



Bill Number:	W-23-02	Sponsored By:	Jonathan Quist
Introduced On:	3-16-23		
Voted On:	3-23-23		
Result:	Passed		
Vote Count:	14-1-2		

A BILL TO: Increase the Amount of Interfaith Rooms on Campus

Recognizing, that the United States of America is a nation founded on the principles of religious diversity, equality, and freedom¹; and

Recognizing, that college campuses play a crucial role in promoting these values by providing an inclusive and respectful environment for all students, regardless of their religious beliefs²; and

Recognizing, that Grand Valley State University, is a vibrant and diverse campus community, with a student body composed of individuals from various cultural and religious backgrounds³; and

Recognizing, college students from diverse religious backgrounds may require a quiet and private space for religious practice, meditation, or reflection; and

Recognizing, the provision of a designated interfaith room(s) on campus can fulfill this need, contributing to an inclusive and welcoming environment for all students; and

Recognizing, that other college campuses such as Michigan State have multiple interfaith rooms across their campus⁴; and

¹ "U.S. Constitution - First Amendment | Resources | Library of Congress." <https://constitution.congress.gov/constitution/amendment-1/>. Accessed 8 Feb. 2023.

² "Religious Liberty on Campus | The Foundation for Individual Rights" <https://www.thefire.org/research-learn/religious-liberty-campus>. Accessed 8 Feb. 2023.

³ "Diversity Dashboard - Division of Inclusion and Equity." 12 Oct. 2021, <https://www.gvsu.edu/inclusion/diversity-dashboard-128.htm>. Accessed 8 Feb. 2023.

⁴ <https://ocat.msu.edu/reflection-rooms/>

Recognizing, that currently, there is one (1) interfaith room on each campus owned by Grand Valley State University⁵, each requiring around a ten (10) minutes' walk⁶, which may pose a challenge for students with differing access to transportation; and

Whereas, this limited availability of interfaith rooms presents a challenge for students who require easy access to a quiet and private space for religious practices, meditation, or reflection; and

Whereas, the establishment of more interfaith rooms on campus would reduce the need for travel in order to find a quiet and private space, which is crucial for students with disabilities; and

Recognizing, that some religious beliefs require multiple time-sensitive daily prayers, such as Islam⁷; and

Recognizing, that the Pew Campus Interfaith room is available from noon (12) to five (5) p.m.⁸; and

Whereas, having limited access to an interfaith room during specific times may prevent students from fulfilling their religious obligation, which may limit their ability to fully exercise their religious beliefs; and

Recognizing, that the Grand Valley State University housing facilities consist primarily of dormitory and apartment-style accommodations, with limited space for students to practice their faith⁹; and

Whereas, this arrangement can pose challenges for students who wish to practice their faith and may hinder their ability to do so in a personal and meaningful manner; and

⁵ "Interfaith Reflection Rooms - Grand Valley State University." 4 Mar. 2021, <https://www.gvsu.edu/interfaith/interfaith-reflection-rooms-126.htm>. Accessed 8 Feb. 2023.

⁶

[https://www.google.com/maps/dir/Holton-Hooker+Learning+%26+Living+Center+\(HHLIC\).+Residence+Drive,+Allendale,+MI/Kirkhof+Center,+Allendale+Charter+Twp,+MI+49401/@42.9644469,-85.890237,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m14!4m13!1m5!1m1!1s0x8819a32013034b71:0x7e50f8c8c76b5076!2m2!1d-85.8854743!2d42.9664103!1m5!1m1!1s0x8819a32083f3fdb1:0x326a3692807d8a30!2m2!1d-85.8892571!2d42.962514113e2](https://www.google.com/maps/dir/Holton-Hooker+Learning+%26+Living+Center+(HHLIC).+Residence+Drive,+Allendale,+MI/Kirkhof+Center,+Allendale+Charter+Twp,+MI+49401/@42.9644469,-85.890237,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m14!4m13!1m5!1m1!1s0x8819a32013034b71:0x7e50f8c8c76b5076!2m2!1d-85.8854743!2d42.9664103!1m5!1m1!1s0x8819a32083f3fdb1:0x326a3692807d8a30!2m2!1d-85.8892571!2d42.962514113e2).

⁷ "Why do Muslims pray five times a day and what does it signify?." 7 Sep. 2022, <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/international/uae/why-do-muslims-pray-five-times-a-day-and-what-does-it-signify/articleshow/94053372.cms>. Accessed 8 Feb. 2023. <https://www.islamicfinder.org/world/united-states/4984029/allendale-prayer-times/>

⁸ "Interfaith Reflection Rooms - Grand Valley State University." 4 Mar. 2021, <https://www.gvsu.edu/interfaith/interfaith-reflection-rooms-126.htm>. Accessed 8 Feb. 2023.

⁹ "Housing and Residence Life - Grand Valley State University." 5 Jan. 2023, <https://www.gvsu.edu/housing/>. Accessed 8 Feb. 2023.

Whereas, the inclusion of Housing and Residence Life in this resolution holds the potential to effectively tackle the challenges faced by students seeking to practice their faith within the dormitories, by offering a solution that grants all students, regardless of religious beliefs, the private and meaningful space necessary for spiritual expression and growth; and

Recognizing, that Grand Valley State University is committed to promoting diversity and inclusiveness recognizing the significance of providing a space for religious practice and spirituality and the role that an interfaith room can play in fostering community and understanding among its students¹⁰;

Therefore, Let it Be Resolved, that the Grand Valley State University Student Senate, acting on behalf of the student body, recommends to the Allendale and Grand Rapids' Facilities Services as well as Housing and Residence Life, that more buildings on the Grand Valley State University campus should have an interfaith room accessible to all students, staff, and faculty, regardless of their religious beliefs; and

Furthermore, Let it Be Resolved, that the interfaith room should be well-equipped, well-maintained, and provide a comfortable and respectful experience for all users; and

Furthermore, Let it Be Resolved, that the interfaith room should be inclusive of all religions and belief systems, neutral in its decor, respectful in its materials, and accessible during all hours the building is open.

¹⁰ "Kaufman Interfaith Institute - Grand Valley State University."
<https://www.gvsu.edu/interfaith/interfaith-gvsu-120.htm>. Accessed 8 Feb. 2023.