

# STUDENT ABSENCES

## UNIVERSITY DECISION

It is the policy of The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio to grant an excused absence from class attendance to a student for the observance of a religious holy day when all procedures for making the request for an excused absence have been met by the student. Additionally, schools or their programs and/or individual courses may administer absence policies unique to the applicable educational functions and requirements and prescribe a process or policy for requesting and completing coursework assigned or scheduled for submission during an absence. Failure to comply with all assignments scheduled during the time of absence shall be subject to rules for grading of the program, course and instructor. The grading policy (<http://catalog.uthscsa.edu/generalinformation/generalacademicpolicies/generalgradingpolicy/>) in this catalog provides additional information.

## PERTINENT INFORMATION

The implementation of this policy and procedure is in compliance with Senate Bill 738, codified in Section 51.911 of the Texas Education Code, which states, "a student who is excused under this section may not be penalized for the absence, but the instructor may appropriately respond if the student fails to satisfactorily complete the assignment or examination."

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

### Religious Holy Day

This is a day observed by a religion whose place of worship is exempt from property taxation.

## GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

### Absences for Religious Holidays

Absences for religious holidays must be formally approved by the appropriate course instructor(s) in advance of the actual holiday. The form (<https://students.uthscsa.edu/registrar/2013/03/forms/>) is included on the website of The Office of the University Registrar. Schools may prescribe specific deadlines available under their school policies in this catalog.

### Military Absences and Leaves of Absence

Under certain circumstances, a student who is required to participate in active military services is excused from scheduled classes or other required activities and will be allowed to complete an assignment or exam within a reasonable time after the absence. The excused absence is permitted only if the student will not miss more than 25% of the total number of class meetings or the contact hour equivalent (not including the final examination period) for the specific course or courses in which the student is enrolled at the beginning of the period of active military service.

Students expected to be absent from classes for active duty must obtain approval from their respective associate dean in order to take a leave of absence. All related procedures, including completion of a Student Clearance Form, must be followed. More information is available under the Leave of Absence Policy (<http://catalog.uthscsa.edu/generalinformation/generalacademicpolicies/leaveofabsencepolicy/>) in this catalog.

## UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES

### Absences for Religious Holidays

1. Students may take an examination or complete an assignment missed during the observance of a religious holy day(s) if they give notification of the planned absence to the instructor(s).
2. The student shall request the excused absence immediately following registration/enrollment or within the first fifteen days of the term.
3. A student shall notify the instructor by completing the Notification of Planned Absence to Observe a Religious Holy Day form (<https://students.uthscsa.edu/registrar/2013/03/forms/>) available on the website of the Office of the University Registrar.
4. The Notification of Planned Absence to Observe a Religious Holy Day form (<https://students.uthscsa.edu/registrar/2013/03/forms/>) is initiated by the student and signed and dated by the instructor.
5. Instructors, upon notification, will stipulate a "reasonable time" in which the student may complete an assignment or take an examination scheduled on the day(s) the student is absent for the purpose of observing a religious holy day.
6. If the student fails to satisfactorily complete assignments or examinations within the stipulated "reasonable time," loss of credit for work or a failing grade for an examination will result.

### Military Absences and Leaves

1. Upon receipt, students should promptly provide a copy of their orders to report for active duty to their respective associate dean.
2. The Student Clearance e-Form is obtained by the student in the Student Center and is electronically approved by the associate dean and electronically sent to the departments identified within the e-form.
3. Students absent from classes for active duty have up to two years from the last term of enrollment to return and complete outstanding coursework to resolve the incomplete (I) grade.
4. Students who fail to return from a military leave of absence within two calendar years will have their statuses converted to indicate "Discontinued; Did not return," and all incomplete grades will be converted to withdrawal grades ("W").
5. Students who do not return within the specified time frame must re-apply for admission to the program. If admitted, they must re-register for the course and pay any associated tuition and fees again.

For more information on leaves of absence, see the Leave of Absence Policy (<http://catalog.uthscsa.edu/generalinformation/generalacademicpolicies/leaveofabsencepolicy/>) in this catalog.