

Academic Council Policy

Academic Considerations for Religious Observances
1017

Description:

Approvals:

Approved by Academic Standards Committee: May 18, 2006

Approved by Academic Council: May 23, 2006

Date Effective: Sept 1, 2006

Approval Authority: Academic Council

Signature: Keith Rushton

Policy:

OCAD acknowledges the pluralistic nature of its university community and agrees that accommodation will be made to students who experience a conflict between a religious obligation and scheduled tests, mid-term examinations, final examinations, or requirements to attend classes and participate in project presentations or critiques. The type of accommodation will vary depending on the nature, weight and timing of the work for which accommodation is sought.

Accordingly, the request for alternative arrangements normally must be submitted to the instructor in charge of the course within two weeks of the distribution of the course outline, that is, at the beginning of the semester.

The instructor has a responsibility to provide reasonable alternative arrangements that do not put the student at an academic disadvantage. In the case of a conflict with a final examination or final critique, the instructor should reschedule the examination/critique to another time during the examination/ critique period taking care that the new date and time do not put the student at an academic disadvantage.

A schedule of principal holy days for the entire academic year will be posted on the OCAD Website.

In the event that a student is not satisfied with the accommodation offered by the instructor, he/she may appeal to the appropriate Assistant Dean who may grant alternative accommodation. A student who remains dissatisfied with the outcome of his/her request may seek the assistance of the Human Rights and Equity Officer to facilitate a resolution.

Instructors who anticipate a conflict between a religious obligation and scheduled course responsibilities should discuss the situation with their Dean/Assistant Dean.

Implementation

1. The new policy should be incorporated in the Faculty Handbook and communicated to faculty and students during orientation meetings at the outset of each semester.
2. All course outlines should contain the following wording, which should be brought to the attention of the students:

A student who foresees a conflict between a religious obligation and any scheduled class assignments, including the final examination or critique, must notify his/her instructor in writing and in the case of final examinations and critiques must make a written request to the appropriate Faculty Office within three weeks of the first class. Late requests for an exam or critique deferral are subject to a fee of \$70.