

In recognition of a student's sincerely held religious beliefs, it is the policy of the Blackhawk Technical College District Board not to schedule mandatory academic exercises, or require class attendance on religious holidays. A student will be given reasonable accommodations so an academic requirement does not unnecessarily interfere with a student's observation of a significant religious event.

Observation of a religious holiday does not exempt students from any course requirement, but allows the students an opportunity to complete the assignment through an alternate means as arranged with course instructors. All faculty members are encouraged not to schedule examinations and other mandatory academic exercises or require class attendance on religious holidays.

There are many different religious holidays observed by students. Examples of religious holidays recognized by BTC might include: Passover, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Good Friday, Easter, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Kwanza, Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Adha.

Conflicts between a student's religious observation and completion of academic requirements should be resolved between students and instructors whenever possible. Unresolved conflicts should be referred to the Dean of the academic department responsible for the course offering. In the event the conflict cannot be resolved at that level, the student may pursue an appeal through the President/District Director, the BTC District Board, and the Wisconsin Technical College System Board.

1. Procedures for Reasonable Accommodation

- a. Students are to report in writing to the course instructor, during the first ten (10) days of class, known potential conflicts with religious observations. Under no circumstances will be student be allowed to notify the instructor of the religious observance less than five (5) days prior to the anticipated absence.
- b. Make-up assignments provided by instructors will be timely to avoid prejudicial effect to a student's preparation. The instructor is not obligated to schedule a make-up assignment before the regularly scheduled requirements are due.

2. Procedures for Resolving Conflicts

Conflicts between a student's observation of a religious holiday and completion of academic requirements should be resolved between the student and instructor whenever possible.

Unresolved conflicts should be referred to the Dean of the academic department responsible for the course offering. In the event the conflict cannot be resolved through these procedures, the student may pursue the issue as follows:

- a. The student may initiate a written complaint to the instructor or to the Dean of the appropriate academic department.
- b. If the conflict is unresolved, the President/District Director will review the circumstances and issue a written decision within thirty (30) calendar days of the date on which the student complaint was submitted. The President/District Director’s decision may be extended beyond the thirty-day period with the agreement of the student.

3. Appeal Procedures

- a. Any student adversely affected by the decision of the President/District Director may appeal that decision to the District Board. Such an appeal must be made in writing within thirty (30) calendar days of the President/District Director’s decision.
- b. The District Board will consider the appeal at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board or at a special meeting called for such a purpose. The decision of the District Board will be communicated in writing to the student within forty-five (45) days following the date the student filed the appeal.
- c. The decision of the District Board is subject to further appeal pursuant to the provisions of Wisconsin statutes, Chapter 227 and Wisconsin Administrative Code, Chapter 4. An appeal to the state board must be made directly with the Wisconsin Technical College System Board in Madison.

Students and instructors will be notified of the rules and the complaint process in the Student Handbook Calendar. Faculty and staff will also be advised of the policy through the policy and procedures manual.

References: Wisconsin Statutes s.38.04 (16)
Wisconsin Statutes Chapter 227
Wisconsin Administrative Code TCS 4 and 14

Policy Adopted: September 15, 1993
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