

**OFFICE OF THE SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AND PROVOST**

*The University of Oklahoma*

*Norman Campus*

MEMORANDUM

TO: Deans, Directors and Chairs - Norman Campus

FROM: Nancy L. Mergler, Senior Vice President and Provost

DATE: August 11, 2009

SUBJECT: Religious Holidays

As we move through the new academic year, I would appreciate your reminding the faculty of your academic unit of the University's policy on student participation in religious observances. Religious services are of great importance to students of all faiths, and it is University policy that students be allowed to participate in religious services without penalty. It would be appropriate for faculty to include a statement in their syllabi regarding the Religious Holiday policy of the University. Since we cannot cite specific holidays for every possible religion, I suggest that the syllabi include the actual policy statement which is located in Section 3.13.2 of The Faculty Handbook and which states:

"It is the policy of the University to excuse absences of students that result from religious observances and to provide without penalty for the rescheduling of examinations and additional required class work that may fall on religious holidays."

Adherence to this policy will make it possible for students who wish to observe religious holidays to do so without adverse effects on their academic progress. Faculty could add an additional statement requesting that students who plan to observe a religious holiday notify the faculty as soon as possible in order to make appropriate arrangements for class work or rescheduling of examinations. Faculty and staff who also plan to observe religious holidays should make appropriate arrangements with their academic units.

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cc: President David L. Boren