

## Policy 10.17

# Religious Accommodation Policy

<b>Responsible Official:</b>	Dean of Religious Life
<b>Administering Division/Department:</b>	Office of Spiritual and Religious Life
<b>Effective Date:</b>	August 1, 2022
<b>Last Revision Date:</b>	August 3, 2022

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### Overview

Emory University seeks to create a campus climate that is welcoming and inclusive of religious, philosophical, and nonreligious diversity. Emory's Equal Opportunity and Discriminatory Harassment Policy prohibits discrimination on the basis of religion, and Emory seeks to provide reasonable accommodation for the sincerely held religious beliefs and practices of employees and students, unless such accommodation would impose an undue hardship (more than a minimal burden on university operations).

Religious holidays and observances vary among religious traditions and within religious traditions. Religious observances may include attending services and may also require abstaining from work and certain other activities (such as writing, carrying things outside of the home, or the use of electronics) altogether on religious holidays and at other significant times of the year.

### Applicability

This policy applies to all university faculty, staff, and students.

### Policy Details

### For Employees

To request an accommodation for religious observance, employees should submit requests in writing as early as possible to their supervisor, department chair, or dean to make arrangements. If that is not effective, individuals should speak with Human Resources and/or consult with the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance, (OIEC) regarding Emory's Equal Opportunity and Discriminatory Harassment Policy.

The Office of Spiritual and Religious Life (OSRL) and the Ombuds Office are also available to provide advice and support to supervisors and employees in this process.

### For Students

To request an accommodation for religious observance, students should submit requests in writing to their faculty members to make arrangements as early as possible. If that is not effective, individuals should speak with the chair of the department (students not linked to a department should speak with their program director or relevant program leadership), the academic dean in their school, or with OIEC regarding Emory's Equal Opportunity and Discriminatory Harassment Policy.

OSRL and the Ombuds Office are also available to provide advice and support to faculty and students in this process.

### Responsibility for Coursework

Academic accommodations for religious observance do not relieve students of responsibilities for the completion of any part of the coursework missed as a result of a religious observance. Reasonable accommodations must be consistent with academic standards and may not include modifications of requirements essential to any program or licensing requirement, or modifications that impose an undue burden on the university.

### List of Major Religious Observances

The Emory Office of Spiritual and Religious Life (OSRL) publishes a list of major religious holidays observed by large numbers within the Emory community each year in May and requests that faculty and staff seek to avoid conflicts with these observances in planning syllabi, examinations, assignment deadlines, required meetings, and major programs.

The list is based on major religious observances for large numbers within the Emory community, but community members may observe and receive accommodation for holidays not on this list. It is intended for planning purposes.

The list can be found on the OSRL website at: [http://www.religiouslife.emory.edu/about\\_us/holidays.html](http://www.religiouslife.emory.edu/about_us/holidays.html).

### Suggested Information for Course Syllabi

Faculty should include on course syllabi information related to academic accommodations for religious observance. The following is a sample statement:

Students seeking academic accommodations for religious observance should submit their requests to the instructor by email as early as possible in advance. If you have questions or concerns about your request, you may contact the university's Office of Spiritual and Religious Life (OSRL), the Ombuds Office, or the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC). Academic accommodations for religious observance do not relieve students of responsibility for the completion of any part of the coursework they may miss as the result of a religious observance.

### Regarding Policies on Number of Excused Absences

Reasonable efforts should be made by faculty to accommodate student absences due to participation in religious observances. Students must inform professors as early as possible each semester of any planned religious observances that conflict with class attendance and participation and make mutually agreeable arrangements to complete any work that will be missed.

The idea of a set number of excused absences is not wholly effective for religious accommodation, and excused absences should be considered separately from and in addition to absences for religious accommodation. There is no set number for approved religious accommodation absences, and if a student needs to use excused absences for

sickness or other emergencies, that should not subtract from possible religious accommodation absences. This principle, however, does not outweigh the fact that regular attendance in class may be essential for meeting academic standards and licensing requirements.

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### Definitions

Relevant definitions and guidance for this policy can be found at the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission website at: <https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/what-you-should-know-workplace-religious-accommodation#:~:text=Yes.%20Title%20VII%20of%20the%20Civil%20Rights%20Act,a%20minimal%20burden%20on%20operation%20of%20the%20business%29>.

### Related Links

- Emory OSRL: <https://www.religiouslife.emory.edu>
- Emory Ombuds: <https://ombuds.emory.edu>
- Emory ODEI: <https://equityandinclusion.emory.edu>

### Contact Information

Subject	Contact	Phone	Email
Clarification of Policy	Office of Spiritual and Religious Life	404-727-6226	<a href="mailto:religiouslife@emory.edu">religiouslife@emory.edu</a>

### Revision History

- Published on: Aug 03, 2022 (Updated OIEC name)
- Version (Original) Published on: July 27, 2022