Dear Colleagues,

As we move into the Fall Semester, I wanted to remind you of the Lehigh University Religious Accommodation Policy. Lehigh University extends hospitality to all persons regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, economic or social background, and the Religious Accommodation policy expresses the University’s respect for diversity in religious matters.

Although non-sectarian, Lehigh University honors the free exercise of religion. People from a wide variety of religious traditions live and work at Lehigh, and the University acknowledges that the demands of religious observance in some traditions may cause conflicts with classroom and work schedules. Like many other colleges and universities, Lehigh has adopted a policy to accommodate those who encounter conflicts between the demands of religious observance and the demands of work or study. This "accommodation policy" acknowledges the right of those who live and work and study at Lehigh to engage in religious observances, and the University is pledged to honor the exercise of that right.

This accommodation policy governs religious holidays. The university policy is to support any member of the Lehigh community who requests an absence due to the demands of religious holiday observance. Of course, nothing in this policy exempts a student from meeting course requirements or completing assignments, so the student will have to negotiate with the instructor any make-up work.

How specific holidays are observed varies within traditions and even among families and individuals. Faculty should be aware that in the Fall Semester students from various traditions may request accommodations as they travel home or otherwise make religious observance by refraining from work or ordinary secular activities. Religious holidays for which students may request accommodations could include these: for Jews, Rosh Hashanah (September 17 and 18), Yom Kippur (September 26), the first two days of Sukkot (October 1 and 2) and Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah (October 8 and 9, overlapping with Pacing Break). Accommodations are to be dealt with on the basis of individual requests from students. Recall that religious holidays are numerous, and no holiday is privileged above another for the purposes of the Lehigh policy. For more information you may consult the calendar of religious holidays kept up to date on the Chaplain’s Office web site, where the Religious Accommodation policy itself is to be found: [http://www.lehigh.edu/~incha/holidays.html](http://www.lehigh.edu/~incha/holidays.html).

Lehigh’s Religious Accommodation Policy is published in the Student Handbook and all students have access to an online copy. Any questions about the Religious Accommodation policy should be directed to the University Chaplain, Rev. Dr. Lloyd Steffen ([lhs1@lehigh.edu](mailto:lhs1@lehigh.edu)) or Associate Chaplain Rabbi Seth Goren ([seg208@lehigh.edu](mailto:seg208@lehigh.edu)).

Thank you in advance for your continued cooperation in abiding by this policy.

Best regards,
Patrick Farrell

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