

**Subject:** Recommendation on Accommodation of Student Religious Observances

**Date:** Approved by the University Senate – March 27, 2019

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The Montclair State University Senate Recommends that the Provost send (at the beginning of each semester) a memorandum to instructors, and another memorandum to students (with copy to instructors), regarding accommodation for students' days of religious observance. The general lines for these Memoranda are specified below.

In making this Recommendation, the Senate notes that, given the multi-faceted diversity of the student body at Montclair State University, it is difficult, if not impossible, to make a complete list of days of religious observance that is inclusive of the religious diversity among students. Therefore, the Senate recommends that students be advised, and reminded, of their responsibility to inform their instructors of any days of religious observance that might conflict with a course schedule, and also that instructors make reasonable accommodations in response to student's requests regarding particular times of religious observance.

This Recommendation does not intend to preclude the Administration from disseminating, to instructors, information regarding days of religious observance. Under the Recommendation, individual students would still be responsible for making a timely request to their instructors for accommodation based on their respective individual observances .

## **Memorandum to Instructors**

The Student Body at Montclair State University comprises individuals from a wide range of religious backgrounds and affiliations. While the Academic Calendar accommodates some days of religious observance, it is not possible, when setting the Calendar, to account for all the possible time conflicts due to religious observances by students. Hence, your consideration in accommodating your students' specific dates of religious observance, as you set the schedule for course work (e.g., exam dates, deadlines for submission of assignments) each semester, supports the goal of providing an inclusive and supportive community for our students. In some cases, due to the specific circumstances, it may be appropriate, and more feasible, to provide accommodation to an individual student.

In this regard, a memorandum is being sent to students as a reminder of their responsibility to inform their respective instructors, as early as possible in the semester, regarding dates of religious observances for which they will request accommodation.

## **Memorandum to Students**

Montclair State University embraces the diversity of its Student Body, and the University endeavors to provide an environment that is inclusive and supportive for all the members of our Community.

If any dates of religious observance will limit your ability to meet course-related deadlines and/or to follow schedules for graded work (for example, dates of in-class exams), you should inform your instructor as soon as possible in the semester. It is the responsibility of each student to inform their instructors of such dates in a timely manner.

Instructors have been requested to consider days of religious observance as they schedule key dates in their courses. However, given the diversity of our Community, it may not be possible to accommodate the observances of all students within the schedule of a particular course. In this case, advance notice to the instructor is essential to facilitate any appropriate individual accommodation.

The setting of deadlines and schedules for graded work, and the form of any individual accommodation for student religious observances, is at the discretion, and under the authority, of the instructor.