

Religious Observance Policy

I. Excused Absence From Class Attendance and Law Exams

A. Law Students

(1). General Provisions

A student may request an excused absence, from class attendance and a scheduled exam, to observe a religious holy day recognized by his or her faith.

The request shall be on a properly executed Religious Observance Form submitted to the Dean or to the Dean's designee by the last day of the add period for the semester.

The Dean or the Dean's designee shall grant or deny the request. The request shall be granted unless the date of the absence is not a religious holy day recognized by the student's faith, the student is not a sincere adherent of the stated faith, or there is convincing evidence of an abuse of this policy. The student shall be deemed a sincere adherent unless there is uncontroverted proof to the contrary.

If the request is granted, the student shall not be penalized for the excused absence. However, the student should be mindful that absences, whether excused or not, may have a negative impact on his or her performance during future classroom participation and on the exam. The professor's syllabus shall clearly state the attendance policy for the course.

(2). Recording of Missed Classes

A professor may, at the professor's sole discretion, allow a recording of the missed class. If recording is not allowed, the student may obtain notes from other students in the class.

(3). Rescheduling Around Excused Absence From Class Attendance

In clinics, skills courses, and other courses requiring class presentations, the professor shall reschedule around an excused absence when possible; and, when rescheduling is not possible, the professor shall assign alternate and/or makeup work so that the student will not be penalized because of the excused absence.

B. Law Professor's Absence for Religious Observance

(1). General Provisions

A professor, in furtherance of a sincerely held religious faith, may reschedule classes in observance of religious holy days recognized by that faith. The professor shall reschedule missed classes when necessary to ensure compliance with all rules and policies regarding the number of required contact hours.

A professor shall not reschedule an exam for religious observance because, in the professor's absence, an exam and its answers can be distributed and collected by the Law Registrar or other qualified persons.

C. Staff's Absence for Religious Observance

(1). General Provisions

A staff member, in furtherance of a sincerely held religious faith, may be absent from work in observance of religious holy days recognized by that faith.

The supervisor of the staff member shall reschedule the staff member's work so that necessary work is completed and the Law School's operations are not negatively impacted.

A staff member who is absent under this policy may take appropriate leave to avoid a loss of compensation if such leave is available. In the absence of appropriate leave, the staff member will be absent without pay, subject to the University's policies

Approved by Law Faculty on October 21, 2011