

Religious Observances Policy (MOA-07/02)

The University is a diverse, multicultural enterprise and, as a community, we jointly embrace both individual responsibility and dignified respect for our differences. It is our general policy to permit students to fulfill obligations set aside by their faith.

It is our intent that students who must be absent from scheduled classes to fulfill religious obligations or observe practices associated with their faith not be disadvantaged. However, it is the student's responsibility to make arrangements with his/her instructors in advance. It is in the student's best interests to approach each instructor expeditiously and with sufficient notice that the rights and responsibilities of the instructor are not disrupted. Instructors should make it known to classes early in the term what they consider reasonable notice for anticipated absences. Without specifying a fixed notification time, we acknowledge in this policy joint responsibility: instructors will inform students of their requirements and students will make every effort to cause no disruption in the instructors' plans and duties.

Instructors should assume that a claim of religious observance has veracity, especially when advance notice is provided by the student. Students likewise must recognize that it is their responsibility to meet all their course obligations. Instructors are not obligated to provide materials to students unless these materials would have normally been distributed to the entire class. For example, if an instructor does not normally post notes, a student cannot expect notes to be provided for lectures missed.

If instructors choose to incorporate adjustments into the syllabus intended to cover student absences, it should be explicit that these apply to absences for religious observances, as well as all other contingencies.

NOTE: Presented and approved at the 3 May 2007 Senate meeting. Approved by the administration on 8 June 2007.