



STUDENT ABSENCE FOR REASONS OF FAITH OR CONSCIENCE

Instruction, Library & Instructional Services

Policy Number: 2190

1.0 PURPOSE

Columbia Basin College ("CBC" or "the College") welcomes diversity of experiences, perspectives, and beliefs, which enhances the teaching and learning environment. Consistent with these values and pursuant to RCW 28B.10.039 as amended, and Substitute Senate Bill 5166, the College reasonably accommodates student absences for reasons of faith or conscience or for organized activities conducted under the auspices of a religious denomination, church, or religious organization.

2.0 AUTHORITY & SCOPE

2.1 **Authority:** N/A

2.2 **Scope:** All CBC students.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

3.1 Reasonably Accommodate means coordinating with the student on scheduling examinations or other activities necessary for the completion of the course or program, and includes rescheduling exams or activities or offering different times for examinations or activities.

3.2 Instructional Day means any contract day on which classes are scheduled for students and faculty.

4.0 STUDENT ABSENCE FOR REASONS OF FAITH OR CONSCIENCE

4.1 Any student, who due to the observance of religious holidays, expects to be absent or endure significant hardship during certain days of the course or program, will be reasonably accommodated under this policy. The student must submit the [Request for Absence for Reasons of Faith or Conscience Form](https://www.columbiabasin.edu/modules/showdocument.aspx?documentid=6637) (<https://www.columbiabasin.edu/modules/showdocument.aspx?documentid=6637>) to the Office of Instruction at instruction@columbiabasin.edu of the specific dates the student requests accommodations regarding examinations or other activities prior to the absence and within the first two weeks of the beginning of the course. Students are encouraged to provide advance written notice prior to the last day of the preceding course or program for off-campus activities, such as clinical rotations, occurring in the subsequent course or program in order to facilitate the process.

4.2 The notification must contain an explanation of how the requested absence is related to a reason of faith or conscience or for organized activities conducted under the auspices of a religious denomination, church, or religious organization.

- 4.3** The Assistant Dean for Instruction will provide written notification to the student of the approved absence with instructions for notifying the faculty member(s). The student is solely responsible for ensuring that the documentation authorizing the absence is provided according to the instructions to each faculty member whose course or assignments are related to the absence.
- 4.4** After a faculty member is notified by the student of an upcoming absence, the faculty member will determine what specific adjustments, if any, will need to be made to the student's scheduled classwork or assignments. The faculty member shall inform the student of these adjustments within three (3) instructional days of receiving the documentation authorizing the absence.
- 4.5** Absences authorized pursuant to this policy shall not adversely impact a student's grade. However, students are expected to make up or complete any coursework or assignments that have been adjusted by the faculty member due to their absence under this policy. Faculty members have the right to require that the student complete the course work prior to or after the anticipated absence.
- 4.6** No fees of any kind shall be charged by the College for making such accommodation to the student, and no adverse or prejudicial effect shall result to any student for availing themselves of the provisions of this policy.
- 4.7** This policy shall be published on the College's website and included in course syllabi. The following language is recommended for course syllabi:
- 4.7.1** Student Absence for Reasons of Faith or Conscience
- 4.7.1.1** Students may request accommodations for absences for reasons of faith or conscience or for organized activities conducted under the auspices of a religious denomination, church, or religious organization. Accommodations may include rescheduling examinations or activities or offering different times for examinations or activities necessary to complete the course or program. Any student seeking reasonable accommodations under this policy must provide written notice to the Office of Instruction at instruction@columbiabasin.edu within the first two weeks of the beginning of the course with the specific dates the student requests accommodations for examinations or other activities. The Office of Instruction will notify the student of the approval or denial in accordance with the policy [Student Request for Absence for Reasons of Faith or Conscience](#).

4.8 Appeal

- 4.8.1** A student whose request for absence under this policy is denied may appeal the determination to the Vice President for Instruction. The appeal must be in writing and must be delivered to the Office of Instruction within three (3) calendar days after the student receives notice of the denial. Within five (5) instructional days of receipt of the student's written appeal, the Vice President for Instruction will provide the student with written notification to the decision.

4.9 Grievance

- 4.9.1** Any student who believes they have been the subject of discrimination based on their protected class status may file a grievance with the EEO Coordinator according to the procedures set forth in the College's Non-Discrimination & Harassment Policy and Procedure located on the CBC policy webpage.

4.10 Other Discrimination Complaint Resources

Discrimination complaints may also be filed with the following federal and state agencies:

- 4.10.1** [Washington State Human Rights Commission](#);

- 4.10.2** [US Department of Education Office for Civil Rights](#); and

- 4.10.3** [Equal Employment Opportunity Commission](#).

5.0 FORMS & OTHER RESOURCES

[Washington State Human Rights Commission](#)

[US Department of Education Office for Civil Rights](#)

[Equal Employment Opportunity Commission](#)

[Student Request for Absence for Reasons of Faith or Conscience](#)

[Request for Absence for Reasons of Faith or Conscience Form](#)

[Non-Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedure](#)

6.0 HISTORY & POLICY CONTACT

6.1 Originated: N/A

6.2 Revised: 01/2023, 05/2023

6.3 Proposal Date: N/A

6.4 Policy Review: N/A

6.5 Promulgation Date: N/A

6.6 Responsible Administrator: Vice President for Instruction