

Texas Woman's University University Regulation and Procedure

Regulation and Procedure Name: Student Religious Holy Day Observance Policy

Regulation and Procedure Number: URP: 06.120

Policy Owner: Student Life

POLICY STATEMENT

Texas Woman's University ("TWU" or University") respects the religious observances of students even though they may conflict with University class meetings, assignments, or examinations. Texas State and Federal law and University policy prohibit discrimination on the basis of religious belief.

APPLICABILITY

This policy is applicable to TWU Students and Faculty.

DEFINITIONS

1. "Faculty" means a person who teaches a course offered for academic credit by TWU, teaching assistants, instructors, lab assistants, research assistants, lecturers, adjuncts, assistant professors, associate professors, and full professors. This also includes clinical faculty, visiting faculty, and adjunct faculty.
2. "Religious Holy Day" means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Texas Tax Code Section 11.20. Religious Organizations.
3. "Student" means a person taking courses at TWU, a person who is not currently enrolled in courses but who has a continuing academic relationship with TWU, or a person who has been admitted or readmitted to TWU.

REGULATION AND PROCEDURE

I. Religious Holy Days

Texas Woman's University is committed to providing an academic and work environment that is respectful of the religious beliefs of its students.

II. Student Religious Holy Day Observance Procedure

- A. In accordance with state law, Texas Woman's University shall excuse a student from classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose.
- B. To request an excused absence to observe a religious holy day under this policy, students should submit the Request to Observe Religious Holy Day Form to their course faculty as early in the term as possible. A separate form must be submitted for each course. Students are encouraged to inform their course faculty about religious holy days early in the term to enable better planning and coordination of work assignments and examinations.
- C. Students whose degree plans require offsite clinical and experiential learning components should submit the Request to Observe Religious Holy Day Form to their academic component administrator as early in the term as possible. Students are encouraged to inform their academic component administrator about religious holy days prior to the beginning of their internship, practicum, or clinical assignment and no later than the first day of class to enable better planning and coordination of internship, practicum, or clinical assignments. A request for an excused absence to observe a religious holy day under this policy may be denied if the requested absence interferes with patient care.
- D. A student whose absence is excused under this section shall be treated in accordance with TWU URP 06.160: Excused Absence Policy. Faculty are encouraged to announce reasonable time periods for make-up work and examinations in the course syllabus and to make clear the consequences of a student's failure to meet such deadlines for make-up work and examinations.
- E. If a student and their course faculty disagree about whether the absence is for the observance of a religious holy day, or if they disagree about whether the student has been given a reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the faculty may appeal to the Dean of Students Office. All parties must abide by the decision of that office.
- F. A student who is excused under this policy may not be penalized for the absence; however, faculty may respond appropriately if the student fails to complete the assignment or examination satisfactorily.

- G. Any student who believes that they have been discriminated against as a result of making a request to observe a religious holy day under this policy may report these concerns by following the procedures outlined in URP 06.230: Student Grievance.

REVIEW

This policy will remain in effect and published until it is reviewed, updated, or archived. This policy is to be reviewed once every six years. Interim review may be required as a result of updates to federal and state law or regulations, Board of Regents policies, or internal processes or procedures.

REFERENCES

[Texas Tax Code Section 11.20 – Religious Organizations](#)

[Texas Administrative Code, Title 19, Part 1, Chapter 4, Subchapter A, Rule 4.4—Student Absences on Religious Holy Days](#)

[Texas Education Code Section 51.911—Religious Holy Days](#)

[URP 06.160: Excused Absence Policy](#)

[URP 06.230: Student Grievance](#)

FORMS AND TOOLS

[Request to Observe Religious Holy Day Form](#)

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