



## STUDENT RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE POLICY

### I. POLICY AND GENERAL STATEMENT

Respect for diversity is one of California Northstate University College of Medicine's core values, extending to all aspects of our community. CNUCOM will endeavor to provide reasonable accommodations relating to religious beliefs and practices in response to a formal written student request.

### II. PURPOSE

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that students from various religious faiths are afforded the opportunity to participate in the major religious observances of that faith, when reasonable accommodations of such requests are possible as outlined below. Such accommodations cannot be guaranteed in circumstances where granting the request would create an undue burden on faculty, negatively affect other students who are participating in the scheduled educational activity, or jeopardize patient care.

### III. SCOPE/COVERAGE

The policy applies to all enrolled students.

### IV. PROCEDURE

All student's request must be made in writing using the designated form for this purpose and include the following:

- Notification to the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs, Admissions and Outreach of the student's request for excused absence from participation in an aspect of the curriculum.
- A statement of the reason for this request and a description of the curriculum that the student will miss as a result of this absence.
- The date of the request and the student's signature.

#### Phase A (Years 1 – 2)

- Students must notify the Course Director(s) during the first week of the semester, or at least 2 weeks before the holiday, whichever comes first, of their request to be absent from class on their day(s) of religious observance.
- The Assistant Dean of Student Affairs, Admissions and Outreach will consult with the Course Director(s) and review any student's written request, decide if there is a need to grant reasonable accommodation for religious observance, and whether granting an accommodation will unduly burden faculty, staff or others involved with the affected activity or will unacceptably compromise the rigor of the educational requirements.

They will also consider whether there will be an opportunity to make up any missed activity. A written response to the student request will be issued by the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs, Admissions and Outreach in a timely manner. The student's request and written response to the request will be maintained in the student's academic file.

- Work Assignments: Students who are excused from class, specific work assignment, or other academic or educational activity for the purpose of observing a religious holiday will be responsible for the material covered in their absence, but shall be permitted a reasonable amount of time to make up any missed work. Missed work shall be made up in accordance with a timetable set by the student's instructor or as prescribed by the Course Director(s) at the beginning of the academic term, including permission to make up examinations.

#### Phases B and C (Years 3 – 4)

- Students requesting an absence due to religious observances during any clerkship or clinical rotation shall notify the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs, Admissions and Outreach and the Clerkship Director as early as possible, but in no case any later than the first week of the semester in which the clinical clerkship and rotation begins, in order to avoid scheduling conflicts.
- The student's request must be in writing and include the following:
  - Notification to the students' Clerkship Director and the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs, Admissions and Outreach of the student's request for an excused absence from participation in some aspect of the curriculum.
  - A statement of the reason for this request and a description of the aspect of the curriculum that the student will miss as a result of this absence.
  - The date of the request and the student's signature.
- The Clerkship Director and the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs, Admissions and Outreach will review any student's written request, decide if there is a need to grant reasonable accommodation for religious purposes, and whether granting an accommodation will unduly burden faculty, staff or others involved with the affected activity or will unacceptably compromise the rigor of the educational requirements. They will also consider whether there will be an opportunity to make up any missed activity. A written response to the student request will be issued by the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, Admissions and Outreach. The student's request and written response to the request will be maintained in the student's academic file.
- Requests for absences from clinical activities must comply with the amount of excused absences for each clerkship/clinical rotation.

APPROVED by the Curriculum Committee in October 2013  
OFFICE OF RESPONSIBILITY: Office of Medical Education and Accreditation  
REVIEW: This policy will be reviewed every three years or more often as needed  
REVIEW 1: October 2015