

Religious and Spiritual Life Observance Policy

Ursinus College believes in the dignity of all its members and embraces its Non-Discrimination Statement affirming that the college does not discriminate on the “grounds of race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, age, creed, ancestry, veteran status, marital status, disability, or other classification protected by applicable law in the administration of any of its educational programs or activities or with respect to employment.”

As such, Ursinus College is committed to providing an academic and work environment in which the religious and spiritual practices of all members of our community are respected. As part of this commitment, Ursinus will make good faith efforts to provide reasonable religious accommodations to those in our community whose genuinely held religious beliefs conflict with an academic or employment requirement unless such an accommodation would fundamentally alter the educational, workplace, or mission of the college.

Definitions

Religion or Creed

Includes traditional, organized religions as well as sincerely held religious and faith beliefs, including those that are not part of a formal church or sect. All aspects of religious belief and observance that are sincerely held will be considered as part of this policy.

Religious or Spiritual Observance

Any change in the work or academic environment that enables a student or employee to observe a religious/spiritual practice or belief will be considered.

A reasonable accommodation for religious and spiritual observances may include but is not limited to:

- The ability to observe a religious holiday or attend religious events.
- Time for prayer during the school or workday.
- The wearing of religious attire.
- The observing of dietary restrictions in accordance with one’s faith.
- Support for residential practices consistent with one’s faith.

Requests for accommodations will be considered on a case-by-case basis taking into account factors including but not limited to, the fundamental requirements of the applicable academic program, essential functions of an individual’s job, the duties of others in the department, the requirements of the department or major, any impact of the request, the duration of the request, and the availability of alternative options.

Procedures for Seeking Accommodations for Religious and Spiritual Observance

The College will make reasonable efforts to support requests for accommodations under this policy. The individual making the request should provide advance notice in accordance with the expectation of the department, division, or office.

Students

Students who expect to miss classes, examinations, or other assignments due to religious observance shall be provided with a reasonable alternative opportunity to complete their academic obligations. It is the responsibility of students to provide faculty with reasonable notice of the dates of religious observances on which they will be absent by submitting a written request two weeks before the observance to the instructor. The faculty member and the student should discuss reasonable alternatives.

A student making a request specifically for final exams must complete and submit the following form:
<https://www.ursinus.edu/live/files/3342-religious-accommodation-during-exams>

Absence from classes or examinations for religious reasons does not excuse students from responsibility for any part of the course work required during the period of absence. The instructor may take appropriate measures if the student fails to complete any alternative assignment or examination.

Employees

All employees may submit a written request for accommodations in support of religious and spiritual observance to their department head or supervisor. Employees may also submit a request to the Office of Human Resources.

Employees who anticipate being absent from work because of a religious or spiritual observance must submit a request for time off in advance and as soon as they become aware of the need or at least (14) business days in advance.

The college hopes to honor the cultural, dietary, and housing-related needs of those requesting religious accommodations as part of a sincerely held belief. Please contact Reverend Terri Ofori to discuss such needs.

Resources

Interfaith Calendar

<http://www.interfaith-calendar.org/>

Registrar's Office

Barbara Boris
bboris@ursinus.edu
610.409.3605

Dining Services

Michael Forstoffer
mforstoffer@ursinus.edu
610.409.3382

Coordinator of Jewish Life

Alexandria Frisch

afrisch@ursinus.edu

610.409.3743

Religious and Spiritual Life

Reverend Terri Ofori

tofori@ursinus.edu

610.409.3273

Academic Affairs

Mark Schneider

mschneider@ursinus.edu

610.409.3720

Human Resources

Kelley Williams

kwilliams@ursinus.edu

610.409.3073

Institute for Inclusion & Equity

Ashley Henderson

twilliams@ursinus.edu

610.409.3653