



C O U R S E

S Y L L A B U S

“USING INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE (IRD) TO STRENGTHEN PEACE, RECONCILIATION AND SOCIAL COHESION”



COURSE BACKGROUND

While interreligious dialogue (IRD) benefits from being a scientific field of study, it also enjoys great applied capacity for everyday human life, within all contexts and for all situations. If the importance of interreligious dialogue may have been questioned twenty years ago, nowadays its necessity has become obvious, and many would argue even urgent. The practice of using interreligious dialogue for building social cohesion, peace and reconciliation is rapidly emerging as a necessary tool for the twenty-first century education tool-box.

In this context, and with regard to the need to fill the existing lack of accredited academic online courses on interreligious dialogue, KAICIID has developed an online course entitled, "Using Interreligious Dialogue (IRD) to Strengthen Peace, Reconciliation and Social Cohesion". The course has been customised to address the evolving needs of religious leaders, policy- and decision makers, KAICIID Fellows, faith based organizations, international organizations, civil society organizations, and government officials.

It is the result of a collaboration with renowned universities such as the University of Montreal, the Complutense University of Madrid and the Institute for the Sciences of Religions in Barcelona.



COURSE GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Goal: This online course aims to strengthen the capacities of religious leaders, policy- and decision makers, KAICIID Fellows, faith based organizations, international organizations, civil society organizations, and government officials within the field of interreligious dialogue. It includes the basic concepts, methodologies, models and tools needed to use interreligious dialogue for peace and reconciliation.

Specific objectives:

- To provide basic knowledge and skills in interreligious dialogue;
- To outline the historical background of interreligious dialogue from the five major religions of the world (Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism) and clarify the geopolitical aspects of these religions;
- To present the various elements of interreligious conflicts through real examples and case studies;
- To explain how to use key theories, models and methods in interreligious dialogue as scientific tools in a given conflict situation, and illustrate the diversity and the complexity of the factors that play a part in interreligious dialogue;
- To explain and critically analyse factors which affect or escalate interreligious conflict situations;

Learning Objectives:

At the end of the course, participants will be able to:

- Demonstrate developing skills and knowledge of interreligious dialogue concepts, tools and methodologies;
- Identify initiatives and best practices for addressing Islamophobia, Christianophobia and anti-Semitism at the national and local levels;
- Understand the conceptual landscape of dialogue, as well as the concepts and models of using interreligious dialogue for peace;
- Experience an innovative approach to education on interreligious dialogue as a new scientific field.





COURSE OUTLINE

The course outline is comprised of the following **8 modules** which will be covered in a moderated environment over an **8 week period**:

week 1
MODULE

1

Theories and Methods
in Interreligious Dialogue:
A Brief Overview

week 2
MODULE

2

A Brief History of the
Modern Interreligious
Dialogue Movement

week 3
MODULE

3

Dialogue Theories and Ethics:
Exploring the Conceptual
Landscape of Dialogue

week 4
MODULE

4

Prejudices and Stereotypes:
How to Treat Islamophobia,
Christianophobia and anti-Semitism



week 5
MODULE

5

Interfaith Dialogue on the Internet:
The Religious Phenomenon in Virtual
Communities and Social Networks

week 6
MODULE

6

**Interfaith Peace
and Dialogue Models:**
From Harmony to Liberation

week 7
MODULE

7

Interfaith Dialogue:
A Venue for
Peacebuilding

week 8
MODULE

8

**Outcomes of
Dialogue Processes:**
Obstacles and Hopes

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE COURSE MODULES

MODULE 1:

Theories and Methods in Interreligious Dialogue: A Brief Overview

(Dr. Patrice Brodeur / University of Montreal)

This first module presents a brief overview of interreligious dialogue terminology, as well as key theories. In this module, participants will establish a foundation of the meaning of the dialogue, its various definitions and forms. Key elements outlined in this module include an awareness of the diverse understandings of dialogue, the many ways in which dialogue can be used and the main methodologies which have emerged in the field.

MODULE 2:

A Brief History of the Modern Interreligious Dialogue Movement

(Dr. Patrice Brodeur / University of Montreal)

The second module provides an overview of key organizations involved in interreligious dialogue, including the history of their foundings. The module aims to identify and analyse significant events which have shaped interreligious dialogue both as a scientific field and also as a global solution to shared challenges. This module particularly emphasises the historical events and key events that contributed to the plurality and richness of the field.

MODULE 3:

Dialogue Theories and Ethics: Exploring the Conceptual Landscape of Dialogue

(Dr. Scherto Gill / University of Sussex)

In a highly polarised world where there are competing ideologies, values and embedded power imbalances, some decisions may be taken with finite knowledge and influenced by specific cultural and historical contexts and subjective narratives. Only dialogue, in its various forms and at its different levels, can help to recognise differences, develop shared meanings and seek understanding in order to work together towards a more just and humane world. This module begins with an overview of the conceptual landscape of dialogue, and familiarises the learner with the general arguments that propose best practices for engagement in dialogue. This overview of the general conceptual landscape of dialogue prepares participants to take a closer look at the ethics of dialogue.

MODULE 4:

Prejudices and Stereotypes: How to Treat Islamophobia, Christianophobia and Anti-Semitism

(Dr. Joan Hernandez-Serret / ISCREB)

Is it possible to establish a shared ethical framework for all religious traditions? This module seeks to answer that question through analysis of the Global Ethic and on the basis of common ethical principles. Participants will learn to place global ethics into the context of dialogue, resulting in increased efficiency in peacebuilding and greater cooperation between religions.

MODULE 5:

Interfaith Dialogue on the Internet: The Religious Phenomenon in Virtual Communities and Social Networks

(Dr. Javier Bustamante / Complutense University of Madrid)

In a world characterised by unrest and conflict, Information Technology is becoming increasingly relevant to everyday life. These tools, when intelligently and positively used, can also provide great benefit to interreligious dialogue. While face-to-face dialogue is restricted to local communities, technology provides opportunities to connect with people from around the world, expanding the voices of interreligious discourse.

This module explores the religious phenomenon in virtual communities and social networks, as well as the impact of social media on interfaith dialogue, the achievements already accomplished, and the challenges to be confronted.

MODULE 6:

Interfaith Peace and Dialogue Models: From Harmony to Liberation

(Dr. Mohammed Abu-Nimer / American University, Washington DC.)

Dialogue is a transformative peacebuilding method because it changes a person's perception of "the Other" and of the tension or conflict between them. When these changes are mutual, dialogue transforms relationships from adversarial to respectful, opening the way for peaceful, inclusive solutions. This module will present a comprehensive overview of the practical aspects of interreligious dialogue in the framework of conflict resolution/peacebuilding, as well as the vital role that religions play in this process. It will also provide tested models of dialogue which place emphasis on religious identity.

MODULE 7:

Interfaith Dialogue: A Venue for Peacebuilding

(Dr. Mohammed Abu-Nimer / American University, Washington DC.)

This module will look at the dialogue principles, themes and topics that different interreligious dialogue groups have adopted. Building on the models discussed in the previous module, this session will dive deeper into roles that religious leaders and institutions can play in peacebuilding processes. Moreover, the module further outlines the key elements of dialogue which are needed to support these peace processes.

MODULE 8:

Outcomes of Dialogue Processes: Obstacles and Hopes

(Dr. Mohammed Abu-Nimer / American University, Washington DC.)

As a conclusion to our course, this module will introduce measurements for the effectiveness of interreligious dialogue and will analyse the different criteria used by interreligious dialogue organizations to assess their successes or failures. It will also look at the relationships between participants from different religious groups (minority or majority) and how each one of them perceives the notion of success in the field, particularly in terms of existing power-dynamics. Last but not least, the module asks a key question: where do we start and where do we want to end up in the interreligious dialogue process?



HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE REQUIREMENTS

Recommended hardware and software requirements for taking our e-learning courses:

PLATFORM:

Windows 10 (32-bit or 64-bit), Windows 8 (32-bit or 64-bit), or Windows 7 SP1 or later (32-bit or 64-bit), Mac OS X 10.6.8 or later

HARDWARE:

2.0 GHz processor (minimum), 2 GB of memory (minimum), 1 GB of available disk space (minimum), 1,280 x 800 screen resolution (minimum)

SOFTWARE:

HTML5 and Flash compatible

BROWSER:

Desktop: Internet Explorer 8-10 (Flash only), Internet Explorer 11, Microsoft Edge (latest version), Google Chrome (latest version), Firefox (latest version), Safari (latest version). Mobile: Safari in Apple iOS 10 or later, Google Chrome in Apple iOS 10 or later, Google Chrome in Android OS 4.4 or later

INTERNET CONNECTION:

256kbps and higher.

Note: In some instances pop-ups must be enabled



COURSE DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

In order to ensure the best possible outreach, the course will be delivered through an interactive online platform, which allows users to take the course at their own pace. Course objectives are intended to be achieved through a variety of educational methods and technologies, designed to match personal learning styles, as well as by the inclusion of non-linear learning that aims to develop just-in-time learning skills for adults. At the same time, in order to allow participants maximum flexibility of scheduling, the learning will be conducted in an asynchronous manner.

Using a state-of-the-art training architecture, KAICIID Dialogue Knowledge Hub (DKH) is based

on the principles of adult learning and comprises a combination of interactive and gamified course content presentations, online discussion forums, quizzes and exercises to master the use of the proposed tools and approaches, as well as peer-to-peer learning through sharing of best practices, experiences and lessons learned in the local or country context.

The pedagogy has been adapted for full-time career professionals and is specifically tailored to train participants through a variety of learning methods: absorb (read); do (activity); interact (socialize); reflect (relate to one's own reality).

01. INTERACTIVE LESSONS

Each lesson includes interactive exercises which give participants the chance to self-assess their knowledge. These exercises may be repeated freely, as the results do not count toward the final grade. At the end of the course, students will complete a final case study and peer-to-peer review exercise, based on the material learned in the course.

- **Each lesson** may have an average of 40-70 slides, including the interactive exercises.
- **The system keeps track** of each participant's position; therefore, lessons may be paused at any point. The system will automatically return to the previous stopping point, upon the participant's return.

02. DISCUSSION FORUMS

In each module, participants can access user-friendly forums to discuss topics initiated by the course facilitator. Participants are also invited to initiate new discussion topics, as desired. All forums will be moderated by the course coordinator and course moderator-facilitator.

Participation in the discussion forums will not be graded. By contributing to the forums, participants gain a unique opportunity to increase knowledge of the specific subjects discussed and to share views and ideas with other course participants.

03. STUDY PLAN

The course has been designed to give each participant flexibility to plan his/her own learning progress. The lessons, activities, and additional resources

for all modules can be accessed throughout the course. Nevertheless, as this is a moderated/facilitated course, there are sessions where the progress needs to be linear to allow for facilitator support and adequate coordination among participants. For reference purposes, the discussions will remain available after the closing date.



ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES

The following activities will count towards the final grade.

01. EVALUATION QUIZZES

Comprehension of course content will be assessed through brief, mandatory quizzes at the end of each module. Each of the eight quizzes contain a variety of question styles including multiple choice, true or false, matching, etc. Participants can attempt each evaluation quiz an unlimited amount of times, without incurring penalties toward the final grade.

02. CASE STUDIES

These exercises provide participants with space to express opinions, share experiences and put acquired knowledge into practice. Some activities will redirect students to the forum, so they can exchange views and lessons learned with other course participants.

03. COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY

Participants will form virtual teams, using online discussion forums to review IRD initiatives and programmes. These teams will be asked to identify:

- **Key components** of the selected initiatives
- **Best practices** and potential challenges to be expected during implementation of short and long term interreligious dialogue programmes
- **Key criteria** necessary for designing and effectively implementing interreligious dialogue programmes and initiatives

04. CERTIFICATION

A certificate of completion will be issued to participants who achieve a minimum total score of 70% for the entire course. A certificate of participation will be issued to participants who complete all mandatory activities but achieve a final score below 70%.

COURSE ADVISERS

DR. PATRICE BRODEUR

*Professor, Institute of Religious
Studies, University of Montreal
& Senior Adviser, KAICIID*

Dr. Patrice Brodeur is a Senior Adviser to KAICIID and a professor at the University of Montreal (Canada). With over thirty years of experience in the area of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, the highlights of Dr. Brodeur's career include the development of an interdisciplinary research team on Islam, pluralism and globalisation at the University of Montreal (Canada), focusing on past and present intra- and interreligious, as well as intercivilisational and interworld-view forms of dialogue. An esteemed author and multilinguist, Dr. Brodeur has received numerous prestigious awards, including fellowships, scholarships, research grants and prizes during his distinguished career. He won 1st Prize in the social entrepreneurship venture plan competition at the University of Notre Dame Mendoza Business School (2005) and received an "Interfaith Visionary Award" from the Temple of Understanding (2010).

DR. MOHAMMED ABU-NIMER

*Professor, School Of International
Service, American University
& Senior Adviser, KAICIID*

Dr. Mohammed Abu-Nimer is a Senior Adviser to KAICIID and a professor at the School of International Service at American University. As part of the International Peace and Conflict Resolution programme, he served as Director of the Peacebuilding and Development Institute (1999-2013). He has conducted interreligious conflict resolution training and interfaith dialogue workshops in conflict areas around the world, including Chad, Egypt, Iraq (Kurdistan), Israel, Niger, the Philippines (Mindanao) and Sri Lanka. He also founded Salam Institute for Peace and Justice, an organization that focuses on capacity building, civic education, and interfaith dialogue. In addition to his numerous articles and books, Dr. Abu-Nimer is the co-founder and co-editor of the Journal of Peacebuilding and Development.

DR. SCHERTO GILL

*Associate Lecturer at the
University of Sussex, England*

Dr. Scherto Gill is a Research Fellow and the Executive Secretary at the Guerrand-Hermès Foundation for Peace, an international peace research institute based in the UK and France. She is also a visiting Fellow and an Associate Tutor at the University of Sussex's Department of Education. As a lecturer, Dr. Gill teaches courses for Masters and Doctoral programmes at the University of Sussex. She is a member of the British Education Research Association, the American Educational Research Association and the European Society of Research in Education. Furthermore, she is a Fellow of British Royal Society of Arts (RSA), a member of the Royal Institute at Chatham House, and an Associate of Taos Institute, as well as a Board Member of the Ara Pacis Initiative.

DR. JOAN HERNANDEZ-SERRET

*Professor at the Institut Superior de
Ciències Religioses de Barcelona (ISCREB)
and at the Faculty of Humanities of the
International University of Catalonia (UIC)*

Dr Joan Hernandez-Serret teaches courses in culture and religious diversity for Masters and Doctoral programmes at universities including the Catalan School of Public Administration, the Institut Superior de Ciències Religioses de Barcelona (ISCREB), the Faculty of Humanities of the International University of Catalonia (UIC), and Ramón Lull (Blanquerna) University. He also serves as an adviser for interreligious and intercultural institutions such as KAICIID.

DR. JAVIER BUSTAMANTE

*Associate Professor, Department
of Moral and Political Philosophy at
the Complutense University in Madrid*

Javier Bustamante Donas is a philosopher and ethical theorist with a strong background in computer science. He focuses on ethical and political issues related to cyberculture and knowledge society. He is currently an Associate Professor for the Department of Moral and Political Philosophy at the Complutense University in Madrid, and has been a visiting professor at several international universities, including University of Deusto, University of the Basque Country (Spain), Pontifical University of Minas Gerais and Universidade Estadual de Campinas (Brazil). He is also the Director of the Iberoamerican Center for Science, Technology and Society (CICTES), and Vice-President of the González-Vallés Foundation.

COURSE COORDINATOR

ARMEN ROSTOMYAN

*Senior Programme Manager,
KAICIID Dialogue Knowledge Hub (DKH)
and Online Course Coordinator*

Armen Rostomyan is the Senior Programme Manager for the KAICIID Dialogue Knowledge Hub (DKH) as well as the KAICIID Online Course Coordinator. He is responsible for development, management, and implementation of the DKH portfolio of training programmes, online courses and thematic webinars. He has over 20 years of experience working as a programme manager, lead trainer and online course content moderator in various UN agencies and international organizations such as: UNISDR, UNDP, UNECE, World Bank, Habitat for Humanity International, Aga Khan Foundation, and Amnesty International UK.

COURSE MODERATOR

LORRAINE VANEY

*Consultant, KAICIID Dialogue
Knowledge Hub (DKH) and
Online Course Moderator*

Lorraine Vaney is a graduate of the Vienna School of International Studies (Diplomatische Akademie Wien) and holds a degree in Social and Political Sciences from Lille Catholic University. She has dedicated a substantial part of her studies to religion and politics across the globe. She also has previous experience working for diplomatic services, international organizations and think tanks. She has moderated a number of KAICIID IRD online courses in both English and French.

COURSE IT & TECHNICAL SUPPORT

ALMIR MOREIRA

*IT Officer and Technical
Support Specialist for the
DKH Online Courses*

Almir Moreira is KAICIID's IT Officer, responsible for Moodle and general technical support. He is also an e-learning enthusiast, always willing to take on new challenges to solve existing problems. He is eager to assist course participants and is continuously seeking ways to improve performance and features of the IT platform to support the KAICIID online trainings.

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