I. POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to define the process for absence from class or work because of religious observance and to provide guidance for the scheduling of UCCS events other than classes on religious holidays.

II. AUTHORITY FOR CAMPUS POLICIES

Authority for the creation of campus administrative policies is found in the Laws of The Regents, 1990, Article 3 Section B.8, which states:

The chancellor of the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs shall be the chief academic and administrative officer responsible to the president for the conduct of affairs of the Colorado Springs campus in accordance with the policies of the Board of Regents. The chancellor shall have such other responsibilities as may be required by these Laws, the Board, and as may be delegated by the president.

III. PURPOSE

This policy has been created to provide for the effective administration of the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs.

UCCS is comprised of students, faculty, and staff who celebrate a variety of religious and spiritual traditions. As an inclusive campus, the university acknowledges the importance of these traditions to its campus members, and will provide reasonable accommodations for staff, faculty, and students whose sincerely held religious or spiritual beliefs, practices and ceremonial obligations conflict with work schedules or academic activities. As a public institution, the university neither promotes any particular form of religion nor discriminates against students, staff, or faculty on the basis of their religious viewpoints.

In addition, in scheduling university-sponsored events, the university will strive to avoid conflicting with major religious holidays, whenever possible.

IV. DEFINITIONS

Religious and spiritual observance is not limited to traditional organized religions, but includes the much broader range of belief systems covered by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 including Native American and other indigenous spiritual practices and ceremonial obligations (see http://www.eeoc.gov/policy/docs/religion.html).
V. PROCEDURES

A. Academic accommodations for religious holidays.
   1. Students are required to provide advance and timely notification, preferably during the
      first week of classes, to instructors regarding necessary absences for religious or spiritual
      observances and are responsible for making up the work or exams according to an
      agreed-upon schedule\(^1\).
   2. Faculty are to excuse without penalty students who are absent from class because of
      religious observance, and to allow the make-up of work missed because of such absence.
      Examinations and special required out-of-class activities shall ordinarily not be scheduled
      on those days when religiously observant students refrain from participating in secular
      activities. Absences for reasons of religious or ceremonial obligation shall not be
      considered unexcused.
   3. When scheduling tests, faculty members are encouraged to take cognizance of religious
      holy days which fall on University class days. In addition, faculty should include in their
      syllabi information regarding the policies for handling conflicts between classroom
      activities (attendance, tests, etc.) and religious and spiritual observance. Such policies
      must be consistent with University policies.\(^2\)

B. Employment accommodations for religious holidays.
   1. The University recognizes state holidays by closing all departments and offices except
      where continuous service is essential. These holidays are assigned by the State of
      Colorado or are UCCS assigned floating holidays. Floating holidays are assigned to
      specific days in order to maximize utility savings:
      - New Year’s Day
      - Martin Luther King Day
      - Memorial Day
      - Independence Day
      - Labor Day
      - Thanksgiving Day
      - Day after Thanksgiving (President’s Day observed)
      - Christmas Eve (Columbus Day observed)
      - Christmas Day
      - New Year’s Eve (Veteran’s Day observed)
   2. Supervisors are to allow employees the use of vacation leave to be absent from work for
      religious observance on days they are normally scheduled to work.
   3. At the option of the employee, supervisors are to allow employees absent from work for
      religious observance the opportunity to make up the work through an alternative work
      schedule. This is not an option for staff in positions that are designated as essential
      personnel. For non-exempt employees requesting an alternative work schedule, the time
      must be flexed over the work week in which the holiday was taken and in a manner that
      does not incur overtime compensation. The flex time would be in lieu of a vacation day.
   4. When vacation leave or alternative work scheduling is not possible, a leave of absence
      without pay may be permitted.
   5. Administrative time off is not an authorized accommodation for religious or spiritual
      observance.
   6. Faculty members who wish to engage in religious or spiritual observance must arrange
      equivalent alternate instruction.
   7. Officers, exempt professionals and classified staff are required to provide advance and
      timely notification to their supervisor in order for their request to be accommodated.

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\(^1\) Adapted from Rutgers New Brunswick http://scheduling.rutgers.edu/religious.shtml

\(^2\) Adapted from the University of Iowa
8. Student employees and other employees not eligible to earn vacation or holiday pay are to work with their supervisor on alternative scheduling options. Whenever possible, supervisors are to allow non-benefitted employees an opportunity to make up work through alternative work scheduling. Again, advance and timely notification to the supervisor is required.

C. Scheduling accommodations for University sponsored events for major religious holidays.
   1. In order to avoid conflicts in scheduling events that fall on major religious holidays, UCCS faculty, staff and student organizations and other programming groups are strongly urged to be mindful of major holy days in their scheduling.
   2. When scheduling event space through the University Center scheduling office, every reasonable effort will be made by scheduling staff to inform UCCS and other event planners of a potential conflict with a religious holiday. In addition to providing direction to multi-cultural calendars, the following non-inclusive list will be specifically referenced:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Religion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rosh Hashanah</td>
<td>Jewish**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eid al Fitr (End of Ramadan)</td>
<td>Islam*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yom Kippur</td>
<td>Jewish**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dusserah (Dushahara)</td>
<td>Hindu/Vedic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diwali (Deepawali)</td>
<td>Hindu/Vedic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ganesha Chaturthi</td>
<td>Hindu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth of the Bab</td>
<td>Baha'i***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth of Baha’u’llah</td>
<td>Baha'i***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eid Al-Adha</td>
<td>Islam*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feast of the Nativity (Christmas)</td>
<td>Roman Catholic, Protestant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pesach</td>
<td>Jewish**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Friday</td>
<td>Roman Catholic, Protestant &amp; Orthodox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easter</td>
<td>Roman Catholic, Protestant &amp; Orthodox</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- *Observance of Buddhist, Hindu/Vedic, and Islamic holy days is dependent on the sighting of the moon. Please note that the dates listed above may not be the exact dates but the closest approximates. Buddhists observe the new moon and full moon as holy days.
- **Observance of Jewish holy days begins at sundown of preceding day and ends at one hour after sunset of the last day.
- ***Observance of Baha’i holy days begins at sundown of preceding day and ends at sunset of the holy days.

3. The University Center scheduling office will make every attempt to include the following information on the scheduling reservation forms:

   Event Planners.
   To confirm that your event date does not conflict with a religious holiday, please reference the following websites:
   http://diversitynet.org/
   http://interfaithcalendar.org/

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3 Adapted from the University of Denver and the University of Iowa  
4 Adapted from American University  
5 Descriptions are from American University
D. The Office of the Associate Vice Chancellor for Diversity and Inclusiveness will send electronic communication to faculty twice a year, in July and January, reminding faculty to be cognizant of scheduling class activities and exams on culturally significant days and referencing the above listed interfaith calendar sites.

VI. RESPONSIBILITY

All UCCS Faculty, Staff, Students and Administrators are responsible for this policy.

VII. HISTORY

_____ Campus policy 400-001 Facilities Use Policy
_____ Campus policy 300-004 Alternate Work Schedules
_____ UCCS Holiday Schedule

VIII. ATTACHMENTS:

_____ List of Religious Holidays, please see the Interfaith Calendar located at http://www.interfaithcalendar.org/