

IV.H. POLICY ON SECULAR AND RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

(Source: Provost Memorandum 9-63, September 13, 1963; revised, Provost's Memorandum 6-68, September 19, 1968; revised, Office of the Provost, Almanac, May 9, 1989; revised, Almanac, January 15, 1991; revised, Almanac, March 18, 1997; revised, Almanac, September 4, 2001; revised, Almanac, September 7, 2010; revised, Almanac, August 29, 2017 (<https://almanac.upenn.edu/articles/policy-on-secular-and-religious-holidays-2017-08-28/>))

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

2. The University also recognizes that there are several secular and religious holidays that affect large numbers of University community members, including Christmas, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Election Day in November, 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.

Additionally, no examinations may be given or assignments due on the days of Fall Break, Thanksgiving Break, Winter Break, or Spring Break for programs that follow the main University Academic Calendar, with the exception of clinicals, global experiences, and approved academic experiences.

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 Atzeret and Simchat Torah, Lunar 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.