

## Agreement of Brandeis Chaplaincy Circle

Revised July 7, 2025

We are dedicated to the spiritual, ethical, intellectual, mental and physical well-being of students, faculty and staff. We are committed to strengthening the University's intellectual culture of questioning openly. We are dedicated to making Brandeis a place of intellectual rigor and spiritual depth, and a place in which people apply their talents, skills and knowledge for the betterment of the world. We are committed to fostering respect, open dialog and mutual understanding among people of different faiths and traditions and to serving as a source of strength within the University during times of calm and crisis.

### Membership

Recognition as a member of the Brandeis Chaplaincy Circle is conferred by the Director of Spiritual Life. The Chaplaincy Circle is an association of individuals whose members agree to and meet the expectations outlined in this document.

To request membership in the Chaplaincy Circle please send a letter to the Director of Spiritual Life (lericson@brandeis.edu). Your letter should include the following:

- a description of your intended work with students and related programming
- which student groups or clubs you intend to work with
- your seminary or other educational background
- the name and contact information of your point of contact within the regional/national faith-based or non-profit organization in which you work
- your membership or association with any clerical or other religious organizations
- disclosure of any funding you receive from foreign, non-private sources (if any)
- a signed copy of this Agreement

All materials will be held in confidence and your request will be evaluated by the current membership committee:

- Professor Ziva R. Hassenfeld (Mandel Center for Studies in Jewish Education)
- Professor Kristen Lucken (Religious Studies and Global Studies)
- Alex Rosset, Assistant Dean of Student Rights and Community Standards
- Lara Ericson (Center for Spiritual Life)

After receiving your materials, the Director will convene the membership committee to review the application under consideration. Upon recommendation from the committee the Director may confer membership, which for the first year is probationary. Membership will be renewed through signing the below agreement annually. You do not need to send an accompanying letter each year.

## **The Agreement**

As a member in good standing with the Chaplaincy Circle:

- I intend to attend all meetings and to support the policies and programs of the Chaplaincy Circle and the Center for Spiritual Life (the expectation is to meet once per semester).
- I affirm that the religious organization I represent on campus is recognized by a faith community (including but not limited to a seminary or clerical organization) and acknowledged by the Director of Spiritual Life, to both of whom I will be accountable.
- I affirm that I will at all times accurately and transparently represent my religious organization and my professional relationship to my faith community to the Director of Spiritual Life, the Brandeis community and to the community at large.
- I affirm that when speaking about my role at Brandeis, I will identify myself either as "a member of the Brandeis Chaplaincy Circle" or as "an affiliate of the Center for Spiritual Life."
- I affirm that I will conduct myself in a way that fosters cooperation and understanding between the Center for Spiritual Life and the other offices, staff and faculty of the University.
- I affirm and understand that my continued participation in the Chaplaincy Circle is dependent on my active relationship in good standing within the faith community that has authorized my work.

## **Collaboration and Collegiality**

- I affirm that while I represent a specific faith community and may have primary commitments to serving the welfare of my own constituents I hereby commit to serving the welfare of the entire Brandeis community.
- I affirm that we are each part of a broader campus mosaic of faith, belief and ritual practices.
- I affirm that I will not promote my own tradition by disparaging other faith traditions, or other denominations within my own, and that all such conversations will be characterized by good faith and respectful discourse.
- I affirm that as a person with a vocation to work in a multi-faith setting I will respond to individuals in need of my compassion and advocacy beyond, as well as within, my own faith community.

## **Legal and Ethical Responsibility**

- I affirm that all literature and publicity will clearly identify my sponsoring religious or spiritual organization.
- I affirm that my role as a religious leader may involve relating to the media. I will be mindful of and attentive to the impact that statements I make on behalf of my faith

community may have on the Chaplaincy Circle and the Center for Spiritual Life. I will distinguish between speaking from my personal point of view and speaking as a member of the Chaplaincy Circle. This is especially true when speaking about a religious tradition or organization other than my own. I agree not to represent myself to third parties (including members of the Brandeis community and media) as an employee or representative of Brandeis.

- I understand that only the Director of Spiritual Life is authorized to speak on behalf of the Center for Spiritual Life and the Chaplaincy Circle as a whole.
- I pledge to be accountable for maintaining the integrity of pastoral relationships. I will not use my professional position for personal gain. I will refrain from any form of exploitation, including but not limited to emotional, financial and sexual.
- I pledge to refrain from any sexual misconduct. This includes a range of behaviors including sexual assault, sexual harassment, intimate partner violence, stalking, voyeurism and any other conduct of a sexual nature that is not consensual or has the purpose or effect of threatening, intimidating or coercing a person.
- I have read, understood and will adhere to the University's standards, statements and policies regarding [Rights and Responsibilities](#) and [sexual misconduct](#).
- I pledge to stay up-to-date on the [University's Health and Safety Measures](#) and will adhere to them, and I will require all University community members participating in my events to do so as well.
- I pledge to provide the Director of Spiritual Life immediate notice of any complaint of unethical or unlawful conduct made against me in a civil, criminal, ecclesiastical, employment or other professional organization's forum. I understand that complaints of unethical or unlawful conduct in one of these forums may lead to my removal from the Chaplaincy Circle even if the event did not occur within the scope of my service to the Brandeis community.
- I affirm that as an advisor to students and to registered student clubs/groups I will abide by the alcohol policies that apply to registered student clubs/groups.
- I affirm that my failure to adhere to the above may result in exclusion from the Chaplaincy Circle, loss of standing as a member of the Chaplaincy Circle, loss of access to the Brandeis campus and its community, and void this agreement.
- I understand that I may need to undergo a background check prior to becoming a member of the Chaplaincy Circle and agree to have Brandeis conduct such a check.
- I understand that Brandeis reserves the right to revoke my membership in the Chaplaincy Circle and my access to the Brandeis campus and community at any time for any reason.

## **Commitment of the Center for Spiritual Life to Members of the Chaplaincy Circle**

The Director will convene members of the Chaplaincy Circle on a regular (semesterly) basis in order to

- Foster deeper relationships between Chaplaincy Circle members and their groups.
- Broaden members' awareness of key University leaders, offices and policies, long-term University visions and relevant campus issues of the day.
- Consult with Chaplaincy Circle members about spiritual and religious life on campus and represent these interests and concerns to the University.

The Center for Spiritual Life office staff will

- Orient new members.
- Provide greater visibility for the work of affiliates.
- Promote cooperation and networking between affiliates and other University staff.
- Help affiliates navigate space reservation processes.

By signing below, I agree to abide by the provisions of this agreement and agree to require all staff of my organization to comply with this agreement. This agreement will be signed annually.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Applicant)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print name: \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide your supervisor/point of contact at the sponsoring organization:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Role: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Director, Center for Spiritual Life)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print name: \_\_\_\_\_