



To: ESF Campus Community

From: Malika Carter, Ph. D, Chief Diversity Officer;  
Anne E. Lombard, Ph.D., Vice Provost and Dean for Student Affairs;  
S. Scott Shannon, Ph. D, Associate Provost for Instruction and Dean of the Graduate School

CC: Nosa O. Egiebor, Ph.D., P.E., Provost and Executive Vice President

Date: 01/19/2018

Re: ESF Guidelines for Interfaith Holiday Observances

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**ESF respects the religious diversity of our community and recognizes the importance of religious holy days and observances in the lives of our community members. ESF strives to be an inclusive community in all aspects of curricular and co-curricular life. To that end, we encourage decision makers to be cognizant of major religious and cultural observances when planning courses and campus events and to be sensitive to potential conflicts. Faculty members are expected to make reasonable efforts to accommodate the sincerely held religious beliefs, practices, and observances of students unless the accommodation creates undue hardship on ESF.**

ESF's guidelines pertaining to interfaith holiday observances are as follows:

- Annually, ESF officials will make available online an at-a-glance schedule of religious holidays. This will be developed through consulting with local faith and non-faith communities and the online resource *Interfaith Calendar* ([www.interfaithcalendar.org](http://www.interfaithcalendar.org)), which lists commonly observed religious holidays as a reference to aid in planning courses, assignments, and events.
- ESF encourages all curricular and co-curricular planners to be cognizant of major religious and cultural observances when planning major campus events in order to be sensitive to potential conflict.
- Please refer to the official syllabus template at <http://www.esf.edu/acadgov/iqas/> as approved by the Committee on Instructional Quality and Academic Standards. Faculty members are strongly encouraged to include on syllabi and to announce at the beginning of the semester the following:
  - Students should notify faculty in writing or via email during the first two weeks of the semester of their intention to be absent from class for religious observance.
  - Faculty should provide students who give the required notice of and are absent for observance of a religious holiday reasonable opportunity to complete academic responsibilities in the original or alternative form without penalty, unless doing so would interfere unreasonably with the academic integrity of the course.
- Dates are assembled from several calendars and use the academic year format (July through June). Lunar calendars can vary based on region and practice.
- *Kosher restrictions apply*: refers to the dietary guidelines of Jewish law which apply daily throughout the year. Restrictions include: pork, shellfish (fish is allowed), and mixing meat with dairy.
- *Halal dietary restrictions apply*: refers to the foods prohibited according to Islamic dietary law throughout the year. Restrictions include alcohol and pork.