

Faith-Based Absences, 4.05
Chapter 4: Student

Responsible Office: Academic Affairs**Applies to: Students****Approved: 03/21/2023**

Policy: Rhodes State College is committed to students' freedom to practice their sincerely held religious beliefs. The purpose of the Faith-Based Absences Policy is to ensure that students are provided with alternative accommodations for faith-based absences, as set forth in Ohio Revised Code, Section 3345.026, and to guide the College in providing the procedure for students to request alternative accommodations for reasons of faith.

Guidelines:**I. Definitions:**

- a. **Alternative Accommodations:** A time and date for an alternative examination or other academic requirement.
- b. **Reasons of Faith:** Activities or holidays conducted under the auspices of a religious denomination, church, or other religious or spiritual organization.

II. Policy Details: Rhodes State College complies with Ohio Revised Code 3345.026, and adopts the following requirements:

- a. Students have the fundamental right to practice their sincerely held religious beliefs and the College commits to providing students with three days each academic semester to take a holiday for the purpose of engaging in activities for reasons of faith or religious or spiritual beliefs.
- b. The College will not impose an academic penalty as a result of the student being absent as permitted by the policy, so long as the student follows the proper procedure.
- c. Students will be provided with alternative accommodations for exams or other academic requirements missed due to an absence as described in section II.a if both of the following apply:
 - i. The student's sincerely held religious belief or practices severely affects that student's ability to take an exam or complete an academic requirement on the due date.
 - ii. The student provides written notice to the instructor of the specific dates of their planned absence(s), for which the student requests alternative accommodations no later than 14 calendar days after the first day of instruction for the course.
- d. An instructor will:
 - i. accept, without question, the sincerity of a student's religious or spiritual belief system.
 - ii. keep requests for alternative accommodations confidential.

- iii. schedule a time and date for an alternative exam or academic requirement, which may be before or after the time and date of the original exam or requirement, without prejudicial effect.
- e. College will:
 - i. ensure that each syllabus contains a statement regarding the Faith-Based Absence Policy that includes (1) a description of the general procedure for requesting accommodations that follow section (II)(c)(ii); (2) contact information, as listed in section (II)(f) of this Policy.
 - ii. post a copy of the Faith-Based Absence Policy on its website.
 - iii. post a non-exhaustive list of major religious holidays or festivals for the next two years, as provided by the Chancellor of Higher Education, on its website. The list is non-exhaustive and may not be used to deny accommodation to a student for a holiday or festival of the student's faith or religious or spiritual belief system that does not appear on the list.
 - iv. provide a clearly defined institution-wide procedure for requesting accommodations.
- f. For further questions or information about this Policy, please contact Dean, Student Affairs at StudentAffairs@RhodesState.edu.

III. Grievance Process and Reporting Requirement

- a. If a student has any grievance with regard to the implementation of this Policy, they should follow the [Student Complaint/Grievance Policy](#), as outlined in policy 11.1.

Related Policies or Procedures:

Faith-Based Absences Procedure 4.05(a)

Compliance References:

Ohio Revised Code Section 3345.026

History:

	Date:	Reason:
Issued:	03/21/2023	Original policy was reviewed and approved by Board of Trustees
Revised:	MM/DD/YY	

This policy and / or procedure provides operating principles for Human Resources issues at Rhodes State College. It supersedes any prior policy covering specific subject. This policy and / or procedure may be suspended, modified or cancelled as determined by the College. This policy and / or procedure does not create a contract of employment, nor is it a condition of employment between the College and its employees.