2017
WORLD RELIGIONS:
SMARTBOOK
CHBOLC

Chaplain (Major) J. Nathan Kline, US Army Chaplain Center & School (February 2017)
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Advise the Command: A Required Capability

The Unit Ministry Team has the required capability to advise the command of religion, ethics, morals, and morale (pertaining to religion). **Internal Advisement** includes advising the command on religious support to include specific requests from commanders’ soldiers for religious accommodation (requests for exceptions to policy on the basis of the free exercise of religion). **External Advisement** includes assisting the command and staff with a clearer understanding of how religion shapes the battlefield and impacts mission success. The Unit Ministry Team provides external advisement primarily through one activity and two products.

Soldier and Leader Engagement (SLE), the activity of external advisement, is taught in the common core of Advanced Individual Training (AIT) for all Military Occupation Specialties (MOS) and every officer branch’s Basic Officer Leaders Course (BOLC) and Captains Career Course. During the past decade UMTs often referred to these engagements as Religious Leader Liaisons (RLL), Religious Leader Engagements (RLE), or Key Leader Engagements (KLE). Today, SLE is the standard term across the force. While it is presumed the majority of those UMTs will engage in the Operational Environment (OE) will be religious leaders, this may not always be the case.

Religious Area Analyses (RAA) and Religious Impact Assessments (RIA), the two products of external advisement, are unique to the Chaplain Corps, though common core cultural awareness lessons do include assignments for students to conduct country studies, a basic or generic form of these products. RAAs serve the command and staff sections as a resource or reference to aid when conducting mission planning and execution. Rarely are they designed for the purpose of briefing a staff or a deskside brief to the commander. RIAs, on the other hand, speak directly to how religion shapes the OE and provides predictions of how religion will impact the mission to include recommended courses of actions (COAs) and desired end states.
Culture as Context: Common Core Pre-Requisites

The Army’s Definition of Culture.

- **Values**: “What is valuable?”
- **Beliefs**: “What is true?”
- **Behaviors**: “What do I see in the OE?”
- **Norms**: “What type of behavior can I expect?”

Culture changes very gradually over generations. The following factors shape culture:

- History
- Religion
- Ethnic Identity
- Language
- Nationality

CULTURE: The set of distinctive features of a society or group, including but not limited to values, beliefs, and norms, that ties together members of that society or group and that drives action and behavior.

“The Army operates with and among other cultures as part of a joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational force, engaging adaptive enemies where indigenous populations, varying cultures, divergent politics, and wholly different religions intersect . . . . Soldiers and leaders need to learn general cultural skills that may be applied to any environment as well as just-in-time information that is specific to their area of operations.” TRADOC PAM 525-8-2

Positive Outcomes of Considering the Culture and Worldviews of Others

- Creates the opportunity for relationships of trust
- Opens avenues of approach for establishing partnerships
- Helps lead to successful stability operations
- Increases possibility for lasting peace
- Corresponds to Army Professional Ethic, U.S. national values, and enduring principles
Developing the Required Capability to Advise through Theological Integration

One’s identity as a religious leader (and a staff officer) is founded on one’s formal, spiritual formation to include critical and creative thinking skills and self-awareness. Whether providing religious support or advising the command, our professional practice requires proper grounding.
External Advisement is most specifically laid out in **ATP 1-05.03 Religious Support and External Advisement**, published in May 2013. Its four chapters and two appendices are laid out to walk the UMT through considerations before, during, and after conducting SLEs and designing both external advisement products (RAA & RIA). The ATP is nested in **FM 1-05** and the Army’s Capstone Doctrine Publications. The ATP is designed to be accessible and the primary resource for external advisement in all three learning domains (self-development, institutional, and operational domains).

**Self-Awareness**

All thinking, rational humans are biased. One’s bias is one’s attitude, preference, position, or pre-conception about everything. We have a **three-fold responsibility regarding our biases**:

- Be aware of them
- Understand how we acquired them
- Ensure they are informed by our values

Just as responsible, critical thinking requires we are aware of and avoid logical fallacies in our thinking, so too does self-awareness require we recognize and avoid bias-guided habits to include the following:

- **Illusory Correlation Bias**
  - See relationships one expects in a set of data when no such relationship exists
• **Availability Heuristic**  
  o Predicting the frequency of an event based on an example that easily comes to mind

• **Primacy-Recency Effect**  
  o First and last items are recalled more readily than others

• **Fundamental Attribution Error**  
  o Over-value personality-based explanation for observed behavior instead of considering situational factors

“Although the United States has a secular, representative government that clearly separates church and state, other states have varying degrees of religious participation in their governments. Countries such as Iran and Saudi Arabia have codified versions of Shari’a (Islamic legislation). Shari’a uses the Quran as the foundation for the national constitution. **Religion is often a central defining characteristic in some forms of government and cannot be discounted by external actors.** Informal governance, such as local elders or sheiks, may also play an important role. **Ultimately, the form of government adopted must reflect the host nation customs and culture rather than those of the intervening actors**” (ADRP 3-07, Stability, 2-90).

Comparing and Contrasting Religious Traditions

Comparing and contrasting religious traditions is an academic exercise that is usually unhelpful in the UMTs role to provide external advisement. In those instances when comparisons may result in helpful analysis, the following website is recommended:

http://www.patheos.com/Library/Lenses/Side-By-Side?path1=&path2=x2008&path3=x652
Here you can select up to three religious traditions for side-by-side comparison in a number of categories. Each block of information can be selected for a more in-depth analysis, to include sources for the information that is almost always from the tradition/community itself.

**External Advisement:**

**Basic Models for Understanding Conflict**

Conflict is exceptionally complicated. This challenge is made even more difficult when the environment is new to us, or when the UMT are outsiders, which is often the case. Responsible analysis requires understanding and applying basic principles. Understanding the fundamentals about conflict can help the UMT provide meaningful and actionable products to the commander and staff and which will inform engagements in the OE.

- Conflict is natural.
- Some conflict is beneficial.
- Some of it is inevitable.
- Chaplains must be able to analyze and assess group conflict in the operating environment OE.

**Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs** informs many basic human needs theories of conflict. Simply put, when humans are deprived of basic human needs to include, food, water, and shelter, they will often resort to extreme action, including extreme violent behavior. Some theorists include fundamental elements of identity and meaning in their theories to explain some basic human needs based conflicts.

Understanding individual preferences for responding to conflict is a helpful first step in understanding large group dynamics. The Thomas-Kilmann Instrument is a tool the Army uses in common core Across Cultures lessons to initiate self-awareness of individual preference styles for dealing with conflict. While this is helpful in shaping healthy interpersonal relationships, it is quite different analyzing group dynamics.
Understanding the basic elements of conflict in the OE over and against the ways religion and culture shape the battlefield and impact mission success is how the UMT aids the command and staff in helping to provide situational understanding.

**Soldier and Leader Engagements (SLE)**

Prior to conducting Soldier Leader Engagements (SLE) UMTs must ensure the **following two critical pre-conditions** are met first:

- Any activities within the OE, such as Soldier Leader Engagements, occur only at the direction of the commander.
- Chaplains will not act in any way that compromises their non-combatant status.

“A UMT engages an imam in Ramadi, Iraq in 2007.”
Prior to executing SLEs, UMTs must plan and coordinate visits and include supervisory UMTs and other relevant staff sections. In addition to security and safe, reliable transportation, UMTs must understand the commander’s mission and intent. Make a list of possible questions, should the appropriate moment present itself; these might include:

**What Religious beliefs are influencing the situation?**

**What are the religious teachings regarding this issue?**

**What do people believe God wants them to do in relation to ...**

**How are the clergy responding to ...?**

What message needs to be sent that explains the religious peril that this situation creates?

What is the religious motivations behind a certain event.

**Identify the Ideology we are confronting?**

What are they willing to die for?

**What religious values are being threatening? What religious values are we supporting?**

How is Religion being used to promote a political agenda?

**Who is promoting a healthy hermeneutic that promotes peace? Can we empower this message?**

Are their injustices contributing to the groups response?

**How does religious group identity impact this situation?**

What are religious and cultural mechanisms for messaging and promoting peace? Conflict?

**How is religion influencing the populace to respond to the political process?**

What is religion doing to resolve current conflicts?

**What is being taught in religious education?**

A Unit ministry team engages an imam in Killeen, Texas following the Fort Hood shootings in 2009.
Religious Affairs Specialists (Chaplain Assistants) make their own significant contributions to producing external advisement products and conducting SLE. In addition to ensuring security and reliable travel, Religious Affairs Specialists are best positioned to take careful notes during an engagement. Ask permission from your guest/host before taking notes; otherwise, it could raise suspicion or alarm.

- Consider the **SLE a tactical operation** with four phases:
  - Planning
  - Preparation
  - Execution
  - Assessment
- Conduct thorough preparation. **(Rehearse!)**
- Rehearse with your interpreter.
- **Show respect to culture, religion, and your counterpart.**
- Your actions after the SLE are just as important as your actions during the SLE.
In addition to promoting relationships of mutual trust and respect, chaplains conducting SLE help “promote human rights, and deepen cultural understanding between unit personnel and the local populace” ATP 1-05.03 (2-9).

A UMT hosts religious leaders who share with unit leadership religious and cultural insights impacting mission success (Ramadi, Iraq 2007).
Basic Rules during SLE

- Don’t agree to any first offer at the table.
- Don’t ever lie, bluff, or make threats.
- Don’t assume your counterpart does not know/speak English.
- Avoid discussion of politics, or ‘policy’.
- Don’t have side-bar conversations (very rude).
- Don’t tell jokes—they do not translate well.
- Don’t look at your interpreter—look at your counterpart when you speak to him.
- Don’t rush off to the next meeting. Make him feel “this” meeting is the most important event in your day.
- Don’t promise anything beyond your ability to control.
- Do know if the partner is a decision-maker.
- Do finish on-time.
- Do stay in your lane.
- Finish with review of agreements made!

Dialogue during SLE according to ATP 1-05.03

Listening: more deeply (think hearing test) and for longer periods of time (think counseling)
Inquiring: to discover others’ values and views
Examining: our own presupposition and separating assumptions from facts
In Order To: demonstrate a thorough understanding of the religious issues within the culture and foster effective relationships between command teams and local leaders (2-12).

**Krister Stendahls’ Rules for Religious Understanding**
- Go to the source for your information.
- Don’t compare your best to their worst.
- Leave room for “holy envy”.

**David Novak’s Minimal Criterion for Interreligious Dialogue**
- One’s interlocutor should recognize herself in your description of her.
The Science of Persuasion

During Soldier and Leader Engagements UNDERSTANDING and EMPLOYING these shortcuts in an ETHICAL manner can significantly increase the chances that someone will be persuaded by your requests:

- Reciprocity
- Scarcity
- Authority
- Consistency
- Liking
- Consensus

While these principles are aimed at U.S. culture in general, many of them directly apply to SLE in the OE. The researchers and author emphasize these principles can (and must) be practiced ethically and sincerely; otherwise, one’s actions can become manipulative. For some detail in context see the following video summary by the author and a link to the best-selling study:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cFdCzN7RYbw


SLE: Final Tips

- Consider the SLE a tactical operation with four phases:
  - Planning
  - Preparation
  - Execution
  - Assessment
- Conduct thorough preparation. (Rehearse!)
- Rehearse with your interpreter.
- Show respect to culture, religion, and your counterpart.
- Your actions after the SLE are just as important as your actions during the SLE.
Religious Area Analysis (RAA) & Religious Impact Assessment (RIA)

Religious Area Analyses (RAAs) are UMT products used to advise the command and staff of how religion is shaping the OE. It is important to contrast the analysis of the RAA with the assessment of the RIA. In the civilian world, these two words are frequently used interchangeably. In the language of ATP 1-05.03, it helps to think of these terms in the following way:

- **Analysis (RAA):**
  - Collect data from the OE related to religion.
  - Organize the data using a standard framework—usually the **Operational Variables:**
    - Political
    - Military
    - Economic
    - Social
    - Information
    - Infrastructure
    - Physical Environment
    - Time
  - REMEMBER: An RAA never presents an operational variable on its own. It is the **cross section between each variable and religion** that provides commands and staff the needed information. For example, the “Political”, the “Military”, the “Economic”, etc. are always provided as each **intersects with religion.**
  - Alternative frameworks include the Mission Variables and ASCOPE

- **Assessment (RIA):**
  - Identify three specific ways religion may likely impact mission success.
  - Each impact will have the following elements related to religion in the OE:
    - Prediction of how religion may impact mission success
    - Recommended **Course of Action** (COA)
    - Desired End State

It is important to note the ATP does not designate a format for either RAA or RIA. (In the institutional domain—at USACHCS—assignments related to these products are submitted in a 10 page PowerPoint presentation (RAA) and a 1-2 page Memorandum to the Commander in Word (RIA). In the operational domain, so long as the products provide commanders and staff the needed analysis and assessment in a clear and accessible manner, the format or interface is irrelevant.

Every UMT, every mission, and every OE is unique; therefore, every SLE and every product (RAA & RIA) will be unique. Should you inherit products from other UMTs, they may be very useful, but will always require revision and update.
To guide the UMT in knowing what data to collect and organize, the following matrix identifies general, but key, questions whose answers are likely to impact mission success. Note the X axis with Operation Variables and Y axis with an alternative ASCOPE together provide more thorough analysis:

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<th>P</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>T</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Consider other military religious areas, strategic; other military chaplains, rank/powers and party affiliation, frequency of visits, etc.</td>
<td>Consider military chaplains; where are religious services, what are the religious services attended?</td>
<td>Consider if any religious groups are highly connected, location of religious resources</td>
<td>Consider if any religious groups are highly connected, location of religious resources</td>
<td>Consider if any religious groups are highly connected, location of religious resources</td>
<td>Consider if any religious groups are highly connected, location of religious resources</td>
<td>Consider if any religious groups are highly connected, location of religious resources</td>
<td>Consider if any religious groups are highly connected, location of religious resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>National policy and regulations on religious activities, education, etc.; main areas of interest in religion; how do religious organizations operate?</td>
<td>Consider how religious organizations operate; are they religiously affiliated?</td>
<td>Consider power of religious organizations; how do religious organizations operate?</td>
<td>Consider power of religious organizations; how do religious organizations operate?</td>
<td>Consider power of religious organizations; how do religious organizations operate?</td>
<td>Consider power of religious organizations; how do religious organizations operate?</td>
<td>Consider power of religious organizations; how do religious organizations operate?</td>
<td>Consider power of religious organizations; how do religious organizations operate?</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>Consider what are the characteristics of the religious organization?</td>
<td>Consider how religious organizations operate; how do religious organizations operate?</td>
<td>Consider power of religious organizations; how do religious organizations operate?</td>
<td>Consider power of religious organizations; how do religious organizations operate?</td>
<td>Consider power of religious organizations; how do religious organizations operate?</td>
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<td>Consider power of religious organizations; how do religious organizations operate?</td>
<td>Consider power of religious organizations; how do religious organizations operate?</td>
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<td>O</td>
<td>Consider other religious organizations and international NGOs; what are they?</td>
<td>Consider how religious organizations operate; how do religious organizations operate?</td>
<td>Consider power of religious organizations; how do religious organizations operate?</td>
<td>Consider power of religious organizations; how do religious organizations operate?</td>
<td>Consider power of religious organizations; how do religious organizations operate?</td>
<td>Consider power of religious organizations; how do religious organizations operate?</td>
<td>Consider power of religious organizations; how do religious organizations operate?</td>
<td>Consider power of religious organizations; how do religious organizations operate?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Consider influential religious leaders, councils, and organizations (e.g., secret societies, financial contributions, external leaders)</td>
<td>Consider how religious organizations operate; how do religious organizations operate?</td>
<td>Consider power of religious organizations; how do religious organizations operate?</td>
<td>Consider power of religious organizations; how do religious organizations operate?</td>
<td>Consider power of religious organizations; how do religious organizations operate?</td>
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<td>Consider power of religious organizations; how do religious organizations operate?</td>
<td>Consider power of religious organizations; how do religious organizations operate?</td>
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<td>E</td>
<td>Consider the potential for religious events, such as religious and political events; how do religious organizations operate?</td>
<td>Consider how religious organizations operate; how do religious organizations operate?</td>
<td>Consider power of religious organizations; how do religious organizations operate?</td>
<td>Consider power of religious organizations; how do religious organizations operate?</td>
<td>Consider power of religious organizations; how do religious organizations operate?</td>
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This graph provides many of the questions you will want to answer.
The following matrix is found in ATP 1-05.03, 1-18. Collecting and organizing religious data in the OE of this sort provides the commander and staff an additional layer of Situational Understanding:

<table>
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<th>Religious Factors Matrix</th>
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<td><strong>Levels of Religious Factors</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Influential Religious Leaders</strong></td>
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Where can you access sample products and [helpful resources](#)?

At the Chaplain Corps’ World Religions Group:


Visit this site and request to join or email CH (LTC) Scott Simpson: Scott.e.simpson2.mil@mail.mil
Internal Advisement:

Ministry in a Pluralistic Environment

Every Army Chaplain is commissioned by the Army and endorsed by an agent of a religious community or denomination. Endorsers support their chaplains individually and many through the National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces, which oversees The Covenant and The Code of Ethics for Chaplains of the Armed Forces.

A chaplain performs religious support directly to those soldiers who share the chaplain’s own religious faith. A chaplain provides religious support through coordination and full support to all other soldiers. Unit Ministry Teams must recognize the very existence of the Chaplain Corps hinges on the need to provide all Soldiers religious support. This fact is grounded in Army Doctrine, Department of Defense Instruction, U.S Code and ultimately in the United States Constitution, specifically the First Amendment:

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof…”

U.S. Constitution, First Amendment

Army Regulation (AR) 165-1, Para 1-6, states: “Congress recognizes the necessity of the Chaplain Corps in striking a balance between the establishment and free exercise clauses.”

The Department of Defense “…places a high value on the rights of members of the Military Services to observe the tenets of their respective religions.”

DODI 1300.17
The same paragraph also emphasizes “chaplains cooperate with each other, without compromising their religious traditions or ecclesiastical endorsement requirements, to ensure the most comprehensive religious support opportunities possible within the unique military environment.” Chaplains are required to minister within a pluralistic (“religiously diverse”) military environment. It can be difficult to discern one’s way through cooperation without compromising, but no chaplain is alone. His or her endorser, supervisory chaplain, and chaplain peers are present to mentor, guide, and encourage the chaplain.

**Religious Accommodation**

Soldiers seeking to freely exercise their religion when doing so is contrary to Army regulations may request religious accommodations (an exception to policy). Such requests will fall into the following categories:

- worship practices
- wear and appearance of the uniform
- personal grooming
- dietary practices
- medical practices

**The Code of Ethics**

(an excerpt)

I understand as a chaplain in the United States Armed Forces that I will function in a pluralistic environment with chaplains of other religious bodies to provide for ministry to all military personnel and their families entrusted to my care.

I will seek to provide for pastoral care and ministry to persons of religious bodies other than my own within my area of responsibility with the same investment of myself as I give to members of my own religious body. I will work collegially with chaplains of religious bodies other than my own as together we seek to provide as full a ministry as possible to our people. I will respect the beliefs and traditions of my colleagues and those to whom I minister. When conducting services of worship that include persons of other than my religious body, I will draw upon those beliefs, principles, and practices that we have in common.
AR 600-20, Para 5-6, a. emphasizes the importance of these requests:

“a. The Army places a high value on the rights of its Soldiers to observe tenets of their respective religions or to observe no religion at all. In accordance with Sections 2000bb through 2000bb-4, Title 42, United States Code (42 USC 2000bb - 2000bb-4) and DODI 1300.17, the Army will approve requests for accommodation of religious practices unless accommodation will have an adverse impact on unit readiness, individual readiness, unit cohesion, morale, good order, discipline, safety, and/or health. As used in this regulation, these factors will be referred to individually and collectively as “military necessity.” All requests for accommodation of religious practices will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Each request must be considered based on its unique facts; the nature of the requested religious accommodation; the effect of approval or denial on the Soldier’s exercise of religion; and the effect of approval or denial on military necessity. Accommodation of a Soldier’s religious practices must be examined against military necessity and cannot be guaranteed at all times.”

Army Directive 2017-03, dated 3 Jan 2017, moved the level of approval for many of these requests from the much higher Department of the Army level to that of the brigade commander. These include unshorn hair and beards for Sikhs and hijabs for Muslims.

Unit chaplains may write Memoranda to the Commander for a Soldier to include in his or her packet requesting religious accommodations from the command. Chaplains are expected to meet with the Soldier and perform any research, referencing, and background checks to allow them to assess the following:

- The Soldier’s sincerity in belief
- The legitimacy of the request (Is it a practice observed by the religious community?)
- Chaplains may choose to conclude the memo recommending the commander approve or disapprove the request.