

## POLICY FOR STUDENTS ON THE ACCOMMODATION OF RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES

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**Effective Date:** September 1, 2023

**Approval Authority:** Provost and Vice-  
President, Academic

**Supersedes /Amends:** July 26, 2011

**Policy Number:** PRVPA-1

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### PREAMBLE

Concordia University (the “University”) is a secular institution which welcomes diversity and places a high value on inclusion and respect for differences.

The University recognizes that diversity exists both between and among religious and spiritual traditions, and that each request for accommodation requires an individual assessment. The accommodation process is a shared responsibility, where the University, Instructors and Students (as such terms are defined below) work together cooperatively and respectfully to consider potential and reasonable accommodations.

### SCOPE

This Policy deals solely with issues surrounding the scheduling of Academic Requirements (as defined below).

### PURPOSE

In accordance with applicable legislation including the Charter (as defined below), this Policy outlines how scheduling accommodations for Religious Observances (as defined below) can be made for Students in the context of Academic Requirements.

### DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Policy, the following definitions shall apply:

“Academic Requirement” means any assignment, paper, test, examination, participation, labs, practicum, tutorials, performance rehearsals, group presentation, other evaluative exercises and/or any other activity that is required to be completed by a Student for the purposes of their work at the University.

“Charter” means the [\*Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, CQLR, chapter C-12.\*](#)

## POLICY FOR STUDENTS ON THE ACCOMMODATION OF RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES

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Page 2 of 5

“Instructor(s)” means any employee who is teaching, advising, supervising, mentoring, overseeing the allocation of resources to, and/or coaching Students. Such employees include, but are not limited to, full and/or part-time faculty, faculty administrators, librarians, laboratory or other Instructors, principal investigators as well as teaching assistants, research assistants, staff, and graduate Student supervisors, and coaching staff.

“Student(s)” means any person registered in a course or program on a full or part-time basis, for credit or not, and includes undergraduate and graduate students, independent students as well as visiting students, exchange students and interns.

“Religious Observance(s)” means any recognized practice or custom or similar observance that is observed or practiced by a Student, based on a religion or faith where the day(s) of such practice, custom and/or observance, conflict with the Student’s Academic Requirement.

### POLICY

1. Subject to the provisions of this Policy, Students will not be penalized if they cannot submit an Academic Requirement where the scheduling of such Academic Requirement conflicts with their Religious Observances.
2. Students who, because of Religious Observances, cannot meet an Academic Requirement, other than centrally supervised final examinations, and Students wishing to have particular Religious Observances recognized in the scheduling of other Academic Requirement must inform their Instructors in writing, in order to explore possible accommodation(s), no later than 1 week before the course’s DNE (Did Not Enter – course withdrawal with refund) date, identified in the applicable [University Calendar](#). The timeline in this [section 2](#) is a minimum requirement that the Instructor needs to evaluate a request, in order to find an alternate evaluation method.
3. A request received by an Instructor after the deadline provided for in [section 2](#) has passed shall be considered by the Instructor in exceptional circumstances.
4. Late notice provided by the Student under [section 2](#) could result in academic delays or other consequences for the Student. A refusal to accommodate such a late request by an Instructor shall not be subject to the recourse under [section 9](#).

## POLICY FOR STUDENTS ON THE ACCOMMODATION OF RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES

---

Page 3 of 5

5. In the case of centrally supervised final examinations, Students must inform the [Examinations Office](#) of any conflict prior to the deadline which is available on the Student's portal once the [final examination schedule](#) has been posted.
6. When the requested accommodation concerns a centrally supervised final examination, possible solutions are outlined in the applicable [University Calendar](#).
7. If a Student misses a lecture or lectures or any other portion of a course due to Religious Observances, it is the Student's responsibility to ensure that they have obtained any material distributed during the missed class or classes and has remained up to date with the course's schedule and lectures.
8. When a Student has requested an accommodation as per [section 2](#), Instructors have a responsibility to provide reasonable alternative arrangements that do not put the Student at an unreasonable academic disadvantage. Possible solutions may include but are not limited to:
  - a. rescheduling the Academic Requirement, or
  - b. preparing an alternative evaluation for that particular Student.

In either case, it remains the Student's responsibility to work collaboratively and reasonably with the Instructor to find solutions in relation to alternative arrangements, which do not result in undue hardship for the University.

9. When the Instructor and Student are unable to agree on suitable accommodation, the matter will be referred to the Chair of the academic unit in question, in consultation, when applicable, with the relevant Associate Dean of Student Affairs. Additional information may be requested confirming the requirements of the Religious Observance.
10. The Associate Dean and Chair of the department will come to a considered decision whether an accommodation is possible, and what accommodation is to be made in this instance. A considered decision will include ensuring that the Student is not caused unreasonable academic disadvantage, while also ensuring that the Academic Requirements can be met appropriately. The Associate Dean and Chair will convey the decision to the Instructor and Student.

**POLICY FOR STUDENTS ON THE ACCOMMODATION  
OF RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES**

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Page 4 of 5

11. Any member of the University community may consult with the various services and resources provided for in [Appendix A](#), for advice or guidance with regards to the application of this Policy.
12. The overall responsibility for implementing and recommending amendments to this Policy shall rest with the Provost and Vice-President, Academic.

**POLICY FOR STUDENTS ON THE ACCOMMODATION  
OF RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES**

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**Appendix A  
Support Services**

[Equity Office](#)

[Exams Office](#)

[Indigenous Directions](#)

[Multi-Faith and Spirituality Centre](#)

[Office of Rights and Responsibilities](#)

[Ombuds Office](#)

[Otsenhàkta Student Centre](#)

[Student Services](#)