



**TO:** All University of Pittsburgh Faculty Members

**FROM:** Ann E. Cudd, Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor *Ann E. Cudd*

Clyde W. Pickett, Vice Chancellor *Clyde W. Pickett*

**DATE:** September 30, 2021

**SUBJECT:** Religious Observances and Student Well-Being during the Academic Year

The University of Pittsburgh recognizes that religious observances of members of the University community may conflict with University activities. On such dates, students should not be penalized for absences, and faculty meetings should not be scheduled. Faculty should encourage students to raise the potential for such conflicts as early in the term as possible. Examples of such occasions are Yom Kippur, Muharram, Diwali, and Good Friday, but other days of religious observance may also conflict with scheduled academic activities.

In addition, please note that the University works to foster the physical and mental well-being of all our students. For disability-related accommodation requests, students should consult with the Office of Disability Resources and Services. To the extent students experience non-disability-related illness, physical impairment, mental health concern, distress, or trauma, including distress or trauma related to current events, they should not be penalized for related absences and modifications should be made for their continued academic progress. In turn, students should make faculty aware of their need for such modifications as soon as practical.

When modifications are requested, students and faculty should make a reasonable effort to reach mutually agreeable arrangements to reschedule the academic activity or provide a substitute activity or evaluation.

Please refer to the Faculty Handbook ([https://www.provost.pitt.edu/faculty-handbook/ch2\\_emp\\_uni\\_holi](https://www.provost.pitt.edu/faculty-handbook/ch2_emp_uni_holi)) for more information about religious observance guidelines.

A religious holiday calendar, while not all-inclusive, is accessible on the Office of Diversity and Inclusion website at: <https://www.diversity.pitt.edu/events/holiday-calendar>. It is a helpful tool to assist in identifying dates on which you might avoid scheduling exams or major projects.

Thank you for your ongoing dedication to the students we serve.

cc: All deans and regional campus presidents