



Office of the Chaplain

August 2017

Dear Penn Faculty & Staff,

As you prepare schedules and syllabi for the new academic year I ask that you please review the attached information regarding the University policy on secular and religious holidays. I recognize that scheduling on such a vibrant campus is a constant challenge and so we have prepared the attached 2017-18 calendar of religious holidays as a resource for you to assist in avoiding conflicts in the coming year. We will also be working with our campus religious communities to share this message with students at the beginning of the new semester. All of this information is also available on [our website](#) where you can also download the calendar in [ical format](#) (to import to Outlook or other applications). The full text of the policy can also be found in the [Pennbook](#). As always, my office is available to you should you have any questions about these materials.

As a reminder, University policy states that **“no examinations may be given and no assigned work may be required” on Christmas, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, the first two days of Passover, and Good Friday.** Here are the dates of these holidays for the 2017-18 academic year:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Day</i>	<i>Holiday</i>	<i>Tradition</i>
9/20/17- 9/22/17*	Wed-Fri	Rosh Hashanah	Jewish
9/29/17- 9/30/17*	Fri-Sat	Yom Kippur	Jewish
12/25/17	Mon	Christmas	Christian
3/30/18 - 4/7/18*	Fri-Sat (9 days)	Passover	Jewish
No exams or assigned work may be required from the evening of 3/30 through 4/1			
3/30/18	Fri	Good Friday	Christian

\* - indicates holiday begins at sunset on the first date given

The attached calendar also includes a selection of additional holiday dates observed by many of our students. There are many holidays listed here and not all will pose direct conflicts with classwork. However, many who observe these holidays will do so by fasting, attending services that may conflict with classes or activities, or by abstaining from work on these days. Section 3 of the policy explains that students can make alternative arrangements with faculty to allow for their observance of these holidays and that **“students who make such arrangements will not be required to attend classes or take examinations on the designated days, and faculty must provide reasonable opportunities for such students to make up missed work and examinations.”**

We deeply appreciate your support of the religious and spiritual diversity of our student body. Thank you for your consideration and best wishes for the coming year.

The Reverend Charles Howard, PhD  
University Chaplain

## 2017-18 Calendar of Religious Holidays

<u>Fall 2017</u>			
<i>Date</i>	<i>Day</i>	<i>Holiday</i>	<i>Tradition</i>
8/18-8/25	Fri-Fri (8 days)	Paryushan	Jain
8/25	Fri	Sri Ganesh Chaturthi	Hindu
8/26-9/4	Sat-Mon (10 days)	Das Lakshan	Jain
9/1-9/2*	Fri-Sat	Eid al-Adha	Muslim
<b>9/20-9/22*</b>	<b>Wed-Fri</b>	<b>Rosh Hashanah</b>	<b>Jewish</b>
9/21-9/22*	Thurs-Fri	Muslim New Year	Muslim
9/21-9/29	Thurs-Fri (9 days)	Navaratri	Hindu
<b>9/29-9/30*</b>	<b>Fri-Sat</b>	<b>Yom Kippur</b>	<b>Jewish</b>
9/30-10/1*	Sat-Sun	Ashura	Muslim
10/4-10/11*	Wed-Wed (8 days)	Sukkot	Jewish
10/11-10/12*	Wed-Thurs	Shemini Atzeret	Jewish
10/12-10/13*	Thurs-Fri	Simchat Torah	Jewish
10/19	Thurs	Diwali	Hindu/Jain
12/12-12/20*	Tue-Wed (9 days)	Hanukkah	Jewish
<b>12/25</b>	<b>Mon</b>	<b>Christmas</b>	<b>Christian</b>
<u>Spring/Summer 2018</u>			
<i>Date</i>	<i>Day</i>	<i>Holiday</i>	<i>Tradition</i>
1/7	Sun	Christmas	Orthodox Christian
1/22	Mon	Vasant Panchami/Saraswati Puja	Hindu
2/13	Tue	Maha Shivaratri	Hindu
2/14	Wed	Ash Wednesday	Christian
2/16	Fri	Chinese New Year	Chinese
2/28-3/1*	Wed-Thurs	Purim	Jewish
3/2	Fri	Holi	Hindu
3/25	Sun	Rama Navami	Hindu
3/29	Thurs	Mahavir Jayanti	Jain
<b>3/30-4/7*</b>	<b>Fri-Sat (9 days)</b>	<b>Passover</b>	<b>Jewish</b>
<b>No exams or assigned work may be required from the evening of 3/30 through 4/1</b>			
<b>3/30, 4/1</b>	<b>Fri, Sun</b>	<b>Good Friday, Easter Sunday</b>	<b>Christian</b>
4/6, 4/8	Fri, Sun	Good Friday, Easter Sunday	Orthodox Christian
5/15-6/14*	Tue-Thurs (31 days)	Ramadan	Muslim
5/19-5/21*	Sat-Mon	Shavuot	Jewish
6/14-6/15*	Thurs-Fri	Eid al-Fitr	Muslim

**Bold** – no examinations may be given and no assigned work may be required on these days

**\*** - indicates holiday begins at sunset on the first date given

**Muslim dates** are based on lunar sightings and may vary from those listed

## **Policy on Secular and Religious Holidays**

1. The University recognizes/observes the following secular holidays: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Memorial Day, July 4, Thanksgiving and the day after, Labor Day, and New Year's Day.

2. The University also recognizes that there are several religious holidays that affect large numbers of University community members, including Christmas, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, the first two days of Passover, and Good Friday. In consideration of their significance for many students, no examinations may be given and no assigned work may be required on these days. Students who observe these holidays will be given an opportunity to make up missed work in both laboratories and lecture courses. If an examination is given on the first class day after one of these holidays, it must not cover material introduced in class on that holiday.

Faculty should realize that Jewish holidays begin at sundown on the evening before the published date of the holiday. Late afternoon exams should be avoided on these days. Also, no examinations may be held on Saturdays or Sundays in the undergraduate schools unless they are also available on other days. Nor should seminars or other regular classes be scheduled on Saturdays or Sundays unless they are also available at other times.

3. The University recognizes that there are other holidays, both religious and secular, which are of importance to some individuals and groups on campus. Such occasions include, but are not limited to, Sukkot, the last two days of Passover, Shavuot, Shemini Atzerat and Simchat Torah, Chinese New Year, the Muslim New Year, Diwali, Navaratri, Rama Navami, Paryushan, and the Islamic holidays Eid Al-Fitr and Eid Al-Adha. Students who wish to observe such holidays must inform their instructors within the first two weeks of each semester of their intent to observe the holiday even when the exact date of the holiday will not be known until later so that alternative arrangements convenient to both students and faculty can be made at the earliest opportunity. Students who make such arrangements will not be required to attend classes or take examinations on the designated days, and faculty must provide reasonable opportunities for such students to make up missed work and examinations. For this reason it is desirable that faculty inform students of all examination dates at the start of each semester. Exceptions to the requirement of a make-up examination must be approved in advance by the undergraduate dean of the school in which the course is offered.