

RELIGIOUS DAYS AND OBSERVANCES



Work-Restricted Religious Observances/Holy Days

Federal law and university policy prohibit discrimination on the basis of religious belief. It is the policy of the University of Louisville to accommodate students, faculty, and staff who observe religious work-restricted holy days.

Students who observe work-restricted religious holy days must be allowed to do so without jeopardizing their academic standing in any course. Faculty are obliged to accommodate students' request(s) for adjustments in coursework on the grounds of religious observance, provided that the student(s) make such request(s) in writing during the first two (2) weeks of the term.

Deans and department chairs must investigate and resolve student complaints arising from alleged faculty failure to make reasonable accommodations under these guidelines.

Faculty and staff supervisors are directed to accommodate requests for absence for work-restricted religious holy days, unless it would cause an undue hardship. Further, whether the holy days are work-restricted or not, supervisors of faculty and staff should be sensitive to requests for accommodations.

Definition of Religious Observance/Work-restricted Holy Day

A recognized denominational sacred or holy day that is observed by persons or groups who are required—through a set or system of religious beliefs, laws/doctrines, tenets, canons or theology—to restrict or limit work and/or physical or mental activity directed toward the production or accomplishment of something; toil; labor.

This definition may include academic endeavors (e.g., examinations, classroom activities and research, or out-of-classroom learning experiences).

There is a distinction between religious holy days, sectarian holidays, and ethnic holidays and festivals which are routinely celebrated in the United States of America—e.g., Christmas, Thanksgiving, New Year's Day—and religious work-restricted holy days which are based upon religious tenets, laws, and/or doctrine—e.g., Yom Kippur, portions of Ramadan, or a work-restricted Sabbath.

Individuals who observe and/or follow these religious work-restricted holy days are not permitted to engage in day-to-day occupations, work, or attend school, including taking examinations or performing other routine

commitments. Observances/practices vary from culture to culture within and across denominations.

While there are no work-restricted holy days within the Christian faith by tenet, Easter and Christmas often are considered to be non-work days by custom.