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Moscow University Student Removed From Exam for Jewish Headwear

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A Jewish student at Moscow State University was barred from taking an exam this week after he declined to take off his religious headgear at the request of a professor.

Lev Boroda was asked by geography professor Vyacheslav Baburin to remove his Jewish religious cap, called a yarmulke or kippah, or leave the classroom, the SOVA Center monitoring group reported Tuesday.

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Boroda, who later took the exam with a different professor, has reportedly filed a complaint about the incident with university administrators.

The film student recalled an earlier incident in which the university's gym teacher told him to "cross himself" when he asked for permission to skip class during the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur, the SOVA Center reported.

Sergei Dobrolyubov, the dean of the geography department, lauded the professor for following the university's rules, which prohibit headgear from being worn on campus. He pointed to Baburin's request last year for female Muslim students to remove their headscarves before exams.

"He had every right to do what he did," Dobrolyubov told the Moskva news agency on Tuesday.

Baburin defended his actions on Wednesday, telling Kommersant-FM radio: "I don't care who he is — a Jew, a Muslim, a Buddhist or a Sikh."

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