Mapping Muslim Chaplaincy

EDUCATIONAL AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

APRIL 4, 2019

Lance D. Laird, Boston University School of Medicine
Samsiah Abdul Majid, Association of Muslim Chaplains

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

We conducted a survey of Muslims who are currently serving or have served as chaplains in the United States. The survey aimed to "map" the growing field of Muslim chaplaincy across sectors; assess the educational and support needs of Muslim chaplains; and contribute Muslim voices to a larger innovation project on the broader chaplaincy profession. In this report, we present the results of this survey, based on 85 completed responses.

- *A diverse, mostly Sunni workforce.* Among Muslim chaplains, males outnumber females 2:1, and most are in their thirties, forties, and fifties. They are racially diverse, with approximately 31% Black, 22% White, and 20% Asian, with a variety of multiracial and ethnic identities. Only one identified as Shi`i, however. They work in 23 states and Washington, DC, with larger numbers in NY, MA, and CA. The top three sectors where chaplains serve are healthcare (27% of 117 responses), corrections (24%) and college/university (19%).
- *A highly educated workforce.* Muslim chaplains are a highly educated group overall (almost 80% with graduate degrees), though the range of official educational attainment is wide. Many have certificates in traditional Islamic sciences. Only six, however, are board certified chaplains.
- *Volunteering but mostly employed*. 72% of survey participants are currently working, a few in multiple positions or in multiple sectors. About 70% of positions held are paid, full- or part-time. The majority of Muslim chaplains have less than 10 years' experience, while many older chaplains have volunteered for years before getting a paid position. Half of all Muslim chaplains are staff chaplains, with about one-fifth being volunteers. Only two are CPE educators, and one educator in training. Half of all Muslim chaplains also serve in other religious leadership positions, often as imams or Qur'an teachers.
- *Interfaith clientele*. Three quarters of Muslim chaplains serve both Muslims and non-Muslims; healthcare chaplains tend to serve a higher percentage of non-Muslim clients than corrections or campus chaplains, but most seek interfaith training.
- *Key challenges* include upholding quality standards and the need for specialization; the need for strong Muslim institutions; financial support; personal support and mentorship; role legitimacy and recognition; gendered expectations; certain sector specific issues; and social climate.
- *Demanding continuing education.* Approximately a quarter of participants had received over 40 hours of continuing education in the past year, while another quarter of participants had not taken any. Participants not only expressed a strong desire for both sharing experiences with other chaplains and more

training in "skills and techniques," but also deeper grounding in Islamic spirituality and theology. Only 41% would seek board certification, while 26% would not, for reasons of finance, time, or perception that it is unnecessary for employment. Participants prefer a smorgasbord of education venues, from webinars to multiple day conferences, from basic training for volunteers to advanced training for experienced chaplains.

- *Organizations.* Approximately one-third are members of Islamic Society of North America (ISNA), while two-thirds are members of the Association of Muslim Chaplains (AMC). Many of the rest are members of a variety of other Muslim and professional chaplaincy organizations. Many identify potential improvements in how these organizations serve chaplains' needs.

Background

Chaplaincy and spiritual care are taking a range of new forms in the United States and emerging in new places – from the Red Cross to fire departments and police stations to the campuses of colleges, universities, and high schools. Recent research by Wendy Cadge and colleagues in the Chaplaincy Innovation Lab shows that about one-quarter of theological schools currently offer degrees or certificates focused on chaplaincy, a number that has grown even as overall enrollments decline.

The Hartford Seminary (CT) founded its flagship Islamic Chaplaincy program in 1999. As new Muslim theological schools emerge across the country, many are trying to replicate Hartford Seminary's training program. Sajida Jalalzai's dissertation at Columbia University (Jalalzai 2016) provides significant insight into how Muslim chaplains training at liberal Protestant seminaries are "translated" into a normative "interfaith chaplaincy" model. Similarly, Harvey Stark's dissertation at Princeton focuses on chaplaincy as an emerging, adaptive form of religious leadership that has attracted both men and women in the Muslim community (Stark 2015). Aly Kassam-Remtullah's Oxford dissertation likewise explores the history and politics of Muslim campus chaplaincy in two US elite universities (Kassam-Remtullah 2013).

Muslim chaplains work in a range of settings across the country. Kowalski and Becker delineate key issues for Muslim chaplains in various sectors, including paucity of CPE-trained hospital chaplains, inadequate endorsement processes for military chaplains, and lack of a funding model for campus chaplaincy (Kowalski and Becker 2015). This professional sphere deserves greater attention, from an educational, institutional, and policy perspective. It is unclear how existing professional chaplaincy organizations serve the needs of chaplains from religious minority groups.

Chaplaincy is still a relatively new form of professional religious leadership in American Muslim communities. A national understanding is absent of how many, where, and in what capacities Muslim chaplains work and how students trained in Muslim chaplaincy programs are serving. The Islamic Society of North America provides institutional endorsement for Muslim chaplains, and Muslim chaplains have regional organizations in California and Connecticut. Community or staff volunteers, however, often perform chaplaincy functions when no trained Muslim chaplain is available.

Based on a national survey and focus group of Muslim chaplains across sectors and qualitative interviews, the Muslim chaplaincy project will analyze multiple pathways to chaplaincy, educational preparation and certification, placement, and ongoing

professional needs of Muslim chaplains, as well as their relationship to local and trans-local Muslim and interfaith communities. The current report presents the findings of the national survey, the first of its kind in the United States.

Method

The research team of Dr. Laird and chaplains Samsiah Abdul Majid and Shareda Hosein drafted a survey to capture data through multiple choice questions and qualitative responses. Survey questions cover five primary areas: demographics and education; organizational membership and the chaplains' experience and expectations of it; professional experience, the sectors they work in and other roles they play in the community; continuing education needs; and the greatest challenge they or their institutions face and key future trends. The aims are to:

- "Map" the growing field of Muslim chaplaincy across sectors: where, how, and with whom Muslim chaplains are serving;
- Assess the educational and support needs of Muslim chaplains: how academic programs, professional organizations, and Muslim institutions might better serve chaplains; and
- Contribute Muslim voices to a larger innovation project on the broader chaplaincy profession.

Several members of the Association of Muslim Chaplains (AMC), which partnered with Boston University in this project, piloted and reviewed the survey draft, and offered suggested revisions to clarify question wording and add specific categories to other questions. The Boston University Medical Campus Institutional Review Board approved the study.

We distributed the finalized survey using the Qualtrics survey software platform, hosted at Boston University. AMC brought the survey to the attention of its members, current and former, through its newsletter and organizational announcement, as well as to chaplains who were never members. In an effort to widen the reach of the survey, we also sent links to Hartford Seminary, the first American educational institution to develop an Islamic chaplaincy program; Islamic Society of North America (ISNA), which has a chaplain endorsement program; the Association of Campus Muslim Chaplains (ACMC); and the recently launched Chaplaincy Innovation Lab. In addition, the research team enlisted personal contacts and friends and made cold calls to other known Muslim chaplains. Eligible participants included all those who identify as

Muslim and are serving or have served as a chaplain in an official capacity in a community, correctional, educational, healthcare or military institution in the United States.

Chaplain Samsiah Abdul Majid followed up with a dedicated email to the AMC listserv two weeks after the first AMC distribution. There was strong concern of the possibility that the survey might be overlooked, even when there was intention to complete it. To bring attention to it and to encourage chaplains to complete the survey, she also made follow up phone calls. The authors were encouraged by the reception to the phone calls, and the willingness to honor the request. Where necessary, we re-sent the survey link.

Due to the time consuming nature of the effort to reach the chaplains and subsequent announcements in newsletters, the survey remained accessible for an additional month beyond its expected closure. The survey closed January 31, 2019.

Results

One hundred thirty eight (138) individuals opened the survey; 129 consented to participate by answering Question 2; 86 completed the survey; and 1 was found ineligible because the person did not identify as Muslim. The following analysis is based on a total population of 85 participants.

Demographics

Of our 85 participants, 33% (28) identified as female and 67% (57), male.

The survey allowed for multiple responses to racial categories commonly listed in sociological research studies. Of those 99 responses, 31% identified as Black or African-American, 22% as White, 20% as Asian, and 1% as American Indian or Alaska Native. About 29% (25 of the sample) listed an ethnicity, with 12 listing Arab/North African/Middle Eastern, 4 listing Hispanic or Puerto Rican, 3 listing Indian or Pakistani, 3 listing Kurdish/Turkish or a combination; 2 Indonesian/Malay; and 1 Irish. Notably, those who listed only ethnicity and did not choose a racial category were Arab/Middle Eastern, Puerto Rican, and Indian.

Eighty-four of our participants responded to the question about their age; 24% (20) were in their thirties (30-39), while 23% (19) were in their forties (40-49). A slightly

smaller percentage were in their fifties (18%) and sixties (17%); 11% (9) were in their seventies, and a comparable number (7, or 8%) were in their twenties.

In the religious affiliation section, we provided options for Sunni, Shi`i, and "prefer 'just Muslim'". Of the 84 respondents, 64% (54) identified as Sunni; 33% (28) identified as "just Muslim"; and only 1% each as Shi`i and Salaf, respectively. Had we not provided the "just Muslim" option, it is highly likely that 99% of the chaplains in our survey would be Sunni, significantly out of proportion to the number of Shi`i Muslims in the U.S.

Table 1. Sample characteristics		
	Number of respondents	% sample
GENDER	n=85	100%
Female	28	33
Male	57	67
RACE (MULTIPLE SELECTION)	n=72	84%
Black or African-American	31	31
White	22	22
Asian	20	20
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1	1
ETHNICITY (OPEN)	n=25	29%
Arab/North African/M.E	12	-
Hispanic or Puerto Rican	4	-
Indian or Pakistani	3	-
Kurdish/Turkish	3	-
Indonesian/Malay	2	-
Irish	1	-
AGE RANGE	n=84	98%
20-29	7	8
30-39	20	24
40-49	19	23
50-59	15	18
60-69	14	17
70+	9	11

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION	n=84	98%
Sunni	54	64
"Just Muslim"	28	33
Shi`i	1	1
Salaf	1	1

Membership and Associations

Membership in National Muslim Organizations
Sixty-four respondents gave 71 responses to the question on National Muslim organization membership. 27% of the total survey sample listed ISNA (23 of the responses), 8% listed The Mosque Cares (7), 7% listed the Muslim American Society (MAS) (6), and 5% listed the Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA) (4). Three also listed AMC here, while others listed Indonesian Muslim Society Association, Darul Islam Movement and Muslim Peace Fellowship. Other responses included local *masajid* (mosques) or regional bodies. One set up his/her own organization.

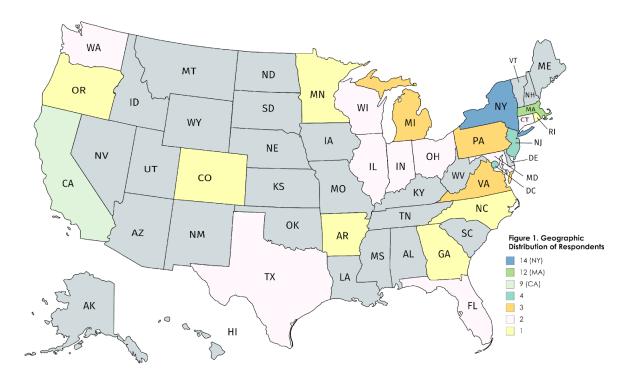### *Membership in Professional Chaplaincy Organizations*
Seventy-four respondents recorded 105 responses to our question about professional chaplaincy organization membership. 67% of the total sample (57 of responses) were members of the AMC; 18% (15) were members of the Association of Campus Muslim Chaplains (ACMC); 12% (10) are members of the Association of Clinical Pastoral Educators (ACPE); and 11% (9), of the Association of Professional Chaplains (APC); 6% (5), of the National Association of Campus and University Chaplains (NACUC); 2% (2), of the College of Pastoral Supervision and Psychotherapy. Additional organizations mentioned included the National Association of Veterans Administration Chaplains, the Washington Islamic Chaplains Organization, American Correctional Chaplains Association, American Muslim Community Endorsing Agency, and Associated Chaplains in California State Service.

Table 2. Organization Membership		
Organization	**Number**	**Percent of respondents (total n=85)**
ISNA	23	27%
The Mosque Cares	7	8%
MAS	6	7%
ICNA	4	5%
AMC	57	67%
ACMC	15	18%

ACPE	10	12%
APC	9	11%
NACUC	5	6%

Geographic distribution

Seventy-seven participants responded to the question about the location of their current chaplaincy service. While two responded "n/a," the remaining 75 (88% of the sample) were distributed among the following 23 states (and DC): New York (14), Massachusetts (12), California (9); New Jersey and Washington, DC (4 each); Michigan, Pennsylvania and Virginia (3 each); Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Ohio, Texas, Wisconsin, and Washington (2 each); and Arkansas, Colorado, Georgia, Minnesota, North Carolina, Oregon, and Rhode Island (1 each). See map below for an illustration.

Figure 1. Geographic
Distribution of Respondents

- 14 (NY)
- 12 (MA)
- 9 (CA)
- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1

Created with mapchart.net ©

Figure 1. Geographic Distribution of Respondents (n=75).

Experience and Employment

Chaplaincy sectors

The top three sectors where chaplains serve are healthcare, 27% (31 of 117 responses); corrections, 24% (28); and college/university, 19% (22); followed by community, 12% (14); military, 8% (9); and primary/secondary education, 3% (3). About 9% (10) work in "other" settings, which include a corporation and an intentional living community. The survey allowed for multiple responses, reflected in that number being greater than the sample of 85.
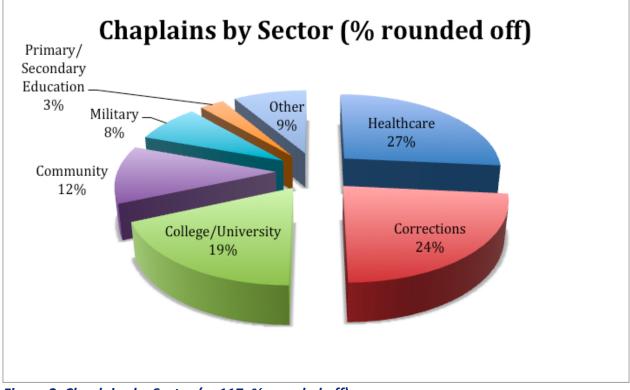

Figure 2. Chaplains by Sector (n=117, % rounded off)

Current Chaplaincy positions

We asked participants to identify their current or most recent positions and received 92 responses, with some participants listing multiple positions. About 46% (42 responses) reported "full-time paid chaplain" positions. Almost 24% (22) were "part time paid"; while 17% (16) were "part time volunteer," and 1% (1) was a "full time volunteer". Three added answers, indicating that they were "contract" or "freelance" chaplains; two indicated that they were chaplain educators; and others were military reserve, chaplaincy residents, and community volunteer chaplains.

Employment status

Almost 72% of chaplains (61 of 85) are currently working. Less than 5% are looking for work or could not find a job. A large number of positions held currently or recently are full-time or part-time paid positions, 64 of 92 (70%). Of these positions, those chaplains with less than 10 years' experience hold over half (35, or 55% of those paid); while those with 10-19 years (12) constitute 19%; 20-29 years (11), 17%; over 30 years (3), 5%; three others did not specify years of experience. Several indicated that they had served in their current positions as volunteers for several years before becoming "official" paid staff. 28% of the total sample (24) were not currently serving for a variety of reasons: Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE), doctoral study, retirement, no desire, no job to match experience level, career change, relocation, and family reasons.
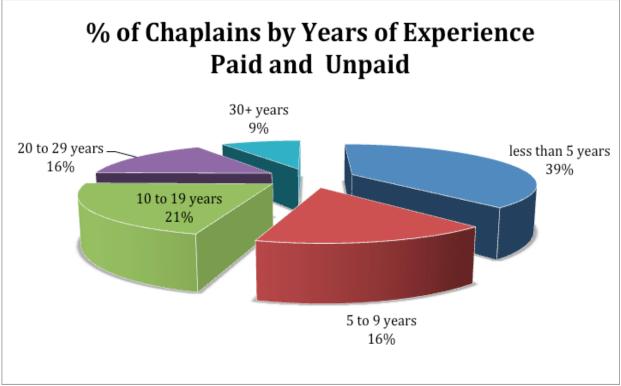
Most respondents identify themselves as staff chaplains (53%, 50 of 94 responses). The second highest are the volunteers, 17 responses. Notably, there are only two CPE educators and one in training, constituting the smallest group, 3%. The institutions employing the chaplains generally paid chaplains' salaries, with a few unique arrangements: community funding, non-profits, endowment, a church, Office of Mental Health, and the Department of Agriculture.

Of the group of 17 volunteer chaplains (20% of the sample), some held multiple positions. Eight were part-time volunteers in correctional facilities, six were part-time volunteers in healthcare, and six part-time volunteer community chaplains (fire, police, and emergency response). Only one was a full-time volunteer, serving on a college/university campus. Three of those who indicated they were volunteer chaplains were also full-time paid community, campus, or corrections chaplains who volunteered their services in other sectors.

In addition to chaplaincy, 52% of respondents (43 of 83) hold other positions, with *imam*, Quran and Islamic studies teacher being the most common. Other services they provide are indicative of the roles they play/perform in their community from being a spiritual adviser, to work in mental health and substance abuse and with youth, and in institutional development, such as for non-profits.

Experience and tenure

Chaplaincy experience varies from 1 to 43 years. However, most chaplains are relatively new; 39% (32 of 82 respondents) have less than five years' experience in the field (paid or unpaid). We asked participants to tell us how long they had served in

their most recent positions. The 83 answers ranged from one month to 38 years. The average tenure was 6.5 years (SD 7.4), while the median tenure was 4 years.

Figure 3: % of Chaplains by Years of Experience, paid and unpaid (n=82)

For those chaplains in their twenties, the longest tenure was 3 years; for those in their thirties, the longest tenure was 11 years; for those in their forties and fifties, the longest tenure was 20 years; and for those in their sixties, the longest was 25 years.

A large number of chaplains assumed their current position less than five years ago (53%; 41 of 78). In general, most chaplains bring previous chaplaincy experience of varying durations to their positions, though lack of experience has not been a barrier for 32% of the chaplains.

Clients and colleagues
Most chaplains serve both Muslims and non-Muslims (78%; 63 of 81 respondents). For about two out of every three chaplains from a set of 54 respondents, non-Muslims constitute half or more of their clientele. Most of these chaplains are in healthcare. Of the chaplains who serve Muslims only (22%; 18), they work primarily in corrections (11), with smaller numbers in healthcare (4), campus (2), and community (1).

Chaplains may find themselves being a party of one in their organization or in a cohort of several hundred. However, the largest proportion (43%; 32 of 74 respondents) work in groups of less than 10 chaplains, and 40% (30 respondents) indicated the presence of chaplain volunteers in their groups. Most chaplains are in organizations with less than 50 Muslim employees or clients (30%; 23 of 77); or in settings with more than 300 (26%; 20 respondents); 17% do not know the number of Muslims in their organizations. No chaplaincy sector seemed to predominate in the large or small "Muslim population in your organization" categories.

Education and Preparation

Eighty-four respondents (99%) indicated their "highest level of education". Of the respondents, 79% (66) had obtained a graduate-level degree: 63 % (53) held a master's degree (30% of whom held an M.Div.; 25); while 16% (13) reported doctoral degrees. 7% (6) reported that a bachelor's degree was their highest, and 6% (5) reported only 1-3 years of college education.

Those with doctorates varied significantly in their fields of study: three had law degrees (JD), two had PhDs in Islamic studies and one in Shari`ah; while others held PhDs in psychology, astrophysics, and criminal justice. At the master's level, half (14 of 28) non-M.Div. respondents tended to have clear specializations in Islamic studies, chaplaincy, or religious studies (with the exceptions being business, education, English, and social work). At the bachelor's level, fields of study were more diverse, ranging from accounting, to Arabic, to political science. All but one respondent received their highest-level degree in the United States.

Forty-nine respondents listed additional certification. About 37% (18 of 49) indicated having an *ijazah* or training in one or more traditional Islamic sciences including *tajweed*, *qiraat*, *Shari'a*, Qur'anic memorization, and *tasawwuf*. About 12% (6) indicated that they had certificates in Islamic chaplaincy or leadership. Less than 20% of the respondents had acquired certification specific to the chaplaincy profession, and only six chaplains held Board of Chaplaincy Certification Inc. (BCCI) certification. In addition to traditional training and chaplaincy certification, the respondents also held a diverse array of other professional licenses and certificates in addiction counseling, nutrition, and accounting to name a few. One respondent was also a licensed social worker.

Key Issues and Challenges

In an effort to identify future needs, our survey asked chaplains to respond to two questions:
1. The greatest challenge or issue that they and/or their organizations are facing: 79% of the sample responded (67 of 85).
2. Three key issues or trends that they foresee for their organizations or the chaplaincy profession as a whole: 68% of the sample responded (58 of 85).

Most of the comments from the first question flow into the second with several common threads:
- quality standards and specialization;
- need for strong Muslim institutions;
- resources, especially financial;
- personal support and mentorship;
- role legitimacy and recognition;
- gender;
- certain sector specific issues;
- social climate.

Specialization and standards. Several respondents expect that Chaplaincy will become more specialized, with pediatrics, transplant and palliative care receiving particular mention. As one chaplain puts it, "Chaplains need to become proficient in a specialty if they want to stay employed." Specific to Islamic chaplaincy, many name the trend toward professionalizing, with the concurrent need for standard setting, education/training, endorsement and certification, which should also include stringent competencies in Islamic spirituality. Criteria for chaplaincy should be established and standards set "so not everyone can be a chaplain." Several call for more board certified Muslim chaplains, CPE educators, and individuals able and willing to serve as chaplains.

Chaplain respondents also foresee a future when those without the required training will be less likely to be hired, as "employers become better educated about what they should seek in a Muslim chaplain, and the American community hold[s] chaplains to a higher standard." There could be tension between remaining both competitive in the job market and relevant to the Muslim constituents as the number of Muslim chaplains increases. A tighter job market is one of the key issues identified.

Muslim institution building. Related to the issue of training, some chaplains identified institution building and quality assurance as the greatest challenge.   There are calls for a strong unified chaplaincy body/organization, an endorsing body, an Islamic curriculum, as well as curricula on pluralism and serving those of other faith traditions. Echoing that sentiment are calls for an educational institution for Muslim chaplains across the US, and for CPE programs to be expanded to diverse settings. One noted "the lack of critical mass" of committed specialists interested in the "long arduous moral obligation of institution building."

Financial Resources. One issue that stands in high relief throughout the responses is resources. One respondent puts it simply: "funding, funding, funding." Describing the situation at the institutional level, another respondent elegantly describes it as a "paucity of resources to support organizational mission …" Some raised the issue of regularizing funding structure for chaplaincy in universities. The institutional pressure to reduce cost affects staff hiring and services provided to clients. The need to hire more chaplaincy staff is a commonly shared concern.

The Muslim community also needs to develop funding for Muslim chaplaincy, according to many participants. A respondent pointedly asked whether "Muslim institutions will financially support chaplaincy positions." Several call for community support, including greater engagement by *masajid*.

Personal support. At the individual level, the cost of education coupled with lack of sufficient personal resources affects a person's ability to pursue further education, training and certification. And even when employment is attained, a chaplain laments, "the salaries are relatively low compared to other fields with much less training." Another pleaded for "financial aid to low paid chaplains." Additional concerns raised include work-life balance, geographical isolation, loss of inter-professional compassion and of mentorship, and the need to build support networks in specific chaplaincy areas.

Support to staff in the work environment received emphasis. The statement that "the greatest challenge that we face is that our patients die," raises such issues as vicarious trauma, burnout, and the ability of organizations to support chaplains in difficult circumstances. One chaplain painted the situation clearly:

- "The hospital is in downtown … and just had the highest per capita rate of gun violence in the country. We do a lot of death notifications with families, and I notice a lot of crisis of meaning (senseless is often a word used). Lots of staff

turnover due to the intensity of shifts and understaffing, so more ways of effective staff support would be helpful."

Others attribute burnout in prison chaplaincy to a retaliatory and Islamophobic environment. One comment on role conflict seems to scream moral distress: "struggle of the soul of chaplaincy (do we work for institutions, or for God?)"

Legitimacy and recognition. Another major theme is the question of legitimacy and role recognition, both in the workplace and in the community. Many perceive a lack of acknowledgement of chaplaincy as a professional role. In healthcare, it makes the process of integration of chaplaincy in interdisciplinary teams "challenging;" in general, there is insufficient awareness or education for spiritual care. Expressing a macro point of view one respondent noted, "The profession of chaplaincy is constantly struggling for its identity as well as legitimacy within most American institutions." This person added that chaplaincy should learn from the experience of behavioral health sciences, which earned "some degree of legitimacy and credibility" through evidence-based research. Others named inclusion, cultural competence, and diversity in chaplaincy, including the need for more board certified Muslim, Hindu and Sikh chaplains and more women in leadership positions as key issues.

For Muslim chaplains there is also an underlying tension concerning competence, acceptance and authority in the Muslim community. Some named unfamiliarity in the general Muslim population about "chaplaincy benefits/services/and how to access a chaplain/difference between an imam/shaykh and chaplain." There is a "misconception that volunteers can do the job just as well if not better (or imams/shaykh)" as well as "suspicion about chaplains 'watering down' the faith or 'bending the rules' *fiqh* wise."

Gender. For Muslim women chaplains, such lack of recognition intersects with the issue of gender. Just as there is call in the wider chaplaincy world for female leadership, some respondents call for hiring of female chaplains in mosques. A female chaplain who finds herself oscillating between being "pastoral" and advocating for herself is grappling with questions of acceptance by the community. Some respondents ambiguously suggested that the "sermon obstacle" faced by women needs resolution.

Role definition. In the college environment, one respondent's comment raised the question of mismatch. S/he takes on the role of chaplain even though s/he is not trained as one, and does so reluctantly. A prison chaplain, on the other hand, finds

his/her role expanded to serving other faiths with no additional training, time or pay. A respondent noted that chaplains "play an important role" in discussions over issues where there are significant differences in the community.

Sector-specific concerns. Certain issues related to specific sectors. For example, **corrections chaplains** articulated a need for support during and after incarceration, including for Islamic material, transitional housing, legal help for the wrongly imprisoned, and preparation for community living. **College/university chaplains** expressed concern with building a faith community, attracting and retaining student interest and involvement, how to make Islam a current and "relate-able" religion, as well as racial tension arising nationally that affects campus community, increased acceptability and visibility of LGBTQ Muslim groups' antagonism towards Islamic "orthodoxy," and helping students with immigrant family inter-generational conflict. For **military chaplains**, there is shortage of Muslim chaplains, and one respondent called for female Muslim chaplains in that sector. In **community chaplaincy**, some see greater need for a presence in disaster/war/conflict areas, nursing homes, and rehab centers. A more general concern is proactive responses to everyday situations, without which the "average citizen[s] do not feel the spiritual presence that remind[s] us of our moral humanity." **Healthcare chaplains** expressed concern over pressure to reduce costs, insufficient number of staff chaplains to cater to needs, including those of Muslims', and the need to address mental illness treatment and education in the community.

Social climate. While Islamophobia is understandably an issue, several other issues were identified including cyber bullying; the impact of secularization/liberalism in general community, especially on youth; and the need for greater attention to mental health, substance abuse, and sexual harassment in the workplace.

Continuing Educational Needs

Seeking continuing education
About 42% (23 of 55 respondents) indicated that the Association of Muslim Chaplains provides them with continuing education opportunities. Second in frequency to the AMC, with six mentions each, were the Islamic Society of North America and the Association of Campus Muslim Chaplains. After that, a smorgasbord of organizations and associations were highlighted for their continuing education offerings: Ta'leef Collective, Boston Islamic Seminary, Association of Professional Chaplains, the Institute of Muslim Mental Health, Muslim Mental Health Initiative, and the Society for Islamic Brotherhood.

Of the 81 respondents, 26% (21) indicated that in the past year they had not participated in any continuing education activities, while 23% said they had attended 40+ hours of continuing education. About half of the respondents clocked between 1-40 hours of continuing education in the last 12 months -- 12% had done 1-5 hours, 17% completed 6-10 hours, another 12% completed 11-25 hours, and about 9% completed 25-40 hours.

Among the biggest reasons people cited for attending continuing education activities were to keep current with skills and techniques of their profession, professional networking, and to advance in their jobs. Several responded that attending such activities reduced isolation in their professional lives, and aided group (professional) affinity. Some noted that continuing education workshops and seminars allowed them earn continuing education units (CEUs), CPE points, or points for BCCI applications and re-certifications.

Board Certification
About 46% of the respondents (35 of 75), or 41% of the total sample said they would probably or definitely seek board certification for chaplaincy in the next three years. Those in favor of seeking certification suggested that certification was a good way of gaining credentials in lieu of ordination, parity with other chaplains, and the best training for the Muslim community. Conversely, 30% of the respondents (22) indicated they probably or definitely would not be seeking certification because it was either not required of them, or because they did not feel it was necessary for advancement.

Others felt it was not appropriate, with one arguing that Christian hegemony of the process means that the training is unable to capture non-Christian frames of spiritual assessment, direction, and reflection, and is therefore useless for the purposes of Muslim chaplaincy. One also argued that "Muslims should take a more active role in the field of Clinical Pastoral Educational (*sic*) Training by developing protocols that can and will be setting new trends that will enhance the delivery of service to those we serve in institutions, communities and Masjids."

With regard to professional association dues, training, and continuing education, 33% of respondents (25 of 75) said they were unsure if their employer offered reimbursements. Approximately 15% indicated that their employers offered reimbursement for APC dues, other association dues, and ISNA's chaplain training; and 22%, for other trainings and continuing education opportunities.

Diverse formats

The question of educational formats allowed for participants to mark multiple answers, including "Other." Seventy-six respondents checked a total of 238 responses. Of these, the most popular formats were "1-2 hour online sessions" (36; 15%), "roundtable discussions" (35; 15%); followed closely by "two-day workshops" (33; 14%), "consultations/mentoring/internships" (32; 13%) and "one-day workshops" (30; 13%). The remaining options also received significant endorsement, however, including "special forums" (24; 10%), "university-based programs" (19; 8%). "Half-day workshops" were only slightly less popular (16; 7%).

The "other" category received 13 votes (6%), and participants listed the following suggestions, some of which overlap with the survey categories: webinars and online seminars or training/tutoring, group brainstorms, annual conference, retreats, regional workshops to reduce travel cost and time, literature, and "all of the above"! One participant added the comment, "I checked all of the listed formats for continuing education because we need to have plenty of options and in as many formats as possible."

Consistent with the high demand for "learning" among this sample of Muslim chaplains, they seem to want it all, in as many media, forums, and settings as possible. They reflect a diversity of learning styles, but many note that participatory discussion and relationships are central to learning in chaplaincy: "Online training is helpful to bring people together but there needs to be a mechanism to have a discussion option to share ideas with each other after." And echoing this sentiment about conferences, another said, "Keynote and guest speakers are fine, however more interactive forums would give individual chaplains opportunity to hear and express needs and concerns."

Different levels of education

In the "Additional comments" section of the survey, several respondents offered perspective on the diversity of chaplaincy training needs. For instance, one encouraged "basic training" for volunteers:

- "The main reason I get from people for why they will not volunteer is that they don't know what to do. … There should be some basic training type courses that allow them to get comfortable with the duties of a Chaplain so they may be willing to start in a more relaxed environment like schools, hospitals, local jail and juvenile facilities before jumping into a large prison environment."

At the other end of the spectrum, some respondents want a "professionals only" space, because of the unique experiences and qualifications of chaplains, in distinction from volunteers or imams. This echoes others' questions about who can assume the "mantle" of "chaplain" or represent "Muslim chaplaincy":

- "It is essential that we have closed door spaces to have the conversations that we need to be able to have among ourselves with people who are trained and qualified as chaplains. Otherwise we will continue to be held hostage at the surface level without the capacity to delve into the depth that we need to be able to reach and establish tools for navigating together. … [Recognizing chaplain diversity], we've also got to have some standards."

A couple of participants were concerned to unite professional training with spiritual and community formation. One called for a combination of "active involvement in the local masjid" and "formal classroom time" for training, since chaplains represent actual Muslim communities. Another suggested the need to balance "social science" knowledge with opportunities to deepen "spirituality." Perhaps these concerns relate to the pursuit of *ijazahs* in *tasawwuf* to supplement chaplaincy training for some chaplains.

Paying for continuing education
After asking about the most useful formats for continuing education, we asked participants whether they would be "willing to pay a fee for an all-day workshop or forum." Out of 80 answers, 89% (71) answered positively. Of these, 49 indicated what they would consider a "reasonable fee." While three additional participants remarked that "it depends" (i.e., on the medium, the content, and the length of such an event), these 49 suggested fees from $30 to $200 (the latter for a two-day event). The average suggested fee was $86, and the median was $75. Some offered further comments about costs: "Please try to make it affordable as many of us are newly graduated graduate students who do not have full time jobs with benefits." Others suggested either regional or virtual events as the most accessible and economical for those who live at a distance from other Muslim chaplains.

Conclusions

This first national survey of Muslim chaplains should provide a baseline for future measurement of development in the profession. Muslim chaplains have a wide range of experience and education levels, serve in multiple sectors across 23 states and DC,

and are racially and ethnically diverse, though almost exclusively Sunni. While almost 80% of Muslim chaplains have graduate degrees, many others (both volunteer and paid) do not. Most Muslim chaplains have less than 10 years' experience and are eager for additional training and connection with other professionals.

Chaplains likewise serve dual roles: as chaplains in multiple sectors, in other forms of religious leadership, or in other professions or offices (e.g., social worker, administrator). Sectoral differences are apparent in the need for interfaith training and expertise in Islamic traditions and spirituality.

While our data certainly support Kowalski and Becker's conclusion about the lack of adequate funding models for campus chaplaincy, we found that issues with endorsement and certification were not limited to military chaplaincy. Our data also reflect some of the unease that Jalalzai found among those chaplains "translated" in predominantly Protestant Christian seminaries and CPE programs. Similarly, our data supports Stark's claim that chaplaincy continues to provide a significant pathway for Muslim women to exercise professional religious leadership and represent Islam in the public square.

Our participants are aspiring for greater professionalization of Muslim chaplaincy, and are self-conscious about quality, certification, acceptance, resources and institution building. The dual calls for more Muslim clinical pastoral educators and for Islamic curricula, as well as for Islamic institutions for chaplains point to a desire for chaplaincy certification grounded in Islamic teachings, that is professionally and nationally recognized, and on a par with those of other religions. This is a strong signal of the respondents' expectations for existing and emerging Islamic seminaries in the country, as well as institutions providing training and certification such as the APC, Healthcare Chaplaincy Network (HCCN) and Association of Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE).

This survey reveals a group with a high demand for learning. Designed for educational and needs assessment, the report contains more granular information on the media, forums, setting as well as fees the respondents could bear for continuing education programs. Emphasis is placed on interactive discussion, and regional and virtual events for accessibility and economy.

We have elaborated on several key issues that chaplains have identified for the profession as a whole and for the shape of Islamic education and training going forward. It is our hope that the full range of Muslim chaplaincy organizations and educational institutions will consider these analyses for future program planning.

LIMITATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

This survey has several limitations. The fact that we initiated the survey through the Association of Muslim Chaplains member (current and former) and "never-member" lists introduced a selection bias toward members. While we attempted to compensate for this through other networks, personal and professional, we would need to revise our strategy for a more comprehensive portrait.

Another limitation is that our respondents were almost all Sunni Muslim. Whether this reflects the actual population of Muslim chaplains is unknown. In future iterations of the survey, we need to make extra efforts to recruit Shi`i and other minority community chaplains. The religious affiliation question should be revised to track more accurately the proportions of Sunni/Shi`i and other minorities in the profession compared with those in the larger American Muslim population.

Since many Muslim chaplains serve in multiple positions, both in multiple sectors of chaplaincy and in other religious or professional leadership positions, our survey could not capture a completely accurate picture of variability in employment and volunteering. For instance, we noted that some full-time paid chaplains also volunteered in other sectors. Similarly, using the language "currently working" raises an interesting dilemma. Some consider being a volunteer as not working; some others consider it work. The question needs refinement and explanation. We anticipate that our qualitative interviews will help to understand the diversity and variability of Muslim chaplains' work, in order to develop a more sensitive survey instrument that captures this phenomenon.

Our survey attempted to capture specific information on hypothetical education and training events for the future. We did not specify which organization might provide such education. Some respondents found this confusing and vague. Some participants, in their qualitative answers, had already expressed concerns about the professional quality of event organizing, the variability in quality; and others were concerned about whether such events would count toward certification requirements. Future surveys should address these concerns, and planners should be aware of these as they organize such events. Nevertheless, we were able to gather significant qualitative data from open-ended short answer questions and the additional comments section of the survey.

References

Jalalzai, Sajida. 2016. "Translating Islamic Authority: Chaplaincy and Muslim Leadership Education in North American Protestant Seminaries." Ph.D., United States -- New York: Columbia University. http://search.proquest.com/docview/1793409663/abstract/8E98BAD1C89847E 0PQ/1.

Kassam-Remtullah, Aly. 2013. "Muslim Chaplaincy on Campus: Case Studies of Two American Universities." Ph.D., Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University. https://ora.ox.ac.uk/objects/uuid:3dfee661-1b66-4570-a808-19aaee5c04f9.

Kowalski, Mumina, and Wendy S. Becker. 2015. "A Developing Profession: Muslim Chaplains in American Public Life." *Contemporary Islam* 9 (1): 17–44. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11562-014-0308-9.

Stark, Harvey Ronald. 2015. "Looking for Leadership: Discovering American Islam in the Muslim Chaplaincy." Ph.D., United States -- New Jersey: Princeton University. http://search.proquest.com/docview/1658223455/abstract/BA9E6BA076584F9 1PQ/1.