

Religious Accommodation Policy

Drake University values diversity, equity and inclusion. As part of our commitment to these values, we must support and embrace our students' various religious traditions and faiths. To ensure equity, Drake University will make a good faith effort to provide reasonable religious accommodations to students whose religious beliefs and practices conflict with an academic requirement unless such an accommodation would create an undue hardship on the university community.

As a guide to instructors in planning their courses and assignments, a list of religious holidays where observance may compete with the demands of the academic calendar can be found at <https://www.drake.edu/acad/calendar/religiousholidays/>. This list is not a designation of all religious holidays recognized by the University; it is simply an aid for planning purposes. Instructors should accommodate religious rituals and holidays that are both listed and not listed on this schedule. Please note that there are rituals of some religions that may not be scheduled very far in advance. Any instructor with concerns regarding a given holiday, or the academic implications of a particular student's religious observance, may seek guidance from the chair of their department, dean of their school, or their Provost.

Definitions

A. Religion: Beliefs and practices associated with faith. This includes both traditional, organized religions and also those that are new, uncommon, or not part of a formal organization. Religious observances perform ways of being religious that may be personal or communal, private or public, daily or occasional.

B. Reasonable Accommodation: An adjustment to the academic environment that enables a student to observe a religious practice or belief without undue hardship on the University community. Regardless of any accommodation that may be granted, students are responsible for satisfying all academic objectives, requirements, and prerequisites as defined by the instructor and by Drake University.

Examples of reasonable accommodations for student absences may include:

1. Adjustment in attendance requirements without academic penalty
2. Rescheduling an exam or giving a make-up exam for the student in need of a religious accommodation
3. Altering the day or time of a student's presentation
4. Allowing assignments to substitute for missed class work. Note: the alternative work must not be more difficult than the missed class work.
5. Not dropping a student from a class roster when a religious holiday occurs during the first week of the semester

C. Undue Hardship: Significant difficulty or expense based on the University's resources and circumstances in relationship to providing a specific accommodation. Undue hardship may refer to accommodations that are unduly expensive, substantial, disruptive, a violation of the law, or that would fundamentally alter academic requirements. In addition, accommodations which interfere with the safe and efficient operation of the campus may present an undue hardship.

Request Procedure: Students should inform their instructors in writing of their need to observe a religious holiday or rite reasonably well in advance of the absence, preferably at the beginning of the semester and no fewer than 5 business days before the absence. Exceptions may be made for certain religious observances that are by their nature unpredictable, such as funerals and other death rites.

Retaliation is Prohibited. Drake University prohibits retaliation against students and employees requesting

a religious accommodation, participating in an approved accommodation, or otherwise engaging in protected conduct under this policy. Any person who violates this anti-retaliation provision may be subject to disciplinary and/or corrective action.

This policy shall be placed in the faculty handbook.