



**Missouri Students Association  
University of Missouri**

**54-11**

**A RESOLUTION URGING CHANGE TO THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI'S RELIGIOUS  
OBSERVANCE POLICY**

**WHEREAS**, the University of Missouri is an institution committed to respecting the diversity of students,  
**AND**

**WHEREAS**, students at the University of Missouri represent diverse religious observance practices,  
**AND**

**WHEREAS**, the current Religious Observance policy of the University of Missouri expresses no clear  
requirement to respect the diverse religious observance practices of students, **AND**

**WHEREAS**, many students express confusion, perceptions of inconsistency, and feelings of injustice  
resulting from experiences with the current Religious Observance policy of the University, **AND**

**WHEREAS**, a Religious Observance policy that clearly requires respect for the diverse religious  
observance practices of students will educate, enhance, and protect members of the University of  
Missouri community, **AND**

**WHEREAS**, numerous other universities, including the University of Missouri-St. Louis and the  
University of Missouri-Kansas City, have embraced clear requirements to respect the diverse religious  
observance practices of students with much success, **AND**

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MISSOURI STUDENTS ASSOCIATION** that the  
Senate suggests a revision to the current Religious Observance policy of the university and urges the  
University of Missouri Faculty Council to take action on this suggestion.

**THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED BY THE MISSOURI STUDENTS  
ASSOCIATION** that the exact wording of the proposed revision be as follows:

*"It is the policy of the University of Missouri to respect the diversity of our students. In  
accordance with this policy the University makes every reasonable effort to accommodate the  
sincerely held religious observance obligations of students. Any student who is absent from class  
or unable to complete an assignment because of his/her sincerely held religious observance  
obligation shall be given the opportunity to make up any relevant work, without penalty, unless  
it can be demonstrated that such an opportunity would create a significant and insurmountable  
hardship upon the quality of the course. It is the responsibility of students to provide faculty with  
advanced notice of the dates of religious observances obligations on which they will be unable to  
attend class or complete an assignment. Such notice must be provided by the add/drop deadline*

*of the given term to receive full consideration. Absence from classes or assignments due to religious observance obligations shall not be construed to relieve students from responsibility for any part of the course work required during the period of absence. It is the responsibility of the student and the relevant instructor(s) to determine the conditions under which work will be made up in a timely and reasonable manner. Should disagreement arise over any aspect of this policy, faculty should consult first the the Department Chair, then the Dean of the School, and finally, if necessary, the office of the Provost for final resolution. On occasions when accommodation for religious observance is denied students may wish to appeal the decision per the University Discrimination Grievance Procedure for Students outlined in the Collected Rules and Regulations of the Provost 390.010 through the Office of MU Equity.”*

Respectfully Submitted,



Alex Nidkum  
MSA Senator

Ben Vega  
MSA Senate Academic Affairs Chairman



Steven Chaffin Jr.  
RHA President



Thalia Sass  
President - Jewish Students Organization



Ben Bolin  
MSA Senate Speaker



Samantha Brown  
Senator



Nathan Willett  
Senator



Mark McDaniel  
Senator

Bill Report:

Bill #54-11 and Title:

A RESOLUTION URGING CHANGE TO THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI'S RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE POLICY

Implementation Timeframe:

After passage of this legislation, the suggestions made here will be presented at the Faculty Council meeting on a date to be determined.

Authors:

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Summary:

Recommends new wording of the University of Missouri Religious Observance Policy

History:

The old religious observance policy reads: "It is the policy of the University of Missouri-Columbia to respect the diversity of our students. Students may want to observe religious holidays and days of special commemoration. The faculty is encouraged to excuse students who have a conflict with a class period, test or activity because of these obligations. An interfaith calendar of primary sacred times for world religions is available at: [www.interfaithcalendar.org](http://www.interfaithcalendar.org)."

Websites, References, Research:

Mizzou Diversity Religious Holiday Calendar:

<http://diversity.missouri.edu/get-involved/religion/holidays.php>

Calendar Mizzou currently links to in RO Statement:

<http://www.interfaithcalendar.org/>

Mizzou Religious Observance Statement:

<http://facultycouncil.missouri.edu/handbook/religious-observance.html>

Mizzou Discrimination Grievance 390.010:

[http://www.umsystem.edu/ums/rules/collected\\_rules/grievance/ch390/grievance\\_390.010](http://www.umsystem.edu/ums/rules/collected_rules/grievance/ch390/grievance_390.010) Appealed to standard of RO compliance

Mizzou Student Absence Policy:

<http://facultycouncil.missouri.edu/handbook/article-4.html>

Some Missouri/UM System Schools:

UMKC:

\*Attached RO4 - Paper reference

UMSL:

\*Attached RO3 - Paper reference

Missouri State:

<http://wp.missouristate.edu/Equity/Religious-Observances.htm>

\*Attached RO2 - Paper reference

Some SEC Schools:

Texas A&M:

<http://dof.tamu.edu/node/75>

University of Florida:

[http://iengage.multicultural.ufl.edu/center\\_for\\_understanding/religious\\_observance\\_policy/](http://iengage.multicultural.ufl.edu/center_for_understanding/religious_observance_policy/)

Also \*Attached RO5 - Paper reference

University of Kentucky:

[http://www.uky.edu/Ombud/ForStudents\\_ReligiousHolidays.php](http://www.uky.edu/Ombud/ForStudents_ReligiousHolidays.php)

Vanderbilt University:

\*Attached RO6 - Paper reference

University of Georgia:

<http://provost.uga.edu/index.php/policies-procedures/academic/academic-affairs/4-general-policies/406-class-attendance/406-2-religious-holidays-attendance-policy-/>

\*Attached RO7 (statement outside of literature attempting to strengthen stance) - Paper reference

Some other large state schools:

University of Washington:

<http://www.washington.edu/students/reg/religcal.html> Includes RO holidays on the academic calendar.

University of Michigan:

[http://www.provost.umich.edu/calendar/religious\\_holidays.html](http://www.provost.umich.edu/calendar/religious_holidays.html)

University of Kansas:

<http://policy.ku.edu/governance/USRR> (1.4.3 and 2.1.4)

University of Iowa:

<http://www.registrar.uiowa.edu/Calendars/ReligiousHolidays/tabid/91/Default.aspx>

University of Illinois:

[http://studentcode.illinois.edu/article1\\_part5\\_1-501.html](http://studentcode.illinois.edu/article1_part5_1-501.html)

Who are Administrators or Staff involved:

Dr. Noel English - Director of MU Equity for the Chancellor's Diversity Initiative

Dr. Angela Speck - Faculty Council Diversity Enhancement

Dr. Nicole Monnier - Faculty Council Academic Affairs

What Bylaws or Rules affected:

N/A