

## Policy for the Accommodation of Religious Holy Days

Last revised by:  
Senate  
Board of Governors

February 14, 2007 (Minute 7)  
April 16, 2007 (Minute 12)

*Full legislative history appears at the end of this Policy.*

### Section 1 - Preamble, Definitions, and Notices

- 1.1 The regulations herein set out the general terms of employment by the University of the academic staff, relating to appointments, renewals of appointment, tenure, and dismissals. Other conditions of employment concerning such matters as, amongst others, sabbaticals, retirements, pensions, and insurance are to be found in other sections of this booklet or are available at the office of the Secretary-General.

#### Preamble

McGill University recognizes and respects the diversity of its members, including diversity of religious faiths and observances. The aim of this policy is to ensure that the University provides an environment in which its students can fulfil both their university and their religious commitments.

#### Policy

- 1 Students are not to be penalized if they cannot write examinations or be otherwise evaluated on their religious holy days where such activities conflict with their religious observances.
- 2 While sessional dates, classroom and faculty activities, and examination dates take into account academic constraints and statutory holidays, where there is flexibility, efforts are to be made to select dates which do not conflict with religious holy days or to find other appropriate accommodations.

#### Procedures

- 1 In advance of the first day of class, the Registrar shall distribute to all units a multifaith calendar for the academic year, along with a copy of this policy.
- 2 Students who because of religious commitment cannot meet academic obligations, other than final examinations, on certain holy days are responsible for informing their instructor, with two weeks' notice of each conflict. Possible solutions include:
  - a) rescheduling the evaluation, or
  - b) preparing an alternative evaluation for that particular student, or
  - c) shifting the weight normally assigned to the evaluation to the weight assigned to other components of the evaluation.

When the instructor and student are unable to agree on suitable accommodation, the matter will be referred to the Associate Dean. The Associate Dean may request official documentation confirming the requirements of the religious observance. The Associate Dean will decide whether reasonable accommodation without undue hardship is possible, and what accommodation is to be made in this instance, and will convey the decision to the instructor and student.

- 3 When the requested accommodation concerns a final examination, students are responsible for advising their faculty office as soon as possible and not later than the deadline for reporting conflicts. Additional documentation confirming their religious affiliation may be requested. Possible solutions include (in order of preference):
- a) treating the request as a conflict, and accommodating it within the examination period, or
  - b) providing a special deferred examination as soon as possible, or
  - c) granting permission to write a regular deferred examination.
- The choice will depend on the particular circumstances.
- 4 This policy is to be made available to all members of the University community.

**Policy for the Accommodation of Religious Holy Days**

*Legislative History:*

Approved:		
Senate	March 20, 1996	Minute 92

<i>Amendments:</i>		
Senate	February 14, 2007	Minute 7
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