




FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF FACULTY DEVELOPMENT AND ADVANCEMENT

MEMORANDUM

To: Deans, Directors, and Department Chairs

From: Janet Kistner 
Vice President for Faculty Development and Advancement

Date: January 8, 2019

Subject: Policy on Observance of Religious Holy Days

Please attend to the University policy on the observance of holy days and remind your faculty members and instructional staff of this policy. The policy is located in the *Faculty Handbook* at <http://facultyhandbook.fsu.edu/>, Section 7, under *Religious Work-Restricted Holy Days*, and in the *General Bulletin* at <http://registrar.fsu.edu/bulletin/undergraduate/information/integrity/>. This memorandum will be posted on the Office of Faculty Development and Advancement website at <http://fda.fsu.edu/> under *Academic Resources* in *Academic Policies*. All reasonable efforts should be made to ensure that observers of religious holy days are not penalized for missing exams or other class work scheduled during these absences. If examinations must be given during holy days, make-up exams or other procedures should be established to provide an opportunity to complete any missed work.

The policy below is intended to delineate what rights must be granted to students who wish to observe a holy day. Please note: instructors have the authority to set overall attendance policy, they may choose to grant additional flexibility to students.

Florida State University policy on student observance of religious holy days provides:

1. Each student shall, upon notifying his or her instructor within the first two weeks of the semester, be excused from class to observe a religious work-restricted holy day of his or her faith.
2. While the student will be held responsible for the material covered in his or her absence, each student shall be permitted a reasonable amount of time to make up the work missed.
3. Instructors and University administrators shall in no way arbitrarily penalize students who are absent from academic or social activities because of religious work-restricted holy day observance.
4. Instructors will find the annotated calendar generated by the Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Office at the University of Missouri (<https://diversity.missouri.edu/religions/holidays.php>) as a useful resource as they respond to student requests for absence.

Students who believe that this policy has been improperly applied in specific instances should be referred to the Grievance Procedure in the *General Bulletin* at <http://registrar.fsu.edu/bulletin/undergraduate/information/integrity/>.

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 Sally McRorie
Vice Presidents
Dr. Kimberly Barber, Registrar
Dr. Todd Adams, Faculty Senate President and Professor
Renisha Gibbs, Associate Vice President