

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY
CALENDAR AND POLICY ON RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS AND OBSERVANCES
Office of the University Chaplain and Religious Life
Academic Year 2018-2019

The calendar that follows was developed to broaden the University community's recognition of its diverse religious perspectives. The listing is not exhaustive of all major holy days in every religious tradition and some variances of dates will exist due to regional differences. It was developed based on the BBC Interfaith Calendar, the projectinterfaith.org website and additional multi-faith resource guides.

Definitions and the University's policy on religious holy days and observances follow the calendar.

- * Holy days begin at sundown on the first date referenced.
- ** Regional customs, group preference or moon sightings may cause a variation of this date.
- * ** Both definitions above apply to holy days indicated by three asterisks.

Guide to Conflicts Between Academic Days and Work Restricted Holy Days

- Holy days noted *in blue italics* are days the religious tradition does not permit an adherent to work or labor. *These Holy days of obligation may create class conflicts.* Absences from academic engagements should be considered appropriate for such designated holy days.
- Holy days in black are not days of obligation and do not indicate class conflicts.
- **Academic Calendar dates are in green.**
- Graduate and Professional Students must refer to their own school and departmental vacation policies and calendar for more specific information.

DATE 2018	HOLY DAY and/or Academic Day	FAITH	NOTES
August 6, Mon	Transfiguration	Orthodox Christian	
15, Wed	Obon (Bon)	Buddhist	
20-21, Mon-Tues	<i>Eid Al-Adha* **</i>	Islam	Begins at sundown on the 20 th , ends on the evening of 21 st
22, Wed	First day of classes for undergraduate schools		

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September 2, Sun	Krishna Janmashtami	Hindu	
9-11, Sun-Tues	<i>Rosh Hashanah*</i>	Jewish	Non-work days begin the evening of the 9 th through the evening of the 11 th
12, Wed	Fast of Gedaliah	Jewish	
12-23, Wed-Sun	Ganesh Chaturthi	Hindu	
18-19, Tues-Wed	<i>Yom Kippur*</i>	Jewish	The non-work day begins at sundown on the 18 th
23-30, Sun-Sun	<i>Sukkot*</i>	Jewish	The 24 th & 25 th are non-work days
October 1, Mon	<i>Shemini Atzeret*</i>	Jewish	Begins evening of Sept. 30 th
2, Tues	<i>Simchat Torah*</i>	Jewish	Begins evening of Oct 1 st
18-19, Thurs-Friday	Fall break (classes do not meet)		
31-11/1, Wed-Thurs	Samhain*	Pagan	
November 1, Thurs	All Saints' Day	Christian	
10/31-11/1, Wed-Thurs	Samhain*	Pagan	
7, Wed	Diwali (Deepavali)**	Hindu	
8-9, Thurs-Fri	<i>Birth of the Bab*</i>	Baha'i	

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9-10, Fri-Sat	<i>Birth of Baha'u'llah*</i>	Baha'i	
17-25, Sat-Sun	Thanksgiving break (classes do not meet)		
27, Tues	19 th of Kislev*	Jewish (Chabad)	
December 2 – 24, Sun-Mon	Beginning of Advent	Christian	
2-10, Sun-Mon	Chanukah	Jewish	
6, Thurs	Undergraduate classes end		
7-15, Fri-Sat	Undergraduate examinations and reading days		
8, Sat	Feast of the Immaculate Conception	Christian	
12/16-1/6, Sun - Sun	Winter Holidays		
18, Tues	Fast of 10 th of Tevet	Jewish	
24, Mon	Christmas Eve	Christian	
25, Tues	Christmas Day	Christian	
2019			
January 6, Sun	Epiphany	Christian	

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Jan 7, Mon	First Day of classes for undergraduate schools		
Jan 7, Mon	Feast of the Nativity**	Christian (Orthodox)	
13, Sun	Bodhi Day (Rohatsu)**	Buddhist	
16, Wed	10 th of Sh'vat*	Jewish (Chabad)	
20-21, Sun-Mon	Tu B'Shvat*	Jewish	
Jan 21, Mon	Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day—classes do not meet		
February 5	Chinese New Year	Confusian, Daoist, Buddhist	
8	Nirvana Day	Buddhism	
12	Triodion	Orthodox Christian	
14	St. Valentine's Day	Christian	
15	Nirvana Day**	Buddhist Jain	
26-3/1	Intercalary Days	Baha'i	
March 1	Intercalary Days end	Baha'i	
2-10, Sat-Sun	Spring break (classes do not meet)		
4, Mon	<i>Maha Shivaratri</i>	Hindu	
6, Wed	Ash Wednesday	Christian	

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20, Wed	Fast of Esther	Jewish	
20-21, Wed-Thurs	Purim*	Jewish	
20-21, Wed-Thurs	<i>Nah Ruz*</i>	Baha'i	
21, Thurs	Magha Puja Day**	Buddhist	
April			
12-13, Fri-Sat	Lailat al Miraj* **	Islam	
14, Sun	Palm Sunday	Christian	
18, Thurs	Maundy Thursday	Christian	
19, Fri	Good Friday	Christian	
19-27, Fri-Sat	<i>Passover (Pesach)*</i>	Jewish	20th & 21 st , and 26 th & 27 th , are non-work days. Passover ends 4/27.
April 20-May 2, Sat-Thurs	<i>First Day of Ridvan*</i>	Baha'i	
21, Sun	Easter	Christian	
22, Mon	Undergraduate classes end	22, Mon	Undergraduate classes end
23-May 2, Tues-Thurs	Undergraduate examinations and reading days		
28, Sun	Greek Orthodox Easter	Christian (Orthodox)	

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28-29, Sun-Mon	<i>Ninth Day of Ridvan*</i>	Baha'i	
May 1-2, Wed-Thurs	<i>12th Day of Ridvan*</i>	Baha'i	
1-2, Wed-Thurs	Yom Hashoah*	Jewish	
5 – 6/4 Sun - Tues	Ramadan (begins)* **	Islam	Ends June 4
6, Mon	Maymester begins		
7-8, Tues-Wed	Yom HaZikaron*	Jewish	
8-9, Wed-Thurs	Yom Ha'Atzma'ut*	Jewish	
10, Fri	Commencement		
19, Sun	Buddha Day (Vesak)	Buddhist	
22-23, Wed-Thurs	Lag Ba'Omer*	Jewish	
23-24, Thurs-Fri	<i>Declaration of the Bab*</i>	Baha'i	
28-29, Tues-Wed	<i>Ascension of Baha'u'llah*</i>	Baha'i	
June 1-2, Sat-Sun	Yom Yerushalayim	Jewish	
3-4, Mon-Tues	<i>Eid Al-Fitr* **</i>	Islam	Eid Al-Fitr begins the evening of the 3rd through the evening of the 4th
4, Tues	First-half and full-term summer classes begin		

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8-10, Sat- Mon	<i>Shavuot*</i>	Jewish	Non-work days begin on the evening of the 8 th through the evening of the 10 th
9, Sun	Pentecost	Christian	
July			
9-10, Tues- Wed	<i>Martyrdom of the Bab*</i>	Baha'i	
20-21, Sat- Sun	Fast of the 17 th of Tammuz*	Jewish	
24, Wed	Pioneer Day	Mormon	

DEFINITION OF RELIGIOUS WORK-RESTRICTED HOLY DAY: a recognized denominational sacred or holy day that is observed by persons or groups who are required--through a set or system of religious beliefs, laws/doctrines, tenets, canons or theology--to restrict or limit work and/or physical or mental activity directed toward the production or accomplishment of something; toil; labor. This definition may include academic endeavors (e.g. examinations, classroom activities and research, or out-of-classroom learning experiences).

RELIGIOUS, SECTARIAN, AND ETHNIC OBSERVANCES (NON WORK-RESTRICTED)

Religious observances that are not work-restricted by definition may involve a special worship or observance in which a faculty, staff or student may feel compelled to participate. The decision on excused absence for these days rests with the faculty member, supervisor, department chair or dean.

Religious observance depends on regional customs. Observances/practices vary from culture to culture within and across denominations. For example, there are no work-restricted holy days within the Christian faith by tenet. But, by custom, in the United States, Easter and Christmas are considered to be non-work days.

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There is a distinction between religious holy days, sectarian holidays, and ethnic holidays and festivals which are routinely celebrated in the United States of America, e.g. Christmas, New Year, etc., and religious work-restricted holy days which are based upon religious tenets, laws, and/or doctrine, e.g. Yom Kippur. Individuals who observe and/or follow these religious work-restricted holy days are not permitted to engage in day-to-day occupations, work, or attend school, including taking examinations or performing other routine commitments.

POLICY

Federal law and university policy prohibit discrimination on the basis of religious belief. University Principles and Policies, as delineated in The Faculty Manual (Chapter 2: Nondiscrimination), and The Student Handbook (Chapter 1: University Policies and Regulations), articulate a policy to make every reasonable effort to allow members of the University community to observe their religious holy days without academic penalty. (See links immediately below to texts in The Faculty Manual and The Student Handbook; and paragraphs germane to religious observance from both of these documents are below, pages 7-8.)

<https://www.vanderbilt.edu/faculty-manual/part-iii-university-principles-and-policies/ch2-nondiscrimination/>

https://www.vanderbilt.edu/student_handbook/university-policies-and-regulations/#religious-holy-days-amp-practices

Vanderbilt University Human Resources Official Holidays/Closings Calendar recognizes December 24, 2018, through January 2, 2019, as Winter Break.
(<https://hr.vanderbilt.edu/holiday-calendar.php>)

From the Faculty Manual:

Civility

“A goal of Vanderbilt University is to foster an open and diverse society where the rights of all members of the community are respected. The free expression of views in orderly ways is encouraged, but personal vilification of individuals has no place at Vanderbilt. Discouragement of personal vilification includes education and assistance in understanding the differing cultures represented at Vanderbilt, peer disapproval of inconsiderate behavior, and provisions of the Student Handbook regulating abusive or harassing conduct.”

Extracurricular Activities

The University is committed to the support and stimulation of the learning experience beyond the boundaries of formal instruction. It will provide opportunities through special personnel, facilities, programs, and services for students to associate with one another on

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an informal basis for participation in nonacademic activities, including the opportunity to form and join campus organizations.

Nondiscrimination

“The University is committed not to discriminate on the basis of unlawful criteria in its policies, practices, programs, and activities.”

“In compliance with federal law, including the provisions of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972, Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, Executive Order 11246, the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, as amended, and the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008, Vanderbilt University does not discriminate against individuals on the basis of their race, sex, religion, color, national or ethnic origin, age, disability, military service, or genetic information in its administration of educational policies, programs, or activities; admissions policies; scholarship and loan programs; athletic or other University administered programs; or employment. In addition, the University does not discriminate against individuals on the basis of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.”

From the Student Handbook:

"It is the policy of Vanderbilt to make every reasonable effort to allow members of the university community to observe their religious holidays without academic penalty. Absence from classes or examinations for religious reasons does not relieve students from responsibility for any part of the course work required during the period of absence. Students who expect to miss classes, examinations, or any other assignments as a consequence of their religious observance should be provided with a reasonable alternative opportunity to complete such academic responsibilities. It is the obligation of students to provide faculty with reasonable notice of the dates of religious holidays on which they will be absent, preferably at the beginning of the semester. Students who are absent on days of examinations or class assignments should be offered an opportunity to make up the work without penalty (if they have previously arranged to be absent), unless it can be demonstrated that a makeup opportunity would constitute an unreasonable burden on a member of the faculty. Should disagreement arise over what constitutes an unreasonable burden or any element of this policy, parties involved should consult the department chair, or, in schools without department chairs, the dean of the school."

Questions regarding this calendar or the University's policy may be directed to the Office of the University Chaplain & Religious Life: religiouslife@vanderbilt.edu

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August

2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22 First day of classes for undergraduate schools	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

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September

2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9 Rosh Hashanah (non-work days begin this eve)	10 Rosh Hashanah (non- work day)	11 Rosh Hashanah (non-work through this evening)	12	13	14	15
16	17	18 Yom Kippur (non-work begins at sundown)	19 Yom Kippur (non- work through this eve)	20	21	22
23 Sukkot (non-work day begins this evening)	24 Sukkot (non- work day)	25 Sukkot (non- work day through this evening)	26 Sukkot	27 Sukkot	28 Sukkot	29 Sukkot
30 Sukkot; Shemini Atzeret (non-work day begins this eve)						

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October

2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Shemini Atzeret (non- work day through)	2 Simchat Torah (non- work day through)	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18 Fall break (classes do not meet)	19 Fall break (classes do not meet)	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

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November

2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8 Birth of Bab (Baha'i)	9 Birth of Bab; Birth of Baha'u'llah (Baha'i)	10 Birth of Baha'u'llah (Baha'i)
11	12	13	14	15	16	17 Thanksgiving break (classes do not meet)
18 Thanksgiving break (classes do not meet)	19 Thanksgiving break (classes do not meet)	20 Thanksgiving break (classes do not meet)	21 Thanksgiving break (classes do not meet)	22 Thanksgiving break (classes do not meet)	23 Thanksgiving break (classes do not meet)	24 Thanksgiving break (classes do not meet)
25 Thanksgiving break (classes do not meet)	26	27	28	29	30	

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December

2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Advent begins (Christian); Chanukah begins				Undergraduate classes end	Undergraduate exams and reading days (12/7-12/15)	Exams and reading days; Feast of the Immaculate conception
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Exams	Exams	Exams	Exams	Exams	Exams	Exams
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Winter Holidays (classes do not meet)	Winter Holidays (classes do not meet)	Winter Holidays (classes do not meet); Fast of 10 th of Tevet (Jewish)	Winter Holidays (classes do not meet)	Winter Holidays (classes do not meet)	Winter Holidays (classes do not meet)	Winter Holidays (classes do not meet)
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
Winter Holidays (classes do not meet)	Winter Holidays (classes do not meet); Advent ends; Christmas Eve (Christian)	Winter Holidays (classes do not meet); Christmas Day (Christian)	Winter Holidays (classes do not meet)	Winter Holidays (classes do not meet)	Winter Holidays (classes do not meet)	Winter Holidays (classes do not meet)
30	31					
Winter Holidays (classes do not meet)	Winter Holidays (classes do not meet)					

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January

2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6 Winter Holidays (classes do not meet); Epiphany (Christian)	7 First day of undergrad classes; Feast of the Nativity** (Orthodox Christian)	8	9	10	11	12
13 Bodhi Day, Rohatsu** (Buddhist)	14	15	16 10 th of Sh'vat* (Jewish—Chabad)	17	18	19
20 Tu B'Shvat* (Jewish)	21 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day - Classes do not meet; Tu B'Shvat* (Jewish)	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

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February

2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5 Chinese New Year (Confucian, Daoist, Buddhist)	6	7	8 Nirvana Day (Buddhism)	9
10	11	12 Triodion (Orthodox Christian)	13	14 St. Valentine Day (Christian)	15 Nirvana Day** (Buddhist)	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26 Intercalary Days begin (Baha'i)	27	28		

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March

2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Intercalary Days end (Beha'i)	2 Spring break (classes do not meet)
3 Spring break (classes do not meet)	4 Spring break (classes do not meet) Maha Shivratri (Hindu)	5 Spring break (classes do not meet)	6 Spring break (classes do not meet)	7 Spring break (classes do not meet)	8 Spring break (classes do not meet)	9 Spring break (classes do not meet)
10 Spring break (classes do not meet)	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20 Nah Ruz (Baha'i)	21 Nah Ruz (Baha'i)	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

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April

2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19 Passover (non-work day begins this evening)	20 Passover (non- work day); First day of Ridvan (Bahai)
21 Passover (non- work day ends this evening); Ridvan	22 Undergraduate classes end;	23	24	25	26 Passover (non-work day begins this evening)	27 Passover (non- work day ends this evening)
28 Ninth Day of Ridvan	29 Ninth Day of Ridvan	30				

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May

2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
			Undergraduate reading exams and reading days; 12 th Day of Ridvan	Undergraduate reading exams and reading days; 12 th Day of Ridvan		
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	Maymester begins				Commencement	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
				Declaration of the Bab (Baha'i)	Ascension of Baha'u'llah (Baha'i)	
26	27	28	29	30	31	

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June

2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3 Eid Al-Fitr (begins this evening)	4 First-half and full-terms summer classes; Eid Al-Fitr (ends this evening)	5	6	7	8 Shavuot (begins this evening)
9 Shavuot	10 Shavuot (ends this evening)	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9 Martyrdom of the Bab (Baha'i)	10 Martyrdom of the Bab (Baha'i)	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			