



Policy Name: Accommodations for Religious and Cultural Observances
Approving Authority: EDIA Committee

Policy # HR-014
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Statement

The Accommodations for Religious and Cultural Observances Policy of Beal University Canada (“BUC” or the “University”) supports diversity and inclusivity and is committed to respecting and accommodating the religious and cultural practices of all members of the University community. BUC recognizes that individuals may need time and space to observe religious holidays, ceremonies, and cultural traditions, and the University strives to support these observances in a manner that is respectful and fair. The Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (“EDIA”) Committee will review this policy every five (5) years.

Purpose

In accordance with the New Brunswick Human Rights Act, the University will promote and protect the rights and dignity of all members of the University community and will create a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for everyone. The purpose of this policy is to ensure the University’s commitment to providing accommodation measures related to the practice of Religious and Cultural Observances.

Roles and Responsibilities

Providing accommodations entails shared responsibilities and communication among University staff, faculty, students, and other members of the University. The EDIA Committee has oversight of this policy. The Director of Compliance, Health, and Safety, in coordination with the Student Services Department, is responsible for the implementation of this policy.

Policy

The University welcomes and includes students, staff, and faculty from a wide range of backgrounds, cultural traditions, creeds, and religions. It is the University’s policy to arrange reasonable accommodation for the needs of members of the University community who observe religious and cultural days other than those already accommodated by ordinary scheduling and statutory holidays. It is important that no member of the University community be seriously disadvantaged because of their Religious and Cultural Observances. However, in the scheduling of academic and other activities, it is also important to ensure that the accommodation of one group does not seriously disadvantage other groups within the University community or cause undue hardship to the University.

Student Academic Accommodation Requests

When a student does not request accommodation within the period of time that corresponds to the initial 20% of the course’s module (mod), or when accommodating the request would cause undue hardship for the University or other students, the request might be denied. However, every reasonable effort will be made to provide accommodations. If compulsory activities are unavoidable, every reasonable opportunity will be given to these students to make up work that they miss. When the scheduling of tests or examinations cannot be avoided, students will be informed of the procedure to be followed to arrange to write at an alternate time. The University also recognizes that religious and spiritual calendars operate on different cycles and that flexibility may be required with respect to holidays that cannot be precisely determined due to their tentative nature (e.g., holidays based on lunar calendars). The University also recognizes that each individual’s needs are

unique and must be considered anew when accommodation is requested, as an arrangement that might work for one individual may not work for others.

Those responsible for the design and publication of course syllabi and materials in the learning management system are responsible for:

- Including in syllabi and online course sites a notice advising students that they will be given the opportunity to make up work or examinations without penalty that they miss due to Religious and Cultural Observances;
- Advising students in syllabi and online course sites of their obligation to notify the Student Services Department that they will be absent or unable to meet a course obligation due to Religious and Cultural Observances within the period of time that corresponds to the initial 20% of the course's mod; and
- Specifying in syllabi, course schedules, and online course sites dates and times for examinations and other major course obligations.

Faculty who have the role of an instructor of a course are responsible for:

- Reminding students of the dates and times for examinations and other major course obligations at the beginning of the mod;
- Advising students of their obligation to notify the Student Services Department that they will be absent due to Religious and Cultural Observances; and
- Advising students that they will be given the opportunity to make up work or examinations without penalty if they choose to observe Religious and Cultural Observances.

Students who will be absent or unable to meet a course obligation because of Religious and Cultural Observances are responsible for:

- Advising the Student Services Department of the need for accommodation within the period of time that corresponds to the initial 20% of the course's mod.

The Student Services Department will maintain a yearly Diversity Calendar that is accessible by all faculty, students, and staff. Faculty, students, and staff may refer to it when planning in advance for days of Religious and Cultural Observances and any related absences.

Related Policies and Documents

AA-004 Student Corrective Action Policy
HR-003 Harassment and Discrimination Policy
HR-004 Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy
HR-009 Workplace Accommodations Policy
HR-013 Gender Inclusion Policy
HR-014-F Student Request for Accommodation of Religious and Cultural Observances Form
HR-018 Employee Corrective Action Policy
SA-001 Student Code of Conduct
SA-003 Student Access to Accommodations Policy