

RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATIONS FOR CLASSROOM ABSENCES

Faculty may consider reasonable accommodations that allow students to meet their academic obligations without compromising their religious commitments. Examples of accommodations may include opportunities to make up missed exams, assignments, or other requirements.

Accommodations cannot be guaranteed. Accommodations cannot place a burden on other students; disrupt learning; have a negative effect on non-Bethel personnel supporting internships, practica, clinical experiences, or other activities; or create unmanageable additional work for faculty or staff.

Accommodations are for absences due to religious observances. Accommodations are not made to relieve students of the obligation to complete assignments. Students may not use religious commitments or beliefs as the basis for avoiding readings, lectures, or any other assignments (e.g., dissection of certain animals or clinical experiences with people of a given gender or sexual orientation).

Guidelines for Accommodations

Accommodations will be considered based on the following criteria:

1. The observance must be commonly recognized/observed by adherents to the student's faith tradition.
2. The observance must be short-term and not result in chronic absences (e.g., not most Fridays of a class).
3. The student must be able to meet all essential course outcomes with the accommodation.
4. The accommodation must be reasonable in light of the course requirements and impact on other students, academic partners, faculty, and university support services.
5. Students must request the accommodation by the deadline listed below.

The university recognizes that certain courses, such as labs, internships, practica, clinicals, field experiences, and student teaching, may be structured so that accommodations are not possible because they will disrupt essential learning processes or outcomes and/or create unresolvable requests for faculty, staff, or non-Bethel personnel.

Advising Support

Students, especially those new to the university or participating in PSEO, are encouraged to consult their advisors when planning their schedules. Advisors can provide guidance to help students balance their academic requirements with their religious commitments.

Appeals

If a faculty member is unable to provide or denies appropriate accommodation, students may appeal the decision to the academic dean over their school or college.