

GONZAGA UNIVERSITY
STUDENT POLICY ON REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS
FOR RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS OR OBSERVANCES

I. Policy Statement

In compliance with Washington State Law RCW 28B.137.010, it is the policy of Gonzaga University to reasonably accommodate students who, due to the observance of religious holidays, expect to be absent or endure a significant hardship during certain days of their academic course or program.

Gonzaga University prohibits discrimination, harassment, and retaliation on the basis of religion. <https://www.gonzaga.edu/about/offices-services/human-resources/equity-inclusion/title-ix/harassment-discrimination-policy>

II. Purpose

This policy sets out a process for students to request a reasonable accommodation due to a religious holiday under RCW 28B.137.010 and for the University to respond to the request.

III. Definitions

- a. Reasonably Accommodate means to coordinate with the student on scheduling examinations or other activities necessary for completion of the course or program so that a student's grades are not adversely affected by the absences due to the observance of a religious holiday. A reasonable accommodation does not include an accommodation that creates an undue hardship on the University, or results in a fundamental alteration to the nature or operation of the academic program or course.
- b. Religious Holiday means a holiday observed for reasons of faith or conscience or for organized activities conducted under the auspices of a religious denomination, church, or religious organization.
- c. Undue Hardship or Fundamental Alteration means that implementing a requested accommodation would be excessively costly, extensive, substantial, or disruptive; or it would result in a fundamental alteration of the nature or operation of the academic program or course. In determining whether a requested accommodation would result in an undue hardship or fundamental alteration of a program or course, the assessment may include, but is not limited to, evaluating the impact on the overall resources, standards, objectives, or structure of the program or course. Before concluding that a requested accommodation would impose a undue hardship or fundamentally alter a program or course, the University will consider whether alternative accommodations exist.

IV. Procedures for Students Requesting a Religious Accommodation

A student seeking a religious accommodation must submit the request to the student's faculty member on the Gonzaga University Student Academic Religious Accommodation Request Form within fourteen (14) days from the first day of classes in the academic semester the student is requesting an accommodation. A separate form should be submitted for each class in which the student is requesting an accommodation for that semester.

V. Procedures for Responding to Student Requests

Using the Student Religious Accommodation Request Form, the faculty member will respond to all requests to reasonably accommodate a student and may require the student to provide additional information about the request. The faculty member may consult with the Chief Diversity Officer in responding to the student's accommodation request. The CDO may deny an accommodation request if it results in the fundamental alteration of the nature or operation of the academic program or course or creates an undue hardship.

The CDO will provide the student with a written decision regarding the accommodation request.

The completed Student Religious Accommodation Request form(s) must be submitted to the Chief Diversity Officer at kelleyr2@gonzaga.edu or delivered to the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion 113 College Hall.

The Chief Diversity Officer will evaluate and respond to all requests to reasonably accommodate a student and may require the student to provide additional information about the request. In evaluating the request, the Chief Diversity Officer will consult with each faculty member whose class is being affected by the request, in addition to other appropriate University officials if necessary. The Chief Diversity Officer may deny an accommodation request if it results in the fundamental alteration of the nature or operation of the academic program or course or creates an undue hardship. The Chief Diversity Officer will provide the student with a written decision regarding the accommodation request within five (5) calendar days of receiving the request.

VI. Appeals Procedures

A student may appeal a decision made under this policy by submitting the appeal in writing to the Provost & Senior Vice President no later than five (5) calendar days after the student receives the decision from the Chief Diversity Officer on the requested accommodation. The written appeal shall be sent to provostandseniorvp@gonzaga.edu

The Letter of Appeal should include the following information:

- Student's Name
- Telephone number
- GU email address
- A statement including (1) the requested religious accommodation; (2) reason for the requested accommodation; (3) a summary of all communications and actions taken in relation to the accommodation request; (4) Why the requested religious accommodation should be granted
- Attach any supporting documentation relevant to the review

The Provost & Senior Vice-President will notify the Chief Diversity Officer of an appeal and copy the Chief Diversity Officer regarding the final decision. The decision of the Provost & Senior Vice President or their designee will be final.

VII. Notice of the Policy

An electronic copy of the policy is available at: <https://www.gonzaga.edu/academics/academic-calendar-resources/registrars-office/policies-procedures/academic-policies-procedures>

All faculty are required to notify students of this policy by including a copy of the policy or a link to the policy in their course syllabi.

VIII. Regarding the Policy

Questions about the interpretation or application of the Student Policy on Reasonable Accommodations for Religious Holidays should be raised with the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (ODEI) at kelleyr2@gonzaga.edu.

IX. Policy Implementation and Modification

This policy may be modified with the approval of the Provost and Senior Vice President, after consultation with the Faculty Senate, to reflect changes in law or University processes, or as otherwise necessary.