

Holiday Observation and Religious Accommodation for Students

Resource: Email message from Vice Provosts of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs sent to Inform C-06, 07, 08, 09 on 11.10.10 and from the OSU Religious Accommodation Policy for Students adopted May 17, 2012

As stated in the OSU Strategic Plan: *OSU understands diversity is essential to excellence and therefore commits itself to integrating core institutional values of diversity, integrity, respect, social responsibility, and accountability into every dimension of the University's life. OSU likewise recognizes the global dimensions of most issues, especially in the context of preparing graduates for success in a competitive, interdependent international society.*

Given these core values, the University is dedicated to promoting cultural diversity, awareness, inclusion and sensitivity throughout the campus community, and promoting an environment responsive to the diversity of groups represented at OSU.

We are fortunate to work and study in a community that includes students, staff, and faculty from around the world as well as all areas of the United States. Each of us brings unique aspects of backgrounds, lifestyles, beliefs and customs to enrich the educational and life experience for all. This richness is especially apparent during a season that is full of many observances, celebrations and holidays.

As a public, state institution, OSU is not affiliated with any religion, and our vocabulary, decorations, and campus customs should reflect inclusion and respect of our rich diversity. We ask that you join us in this effort. In addition, OSU faculty are specifically asked to accommodate students who request an excused absence on a religious holiday.

[All campus inform email 11.10.10]

Religious Accommodation of Students Policy

Absences: Observation of Major Religious Holy Days and Celebrations

Upon registration for a class, the student is expected to examine the course syllabus for potential conflicts with holy days and to notify the instructor as soon as possible and in advance of the need for an accommodation, of any conflicts that may require an absence (including any required additional preparation/travel time). The student is also expected to remind the faculty member in advance of the missed class, and to make arrangements in advance (with the faculty member) to make up any missed work or in-class material within a reasonable amount of time.

Examples of reasonable accommodations for student absences include but are not limited to: submitting assignments prior to the absence, rescheduling of an exam or giving a make-up exam; altering the time of a student's presentation; allowing extra-credit assignments to substitute for missed class work or arranging for an increased flexibility in assignment due dates, etc.

A reasonable accommodation, if granted, provides students the opportunity to complete appropriate make-up work that is equivalent and intrinsically no more or less difficult than the original exam or assignment. Faculty should keep in mind that religion is a deeply personal and private matter and should attempt to respect the privacy of the student when making accommodations, discussing it only with University employees who need to know and not sharing it with other students.

Students who expect to miss classes, examinations, or other assignments as a consequence of their sincerely held religious belief should meet with the instructor to address the following questions:

- What specific class accommodation(s) do you request (e.g., excused absence, rescheduling of an exam or other class requirement)?
- Explain how the requested accommodation enables you to participate in your religious practice or belief
- State the date(s)/frequency of requested accommodation within the academic term.

The instructor and the student should discuss what a reasonable accommodation should include in a given case. Absence from classes or examinations for religious reasons does not relieve students from responsibility for any part of the course work required during the period of absence. If the student fails to satisfactorily complete any alternative assignment or examination, the instructor may apply the same grading consequences held for all students.

It is not necessary to contact OIE regarding absences for Religious Holy Days or Celebrations, if the request can be accommodated. OIE must be contacted prior to the **denial** of an absence related accommodation.

The Religious Accommodation Policy document is maintained by the Office of Equity and Inclusion, 526 Kerr Administration Building, 541-737-3556, <http://oregonstate.edu/oei/>.

For more information about the academic regulation governing attendance visit
<http://catalog.oregonstate.edu/ChapterDetail.aspx?key=75#Section2882>

Every student is responsible for knowing the academic regulations and for observing the procedures that govern his or her relations with Oregon State University. Unless otherwise specified, these regulations apply to both undergraduate and graduate students. Any question regarding these regulations that cannot be answered by a student's academic advisor should be referred directly to the [Office of the Registrar](#) (102 Kerr). Additional information regarding Graduate School policies should be addressed to the Office of the Graduate Dean (A300 Kerr).

*This publication can be made available in an accessible format upon request. Please call the Office of the Dean of Student Life, 541.737.8748
ODOSL: 111314*