**Student Absences for Religious Holy UPPS No. 02.06.01**

**Days Issue No. 6**

**Revised Date: 01/21/2020  
Effective Date: 03/28/2017**

**Next Review Date: 01/01/2024 (E4Y)**

**Sr. Reviewer: Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management and Marketing**

**01. POLICY STATEMENT**

01.01 The purpose of this policy is to establish the procedures governing student absences on religious holy days.

**02. DEFINITION**

02.01 Religious Holy Day – a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under [Texas Tax Code, Section 11.20](https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/TX/htm/TX.11.htm).

**03. PROCEDURES CONCERNING STUDENT ABSENCES ON RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS**

03.01 In accordance with [Texas Education Code Section §51.911(2b)](http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/ED/htm/ED.51.htm#51.911), an institution of higher education shall excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence, and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence, to be determined upon notification to the instructor of the absence.

03.02 Students must provide written notification to the instructor of each class prior to the students’ absence for a religious holy day. Ideally, students should make every attempt to notify the faculty member at least two weeks in advance of the anticipated absence.

03.03 An instructor will not penalize a student excused under this section for the absence. However, the instructor may respond appropriately if the student fails to complete any missed assignments or examinations within a reasonable time after the absence, to be determined upon notification to the instructor of the absence.

03.04 Each instructor may establish additional procedures to accommodate the needs of students who are absent from classes to observe a religious holy day. These procedures must not conflict with state law.

03.05 [Texas Administrative Code, Title 19, Part 1, Chapter 4, Subchapter A, Rule §4.4 (c)](https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac$ext.TacPage?sl=R&app=9&p_dir=&p_rloc=&p_tloc=&p_ploc=&pg=1&p_tac=&ti=19&pt=1&ch=4&rl=4) states that if a student and an instructor disagree about the nature of the absence being for the observance of a religious holy day, as defined therein or if there is similar disagreement about whether the student has been given a reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the instructor may request a ruling from the chief executive officer of the institution, or designee. The student and instructor shall abide by the decision of the chief executive officer, or designee. The academic dean of each college serves as the president’s designee to hear requests for decisions on these matters from either the faculty member or the student.

**04. PROCEDURE FOR PUBLICATION**

04.01 The list below outlines the publication methods:

a. by publication, annually, in the [Student Handbook](http://www.dos.txstate.edu/handbook.html);

b. by electronic notification from the dean of Students to all staff, students, and faculty members at the beginning of each academic year;

c. by the provost and vice president for Academic Affairs through publication in the [Faculty Handbook](https://www.provost.txst.edu/resources-faculty.html); and

d. by the registrar through other appropriate student publications.

**05. REVIEWERS OF THIS UPPS**

05.01 Reviewers of this UPPS include the following:

Position Date

Associate Vice President for January 1 E4Y

Enrollment Management and Marketing

Associate Vice President and January 1 E4Y

Dean of Students

**06. CERTIFICATION STATEMENT**

This UPPS has been approved by the following individuals in their official capacities and represents Texas State policy and procedure from the date of this document until superseded.

Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management and Marketing; senior reviewer of this UPPS

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

President