

<b>POLICY NAME</b>	<b>POLICY FOR THE ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION OF RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES</b> (Formerly the <i>Policy for the Accommodation of Religious Holy Days</i> )
<b>Approving Body</b>	Board of Governors
<b>Original Approval Date</b>	March 20, 1996
<b>Last Revision Date</b>	Senate (May 8, 2024) Board of Governors (May 16, 2024)
<b>Next Review Date</b>	Spring 2029
<b>Related Documents</b>	Related policies, procedures, guidelines, forms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Final Exam Conflict Forms</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Policy on Assessment of Student Learning</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">UGME Short-Term Absences Policy</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Handbook of Student Rights and Responsibilities</a></li> </ul>

## 1. PREAMBLE

McGill University welcomes students who hold and practice a wide diversity of religious identities, traditions, and beliefs. The University embraces this diversity and is committed to providing an academic environment that is respectful and inclusive of all students. As part of this commitment, it is the responsibility of the University, in accordance with applicable legislation, including the *Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms*, CQLR, chapter C12 (“Charter”), to reasonably accommodate students where there is a conflict between an Academic Requirement and their individual Religious Observances.

## 2. PURPOSE

In accordance with applicable legislation including the Charter (as defined below), the purpose of this Policy is to outline how scheduling accommodations for Religious Observances can be made for Students in the context of Academic Requirements. The accommodation process is a shared responsibility, where the University, instructors and students work together cooperatively and respectfully to consider potential and reasonable accommodations.

## 3. SCOPE

This Policy shall apply to all McGill Students, Instructors, and to the University.

## 4. DEFINITIONS

4.1 **Academic Requirement** means any activity or component specified in a course outline.

- 4.2 **Assessment** means the process through which the progress and achievements of a student or students are measured or determined. Based on established criteria and standards, assessment provides ongoing feedback to the student about the quality and extent of their knowledge, understanding, and performance, and determines assigned grades (as in the Policy on Assessment of Student Learning).
- 4.3 **Holy Days** means the list of Holy Days published in the University's multifaith calendar. This calendar is intended to be informative rather than prescriptive and should not be considered exhaustive.
- 4.4 **Instructor** means the member of the academic staff responsible for instruction, the means of assessment, and the grades to be granted in a course (as in the Policy on Assessment of Student Learning).
- 4.5 **Religious Observance** means any practice or custom that is observed or practiced by a Student, based on a religion or faith.
- 4.6 **Student** means any person registered in the University for a course, courses, or research activities, whether or not they are a candidate for a degree, diploma, or certificate (as in the Policy on Assessment of Student Learning).

## 5. POLICY

- 5.1 Students shall not be penalized if they cannot write examinations or be otherwise assessed where such activities conflict with their Religious Observance.
- 5.2 In advance of the first day of class, the Office of the Dean of Students shall distribute to all units a multifaith calendar listing Holy Days for the academic year, along with a copy of this Policy.
- 5.3 While sessional dates, classroom and Faculty activities, and examination dates take into account academic constraints and statutory holidays, where there is flexibility, efforts are to be made by the University and Instructors to schedule assessments on dates and/or at times that do not conflict with Religious Observances.
- 5.4 Students who, because of their Religious Observance, cannot meet an Academic Requirement, other than final examinations, are responsible for informing their Instructor with two weeks' notice of the conflict. Possible solutions to the conflict include, but are not limited to:
- 5.4.1. rescheduling the Assessment, or
  - 5.4.2. preparing an alternative Assessment for that particular student, or
  - 5.4.3. shifting the weight assigned to the Assessment to other components of the Assessment, in accordance with the Policy on Assessment of Student Learning.
- 5.5 When the Instructor and Student are unable to agree on suitable accommodation, the matter will be referred to the Associate Dean of Student Affairs in the Faculty responsible for administering the course. The Associate Dean of Student Affairs will decide whether reasonable accommodation without undue hardship is possible and what accommodation is to be made. The Associate Dean of Student



Affairs will convey the decision to the Instructor and Student.

5.6 When the requested accommodation concerns a final examination, Students are responsible for completing and submitting the Final Exam Conflict Form appropriate for their Faculty at least four weeks before exams begin. Each Faculty is required to have a Final Exam Conflict Form for this purpose.

5.7 When the requested accommodation concerns a final examination, and provided the Student complied with 5.6 of this Policy, possible solutions to the conflict include (in order of preference):

- 5.7.1. treating the request as a procedural conflict, and accommodating it within the examination period, or
- 5.7.2. providing a special deferred examination as soon as possible, or
- 5.7.3. granting permission to write a regular deferred examination.

The accommodation will be chosen by the Exam Office after consultation with the Student.

5.8 This policy is to be made available to all members of the University Community.

## 6. REPORTING

To ensure proper governance oversight, an Implementation Committee for this Policy will submit an annual report to the Enrolment and Student Affairs Advisory Committee regarding how this policy is applied in the reference year.

## 7. AUTHORITY TO APPROVE PROCEDURES

The Deputy Provost (Student Life and Learning) is responsible for the development and approval of Procedures pertaining to the application of this Policy across all Faculties.

## 8. REVIEW

The Policy shall be reviewed by the Office of the Dean of Students every five years through a process that includes appropriate stakeholder consultation. Proposed amendments must be approved by the Board of Governors.

<i>Legislative History:</i>		
<u>Approved:</u> Senate	March 20, 1996	Minute 92
<u>Amended:</u> Senate Board of Governors	February 14, 2007 April 16, 2007	Minute 7 Minute 12
<u>Amended and Renamed:</u> Senate Board of Governors	May 8, 2024 May 16, 2024	Minute IIB5 Minute 11.1.3