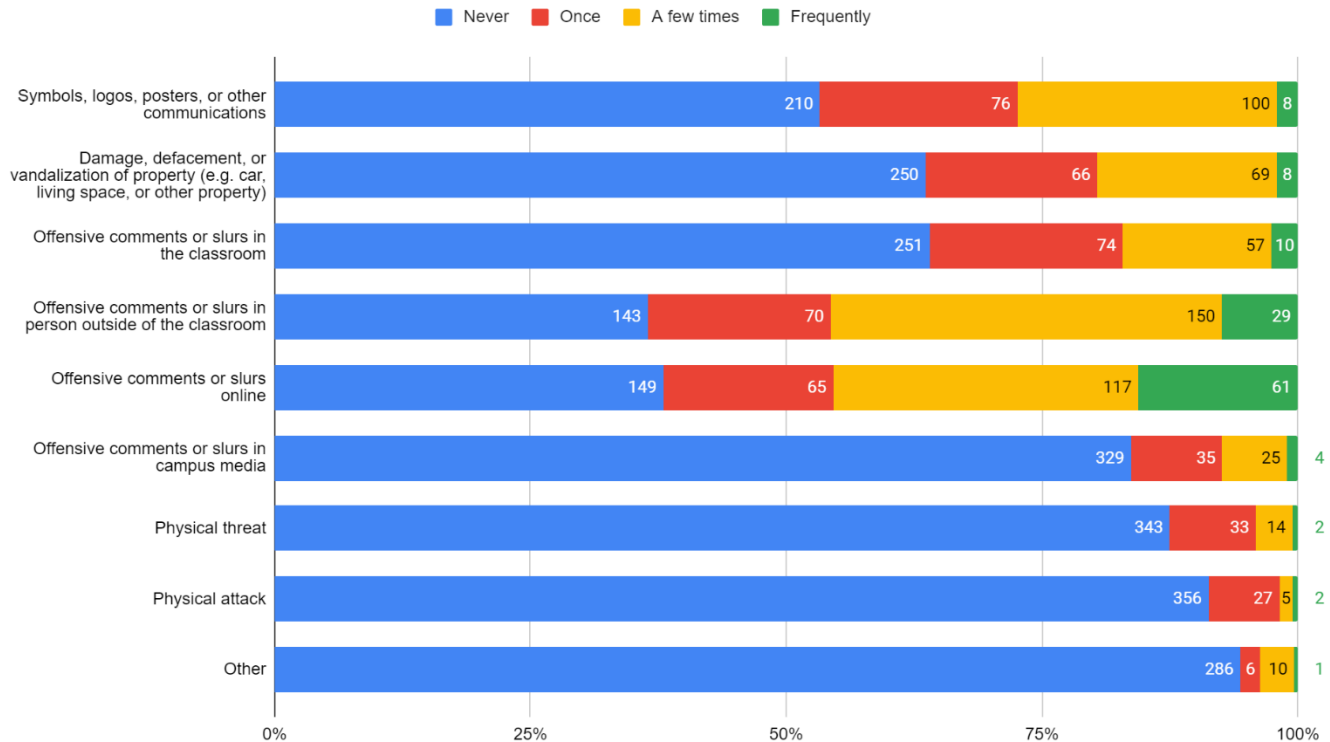
The students who feel the least welcome/included/understood/safe in relation to their religious/spiritual/secular identity includes a disproportionate number of students from minoritized religious groups.

<sup>5</sup> Including undergraduate students from all years, as well as graduate students.

<sup>6</sup> We combined these numbers due to very low numbers within each group and confidentiality concerns.

HAVE YOU WITNESSED OR OBSERVED (I.E., NOT DIRECTED AT YOU) PREJUDICE, DISCRIMINATION, HOSTILITY OR VIOLENCE LINKED TO RELIGIOUS/SPIRITUAL/SECULAR IDENTITY (E.G., ISLAMOPHOBIA, ANTISEMITISM, ETC.) ON CAMPUS OR BY MEMBERS OF THE CAMPUS COMMUNITY?

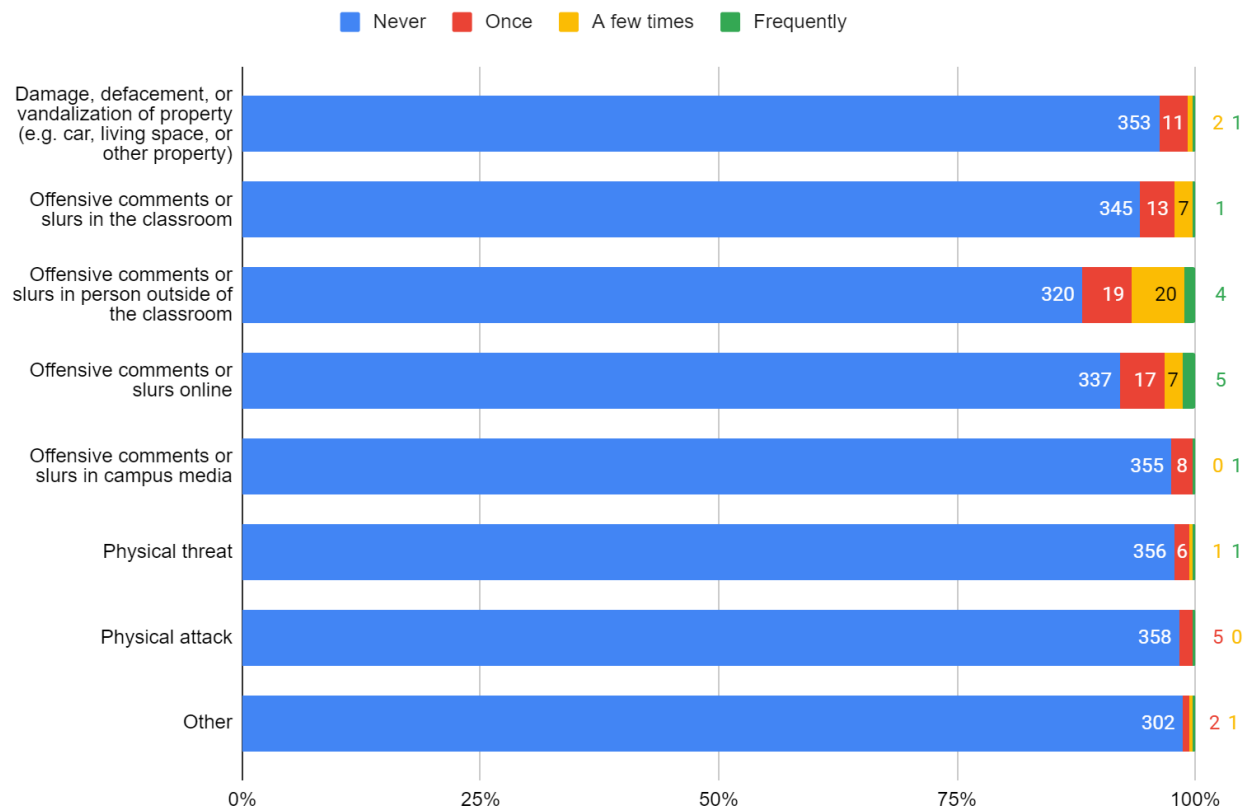
Have you witnessed or observed (i.e. not directed at you) prejudice, discrimination, hostility or violence linked to religious/spiritual/secular identity (e.g., Islamophobia, antisemitism, etc.) on campus or by members of the campus community?



Have you witnessed or observed (i.e., not directed at you) prejudice, discrimination, hostility or violence linked to religious/spiritual/secular identity (e.g., Islamophobia, antisemitism, etc.) on campus or by members of the campus community?	Never	Once	A few times	Frequently
Symbols, logos, posters, or other communications	210	76	100	8
Damage, defacement, or vandalism of property (e.g. car, living space, or other property)	250	66	69	8
Offensive comments or slurs in the classroom	251	74	57	10
Offensive comments or slurs in person outside of the classroom	143	70	150	29
Offensive comments or slurs online	149	65	117	61
Offensive comments or slurs in campus media	329	35	25	4
Physical threat	343	33	14	2
Physical attack	356	27	5	2
Other	286	6	10	1

HAVE YOU PERSONALLY EXPERIENCED (I.E. DIRECTED AT YOU) PREJUDICE, DISCRIMINATION, HOSTILITY OR VIOLENCE LINKED TO RELIGIOUS/SPIRITUAL/SECULAR IDENTITY (E.G., ISLAMOPHOBIA, ANTISEMITISM, ETC.) ON CAMPUS OR BY MEMBERS OF THE CAMPUS COMMUNITY?

Have you personally experienced (i.e. directed at you) prejudice, discrimination, hostility or violence linked to religious/spiritual/secular identity (e.g., Islamophobia, antisemitism, etc.) on campus or by members of the campus community?



Have you personally experienced (i.e. directed at you) prejudice, discrimination, hostility or violence linked to religious/spiritual/secular identity (e.g., Islamophobia, antisemitism, etc.) on campus or by members of the campus community?	Never	Once	A few times	Frequently
Damage, defacement, or vandalization of property (e.g. car, living space, or other property)	353	11	2	1
Offensive comments or slurs in the classroom	345	13	7	1
Offensive comments or slurs in person outside of the classroom	320	19	20	4
Offensive comments or slurs online	337	17	7	5
Offensive comments or slurs in campus media	355	8	0	1
Physical threat	356	6	1	1
Physical attack	358	5	0	1
Other	302	2	1	1

## b) Employee Survey: Quantitative Results

Quantitative data from the employee survey, opened by 276 employees, was as follows:

### WHAT IS YOUR EMPLOYEE STATUS AT ELON?

	<b>%</b>	<b>Count</b>
Staff	47%	112
Faculty	37%	88
Prefer not to respond	9%	22
Administrator	4%	10
Not listed	2%	4
Total	100%	236

### PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR GENDER IDENTITY. (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)

	<b>%</b>	<b>Count</b>
Woman	59%	140
Transgender	0%	1
Prefer not to disclose	9%	22
Not listed	0%	1
Non-binary	2%	5
Man	31%	73
Total	100%	236

## PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR RACIAL/ETHNIC IDENTITY. (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)

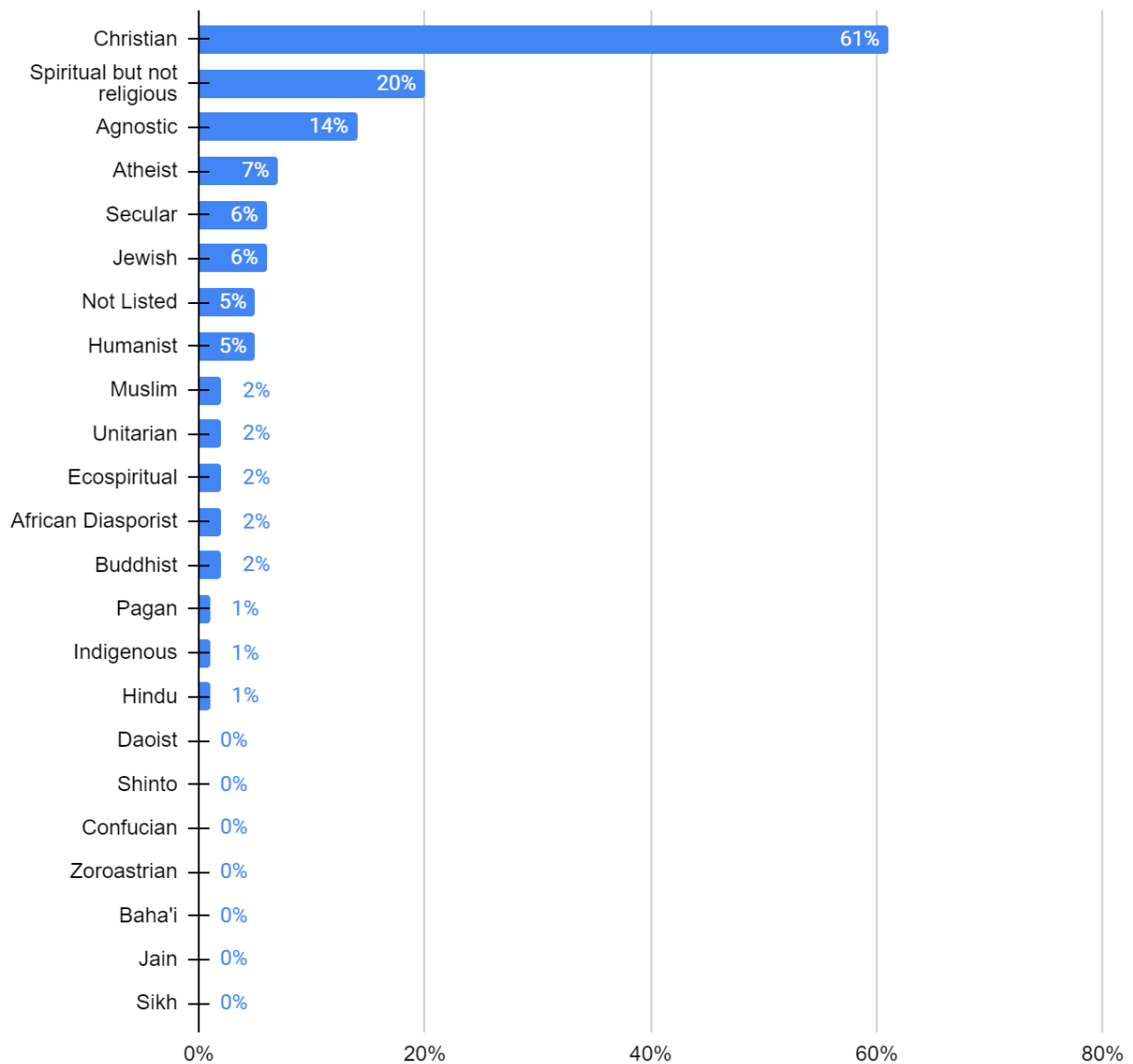
	<b>%</b>	<b>Count</b>
White	75%	178
Black or African American	12%	29
Prefer not to respond	9%	22
Hispanic, Latino, or Latinx	3%	8
Not Listed	3%	7
Asian	2%	5
American Indian or Alaska Native	1%	2
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0%	0
Total	100%	236

## PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR SEXUAL ORIENTATION.

	<b>%</b>	<b>Count</b>
Straight (Heterosexual)	77%	182
Prefer not to disclose	10%	24
Gay	3%	7
Bisexual	3%	7
Queer	3%	7
Pansexual	2%	4
Lesbian	1%	2
Asexual	1%	2
Same-gender loving	0%	0
Not listed	0%	0
Questioning or unsure	0%	0
Total	100%	235

WHICH OF THESE WORDS WOULD YOU USE TO DESCRIBE YOUR IDENTITY?  
(SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)

Which of these words would you use to describe your identity? (Select all that apply)





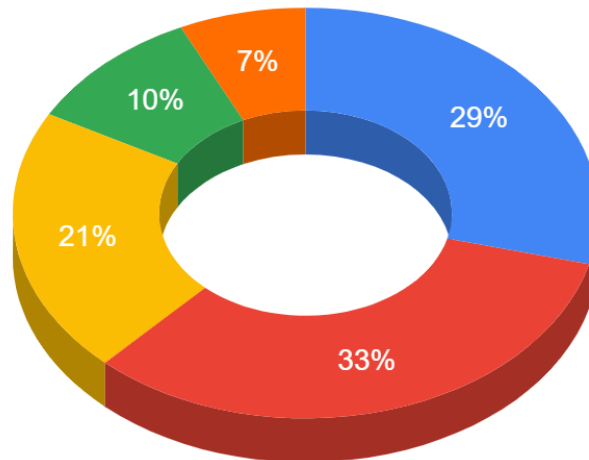
WHICH OF THESE WORDS WOULD YOU USE TO DESCRIBE YOUR IDENTITY? (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)	%	Count
Christian	61%	153
Spiritual but not religious	20%	49
Agnostic	14%	35
Atheist	7%	18
Secular	6%	16
Jewish	6%	14
Not Listed	5%	13
Humanist	5%	12
Muslim	2%	6
Unitarian	2%	5
Ecospiritual	2%	5
African Diasporist	2%	5
Buddhist	2%	4
Pagan	1%	3
Indigenous	1%	2
Hindu	<1%	1
Daoist	0%	0
Shinto	0%	0
Confucian	0%	0
Zoroastrian	0%	0
Baha'i	0%	0
Jain	0%	0
Sikh	0%	0
Total	100%	250

(Note that respondents were able to check more than one identity.)

## HOW IMPORTANT ARE THE IDENTITIES YOU SELECTED IN THE PREVIOUS QUESTIONS TO YOU?

How important are the identities you selected in the previous questions to you?

- Extremely important
- Very important
- Moderately important
- Slightly important
- Not important

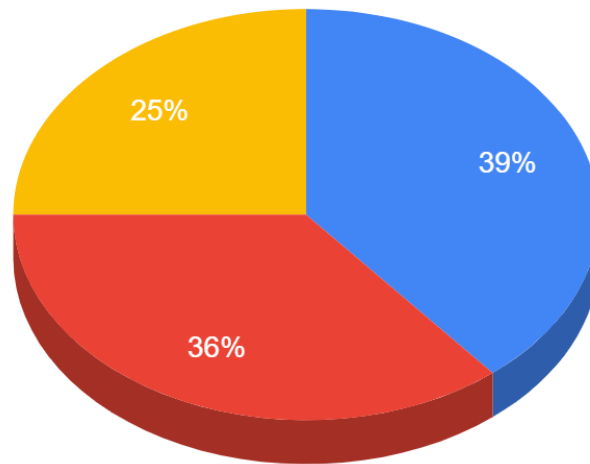


	%	Count
Not important	7%	17
Slightly important	10%	26
Moderately important	21%	52
Very important	33%	82
Extremely important	29%	73
Total	100%	250

## DO YOU HAVE A SPIRITUAL OR RELIGIOUS PRACTICE OR GROUP THAT YOU ENGAGE WITH?

Do you have a spiritual or religious practice or group that you engage with?

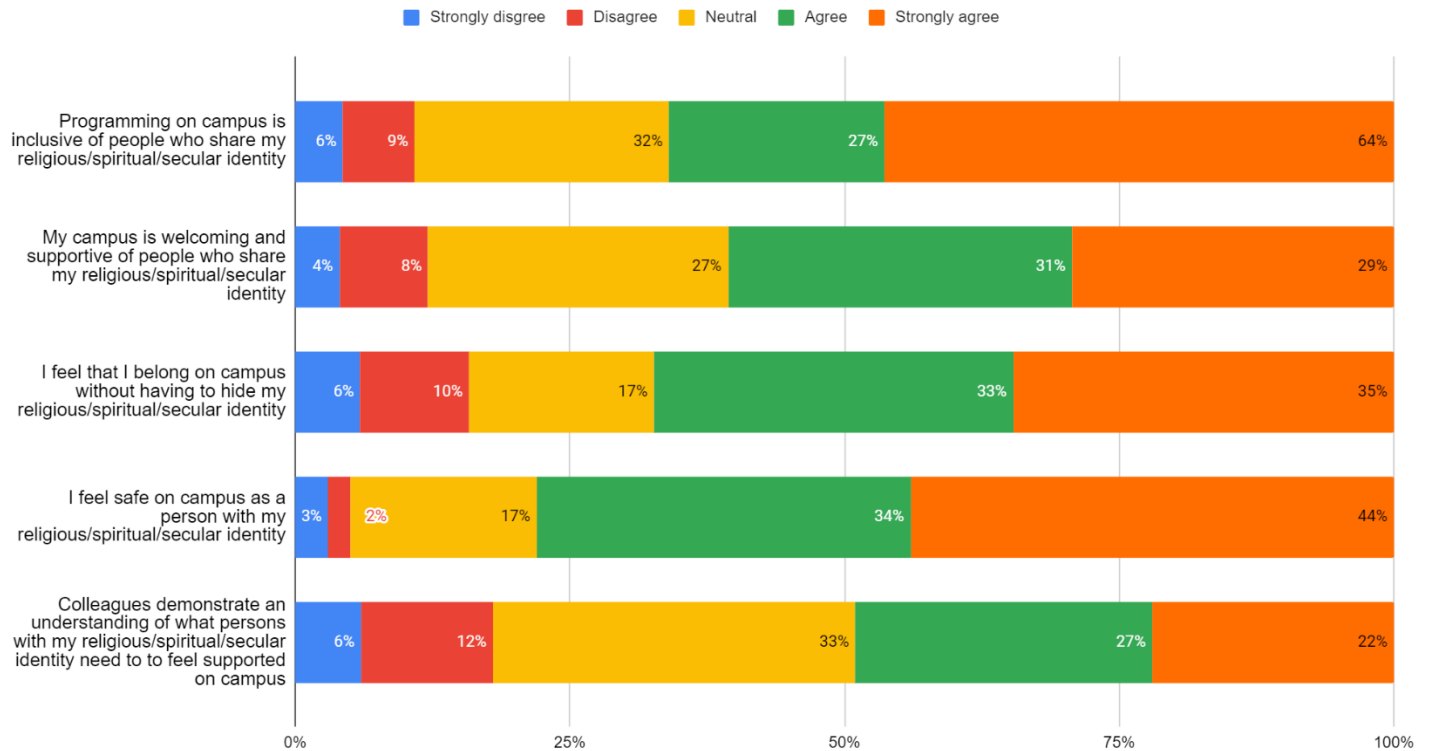
- Yes
- No
- Yes, but not regularly



	%	Count
Yes, but not regularly	25%	62
Yes	39%	98
No	36%	91
Total	100%	251

PLEASE INDICATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH YOU AGREE WITH EACH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS BASED ON YOUR EXPERIENCES WHILE EMPLOYED AT ELON:

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements based on your experiences while employed at Elon:



	<b>Strongly disagree</b>		<b>Disagree</b>		<b>Neutral</b>		<b>Agree</b>		<b>Strongly agree</b>		<b>Total</b>
Programming on campus is inclusive of people who share my religious/spiritual/secular identity	6%	15	9%	22	32%	80	27%	66	26%	64	247
My campus is welcoming and supportive of people who share my religious/spiritual/secular identity	4%	11	8%	21	27%	68	31%	77	29%	71	248
I feel that I belong on campus without having to hide or change my religious/spiritual/secular identity	6%	14	10%	26	17%	41	33%	81	35%	86	248
I feel safe on campus as a person with my religious/spiritual/secular identity	3%	7	2%	5	17%	43	34%	83	44%	108	246
Colleagues demonstrate an understanding of what persons with my religious/spiritual/secular identity need to feel supported on campus	6%	16	12%	30	33%	81	27%	66	22%	54	247

ADDITIONAL ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES TO CAMPUS CLIMATE QUESTIONS (“PLEASE INDICATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH YOU AGREE WITH EACH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS BASED ON YOUR EXPERIENCES WHILE EMPLOYED AT ELON”)

<b>Overall Frequencies (Means, Median and Mode) for 5 Items Related to Experience at Elon (n ~ 247)</b>			
<b>Item</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Median</b>	<b>Mode</b>
Belong on campus without having to change	3.81	4	5
Campus is welcoming and supportive	3.71	4	4
Programming on campus is inclusive of people like me	3.58	4	3
Feel safe on campus	4.14	4	5
Colleagues demonstrate understanding	3.46	3	3

<b>Frequency Analysis for the 5 Items Related to Experience at Elon</b>		
<b>Frequency Analysis</b>	<b>1, 2, 3 (%)</b>	<b>4 &amp; 5 (%)</b>
Belong on campus without having to change	80 (32%)	167 (68%)
Campus is welcoming and supportive	99 (40%)	148 (60%)
Programming on campus is inclusive of people like me	116 (47%)	130 (53%)
Feel safe on campus	54 (22%)	191(78%)
Colleagues demonstrate understanding	126 (51%)	120 (49%)

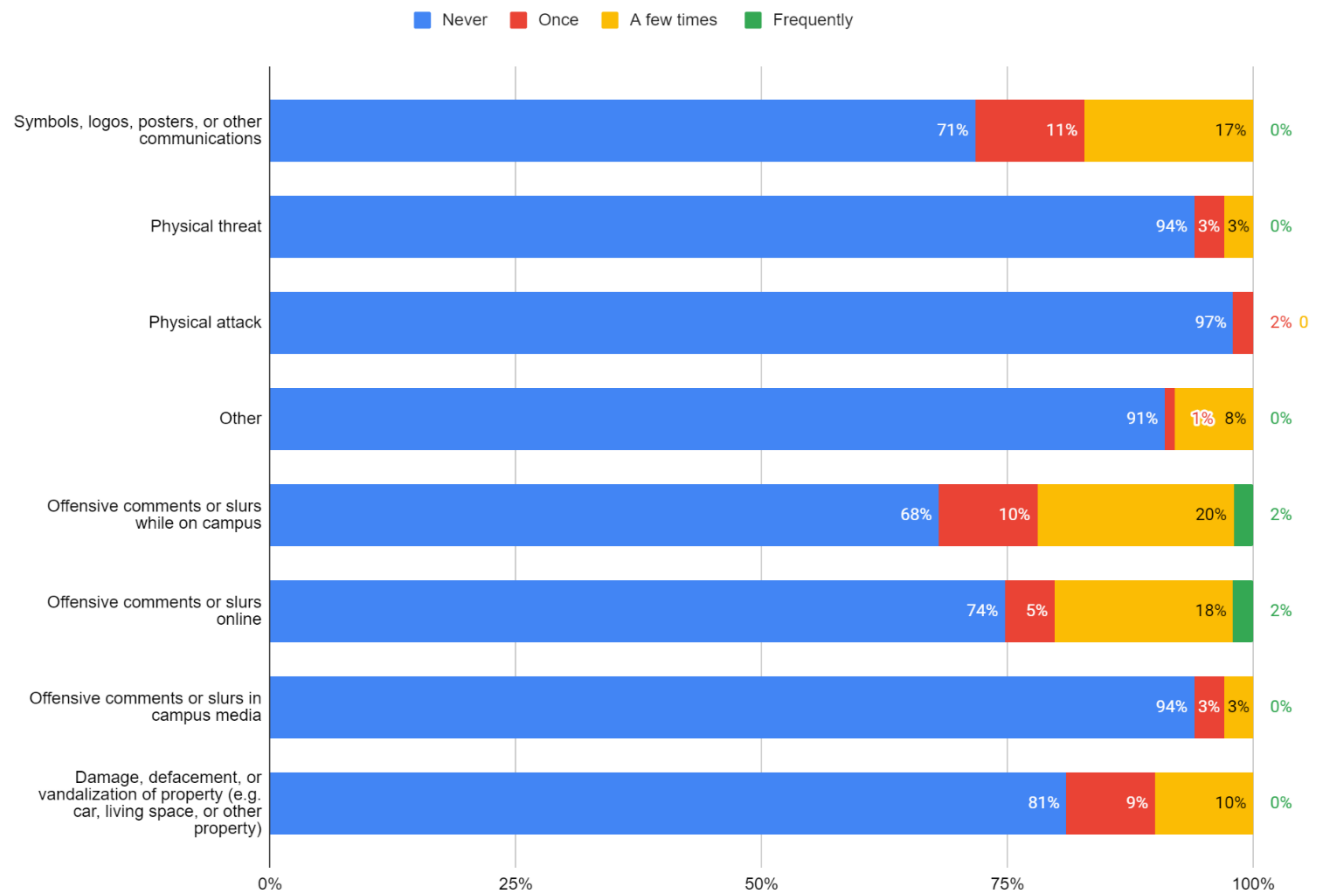
<b>Comparison of Means for the 5 Items by Employee Status</b>					
<b>Means Comparisons by Status</b>	<b>Faculty (n ~ 87)</b>	<b>Staff (n ~112)</b>	<b>Admin (n ~ 10)</b>	<b>Prefer not to disclose (n ~22)</b>	<b>Not listed (n ~ 4)</b>
Belong on campus without having to change	3.80	3.86	3.80	3.86	3.75
Campus is welcoming and supportive	3.70	3.84	3.20	3.45	3.50
Programming on campus is inclusive of people like me	3.64	3.63	2.70	3.41	3.50
Feel safe on campus	4.33	4.14	3.80	3.82	4.00
Colleagues demonstrate understanding	3.24	3.74	2.90	3.14	3.00

<b>Comparison of Means for the 5 Items by Employee Race</b>						
<b>Means Comparisons by Race</b>	<b>White (n ~ 170)</b>	<b>Black/ AA (n ~ 22)</b>	<b>Hispanic/ Latino (n ~ 5)</b>	<b>Asian (n ~ 2)</b>	<b>Prefer not to disclose (n ~ 22)</b>	<b>Not listed/ Multiracial (n ~ 15)</b>
Belong on campus without having to change	3.91	3.86	4.40	4.00	3.05	3.60
Campus is welcoming and supportive	3.79	3.86	4.00	3.50	3.09	3.53
Programming on campus is inclusive of people like me	3.69	3.55	2.80	4.00	3.23	3.07
Feel safe on campus	4.28	4.10	4.40	4.50	3.41	4.16
Colleagues demonstrate understanding	3.63	3.27	3.20	3.00	2.77	3.45



HAVE YOU WITNESSED OR OBSERVED (I.E. NOT DIRECTED AT YOU) PREJUDICE, DISCRIMINATION, HOSTILITY OR VIOLENCE LINKED TO RELIGIOUS/SPIRITUAL/SECULAR IDENTITY (E.G., ISLAMOPHOBIA, ANTISEMITISM, ETC.) ON CAMPUS OR BY MEMBERS OF THE CAMPUS COMMUNITY?

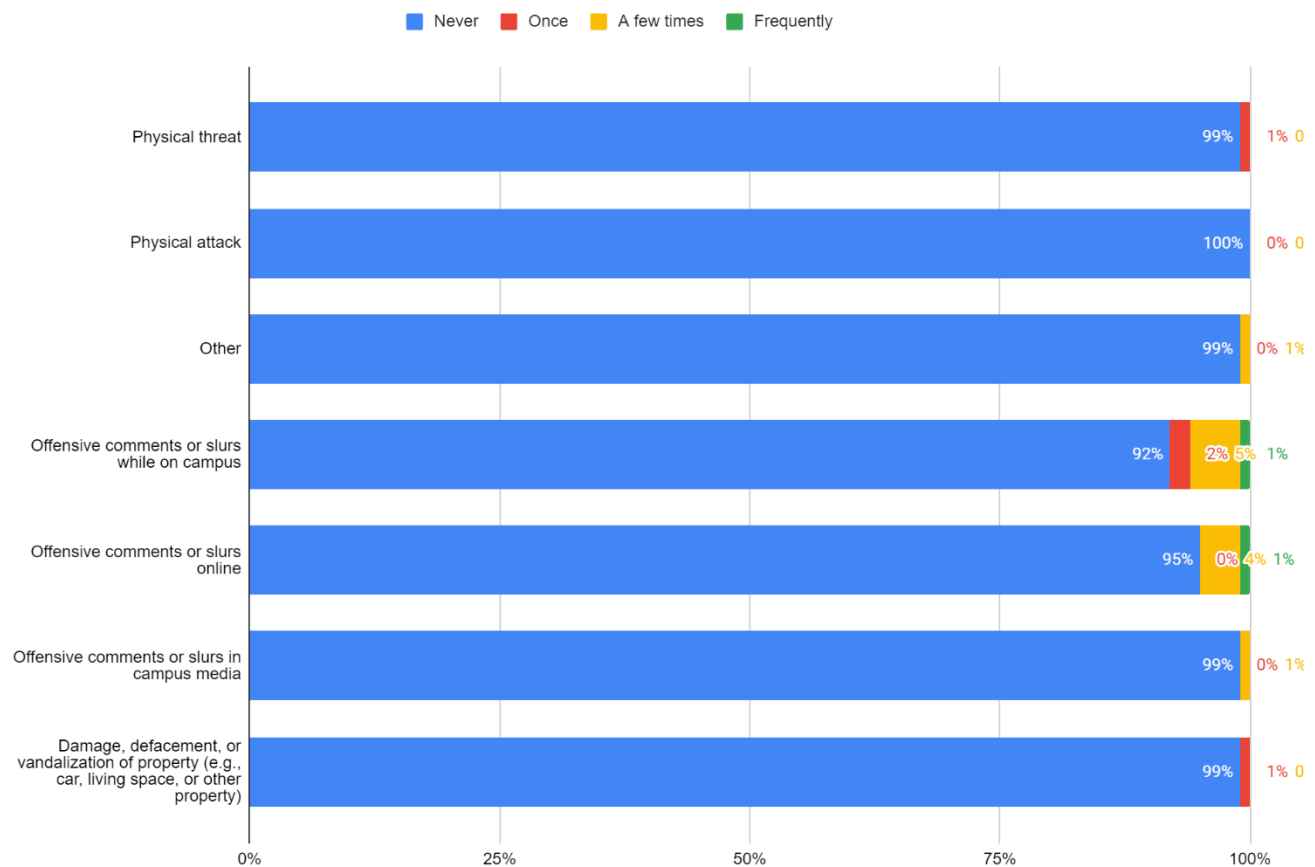
Have you witnessed or observed (i.e. not directed at you) prejudice, discrimination, hostility or violence linked to religious/spiritual/secular identity (e.g. Islamophobia, antisemitism, etc.) on campus or by members of the campus community?



Have you witnessed or observed (i.e. not directed at you) prejudice, discrimination, hostility or violence linked to religious/spiritual/secular identity (e.g., Islamophobia, antisemitism, etc.) on campus or by members of the campus community?	Never		Once		A few times		Frequently		Total
Symbols, logos, posters, or other communications	71%	172	11%	27	17%	41	0%	1	241
Physical threat	94%	227	3%	8	3%	7	0%	0	242
Physical attack	97%	235	2%	6	0%	1	0%	0	242
Other	91%	165	1%	2	8%	14	0%	0	181
Offensive comments or slurs while on campus	68%	165	10%	24	20%	49	2%	4	242
Offensive comments or slurs online	74%	176	5%	13	18%	44	2%	5	238
Offensive comments or slurs in campus media	94%	223	3%	7	3%	8	0%	0	238
Damage, defacement, or vandalization of property (e.g., car, living space, or other property)	81%	194	9%	22	10%	24	0%	0	240

HAVE YOU PERSONALLY EXPERIENCED (I.E. DIRECTED AT YOU) PREJUDICE, DISCRIMINATION, HOSTILITY OR VIOLENCE LINKED TO RELIGIOUS/SPIRITUAL/SECULAR IDENTITY (E.G., ISLAMOPHOBIA, ANTISEMITISM, ETC.) ON CAMPUS OR BY MEMBERS OF THE CAMPUS COMMUNITY?

Have you personally experienced (i.e. directed at you) prejudice, discrimination, hostility or violence linked to religious/spiritual/secular identity (e.g., Islamophobia, antisemitism, etc.) on campus or by members of the campus community?



Have you personally experienced (i.e. directed at you) prejudice, discrimination, hostility or violence linked to religious/spiritual/secular identity (e.g., Islamophobia, antisemitism, etc.) on campus or by members of the campus community?	Never		Once		A few times		Frequently		Total
Physical threat	99%	238	1%	2	0%	0	0%	0	240
Physical attack	100%	238	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	238
Other	99%	191	0%	0	1%	2	0%	0	193
Offensive comments or slurs while on campus	92%	220	2%	5	5%	11	1%	2	238
Offensive comments or slurs online	95%	226	0%	1	4%	9	1%	3	239
Offensive comments or slurs in campus media	99%	235	0%	0	1%	3	0%	0	238
Damage, defacement, or vandalization of property (e.g., car, living space, or other property)	99%	235	1%	3	0%	0	0%	0	238

These results indicate that faculty/staff do not observe bias at the same rate that students do.

### c) Open-Ended Questions

In addition to the quantitative data above, the surveys asked several open-ended questions:

- “What are ways that you seek or find meaning or sense of purpose in your life?” asked of respondents who indicated that they did not have “a spiritual or religious practice or group.
- “In what ways are you able to connect to your religious/spiritual/secular identities in academic, co-curricular, or off-campus spaces?” asked of respondents who indicated that they did have “a spiritual or religious practice or group.”
- “Please describe what acts of bias you witnessed or observed” – for those who indicated that they had witnessed or observed prejudice, discrimination, hostility, or violence linked to religious/spiritual/secular identity.
- “Please describe what you experienced” – for those who indicated that they had personally experienced prejudice, discrimination, hostility, or violence linked to religious/spiritual/secular identity.
- “What suggestions do you have for how Elon can become more inclusive of people with diverse religious/spiritual/secular/ethical/cultural identities?”

The committee’s preliminary observations on the responses to these questions are as follows:

#### **Meaning and Purpose**

Responses to the question “What are ways that you seek or find meaning or sense of purpose in your life?,” asked of respondents who indicated that they did not have “a spiritual or religious practice or group, ”indicate that community members are finding these answers most frequently in interpersonal relationships, academics and professional work, and extracurricular activities and hobbies. These areas of scaffolding meaning and purpose are followed most closely by references to introspective qualities (gratitude and appreciation), community service and social justice, and religiosity, prayer, and meditation. Focus on exercise and sports, travel and life experiences, creativity and journaling, and spending time in nature formed the next most cited group of answers.

Moreover, the responses to this question show us the areas of greatest potential impact as we consider creating new and strengthening existing opportunities for Elon community members to gain experiences that align their values to actions, deepen a sense of meaning and purpose, and consistently challenge all of us to ask the bigger questions about what gives meaning.

Source of Meaning and Purpose		Times Cited
1.	Family/Friends/Mentor Relationships	68
2.	Work/Education/Academics	40
3.	Hobbies/Extracurricular Activities	37
4.	Introspective Qualities/Gratitude/Appreciation	27
5.	Community Service/Social Justice/Helping Others	20
6.	Religion/Prayer/Meditation	20
7.	Exercise/Sports	12
8.	Life Experiences/Travel	12
9.	Natural World	11
10.	Creativity/Artistic Expression	11
11.	Journaling	10
12.	No Purpose/NA	9
13.	Follow Passions/Chase Happiness	8
14.	Self-Care	7
15.	Partying/Fun/Drugs	6
16.	Meeting Goals	6
17.	Struggling	2
18.	Not Religion	2
19.	Philosophy/Stoicism	2
20.	Everything/All Things	2

## **Connecting With One's Identity**

The question “In what ways are you able to connect to your religious/spiritual/secular identities in academic, co-curricular, or off-campus spaces?” was asked of respondents who indicated that they did have “a spiritual or religious practice or group.” Those who responded to this question were almost all juniors & seniors (JS), and faculty & staff (FS). (On the separate first- and second-year and graduate school student survey, there were only eight responses to this question.) A significant majority of the respondents point to off-campus spaces for these connections (JS= 28, FS= 70). The Truitt Center (JS= 20, FS= 18) and Catholic Campus Ministry (JS= 19, FS= 10) are also important locations. In addition, Hillel is one other location of such service to the Elon community (12G= 3, JS= 15, FS= 4)—yet it is less so for faculty. The respondents offered 45 other ‘sources of connection’ in addition to these. Finally, the survey also suggests that there is no such space, “No Connection,” for some community members (JS= 14, FS= 17).

	Sources of Connection	Juniors & Seniors	Faculty & Staff	1st- & 2nd-Year/Grad
1	Off Campus	28	70	
2	Truitt Center	20	18	
3	Catholic Campus Ministry	19	10	
4	Hillel	15	4	3
5	No Connection	14	17	
6	Lutherans, Episcopalians and Friends	10		
7	Chabad	8		3
8	Friends/Colleagues	6	9	
9	Mass	5	2	
10	Inter-Varsity	4	1	
11	Department of Religious Studies	4	2	
12	Young Life	4		
13	Elon Class/Teaching	3	3	
14	Easter Services	3		
15	Multifaith Scholars	3		
16	Fellowship of Christian Athletes	3	5	
17	Campus Outreach	2		
18	Mindfulness/Yoga/Meditation	2	1	
19	Jewish Learning Fellowship	2		
20	Spirit and Pride	2		
21	Jewish Life Groups/Events	1	3	
22	Shabbat Dinners	1		
23	Iron Tree Blooming	1		
24	Benches by Lake Mary Nell	1		
25	Philosophy Department	1		
26	Elon Gospel Choir	1	1	
27	CREDE	1		
28	GLC	1		
29	Challah for Hunger	1		
30	UKirk-Wesley	1		
31	Elon Muslim Society/Islamic Events	1	1	
32	Nature	1	1	
33	On-campus Bible Study		4	
34	Team Devotionals		2	
35	Ash Wednesday Services		2	
36	Wherever I am		3	
37	Labyrinth		3	
38	Social Justice Work		1	
39	Blessing of the Animals		1	
40	Meditation spaces		1	
41	CSRCS		1	
42	Numen Lumen Event		11	
43	Book of Names		1	
44	Luminaries		1	
45	Guest Speakers		1	
46	Mandala		1	
47	Winterfaith Lunches		1	
48	Hebrew Club			1
49	Surtal			1



## Observations and Personal Experiences of Prejudice, Discrimination, Hostility or Violence

In open responses, respondents often did not distinguish between prejudice, discrimination, hostility or violence linked to religious/spiritual/secular identity that they personally experienced as directed at them and what they witnessed as directed at others. The survey offered respondents the opportunity to share what they witnessed or experienced and we group them together here.

	<b>Act of bias witnessed</b>	<b>Students</b>	<b>Employees</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>1</b>	antisemitic bias	59	18	77
<b>2</b>	micro-aggressions/jokes	43	17	60
<b>3</b>	Chabad shooting and vandalism	33	8	41
<b>4</b>	by non-Elon local community	18	19	37
<b>5</b>	social media/online	19	12	31
<b>6</b>	vandalism/white boards (not including Chabad vandalism)	15	11	26
<b>7</b>	anti-Muslim bias	6	12	18
<b>8</b>	in the context of Greek life	16	2	18
<b>9</b>	pro-Christian bias/exclusion	8	8	16
<b>10</b>	anti-Christian bias	2	12	14
<b>11</b>	flags/displays	6	7	13
<b>12</b>	in class	8	4	12
<b>13</b>	Trump caravan	7	4	11
<b>14</b>	calendar is biased	3	2	5

Our observations about these responses include the following:

### **Social Media**

Respondents frequently noted that social media platforms are a major purveyor of bias in general. Antisemitic, Islamophobic, and anti-Christian posts were cited. Platforms cited included Yik Yak, Instagram and Facebook.

### **On-Campus experiences**

Multiple responses revealed that students often feel unsafe walking on Elon's campus at night. Reports of troubling remarks shouted from passing vehicles were common. The Trump caravan through campus came up many times and clearly continues to shape perceptions of campus safety and perceptions of Alamance/Burlington. Some reported fights or threats of violence between students after social gatherings because of offensive remarks. Jokes, and humor are the sources of some racial remarks. Offensive and hateful flags and posters in student windows were reported a lot by students and, to a certain degree, by faculty/staff as well. Defacement or graffiti on whiteboards, posters, and bathroom stall walls was often mentioned.

### **Professors and staff**

A few respondents reported that professors are not understanding of or sensitive about race and biases. Students report being uncomfortable at being asked to talk about their religion in front of the class and being uncomfortable about racial comments by professors during lecture and discussion and a more general perspective of 'White dominance.' Two responses pointed to bias by dining hall employees.

### **Antisemitism**

The most common form of bias reported among students was antisemitism. Graffiti, vandalism and remarks were reported. Greek Life organizations appear to students to be unwelcoming to Jews and Greek Life events the setting for antisemitic acts and speech. Students perceive that other events on campus are not always inclusive of Jewish students. The shooting outside of the Chabad house in 2019 and the vandalism of the menorah outside the house in 2020 loom large in the perception of campus climate for many students, both Jewish and non-Jewish.

One thing that did *not* loom large in students' comments: only two students made any mention of attitudes regarding Israel in connection with their discussions of bias.

### **Anti-Christian sentiment**

Some students and many more faculty and staff report that anti-Christian bias is evident in classrooms and in campus programming. Responses of this sort seem overwhelmingly to come from respondents who identify as Christian and feel alienated from a campus culture that they perceive favors religious minorities. Several such responses include factually incorrect reports about the Truitt Center.

### **Greek Life**

Responses from students frequently mentioned Greek Life at Elon. Responses suggest that non-white students are frequently subject to racialized prejudice in the context of Greek Life. Among respondents there is a perception that fraternities and sororities are White dominated, that non-white students encounter social problems at parties, and that Greek organizations harbor antisemitic sentiments.

## **Suggestions for a More Inclusive Elon**

In response to the question, "What suggestions do you have for how Elon can become more inclusive of people with diverse religious/spiritual/secular/ethical/cultural identities?" respondents shared a wide range of suggestions. We found twenty sorts of suggestions that were mentioned by more than three different survey respondents. All suggestions that were named at least three times are listed below:

Suggestion	Students	Employees	Total
1. Create more educational opportunities or requirements (includes lectures/speakers)	33	11	44
2. Create more organizations, activities, and programming	28	10	38
3. We need to de-center Christianity (this includes abandoning prayer at faculty meetings, football games)	9	17	26
4. We need better visibility for minorities; better acceptance and recognition of diverse identities	14	10	24
5. We are already inclusive/doing a good job	9	14	23
6. We need better policies for religious holidays, especially non-Christian ones (this includes many people asking for Jewish holidays off)	13	10	23
7. We need to re-center Christianity; honor Christianity; enfranchise Christianity	4	17	21
8. We need to better promote events/religious options	12	6	18
9. We need to silence bias/hold people accountable for bias	13	1	14
10. We need to recruit/admit more people from underrepresented identities	8	5	13
11. We need more interreligious dialogue	4	4	8
12. We need new spaces / we need to use existing spaces better	5	1	6
13. Embrace the Christians/white people who are already here instead of the diverse students/employees who are not	2	4	6
14. We need vegan/veg options; better food handling	0	4	4
15. We need better safety and security for women and minorities on campus	4	0	4
16. Make it safe to be conservative on campus	2	2	4
17. Be more inclusive of Chabad	4	0	4
18. Be more inclusive of atheism/agnosticism	0	4	4
19. Religion should be private; we need to secularize Elon	0	3	3
20. Encourage mindfulness / reduce workload	1	2	3

Many of these suggestions are, of course, in conflict with each other: for example, while many respondents suggested de-centering Christianity (#3), others (especially among faculty/staff) suggested re-centering Christianity (#7). Still, we can see some notable trends. Many respondents noted their interest in greater opportunities for learning and engagement, and many were concerned about minoritized religious populations on campus. We were also struck by how many respondents mentioned the need to improve policies or systems regarding religious holidays, especially for non-Christians at Elon.