



FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF FACULTY DEVELOPMENT AND ADVANCEMENT

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Faculty and All Instructors

From: Janet Kistner 
Vice President for Faculty Development and Advancement

Date: May 10, 2022

Subject: Policy on Observance of Religious Holy Days

Per Section 1006.53, Florida Statutes, the Florida State University policy on observance of religious holy days provides that reasonable accommodations will be provided to students who request to be excused from class to observe a religious holy day of their faith. Students will make the request in writing to their instructor, preferably upon receipt of the course syllabus but not later than two weeks before the holy day observance. Note that such an accommodation may not be possible when the religious holy day conflicts with group work or experiential learning projects that cannot reasonably be rescheduled; therefore, students should avoid potential conflicts when scheduling courses or joining particular student groups. While excused students will be held responsible for the material covered in their absence, they shall be permitted a reasonable amount of time to make up the work missed. Instructors and University administrators shall not penalize students who are absent from academic activities because of excused religious holy day observance. This policy applies to all Florida State University instructional sites, regardless of location or mode of delivery.

Instructors may find information provided in these two links to be helpful when responding to student requests concerning holy day observation: [Interfaith Council at FSU](#) and the [Interfaith Calendar](#). Students who allege that this policy has been improperly applied in specific instances may have their grievances addressed through the general academic appeals process in the [Undergraduate Bulletin](#) and in the [Graduate Bulletin](#) under “Undergraduate Academic Integrity and Grievances.” In this process, the student provides a complaint first to the instructor, then to the department chair, and finally to the academic dean appropriate to the course involved, stopping at the level at which the complaint is resolved. If no resolution is reached, the student brings the complaint to the attention of the FSU Undergraduate Ombudsperson, Jill Flees, at undergraduateombuds@fsu.edu or the FSU Graduate Student Ombudsperson, Adrienne Stephenson, at graduateombuds@fsu.edu, or either resolution or referral to the [Student Academic Relations Committee](#) of the Faculty Senate. This committee has the authority to recommend to the Vice President for Academic Affairs that corrective action be taken when justified. Consult the ‘Grievance Procedure’ section of the [Undergraduate Bulletin](#) and the [Graduate Bulletin](#) for a complete description of the general academic appeals process.

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Florida State University policy also provides that "a faculty member who wishes to observe a religious holy day shall notify the department chair or academic dean as soon as possible in order that arrangements may be made for the meeting of classes and the performance of other scheduled activities."

cc: Provost James Clark
Vice Presidents
Dr. Kimberly Barber, Registrar
Dr. Eric Chicken, Faculty Senate President
Renisha Gibbs, Associate Vice President
Jill Flees, Undergraduate Student Ombudsperson
Dr. Adrienne Stephenson, Graduate Student Ombudsperson