

<b>NEOMED ACADEMIC POLICY</b>	Policy No: 3349-AC-413
ACADEMIC POLICY TITLE: Religious Holiday Observation	EFFECTIVE DATE: 7/1/2019 Revised: 03/09/2020 (updated 3/24/2022)
RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT: Medical Education, College of Medicine	Approval Authority: Dean, College of Medicine Responsible Office: Office of the Dean and Medical Education

**(A) PURPOSE**

The NEOMED College of Medicine (COM) is sensitive to the diverse religious beliefs of its students and strives to be responsive to students’ requests to have time away from the curriculum to observe such religious holidays. The purpose of this Policy is to establish guidelines for such requests and approval of time away from the curriculum.

**(B) SCOPE**

This Policy applies to credit-bearing courses that are contained in the College of Medicine (COM) curriculum, M1 thorough M4.

**(C) DEFINITIONS**

- (1) **Course Director** refers to the appointed faculty member who is responsible for the overall design, conduct, student assessment within and evaluation of a Credit-bearing Course.
- (2) **Credit-bearing Course** refers to a course offered by the College of Medicine in which a student is enrolled, the course appears on the student’s official transcript with either contact hours or credit-bearing acknowledgment, and a grade is assigned.
- (3) **Clinical Site Director:** for the purpose of this policy, the Clinical Site Directors for M3 are the clerkship site directors, and for M4, the elective site directors.

**(D) POLICY STATEMENT**

- (1) Time off for religious holiday observation will be considered only for the official day(s) of religious observation, as defined by the calendar year and continent.
  - (a) Sundown will be specified as 4:00 p.m., eastern standard time.

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- (b) Requests for additional time or flexible time will be considered in light of the context of the request.
- (2) Students are responsible for submitting by the established deadlines requests for time away from the curriculum for religious holiday observation.
- (a) The deadline to submit a request for religious holiday observation for religious holidays occurring on or before December 31 is July 1, prior to the academic year. For religious holidays occurring on or between January 1 and July 1, the deadline to submit a request is November 1.
  - (b) The deadlines for submission will be posted annually in the AIMS orientation site for each curriculum year (M1-M4) under Recommended Tasks.
  - (c) Students must make the request using the online [standardized request form](#).
  - (d) Late requests will be considered only in exceptional circumstances, to be determined by the Associate Dean of Medical Education or designate.
    - (i) A late request, if considered, will be acceptable for a student only once. Subsequent late requests will not be considered.
- (3) Students will be notified in writing of receipt of their request and verification of the religious holiday dates by COM Office of Medical Education; Course Directors, Course Coordinators, and Clinical Site Directors will be copied on this notice. Confirmation of the request is necessary, but not sufficient to be excused from the curriculum.
- (4) The decision to excuse a student from a curricular responsibility is ultimately at the discretion of the Course Director or Clinical Site Director as it is dependent on the ability of the course to reschedule any necessary make-up time for missed curricular activities; all mandatory curricular activities must be made-up. Students will be

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informed of the Course Director's/Clinical Site Director's decision to approve or deny the request via email; the COM Office of Medical Education will be copied on the correspondence.

- (a) If the requested time off creates an undue hardship for the delivery and/or make-up of missed curricular activities, the student's request may be denied by the Course Director(s)/Clinical Site Director(s).
  - (b) If the request is approved, students will be notified, by email, of their make-up requirements by the Course Director/Clinical Site Director or curriculum coordinator.
  - (c) As permitted by the Course Director/Clinical Site Director and availability of personnel and/or other resources for examination administration, missed examinations may be scheduled prior to the religious holiday observance or immediately thereafter. Students will be notified, by email, of their alternate test date, time and location.
- (5) Missed work/assignments may result in a grade of "incomplete" for the course.
  - (6) Students for whom the Course Director/Clinical Site Director has granted permission of the request, must submit an absence notification form for the date(s) approved.
  - (7) Failure of students to comply with the procedures described in this Policy may be considered a professionalism issue.