

WHAT INSTRUCTORS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT RELIGIOUS, INDIGENOUS, AND SPIRITUAL OBSERVANCES (RISO) ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

The University recognizes that, on occasion, the timing of a student's religious, Indigenous, or spiritual observances and that of their academic obligations may conflict. In such cases, the University will provide reasonable academic accommodation for students that is consistent with the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.

What to do if a student approaches you for an accommodation:

- Inform the student that they must submit a RISO form to their Faculty Office (or the Registrar's Office for Registrar-invigilated final exams).
- You and the student will receive confirmation from the Faculty Office and then the student must contact you as soon as possible (not less than **five (5)** days before the date of the conflict) to work out the accommodation details.
- You must get back to the student within **ten (10)** days of them reaching out to you.
- If students must leave class for short periods (e.g., to pray), they should work with you to make mutually agreeable arrangements.

What do "alternative arrangements" include?

- Rescheduling an academic obligation (excluding registrar-invigilated final exams)
- Providing an alternative academic obligation
- Re-weighting, providing that no one component of the course becomes worth 75% of the final grade or greater
- Extending a deadline
- And more

Try to avoid arrangements such as the following or consult with your Chair first if you are considering them:

- Requiring the Student to submit an academic obligation prior to the deadline
- Requiring the student to have someone else submit their academic obligation on their behalf
- Re-weighting where one component of the grade becomes worth 75% of the final grade or greater

At any point during the process you may seek assistance from the Office of Human Rights & Equity Services (HRES), www.hres.mcmaster.ca.

Policies and resources related to accommodation of Religious, Indigenous and Spiritual Observance:

- Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment: Prevention and Response Policy: http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/General/HR/Discrimination_Harassment_Sexual_Harassment-Prevention&Response.pdf
- McMaster University Multifaith Resources: <https://mcmastermultifaithresources.wordpress.com/>
- Policy on Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous and Spiritual Observances: <http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicAccommodation-Observances.pdf>