



Senate

Policy Name	Accommodation of Students' Religious and Spiritual Observances
Policy Number	CAPP 2014-02
Origin	Committee on Academic Policy and Planning (CAPP)
Authority	Senate
Date of Original Approval	2014-09-26
Supersedes	n/a
Senate Approval Dates	2014-09-26
Effective from	January 1, 2015
Review/Retirement Date	January 2020
Responsibility for Revision	Committee on Academic Policy and Planning
Responsibility for Implementation	Chair of CAPP

Purpose

Mount Saint Vincent University (The Mount) is a community which celebrates diversity and places a high value on inclusion and respect for cultural differences. Members of the Mount community recognize that the religious or spiritual observances of students may conflict with their academic obligations and could potentially lead to a disadvantage if an accommodation is not arranged. The Mount also accepts that observance practices may vary by members of the same religious group or peoples (from different nations). This policy outlines how accommodations for the religious or spiritual observances of Mount students will be determined.

Scope

University wide

Policy

Religious or spiritual observances are often highly personal and diverse. Instructors have the responsibility to accommodate and address the spiritual and religious observances of their students. In responding to requests for accommodation, instructors will enable the observing student to meet the academic obligations of the course as presented in the course outline while ensuring that academic integrity is maintained. Accommodations should prevent academic disadvantage or penalty to the

student. Any accommodation must allow the student to meet the course's academic requirements and the University's academic standards.

This policy covers classes, labs, tests, assignments, practica, and final examinations. Although University policy is that regular attendance is expected of students, observances may necessitate some accommodation of this policy, including:

- Absence from all or part of a class
- Rescheduling an exam
- Changes in due dates for course requirements.

In any case where a mutually agreed upon accommodation cannot be reached between a student and the instructor, students have the right to appeal the decision made by the instructor to the Chair/Director of the academic unit responsible for the course. Decisions of the Chair/Director may be appealed to the Dean of the Faculty, who will consult with relevant experts as appropriate.

Procedure

To facilitate timely requests and decision making, the University will take all practical steps to ensure that students and instructors are aware of the policy and related observance issues and dates. Instructors are encouraged to consult with their Dean if they have any questions.

Requests for accommodation of specific religious or spiritual observance must be presented to the instructor within the first two weeks of class. This deadline may be extended in extenuating circumstances.

Course outlines must contain the following phrase: "Requests for accommodation of specific religious or spiritual observance must be presented to the instructor within the first two weeks of class."

Students must submit a clear, written explanation of the observance and requested accommodation. Instructors will confirm accommodations, in writing, within 5 days of receiving the request.

Parts of this policy have been adapted from Ryerson University's policy: "Accommodation of Student Religious, Aboriginal and Spiritual Observance."