

Has Someone Around Campus Invited You to their Bible Study? Whether You Said Yes or No, Keep Reading.

HU has a number of religious life organizations that support spiritual growth and faith development AND there are other groups that target university campuses, finding students that they can target for potentially dangerous practices. These groups are often referred to as cults. **This year, we have received a number of reports from students about possible cult presence.**

HOW DO YOU KNOW IF YOU'VE BEEN APPROACHED BY A CULT?

If it is Not a Recognized HU Student Organization, It May be a Cult – All recognized organizations on our campus have been reviewed by the Office of the Dean of the Chapel, Office of Student Activities, and the student-led Religious Fellowship Council to be sure their purpose and practices are not potentially harmful to students. If an organization is not recognized, this review has not occurred and their practices may be harmful.

HOW DO YOU KNOW IF THEY'RE RECOGNIZED? SOME CLUES:

1. **ARE THEY IN "AT THE HEART OF THE MECCA" RELIGIOUS LIFE MAGAZINE?** Get a copy online at <http://www.chapel.howard.edu/ReligiousLife/Recognized> or in the Chapel Office (Carnegie Building, Lower Level). All recognized religious life organizations are listed.
2. **DO THEY MEET OFF-CAMPUS?** Because they are not recognized HU student organizations, they cannot schedule rooms in HU buildings and will often resort to meeting at nearby places like **Starbucks, Potbelly, someone's home, or other locations throughout the city.**
3. **DO THEY WANT TO USE YOUR ROOM FOR MEETINGS?** **They may offer to bring food or cook** and suggest using your dorm room. A recognized organization will have a student e-board that includes students in dorms. They would not need your dorm room to have meetings on campus.
4. **DO THEIR HANDOUTS HAVE THE HU STAMP ON THEM?** – Hmmn.

SOOO...THEY'RE NOT RECOGNIZED, BUT IS IT A CULT? HOW CAN I TELL?

1. Are they trying to control your behavior and decisions?
2. Are they trying to control your relationships with friends and family? Are they suggesting you stop contacting them, especially if they don't share the group's beliefs?
3. Are their leaders claiming to be divine or to have some special relationship with God that requires faithfulness to this leader?
4. Are they asking you to confess all of your past sins or mistakes to the group?
5. Are they asking you to keep some things about the group secret?
6. Are they asking for/requiring money or other donations/contributions?
7. Are they diminishing your sense of self?

**If you believe you or a friend has been approached by or become involved in a cult, contact the
Office of the Dean of the Chapel**

Carnegie – Lower Level; 202-806-7280; chapel@howard.edu
Rev. Kanika Magee, *Associate Dean of the Chapel & Religious Life*
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