

February 2, 2018

To: Members of the Faculty

From: Jill Dolan, Dean of the College  
Sanjeev Kulkarni, Dean of the Faculty  
Sarah-Jane Leslie, Dean of the Graduate School

Re: Religious Holidays, Spring Term 2017-18

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*Religious  
Observances  
2-2-18  
Page | 1*

Throughout the year, students might ask faculty for permission to reschedule academic obligations so that they may observe their religious holidays. We ask you to honor such requests and to work with students to plan the most effective ways for them to make up their work.

We realize many of you might also observe one or more of these holidays. Please let your students know if you plan to reschedule one of your class meetings to accommodate your own observances. They should be as graceful with your religious needs as we encourage you to be with theirs.

This spring, many students will observe one or more of these holidays after the term begins:

- *Ash Wednesday* (Christian) – Wednesday, February 14
- *Purim* (Jewish) – sunset of Wednesday, February 28 through nightfall of Thursday, March 1
- *Holi* (Hindu) – Friday, March 2
- *Passover* (Jewish) – sunset of Friday, March 30 through nightfall of Saturday, April 7 (*see paragraph below regarding prohibition of work*)
- *Good Friday* (Christian) – Friday, March 30
- *Easter* (Christian) – Sunday, April 1
- *Easter* (Orthodox Christian) – Sunday, April 8
- *Baisakhi* (Sikh and Hindu) – Saturday, April 14
- *Visakha Puja* (Buddhist) – Sunday, April 29
- *Shavuot* (Jewish) – nightfall of Saturday, May 19 through nightfall of Monday, May 21

Students who observe the Jewish holidays in a traditional way are unable to write, use a computer, or complete assignments on Shabbat (Friday sunset to Saturday nightfall every week); on the first two and the last two days of the Passover holiday; and on the two days of the Shavuot holiday. Their observance of these holidays restricts them from doing any work at all

from sunset on Friday, March 30, through nightfall on Sunday, April 1; from sunset on Thursday, April 5, through nightfall on April 7; and from sunset on Friday, May 18, through nightfall on Monday, May 21.

Additionally, observant Muslim students are expected to pray individually five times a day, on a specific schedule, as well as once a week in a group session on Friday afternoons. While there is some flexibility in the daily prayers, so that they can usually be accommodated around regular class meetings, the weekly group prayer session on Fridays from 1:15 to 2:00 p.m. in Murray-Dodge Hall requires attendance on a fixed schedule.

Because the Friday prayer session overlaps with 12:30 and 1:30 classes, it would be helpful if Muslim undergraduate students who request rescheduling could enroll in classes, precepts, drill sections, and labs that meet at times other than Friday afternoon.

Since most of this scheduling happens with the faculty members in charge of these courses, rather than through the Registrar's office, we want to alert you that you should expect to receive some requests for rescheduling from observant Muslim students. We hope you'll do everything you can to accommodate them.

This list of holidays isn't exhaustive. If you need information about other religious holidays that students may bring to your attention, please contact the Office of the Dean of Religious Life. You may also contact the Dean of Religious Life and the Chapel, Dr. Alison Boden, directly at [aboden@princeton.edu](mailto:aboden@princeton.edu) or at 609-258-6244.

And, of course, feel free to contact Jill in the Office of the Dean of the College at [jsdolan@Princeton.edu](mailto:jsdolan@Princeton.edu) or 609-258-3040, if you have questions or concerns.

Thanks very much for your help. We wish you all a smooth beginning to what we hope will be a rich and rewarding semester.



cc: Academic Department/Program Managers  
Office of the Dean of the College  
Office of the Dean of Religious Life and of the Chapel  
Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Students  
Office of the Vice President for Campus Life  
Residential College Deans and Directors of Studies  
Registrar's Office