

OAA Guidelines for Religious Holiday Observance *Adopted Fall 2016*

The University of Alabama respects the religious diversity of our academic community and recognizes the importance of religious holy days and observances in the lives of our community members. UA strives to be an inclusive community in all aspects of academic and campus life. As such, the Office for Academic Affairs (OAA) encourages faculty members, staff, and students to be cognizant of major religious and cultural observances when planning courses and campus events and to be sensitive to potential conflicts. Faculty members are expected to make reasonable efforts to accommodate the sincerely held religious practices and observances of students unless the accommodation would create an undue hardship on the University.

Guidelines: OAA's guidelines pertaining to the observance of religious holidays are as follows:

1. Annually, OAA officials will circulate to students and faculty, and make available online, a schedule of religious holidays. This may be done through an online resource such as the Interfaith Calendar (<http://www.interfaithcalendar.org/>), which lists commonly observed religious holidays as a reference to aid in planning courses, assignments, and events.
2. At the beginning of each semester, OAA officials will circulate to students and faculty, and make available online, these guidelines.
3. Out of respect for persons of all faiths and religious traditions, OAA encourages nonsectarian approaches when marking the solemnity of a University event with an invocation or similar ritual.
4. OAA encourages all faculty, staff, and students to be cognizant of major religious and cultural observances when planning major campus events in order to be sensitive to potential conflict.
5. Guidelines relating academic work (below) will be loaded into the online syllabus template. All faculty members are encouraged to include on the syllabus and to announce at the beginning of the semester the following:
 - Students should notify faculty in writing or via email during the first two weeks of the semester of their intention to be absent from class for religious observance.
 - Faculty should provide students who give the required notice of and are absent for observance of a religious holiday reasonable opportunity to complete academic responsibilities in the original or alternative form without penalty, unless doing so would interfere unreasonably with the academic integrity of the course.
 - If the student and the faculty member cannot agree on a requested accommodation for completion of the academic responsibilities, the student may follow the procedure for academic grievances.