

TO: Dickinson Faculty, Staff and Students
FROM: President William G. Durden
RE: Religious Holiday Observance Policy

Dickinson College is fully committed to tolerance, understanding and support of the diverse faith traditions to which members of our community adhere. After a careful review of our practices and those of our peers, the College is instituting a written policy that provides guidelines about event scheduling around religious holidays. While classes will still be held, the administration and faculty will make every effort not to schedule College-wide and/or public events on major religious holidays. The traditional calendar already recognizes many major Christian holidays, *Easter and Christmas*. In addition, the College calendar will also include *Rosh HaShanah, Yom Kippur, the first evening of Passover, Eid-al-Fitr, and Eid-al-Adha*.

Notations will be made on the CASE calendar to designate the official beginning and ending times of these holidays. All large venue college spaces will not be available for reservation on the evenings of these holidays. Using the Gateway, faculty and staff can add the major holidays with college observance easily onto one's Outlook calendars. On each holiday with programmatic restrictions a reminder will then automatically, and annually, appear.

Each August, a calendar of selected religious holidays and celebrations will be prepared and sent to all Dickinson employees by the Office of Religious Life. That calendar will also be available on the Religious Life webpage and accessed from a link on the Registrar's page. This calendar is for planning and educational purposes.

Students of any faith who regularly observe these religious holidays or others that typically restrict their participation in regular activities may also be excused from academic, athletic, and other responsibilities on those days by following the guidelines in the policy below.

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAY OBSERVANCE POLICY

The College (offices and departments) will not schedule public and/or college-wide events on the following major religious holidays: Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and the first night of Passover, Eid-al-Fitr, and Eid-al-Adha. The College calendar already excludes events on Christmas and Easter. College wide events are those that invite all members of any part of Dickinson community, and due to religious observance, someone within that group might be excluded. If a college sponsored event is scheduled on these holidays, it must be rescheduled as soon as the conflict is realized.

Students must make arrangements with their faculty members in advance when an exam (including quizzes), papers, and other work are due on major religious holidays. A student will not be penalized for missing class or not handing in work on a holiday due to religious observance. However, students must notify faculty, in writing, reasonably in advance of the holiday if they will be absent from class for religious observance. Likewise, students who observe these holidays must notify, in advance, their coaches should they have athletic practice or scheduled competition at a time of religious observance. While faculty and staff are expected to be sensitive to the needs of observant students of all faiths when planning lectures, field trips, work and other curricular activity that might conflict with observance of a major religious holiday, any course work or other obligation that is missed remains the student's responsibility to complete. Faculty are expected to make reasonable arrangements for students to complete missed work; students must make up the work.

Effective: October 2008, updated October 2011