

IUPUI Policy on Religious Holidays and Class Participation

IUPUI respects the right of all students to observe their religious holidays and will make reasonable accommodation, upon request, for such observances. On occasion conflicts may occur between a student's obligations in a course and the student's obligations in observing major religious holidays.

Any student who is unable to attend classes or participate in any examination, study, or work requirement on some particular day or days because of his or her religious beliefs must be given the opportunity to make up the work that was missed or to do alternative work that is intrinsically no more difficult than the original exam or assignment. Upon request and timely notice, students shall be provided a reasonable accommodation. It is recommended that dates and times for examinations and other major course obligations be announced at the beginning of the semester or summer session and that students let instructors know of conflicts very early in the semester, so that accommodations can be made.

Students seeking accommodation for religious observances must make a request in writing by the [end of the 2nd week of the semester](#), or equivalent for nonsemester length courses, to the course instructor and must use the [Request for Course Accommodation Due to Religious Observance Form](#). In the case of religious holidays for which the date may change, the student should state the approximate date and when the exact date is known, inform the instructor of the exact date. The university will not levy fees or charges of any kind when allowing the student to make up missed work. In addition, no adverse or prejudicial effects should result to students because they have made use of these provisions.

It should be noted that while campus policy requires instructors to make reasonable accommodations when a student must miss an examination, assignment, or other academic exercise because of a required religious observance, it is not campus policy to require accommodations when students wish to travel to share a holiday with their families. Most religions are represented in the Indianapolis area and can provide appropriate observances. However, it is appropriate to grant accommodations for a few hours after the holiday if the observance includes fasting.

Recommended Accommodations

The instructor and the student should discuss what a reasonable accommodation would represent. In general, the student must be given the opportunity to do appropriate make-up work that is equivalent to and intrinsically no more difficult than the original examination, assignment, or other academic exercise. This could be the same work with a different due date, or a substantially similar exercise at another time. However, any accommodation that is mutually agreeable to both student and faculty member is acceptable.

For example, if a student asks to be absent from an examination that falls during a religious holiday, it is the responsibility of the instructor to provide the student with an opportunity to take the examination or an alternate examination at another time. Some instructors have a policy of dropping the lowest examination score before calculating the course grade, but it would be inappropriate to require the student to drop an examination held on a religious holiday, since the student does not have an opportunity equal to all other students in the class to take all the examinations and drop the lowest grade. Similarly, an offer to substitute for the examination grade an average of the grades on the other examinations may not be fair if the student would do better on this examination than on the others.

If after discussion the instructor and student cannot agree on an accommodation, either or both should seek the advice of the [senior associate vice chancellor for academic affairs](#).

Approved by IUPUI Faculty Council May 3, 2001

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