

# Uintah Basin Technical College

## 127 – Religious Accommodations

Last Administrative Review: 05/18/2026  
Effective Date: 05/20/2026  
Executive Team Approval: 05/18/2026  
Policy Committee Approval: 05/19/2026  
Board of Trustees Approval: 05/20/2026

### 1. Purpose

Uintah Basin Technical College (UBTech) is committed to providing an academic and work environment that honors each employee's and student's religious belief and conscience. This policy establishes requirements to ensure the protection of employees' and students' sincerely held religious or conscience beliefs and provides minimum requirements for UBTech's processing of religious accommodation requests.

### 2. References

- 2.1. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended
- 2.2. Utah Code § 63G-33-201, Exercise of Religion
- 2.3. Utah Code § 67-27-106, Reasonable Accommodations for Government Employees
- 2.4. Utah Code § 34A-5-112, Religious Liberty Protections
- 2.5. Utah Code § 34A-5-106, Utah Antidiscrimination Act as amended
- 2.6. Utah Code § 53H-1-102, Utah System of Higher Education
- 2.7. Utah Code § 53H-7-903, Student Religious and Conscience Accommodations
- 2.8. Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
- 2.9. Utah Administrative Code, R765-264, Student Belief Accommodations

### 3. Scope

This policy applies to students in attendance at UBTech and employees of UBTech.

### 4. Definitions

- 4.1. "College" means Uintah Basin Technical College.
- 4.2. "Conscience" means the same as that term is defined in Utah Code 67-27-106.
- 4.3. "Fundamental alteration" means a change so significant in an examination or assignment that the change:
  - 4.3.1. alters the essential nature, objectives, or standards of a class, program, or degree; and
  - 4.3.2. negatively impacts the student's ability to:
    - 4.3.2.1. master essential learning outcomes of the course, program, or degree; or
    - 4.3.2.2. acquire the knowledge, skills, or competencies necessary to pass the course, program, or degree.
- 4.4. "Neutral Arbiter" means Vice President of Student Affairs.
- 4.5. "Point of Contact" means Vice President of Executive Relations.
- 4.6. "Reasonably accommodate" means taking reasonable steps to modify expectations for a student's participation, in an examination or other academic requirement by excusing participation, offering an alternative deadline or schedule, or offering an alternative examination or assignment.
- 4.7. **Religious Tradition:** A religious, non-religious, theistic, or non-theistic moral or ethical tradition.

**4.8. Sincerely Held Belief:** A religious, non-religious, theistic, or non-theistic moral or ethical tradition.

**4.9. Undue Hardship:** Significant difficulty or expense.

**4.10. Retaliation:** For students, any action or threat designed to dissuade a reasonable person from asserting their rights under this policy, or to inflict retribution for assertion of rights under this policy.

For employees, retaliation is an adverse employment action taken against an employee as a result of the employee filing a request for accommodation of religious belief or conscience.

## **5. Employee Accommodations**

**5.1.** UBTech grants employees their reasonable requests to be relieved from performing certain tasks, expressions, actions, or inactions if (1) performing the task conflicts with, burden, or offend the employees sincerely held religious beliefs or conscience; (2) the employee follows the procedures for requesting an accommodation outlined in section 8; and (3) none of the exceptions listed in section 5.2 apply.

**5.2. Exceptions.** UBTech will not grant an employee's request if exempting the employee from the task, expression, action, or inaction would impose an undue hardship on the college, including when

**5.2.1.** The request is to be relieved from performing a task that is part of training or safety instructions directly related to the employee's job;

**5.2.2.** Granting the request would create an unavoidable conflict with an existing legal obligation;

**5.2.3.** The employee's asserted beliefs or conscience are being asserted for improper purpose, such as for a reason other than religious belief or conscience, or to receive pay for work not performed.

**5.3.** Any time off for accommodation of religious belief or conscience is unpaid; however, accrued paid time off may be used in place of unpaid time off. Employees who anticipate being absent from work because of religious belief or conscience should submit their request for time off five (5) working days in advance.

## **6. Student Accommodations**

**6.1.** In accordance with Section 53H-7-903 and this policy, the College shall:

**6.1.1.** For any course, reasonably accommodate a student's absence, or offer an alternative deadline or schedule, from an examination or other academic requirements for reasons of the student's religious or conscience belief or the student's religious tradition or religious organization;

**6.1.2.** For a course that the College mandates for graduation or for an academic program, reasonably accommodate a student's objection to a required examination or assignment by offering an alternative examination or assignment for reasons of the student's sincerely held religious or conscience belief if the requested accommodation does not create a fundamental alteration.

## **7. Retaliation**

**7.1.** No college employee or student may retaliate against a student or employee for requesting accommodation for religious belief or conscience.

## **8. Making a Request**

**8.1.** In addition to all requirements in Section 53H-7-903, the College shall comply with the following minimum requirements to provide parameters for a requested accommodation and guidance for protecting an employee's or Student's sincerely held religious or conscience beliefs:

### **8.1.1. Employee Request**

**8.1.1.1.** An employee shall provide written notice to their supervisor identifying the sincerely held religious or conscience belief for which the accommodation is requested, along with the specific accommodation being sought.

**8.1.1.2.** An Employee requesting a religious or conscience belief accommodation must notify their supervisor in advance. Requests should be made as early as possible, and generally, absent good cause, no later than 30 days before the accommodation is needed. The request must

explain how the task, expression, action, or inaction conflicts with the employee's religious belief or conscience.

- 8.1.1.3.** The supervisor and employee shall engage in an interactive process to assess whether the requested accommodation is a reasonable accommodation and can be provided and/or whether the accommodation would create an undue hardship.
- 8.1.1.4.** The supervisor shall respond to the employee's request for an accommodation within a reasonable time based on the facts and circumstances but no later than five business days from the date of receiving the written accommodation request.
- 8.1.1.5.** If a supervisor denies the employee's request for an accommodation, the supervisor shall inform the employee in writing and provide information about next steps in the process, the College's Religious Accommodation policy, and the contact information for the Neutral Arbiter.
- 8.1.1.6.** A supervisor who denies an employee's accommodation shall notify the Point of Contact at the College about the denial within a reasonable time but no longer than five business days after the denial and provide a written explanation of why the request was denied.

### **8.1.2. Student Request**

- 8.1.2.1.** A Student shall provide written notice to the instructor of the course for which the student is seeking an accommodation that identifies the religious or conscience belief and the requested accommodation based on the student's sincerely held religious or conscience belief.
- 8.1.2.2.** To ensure proper record keeping, the College may require students to complete a religious belief accommodation form provided by the institution.
- 8.1.2.3.** To help facilitate the accommodation process, instructors are encouraged to include detailed information about course deadlines and requirements in their syllabus.
- 8.1.2.4.** A student requesting a religious or conscience belief accommodation must notify the instructor in advance. Requests should be made as early as possible, and generally, absent good cause, no later than 30 days before the accommodation is needed. The instructor may deny a student's accommodation request if sufficient notice is not provided and no good cause exists.
- 8.1.2.5.** The instructor shall respond to a student's request for an accommodation within a reasonable time based on the facts and circumstances but no later than five business days from the date of receiving a written accommodation request.
- 8.1.2.6.** The instructor will determine whether they can implement the requested accommodation without creating a fundamental alteration of the course. The instructor may explore other possible reasonable accommodations to address the student's religious or conscience belief. When more than one accommodation is feasible, the instructor may select any of the feasible accommodations, provided the accommodation will effectively eliminate the conflict with the student's sincerely held religious or conscience belief.
- 8.1.2.7.** The student and instructor shall engage in an interactive process to assess whether a requested accommodation is a reasonable accommodation and can be provided and/or whether the accommodation creates a fundamental alteration to the course. The instructor and student are expected to participate in the interactive process.
- 8.1.2.8.** After the instructor receives a religious accommodation request from the student, the instructor shall initiate contact with the student to collaboratively create a reasonable accommodation as soon as practicable.
- 8.1.2.9.** If an instructor denies the student's request for an accommodation, the instructor shall inform the student in writing and provide the information about next steps in the process, the College's Religious Accommodation Policy, and the contact information for the Neutral Arbiter.
- 8.1.2.10.** An instructor who denies a student's accommodation shall notify the Point of contact at the College about the denial within a reasonable time but no longer than five business days after the denial and provide a written explanation of why the instructor denied the request.
- 8.1.2.11.** A reasonable accommodation allowing a student to be absent from an exam or other academic requirement in order to accommodate the student's sincerely held religious or conscience belief shall not adversely impact the student's academic opportunities.

- 8.2.** The College's employees engaging in the interactive process will be offered training annually on legal and policy requirements for this process

- 8.3. Accommodations are not retroactive.
- 8.4. All requests for accommodation will be kept confidential.
- 8.5. The College prohibits retaliation against an employee or student for requesting accommodation based on the student's religious or conscience belief.
- 8.6. The College shall address any failure to comply with Section 53H-7-903 and this policy.

## 9. Appeals and Complaints

- 9.1. Employees, students, supervisors, and instructors may contact the Point of Contact for information about an accommodation as described in the policy.
- 9.2. Employees and students may appeal an accommodation request denial to the designated Neutral Arbiter
  - 9.2.1. The College's designated Neutral Arbiter shall have the academic and subject matter expertise to review a denial of an accommodation and determine whether the requested accommodation constitutes a fundamental alteration.
  - 9.2.2. Employee or Student may file an appeal with the Neutral Arbiter within five days of receiving:
    - 9.2.2.1. A denial of accommodations; or
    - 9.2.2.2. Insufficient accommodations.
  - 9.2.3. The Neutral Arbiter must not discuss the denial or appeal process with other parties, unless:
    - 9.2.3.1. The Neutral Arbiter requires more information from either party.
    - 9.2.3.2. If the Neutral Arbiter discusses the matter with either party, the Neutral Arbiter must document the transaction.
  - 9.2.4. The Neutral Arbiter must make a finding within five days of receipt of the complaint and supervisor/instructor's decision and reasonings. The findings will be issued to the student and instructor or the supervisor and employee, as applicable.
  - 9.2.5. The Neutral Arbiter must show the process the Neutral Arbiter took in rendering its decision by:
    - 9.2.5.1. Documenting the reasoning for the Neutral Arbiter's findings;
    - 9.2.5.2. Showing the information in the record that led to that reasoning.
- 9.3. The Neutral Arbiter's decision is final.
- 9.4. If a student believes they have experienced retaliation, harassment, or discrimination based on the student's religious or conscience belief, that student may file a complaint with the Neutral Arbiter.
  - 9.4.1. The student may file the complaint in writing by emailing the Neutral Arbiter or by delivering a hard copy of the written complaint in person to the Neutral Arbiter.

## 10. Reporting

- 10.1. The College shall submit an annual report to the Board no later than December 1 of each year that details, for the previous academic year, any decisions by the Neutral Arbiter.

## 11. Religious Holidays

- 11.1. The College may grant a religious accommodation for a holiday that is not on the list provided by the Utah Commissioner of Higher Education if a student seeks an accommodation for such holiday.

## 12. UBTech Website

- 12.1. UBTech will publish on its website this policy, the contact information of all persons involved with the accommodation process, and a list of major religious holidays.