

Association of Religious Counselors (ARC)

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

April 24, 2001

Mission Statement:

The Association of Religious Counselors (ARC) is an independent association of representatives from religious and spiritual communities that serve the students, staff, and faculty of the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Committed to the central role of religion and spirituality in the development of the whole human being – body, heart, mind and soul, – ARC advocates for the religious, spiritual, and ethical dimensions of university life. ARC provides its members opportunities for networking, education, and advocacy. In addition, ARC facilitates communication and cooperation between its members and the University of Michigan. ARC is guided by understanding and respect for the societal, cultural, and religious diversity of the student community and the university environment that embraces it.

Shared Commitments:

Every ARC member pledges:

1. to serve the University of Michigan community by advocating for the moral, religious, and spiritual dimensions of university life;
2. to support the university's exercise of free inquiry and its pursuit of the highest standards of intellectual and moral excellence;
3. to represent one's own community and its purposes with honesty and integrity while treating other ministries and traditions with respect; and
4. to safeguard the religious freedom, human dignity, and personal conscience of all individuals in the course of the activities and mission of ARC and its member communities.

Constitution of the Association of Religious Counselors (ARC) at the University of Michigan

Membership

ARC is a voluntary association of persons who are:

- 1) Advisors of recognized religious groups at the U of M
- 2) Staff persons of recognized religious organizations and campus ministries at the U of M
- 3) Leaders of congregations whose ministry relates to university faculty, staff and students
- 4) Persons in the U of M whose professional activity relates to ARC.

The ARC Executive Committee grants membership to ARC annually according to the membership criteria in the ARC Constitution (and supporting documents). A person applying for membership:

- 1) Must have a statement from a sponsoring organization indicating that he/she is appointed by that group to work on campus
- 2) Must have a statement of purpose of the group which must be filed with ARC and the statement must be consistent with the objectives of ARC
- 3) Must pay annual dues.
- 4) Will be given a copy of this Constitution (and supporting documents) and must be able to agree to it.

The privilege to vote on the Constitution, the Bylaws, and election of officers is ensured by regular participation in ARC meetings (at least three meetings in a given year).

Objectives

ARC is a society composed of the above-defined persons, whose purposes are:

- 1) To provide occasions for the exchange of ideas and concerns
 - a) among the various faith perspectives of ARC members
 - b) relating to religious and ethical needs on campus
(ARC hopes to build trust and communication by interaction among the various religious counselors and group advisors).
- 2) To provide opportunities for the exploration of cooperative approaches to religious work among students and faculty.
- 3) To maintain mutually helpful relationships between ARC and the University and to speak to the University community when it deems appropriate.
- 4) To provide for accountability among members for methods and programs of individual members or groups (See Executive Committee #3 below).

In order to safeguard and promote the professional relationships among the members of ARC, the Association underscores the importance of care, integrity, and respect among the various religious traditions that constitute ARC.

ARC recognizes the differences that exist among religious groups and the desire to promote one's message. We encourage honest dialogue, open discussion, and vigorous debate of our various convictions and points of view.

However, recognizing the detrimental effect on our relationships and our mutual collaboration of dishonest, manipulative, coercive or disrespectful methods of presenting one's message, members of ARC agree not to engage in such methods. Where tensions or perceived offenses arise, we will aim to speak to one another directly about them or address the issues through the mediation of the Executive Committee of ARC.

Methods of Procedure

- 1) ARC will ordinarily meet once per month from September through May.
- 2) Special meetings may be called at the request of the University administration, the ARC Executive Committee, or any five members of ARC who come from five different organizations.
- 3) Voting is by a majority of the members at a meeting where a particular question is discussed and decided. Information about matters of great importance or controversy will be sent to ARC members before the meeting at which they will be discussed.
- 4) The Association shall elect annually a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. To provide continuity, the Vice President (or another returning Executive Committee member) shall ordinarily become President.

Executive Committee

- 1) The Association shall elect five members-at-large who, together with the officers and immediate past President, shall constitute the Executive Committee (EC). The EC shall be selected in such a manner as to represent as nearly as possible the various religious traditions of the Association.
- 2) The EC shall meet as necessary (ordinarily meet once per month) to plan programs and to carry on the business of ARC.
- 3) The EC shall also provide the opportunity to hear concerns or complaints from any group(s) or person(s) about the activities of religious groups on campus, thus providing some form of accountability within ARC. These concerns could be brought to ARC at its meetings.

When a complaint about the behavior of an ARC member (with respect to the norms outlined in this constitution and supporting documents) has been brought to the EC for mediation, the EC shall be empowered to determine whether that member is in violation of the terms of membership. If the EC concludes that such a violation has occurred, the EC shall revoke that individual's rights and privileges of membership.

Revised March 8, 2002

**Membership Application for
The Association of Religious Counselors
At the University of Michigan**

Date: _____

1. Contact Information:

Name: _____

Position/Title: _____

Organization: _____

Address of Organization: _____

Work Phone: _____ **Home Phone:** _____

Home Address: _____

Email address: _____

Organizational Website: _____

2. *Organization's Purpose/Intentions on Campus:

***Only one response per organization is required for question 2 (Organization's purpose/intentions on campus), all other questions/requests (unless marked optional) must be completed to receive ARC membership.**

3. Educational Degrees/Certification (optional)

4. **Other Professional Preparation and Areas of Interest (optional)**

5. **Please submit a statement from the organization to which you are accountable, indicating that you are appointed by that organization to represent it on the University of Michigan campus. (Needs to be updated every 2 years)**

6. **Membership dues are \$25. Please include a check, made payable to: ARC-UM, or cash at the time of membership request. Membership dues are non-refundable.**

I am in agreement with the Mission and Shared Commitments of the Association of Religious Counselors and accept the responsibilities and privileges associated with ARC membership.

Signature: _____

Print Your Name: _____

Date: _____

Membership in the Association of Religious Counselors must be renewed annually.

Please return application to:

**Ernestine Griffin
P.O. Box 6073
Ann Arbor, MI 48106**

Benefits and Responsibilities of ARC Membership

Benefits:

Religious workers who participate in and become a member of the Association of Religious Counselors will benefit from the organization by:

1. The unique educational role ARC plays in acclimating religious workers to the administrative aspects of campus life.
2. The forum for discussion ARC provides on differences between spiritual and religious traditions or about religious and spiritual needs on campus.
3. The opportunity for networking with other voluntary staff at the UM.
4. Regular email notices about meeting times and topics.
5. The listing of member's name and religious community on the ARC website.

The University also grants ARC members certain rights and privileges:

- 1) An MCard with the UM which allows members to:
 - a) Meet with students in University buildings and gain access to housing buildings using the door swipe security system.
 - b) Borrow from the University libraries.
 - c) Subscribe to an individual University email account (for a low monthly fee).
 - d) Receive access to University recreational buildings and other facilities (some fees apply).
- 2) Name and contact information of incoming first year students who indicate interest in specific religious or spiritual communities.

Responsibilities:

In order to receive the privileges associated with ARC membership, each religious worker agrees:

- 1) To support the ARC mission, shared commitments, and constitution.
- 2) To comply with university policy with respect to access to students, campus facilities, promotion, etc.
- 3) To attend at least three ARC meetings per year.
- 4) To pay annual dues a) in the amount of \$25.00 per year for new ARC members or returning members who attended at least three ARC meetings the previous academic year; or b) in the amount of \$50.00 for returning ARC members who did not attend three ARC meetings in the previous year.
- 5) To wear one's Mcard University ID whenever in university housing.