

## Student Religious Observance Policy

### I. Policy Statement

Respect for diversity is one of California Northstate University College of Medicine's core values, extending to all aspects of our community. CNUCOM strives 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 religious observances of that faith when reasonable accommodations of such requests are possible as outlined below, including religious holidays that are not official university holidays. Such accommodations cannot be guaranteed in circumstances where granting the request would create an undue burden on faculty, negatively affect the education of other students who are participating in the scheduled educational activity or jeopardize patient care or the ability of the student to fulfill necessary educational requirements for the profession.

### III. Scope/Coverage

The policy applies to all enrolled students.

### IV. Procedure

- A. Request for religious observance: All students' requests must be made in writing using the designated excused absence form for this purpose and include the following:
  1. Notification to the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs and Admissions and the appropriate Course or Clerkship Director of the student's request for excused absence from participation in an aspect of the curriculum.
  2. A statement of the reason for this request and a description of the curriculum that the student will miss because of this absence.
  3. The date of the request and the student's signature.
- B. Phase A (Years 1 – 2)
  1. Students must notify the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs and Admissions and 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 the day(s) of religious observance.
  2. The Assistant Dean of Student Affairs and Admissions 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 educational requirements.

3. They will also consider whether there will be an opportunity to make up any missed activity. A written response to the student's request will be issued by the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs and Admissions in a timely manner. The student's request and written response to the request will be maintained in the Office of Student Affairs.
4. 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.

#### **C. Phases B and C (Years 3 – 4)**

1. Students requesting an absence due to religious observances during any clerkship or clinical rotation shall notify the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs and Admissions 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 to avoid scheduling conflicts.
2. The Clerkship Director and the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs and Admissions will review the 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 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 and Admissions. The student's request and written response to the request will be maintained in the Office of Student Affairs.
3. Requests for absence from clinical activities must comply with the excused absence policy for each clerkship/clinical rotation.

#### *Approval record:*

APPROVED: PEC: 3/17/21

APPROVED: COM DAC:

APPROVED: FEC 3/12/21

APPROVED: CC 3/8/21

APPROVED: CC 10/13

Office of Responsibility: Office of Student Affairs

REVIEW: every three years (or more often if required)