

PROPOSED: QCC RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Whereas, Queensborough Community College is committed to providing an academic and work environment that is respectful of the religious beliefs of its students, faculty, and staff.

Be it resolved that To further accomplish this, and in accordance with Federal and New York State laws, the College adopts the following policy and procedures:

I. By June 1st of each year, the College will issue a list of religious observance dates that occur during the following academic year. While not exhaustive, this list will provide notice to the faculty of the religious observance dates of many faiths practiced by the students and other members of the college community. One such listing is from the [INTERFAITH CALENDAR](#)

II. Student absences from class necessitated by religious observance will be deemed an excused absence, with no negative academic consequences. Faculty must provide observing students the opportunity to make up any missed assignments or exams within a reasonable amount of time of the religious observance.

III. Students must notify their professors in advance of their religious observance, via their College email accounts or otherwise in writing, of their intention to be absent from a particular class due to a religious observance.

Such notification should occur at least one week prior to the religious observance.

Students are not required to provide third-party certification of their religious practices.

IV. To the extent possible, faculty should avoid scheduling examinations or assigning papers, presentations, or other academic requirements on any of the identified religious observance dates. When this is unavoidable, professors must give students, who have notified their professors in advance, the opportunity for equivalent make-up work.

V. Faculty who will be absent as a result of religious observance must notify their Academic Department Chair or immediate supervisor in advance of their religious observance, inform all students of their intended absence, and make up missed instructional time in one of the following ways:

1. Hold a make-up class or classes on a date and time that is acceptable to class members.
2. Hold class electronically, using a web-based source such as Blackboard, only when all class members have access to the technology.
3. Make-up for the missed instructional time within remaining class meeting time by modifying and/or adding class assignments, papers, exams, quizzes, and/or activities.
4. Provide additional office hours to accommodate individual students.

5. Provide an alternative method, as approved by the appropriate Academic Department Chairperson or Provost.

VI. The College will accommodate requests for absences from faculty and staff for religious observance dates, and benefits will be provided in accordance with the collective bargaining agreements and University Policies. Absence for any reason should be communicated to an employee's supervisor in advance of the absence. Faculty and staff member complaints regarding the application of this policy by their supervisor should be brought to the Office of Faculty and Staff Relations.

VII. Students' complaints should initially be brought to the Department Chair. If students are dissatisfied with the meeting's outcome, they may take their complaint to the Provost.

VIII. Any complaints regarding possible abuse of this policy by students should be brought to the Office of Student Affairs and processed pursuant to the Student Code of Conduct.

NOTES:

(1) This proposed College Policy is not inconsistent with CUNY BOT Policies.

CUNY

Procedures for Implementing Reasonable Accommodations and Academic Adjustments

<http://www2.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/page-assets/about/administration/offices/legal-affairs/policies-procedures/reasonable-accommodations-and-academic-adjustments/Procedures-for-Implementing-Reasonable-Accommodations-9.21.2016.pdf>

Time off for Religious Observances

<http://www2.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/page-assets/about/administration/offices/hr/policies-and-procedures/Time-Off-for-Religious-Observance-MJV2016.pdf>

(2) New York Education Law § 224-a:

New York State Education Law § 224-a provides rights to students who are unable because of religious beliefs to register or attend classes on certain days. The law provides that a student, who is absent from school because of a religious belief, is entitled, without any additional fees, to an equivalent opportunity to register for classes or make up any examination, study or work requirements that the student may have missed because of such absence on any particular day or days.

(3) Current College practices not set by the Academic Senate are not college policies as only the QCC Academic Senate has been empowered by the CUNY BOT to set College Policy.