

# OLYMPIC COLLEGE POLICY

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**TITLE:** Student Absences for Reasons of Faith or Conscience

**POLICY NUMBER:** 300-03

**REFERENCES:** [RCW 28B.10.039](#); [RCW 49.60](#) – Washington’s Law Against Discrimination

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## I. Purpose

Olympic College welcomes diversity of experiences, perspectives and beliefs, which enhances the teaching and learning environment. Consistent with these values and pursuant to RCW 28B.10.039, the College accommodates student absences for reasons of faith or conscience.

## II. Policy

Olympic College students may request absences or other reasonable accommodations for reasons of faith or conscience or for organized activities conducted under the auspices of a religious denomination, church, or religious organization. To be eligible, a student must expect to be absent or endure a significant hardship during the course or program due to the observance of religious holidays.

Faculty will reasonably accommodate such requests. Students’ grades may not be adversely impacted by reasonable accommodations granted under this policy.

## III. Definitions

1. “Reasonably Accommodate” means coordinating with the student on scheduling examinations or other activities necessary for completion of the program and includes rescheduling examinations or activities or offering different times for examinations or activities.

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2. "Within the first two weeks" means the first fourteen (14) days starting with the first day of the course.

## **IV. Procedures for Student Requests for Leave for Reason of Faith or Conscience**

Students may request reasonable accommodations during the academic year for reasons of faith and conscience or for organized activities conducted under the auspices of a religious denomination, church, or religious organization without adverse impact on their grade. Such requests must be submitted in writing within the first two weeks of the beginning of the course (or with as much advance notice as is reasonably possible if the accommodation is needed within the two weeks of the first day of the course) and identify the specific dates the student anticipates needing the accommodation(s).

1. A student must submit a request for accommodation to their instructor using the online "[Student Reasonable Accommodation: Reasons of Faith or Conscience](#)" available on the Vice President for Student Services and Achievement's webpage.
2. The College is not required to accommodate absences requested after the first two weeks of the start of the course unless warranted by compelling circumstances. If a reasonable accommodation is necessary during the first two weeks of the course, a student must provide the College with as much advance notice as is reasonably possible within the first two weeks of the beginning of the course.
3. The College is not required to provide reasonable accommodations if the student does not follow these procedures.
4. Upon receiving notification of the request for accommodation from the student, student services and the instructor will determine what accommodations, if any, are necessary and reasonable regarding coursework, class attendance, testing, and/or assignments. Student services will then notify the student and the instructor in writing of

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these accommodations in time to allow the student to complete or makeup any required coursework, testing, and/or assignments.

5. If the student's accommodation date is on a day when a test is scheduled or an assignment is due, the student may be required to take the test or submit the assignment before or after the regularly assigned date. Students are expected to complete or make up any coursework or assignments that have been adjusted due to a reasonable accommodation.
6. The notification by the student of an eligible reasonable accommodation under this Policy supersedes an instructor's grading or absence policies. A student's grade or evaluation will not be adversely impacted because they received reasonable accommodations in conformance with these procedures.
7. Questions about this process should be directed to the Office of the Vice President of Student Services and Achievement.
8. Notice that reasonable accommodations are available for reasons of faith or conscience, including a hyperlink to this policy and procedure, shall be included in all College syllabi, along with a hyperlink to the College's anti-discrimination policy and procedure.

*Recommended by Cheryl Nuñez, Vice President for Equity and Inclusion*

*August 29<sup>th</sup>, 2017*

*Approved by Board of Trustees*

*October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017*

*Update recommended – Mary Garguile, Vice President for Instruction*

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*Update approved by President*

*August 6<sup>th</sup>, 2019*

*Update submitted to Board of Trustees*

*August 29<sup>th</sup>, 2019*

*Update approved by Board of Trustees*

*XXX, 2019*