

III-5.10 UMCES Policy Concerning the Scheduling of Academic Assignments on Dates of Religious Observance; Campus Space for Faith-Based or Religious Practices

Approval Date November 9, 2023

In accordance with University System of Maryland (USM) Board of Regents (BOR) policy and State of Maryland Statute, the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES) states the following:

1. UMCES academic programs and services shall be available to all students admitted into its programs, regardless of their faith-based or religious beliefs.
2. Students shall be given reasonable accommodation, including excused absences, to observe faith-based or religious holidays or participate in organized religious activities.

Accordingly, an accommodation requested under this policy shall be granted if it is required for the student to practice a sincerely held faith-based or religious belief and it does not impose an undue hardship upon the Institution or fundamentally alter the essential nature of the course or program (a "Reasonable Accommodation").

Academic Accommodations

A student shall be provided reasonable alternative accommodations for missing an examination or other academic requirements due to an excused absence for sincerely held faith-based or religious belief or practice. Absences excused by any Reasonable Accommodation granted under this policy shall be counted toward the maximum number of excused absences permitted by applicable Institution or course policy but cannot impact participation grades or other measures of course assessment. There may be circumstances under which it may be a Reasonable Accommodation to increase the number of maximum allowed absences to accommodate sincerely held faith-based or religious beliefs or practices. Request for such Reasonable Accommodations shall be made at the beginning of the semester in which the accommodation will occur. Additional guidance on these request procedures will be provided by the UMCES Education Office.

Space Accommodations

Each campus shall also provide an appropriate on-campus space to accommodate faith-based or religious practices. These spaces are to be identified and made available to the campus community.

Concern or violations regarding this policy shall be reported to the following university officers:

Academic Accommodation: UMCES Vice President for Education

Space Accommodation: UMCES Vice President for Administration & Finance