Policy Statement.
The University of North Texas Health Science Center respects the rights of students to observe religious holy days.

Application of Policy.
This policy applies to all UNTHSC students.

Definitions.
1. Religious holy day – a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation in accordance with section 11.20 of the Texas Tax Code.

Procedures and Responsibilities.
1. Students will be excused from attending classes or other required activities including examinations, for the observance of religious holy days. Excused absences will include time required for travel to observe religious holy days. A request to excuse an absence for a religious holy day must be made in advance through the Office of Student Affairs.

2. In the interest of continuity of patient care, Doctor of Osteopathy (DO) and Physician Assistant (PA) students will only be excused on December 25 for the purposes of observance of a religious holy day.

3. Students excused for religious holy days may not be penalized for their absence, and will be permitted to take an examination or complete an assignment within a reasonable period of time after the absence. Students who fail to take an examination or complete an assignment within a reasonable period of time after a religious holy day as determined by the instructor may be penalized.

4. Instructors may request verification of the tax exempt status of a place of worship prior to excusing a student’s absence for a religious holy day.
5. If a student and instructor disagree about the nature of the absence as observance of a religious holy day or about the reasonableness of time provided to complete a missed assignment of examination, either the student or the instructor may seek review by the Senior Student Affairs Officer. The decision of the Senior Student Affairs Officer will be final.

6. Instructor(s) may require a letter of verification of the observed holiday or holy day(s) from the religious institution.

   Responsible Party: Academic Department

7. A student who is excused under this provision may not be penalized for the absence, but the instructor may respond appropriately if the student fails to satisfactorily complete the assignment or examination.

   Responsible Party: Academic Department

References and Cross-references.
Section 1120 of the Tax Code
Texas Education Code Section 51.911

Forms and Tools.
UNTHSC Catalog: http://www.hsc.unt.edu/catalog/

Approved: July 2006
Effective: July 2006
Revised: July 2012