

# SEATTLE UNIVERSITY

## POLICY ON RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS

### I. Policy Statement

Consistent with Washington State law ([RCW 28.10.039](#)), it is the policy of Seattle University to reasonably accommodate students who, due to the observance of religious holidays, expect to be absent or endure a significant hardship during certain days of their academic course or program.

### II. Purpose

To promote Seattle University's commitment to diversity, advancement of inclusive excellence and support of our students regardless of religious affiliation or non-affiliation, in accordance with state law.

### III. Definitions

The following definitions apply to the terms in this policy:

- **Reasonably accommodate** means coordinating with the student on scheduling examinations or other activities necessary for completion of the program and includes rescheduling examinations or activities or offering different times for examinations or activities without creating an undue hardship on the University or resulting in a fundamental alteration to the nature or operation of the academic program or course.
- **Religious holidays** means holidays for reasons of faith or conscience or for organized activities conducted under the auspices of a religious denomination, church, or religious organization.
- **Undue Hardship or Fundamental Alteration** means that implementing a requested accommodation would be excessively costly, extensive, substantial or disruptive; or result in the fundamental alteration of the nature or operation of the academic program or course. In determining whether a requested accommodation poses an undue hardship or fundamental alteration, the assessment may include, but is not limited to, evaluating the impact on the overall resources, standards or structure of the course and/or program. Before concluding that a particular accommodation would impose an undue hardship or a fundamental alteration, the University will consider alternative accommodations.

### IV. Procedures for Requesting a Religious Accommodation

- a. A student seeking accommodations under this policy must provide a written request to the student's faculty member: (i) within fourteen (14) calendar days from the first day of classes of the academic quarter in which the student is

requesting accommodations; and (ii) identifying the specific dates the student requests accommodations.

If a student is requesting religious accommodations for multiple classes, the student must submit a written request to each of their faculty members.

[<https://www.seattleu.edu/media/policies/Religious-Accommodation-Request-Form-FINAL.PDF>]

- b. The faculty member will evaluate and respond to all requests to reasonably accommodate a student and may require the student to provide additional information about the request. The faculty member may consult with the Assistant Vice President for Institutional Equity or other appropriate University officials in evaluating the student's accommodation request. The faculty member may deny an accommodation request if it results in the fundamental alteration of the nature or operation of the academic program or course or creates an undue hardship.
- c. The faculty member will provide the student with a written decision regarding the accommodation request.

#### **V. Appeals Procedures**

- a. A student may appeal a decision made by the faculty member under this policy by submitting the appeal in writing to the Office of the Dean of the respective school or college of the class the student is seeking accommodations no later than five (5) calendars after the faculty member's decision on the requested accommodation. The decision of the Dean or designee will be final.

#### **VI. Notice of the Policy**

- a. The policy is published on the University's Policies webpage: <https://www.seattleu.edu/policies/>
- b. All faculty are required to notify students of this policy by including a copy of the policy or a link to the policy in their course syllabi.

#### **VII. Questions Regarding the Policy**

- a. Questions about the interpretation or application of the Policy on Religious Accommodations on Students should be raised with the Office of Institutional Equity. Please contact OIE at (206) 296-2824 or [oie@seattleu.edu](mailto:oie@seattleu.edu) for assistance.

#### **VIII. Policy Implementation and Modification**

- a. This policy may be modified with the approval of the Provost to reflect changes in law or University processes, or as otherwise necessary.

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