



Resolution for Supporting Practicing Muslim Students During Ramadan

Resolution 20-21-14

Whereas: The core Jesuit values of USF calls for cura personalis, or ‘care for the entire person’ includes the health and physical wellbeing of students; and

Whereas: Within the month of Ramadan—the 9th month of the Lunar based Islamic calendar and one of the five pillars of Islam—all practicing Muslims are obligated to fast from dusk to dawn for 30 days i.e., abstaining from food and drinks during that time period in the day; and

Whereas: During this month and on a daily basis, practicing Muslims have to pray 5 times a day. These 5 prayers include Fajr (dawn), Dhuhur (after midday), Asr (afternoon), Maghrib (sunset), Isha (nighttime) with an addition of a Taraweeh prayer specific for Ramadan; and

Whereas: Respecting these students and their additional needs/support during Ramadan is crucial for them to successfully meet the demands of being a student; and

Whereas: Like many Muslim students in the campus community,

“The biggest issue conflicting with our practices is the deadlines set for the assignments. I feel like they hinder the flexibility of maintaining an academic schedule with one of Ramadan. It’s not about prioritizing one thing over the other, but rather having reasonable amounts of assignments or times for deadlines for Muslims this Ramadan. If that is not possible, then maybe grading in a more fair way perhaps or lessening the weight on exams if there is an urgent case. Some days for us are harder than others, and we would not have sufficient energy to meet all deadlines. So, the work gets crammed till nighttime, which is supposed to be rich in practices. However, Muslim students may face symptoms such as migraines or fatigue, which really should account for understanding by professors in case the student is unable to attend a particular class.”

- Sarah Tinawi (Vice President of Muslim Student Association)

Whereas: Many Muslim students agree,

“As a practicing Muslim I pray 5 times a day. According to President Fitzgerald: ‘At USF, the diversity of religious traditions and spiritual practices among the members of our beloved community further enriches our shared project to fashion a more just, humane, and sustainable future for all humankind.’



- *Anonymous Student*

“At USF we do feel acceptance. However what we are asking for is to make it easier for us to practice our religion—which means taking at least 15 minutes even if it’s in the middle of a class to pray. 5 minutes for ablution and 10 to pray. In addition, there are days where class conflicts with opening your fast or one isn’t feeling well as there is a lack of food and water in your body, an excused absence would be very helpful.”

- *Abdullah Jamalallail (Events Coordinator of Muslim Student Association)*

Therefore, be it Resolved by the Associated Students of the University of San Francisco Senate in its role as the sole representative body of all the undergraduates students of the University of San Francisco, that the following be enacted:

Resolved: Practicing Muslim students receive a requested class absence via prior communication with their professor, including a discussion of making up missed work.

Resolved: Practicing Muslim students be allowed to be excused from class for at least 15 minutes if it conflicts with prayer time in order to pray.

Resolved: The University of San Francisco explore a broader and more encompassing religious exemption policy to provide an inclusive community for students of all religions.

Submitted by:

Fiza Shaikh, *Muslim Student Representative*

Supported by:

Muslim Student Association

University Ministry

Shannon Gary, Ed.D. Associate Vice President/Dean of Students

Dr. Molly Zook, Interim Co-Director of CAPS

Dr. Sonja Poole, University of San Francisco Faculty Association President

Presented to the Senate on:



April 28th, 2021

Passed by the Senate on:

May 5, 2021

Signed by:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John Garfo". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" and the last name "Garfo" clearly distinguishable.