

LINCOLN UNIVERSITY

Policy:	Policy on Secular and Religious Holidays
Policy Number:	HRM-134
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Revisions:	
Next Review Date:	November 2025
Review Officer(s):	Office of the Human Resources, Division of Student Success, Office of Student Life & Development, Vice President, General Counsel & Secretary to the Board of Trustees
Status:	Approved by the President and LU Board of Trustees

I. Purpose

This policy explains the University policy on student observance of a religious holiday that occurs during a scheduled class and provides a means for students and faculty to resolve a missed assignment or test that may be due on a student's observance of that holiday.

II. Scope

This policy applies to all faculty, professional staff, students, visitors to the University, and members of the public utilizing University spaces. This policy is applicable to all recognized religious observations that occur during a scheduled class or field trip involving an on-campus or online synchronous credit-bearing course.

This policy does not apply to:

1. **Asynchronous online courses.** By design these courses have flexibility in attendance and completing course requirements.
2. **Experiential Education.** Students who are engaged in experiential education (clerkships, rotations, internships, etc.) must follow the policies of their organization or facility regarding absence for religious observance.
3. **Preparation or Travel** prior or after the recognized day of the religious holiday.

III. Policy Overview

The University recognizes/observes the following secular holidays: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, July 4, Thanksgiving and the day after, Labor Day, and New Year's Day. The University also recognizes that there are several secular and religious holidays that affect large numbers of University community members, including Christmas, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Election Day in November, the first two days of Passover, and Good Friday.

- a. In consideration of their significance for many students, no examinations may be given and no assigned work may be required on these days. Students who observe these holidays will be given an opportunity to make up missed work in both laboratories and lecture courses. If an examination is given on the first class day after one of these holidays, it must not cover material introduced in class on that holiday.
- b. Faculty should realize that Jewish holidays begin at sundown on the evening before the published date of the holiday. Late afternoon exams should be avoided on these days. Also, no examinations may be held on Saturdays or Sundays in the undergraduate schools unless they are also available on other days. Nor should seminars or other regular classes be scheduled on Saturdays or Sundays unless they are also available at other times. Additionally, no examinations may be given or assignments due on the days of Fall Break, Thanksgiving Break, Winter Break, or

Spring Break for programs that follow the main University Academic Calendar, with the exception of approved academic experiences.

- c. The University recognizes that there are other holidays, both religious and secular, which are of importance to some individuals and groups on campus. Such occasions include, but are not limited to, Sukkot, the last two days of Passover, Shavuot, Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah, Lunar New Year, the Muslim New Year, Diwali, Navaratri, Rama Navami, Paryushan, and the Islamic holidays Eid Al-Fitr and Eid Al-Adha.

Students have a right to observe their recognized religious holiday without being academically penalized for absence, test or assignment due on the same day as the holiday. Students who wish to observe such holidays must inform their instructors within the first two weeks of each semester of their intent to observe the holiday even when the exact date of the holiday will not be known until later so that alternative arrangements convenient to both students and faculty can be made at the earliest opportunity.

In implementing this policy, the following non-exhaustive list of examples of accommodations are typically considered reasonable.

- Adjusting the date or time of an examination
- Rescheduling a required activity that is necessary for completion of the course or program
- Stepping out from class for a brief period to pray or break a fast
- Submitting an assignment on an alternate date or at an alternate time
- Receiving an earlier registration date or time
- Arranging or facilitating the provision of notes or other materials, or other opportunities to gain exposure to content during missed class time.

Students who make such arrangements will not be required to attend classes or take examinations on the designated days, and faculty must provide reasonable opportunities for such students to make up missed work and examinations. For this reason it is desirable that faculty inform students of all examination dates at the start of each semester. Exceptions to the requirement of a make-up examination must be approved in advance by the undergraduate dean of the school in which the course is offered.

IV. Components

Student Responsibility

- Will notify their instructor, in writing, of any days they will miss class because of the observance of religious observation. Students must provide this notice within three days of the course start date.
- As a means of fostering professional communication, the student is encouraged, but not obligated to provide the name of the religious observance.
- Will be responsible to obtain notes or new assignments shared during absence which may come from the instructor or a classmate

Instructor Responsibility

- Will excuse the student from the class without penalty.
- Will work with the student to make up missed assignment or exam that takes place on the day of the student's holiday.
- May, at their discretion, communicate missed information or new assignments that was shared during the class
- If applicable, shall provide alternative test or assignment equal in rigor and scope to the original tests or assignment.

Instructors & Students Joint Responsibility

- Will collaboratively develop a plan to reschedule any exams, assignment due dates
- If multiple students provide notice for the same holiday, the faculty member has the right to provide a uniform, reasonable arrangement that applies to all the students involved.
- If student and instructor cannot reach an agreement about alternative arrangements, either party has the right to seek recourse with their appropriate program director or chairperson who will consult with the Dean or designee.

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