



STARBUCKS[®]
GLOBAL ACADEMY

Resource Toolkit for
To Be Welcoming Curriculum

WELCOMING DIALOGUE ON RELIGIOUS BIAS



OVERVIEW

Public spaces and third places are more welcoming to all when we celebrate our shared humanity. By understanding each other, we deepen connections. To encourage more meaningful conversations on this topic, leaders at Starbucks partnered with experts at Arizona State University to create To Be Welcoming, a 15-course curriculum designed to address bias through understanding the human experience.

Below are 4 core resources from the "Welcoming Dialogue on Religious Bias" course. This learning experience focuses on key issues in religious discourse in the United States and introduces terms, concepts, and biases affecting people from diverse religious communities. Learn more about the program and register for courses at [ToBeWelcoming.com](https://www.tobewelcoming.com).



RESOURCE 1

Key Terms and Concepts

RESOURCE 2

Perceptions of World Religions

RESOURCE 3

Constitution and Freedom of Religion

RESOURCE 4

Dialogue Challenge

This section defines key terms and concepts related to religion and religious bias. These terms have been defined specifically to fit the context of this course, and will be used to enhance your understanding of the course topic.



RELIGION

Though there is no universal definition of religion, it has been called "the state of being grasped by an ultimate concern, a concern which qualifies all other concerns as preliminary and which itself contains the answer to the question of the meaning of life."



RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY

The variety of religious traditions practiced by those in a particular area, state, or nation. Diversity, in this way, is typically quantifiable where one can use a single standard to calculate the number of religious traditions in an area.



FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE

The portion of the Constitution recognizing the right of Americans to practice religion without government interference.



ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE

The portion of the Constitution prohibiting the government from privileging a specific religious tradition over others. The 1st Amendment states: "Congress shall make no law respecting *an establishment of religion*, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."



SECULARISM

The idea that government systems ought to be separated from religious influence; there are secularist states which permit the free exercise of religion and secularist states which do not.



SPIRITUALITY

A designation for an individual's religiosity as opposed to that of an organized religious body.



INCLUSIVISM

An orientation to religious diversity that, while recognizing one true religion, also identifies elements of truth and value in some (or all) other traditions and spiritualities.



EXCLUSIVISM

An orientation to religious diversity that recognizes one true religion and emphasizes the consequent invalidity of other religious traditions. More extreme forms can lead to discrimination and outright resistance to other groups.



RELATIVISM

An orientation to religious diversity that underscores the incompleteness of religious claims to truth, therefore either granting some legitimacy to all traditions and spiritualities or approaching them all with a level of scepticism.



TOLERANCE

An orientation to religious diversity, primarily in the public square, maintaining that regardless of their religious beliefs or lack thereof, everyone's civil liberty to practice and express their faith deserves protection and respect.

Summary: Bias of any kind generally stems from ignorance about situations different from the norm, which can lead to prejudice against others. These key terms will help you understand and demystify the "unknown," as well as give a glimpse of the trauma that certain groups of people still endure due to bias.

In American history, some religious groups and individuals have been marginalized, oppressed, and discriminated against. The following resource identifies three groups that have faced challenges in American society.

Anti-Catholicism

In the 19th century there was a growing collective fear that Catholic immigrants challenged social values and norms in the United States, posing a threat to the existing political order. An increase in Catholic immigrants gave rise to a xenophobic fear that the religious leader of the Catholic Church, the Pope, might exercise a level of control on his followers that would undermine American democracy. Catholics were further caricatured as drunkards and lazy. Sadly, some Americans responded with violence against Catholics. Catholic churches were burned, and Irish and Italian Catholics were targets of lynch mobs. At the time, Catholics were a religious minority and most spoke foreign languages or an accented English labeling them as foreign. As with the other examples in this section, religious discrimination intersected with other biases, in this case bias based on ethnicity.

Anti-Semitism

Like Catholics, Jews have faced a long history of discrimination in America and other parts of the world. In the United States, some blamed Jews for starting the Great Depression and spreading communism and anarchy. Today, anti-Semitism (prejudice or hostility toward Jews) is re emerging.

Facing persecution in Eastern Europe in the late 19th century, Jews immigrated to the United States. By the first half of the 20th century, many restrictions and discriminations against Jews limited employment opportunities, residential and resort access, and membership in certain clubs and organizations. The rise of hate groups like the Ku Klux Klan promoted anti-Semitism, as well as anti-Catholicism and racial attacks. In addition, noteworthy Americans like Henry Ford and Charles Lindbergh publically maintained anti-Semitic views. Often in popular depictions, Jews were characterized as untrustworthy and financially dubious.

Islamophobia

While Islamophobia refers to a collective fear of Muslims, anti-Muslim bias better describes individual acts of discrimination, hate, or bigotry against Muslims in today's world. This includes countless threats and attacks made on Islamic mosques and incidents of harassment against Muslims. This rise was fueled by the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center, but also by ignorance of Islam. Islam is a global religious tradition, and only 20% of Muslims live in the Middle East. More Muslims reside in southeast Asia, in countries like Indonesia and Pakistan. Islam, like Judaism, is typically categorized as an orthopraxic tradition. Daily customs, practices, and rituals within the tradition are greatly emphasized. Many Muslims pray five times a day and find this routine very important.

The Impact of Religious Intolerance

In all three cases (anti-Catholicism, anti-Semitism, and Islamophobia), the grouping of racial, ethnic, and religious differences creates a powerful fear for some Americans. The conflation of these identities can intensify biases and discriminatory actions directed toward specific subgroups. For example, in contemporary society, Islam is often portrayed as inherently violent and unassimilable into American society.

American history is marked with discriminatory attitudes and actions toward specific religious traditions. The three groups highlighted in this section only compose a small fraction of historical examples.

The First Amendment to the United States Constitution confirms freedom of religious expression within the United States. Its two clauses, the Establishment Clause and the Free Exercise Clause, extend protections *from* and *for* religious practice to United States citizens. This amendment provides the ultimate guiding framework for American legal decisions about religion.

ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE

The first part of the amendment, known as the Establishment Clause, protects citizens from compelled religious practice by prohibiting the government *from* privileging any specific religion. This clause is typically applied to government action and public spaces.



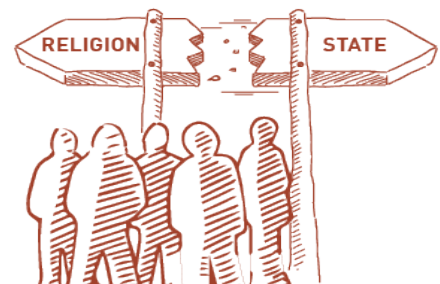
FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE

The second part of the amendment, known as the Free Exercise Clause, protects religious expression from government interference. Simply stated, the government must extend religious freedom to each citizen of the country. Thus prayers, rituals, and community practices are protected.



SECULARISM

The constitution makes use of a secular notion of government. As a reminder, secularism implies a shift away from religious authority. The U.S. Government cannot establish any religious authority, nor, ideally, does it interfere with any. In this way, citizens can choose to participate or not participate in any religious ritual or community they wish.



SUMMARY

While the Constitution protects freedom of religion, we learned in the previous resource that legal freedoms do not always entail freedom from social pressures. Social pressure can make people feel unwelcome in this country and limited in their freedom of religious expression.

Consider thinking about:

In what ways does the Constitution allow religious freedom?

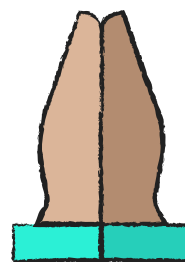
Have you ever witnessed religious discrimination?

Talking about religious bias requires a complex and creative communication skill set. This series introduced you to the role civility, empathy, and dialogue play in navigating critical conversations around bias. As you practice these skills, your awareness will increase and you will get better at engaging in critical conversations on sensitive topics.

It can be difficult to start a dialogue on these issues. Use the following list of questions to guide your conversation on religious bias.

DIALOGUE CHALLENGE

I'm learning about the role civility, empathy, and dialogue play in critical conversations around religious bias in the To Be Welcoming Series featured on Starbucks Global Academy. One of the activities is a dialogue challenge where I am encouraged to engage in dialogue with a close family member or friend on their perceptions of religion. Do you mind if we discuss your perspective? Thank you.



How do you religiously identify?

How does this inform how you live your life or the values that you hold, if at all?



Have you always identified with the religion that you do today? If not, how have you changed your religious commitments?

What's the single most important aspect of your religiosity or non-religiosity for you?



Did your parents ever discuss their perspectives about religion or people of different religions? If so, what were their views?



Do you think certain religious persons are portrayed positively or negatively in the media?

Do you have friends from other religious traditions? Do you have positive discussions about religion with those friends? Why or why not?



Do you have friends who are not religious or claim no religious affiliation? Do you have positive discussions about religion with those friends? Why or why not?



Do you think people of certain religious traditions are discriminated against? If so, how?

Do you think that there are certain privileges that come with specific religious affiliations and a lack of privileges with others? How so?

COURSE AUTHORS



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Terry Shoemaker, Ph.D., received his doctorate in Religious Studies from Arizona State University. He has conducted religious studies research, taught in the classroom, developed curriculum, and mentored students over the last ten years. His research focuses on the ways in which religion is both a site of resistance and repair within American society and religion's role in social justice efforts. As a site of social justice inquiry, Terry's research has investigated marginalization pertaining to disability, race, and religious affiliations. He is currently a lecturer at ASU and teaches courses on Religion, Culture, Public Life; Religion in America; and Religion and Popular Culture. Dr. Shoemaker has worked with Harvard's Pluralism Project and the Interfaith Youth Core in both documenting religious diversity in America and cultivating religious dialogue on college campuses.



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