



## **RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

Suffolk County Community College is committed to providing an academic and work environment that is respectful of the religious beliefs of its students, faculty, and staff. To accomplish this, and in accordance with federal and New York State laws, the College has instituted the following policy and procedures:

- A. By June 1<sup>st</sup> of each year, the College will issue a list of religious observance dates that occur during the following academic year. While not exhaustive, this list will provide notice to the faculty of the religious observance dates of many faiths practiced by our students.
- B. Student absences from class necessitated by religious observance will be deemed an excused absence, with no negative academic consequences. Faculty must provide observing students the opportunity to make up any missed assignments or exams within a reasonable amount of time of the religious observance.
- C. Students must notify their professors in advance of their religious observance, via their College email accounts or otherwise in writing, of their intention to be absent from a particular class due to a religious observance. Such notification should occur at least one week prior to the religious observance. Students are not required to provide third-party certification of their religious practices.
- D. To the extent possible, faculty should avoid scheduling examinations or assigning papers, presentations, or other academic requirements on any of the identified religious observance dates. When this is unavoidable, professors must give students, who have notified their professors in advance, the opportunity for equivalent make-up work.
- E. Faculty who will be absent as a result of religious observance must notify their Academic Chair or immediate supervisor in advance of their religious observance, inform all students of their intended absence, and make up missed instructional time in one of the following ways:
  1. Hold a make-up class or classes on a date and time that is acceptable to class members.

2. Hold class electronically, using a web-based source such as Blackboard, only when all class members have access to the technology.
  3. Make-up for the missed instructional time within remaining class meeting time by modifying and/or adding class assignments, papers, exams, quizzes, and/or activities.
  4. Provide additional office hours to accommodate individual students.
  5. Provide an alternative method, as approved by the appropriate Executive Dean.
- F. The College will accommodate requests for absences from faculty and staff for religious observance dates, and benefits will be provided in accordance with the collective bargaining agreements. Absence for any reason should be communicated to an employee's supervisor in advance of the absence. Faculty and staff member complaints regarding the application of this policy by their supervisor should be brought to the Assistant Vice President for Employee Resources.
- G. Students' complaints should initially be brought to the Department Chair. If students are dissatisfied with the meeting's outcome, they may take their complaint to the Campus Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. Any complaints regarding possible abuse of this policy by students should be brought to the Campus Associate Dean of Student Services pursuant to the Student Code of Conduct.

*Answers to **Frequently Asked Questions** for students, faculty, and staff are available at:*  
<http://www.sunysuffolk.edu/explore-academics/academic-calendar.jsp>

**Board of Trustees  
September 14, 2017**