

Dear Colleagues,

Below is the March Religious/Ethnic Holiday calendar. Please note that many holidays in this time frame include fasting or other religious practices associated with dietary traditions, including a sunrise-to-sunset fast as part of the holy month of Ramadan, Nineteen-Day Fast and Good Friday .

As a reminder, CUNY's policy on religious accommodation allows students to request and be granted academic and attendance accommodations based on religious belief. A link to the policy is posted here: [VI. Religious Accommodations – The City University of New York \(cuny.edu\)](#)

### ***VI. Religious Accommodations***

#### ***A. Requests for Accommodations***

- 1. Students requesting a religious accommodation should contact the Office for Student Affairs at the College or unit in which they are enrolled. The Chief Student Affairs Officer, or a designee, and the student will engage in an interactive process with the goal of finding an acceptable accommodation.*
- 2. Consistent with New York State Education Law § 224-a, students who are absent from school because of a religious belief will be given the equivalent opportunity, without any additional fee charged, to register for classes or make up any examination, study or work requirements missed because of such absence on any particular day or days.*

As a frame of reference for anticipating student requests for religious accommodations, CUNY's Interfaith Council has developed the following "Religious & Ethnic Holidays Calendar," which serves as a helpful resource

[\(https://www.cuny.edu/current-students/student-affairs/religious-ethnic-holiday-calendar/\)](https://www.cuny.edu/current-students/student-affairs/religious-ethnic-holiday-calendar/).

For questions about CUNY's policy on religious accommodations or to add additional observances, don't hesitate to get in touch with Sophia McGee, Director of Intercultural Student Engagement and Dialogue, at [sophia.mcgee@cuny.edu](mailto:sophia.mcgee@cuny.edu).

Thank you for your support and enduring commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion at CUNY.

<b>Religious/ Ethnic Group</b>	<b>Holiday</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Obligations/ restrictions affiliated with the holidays</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Traditions or Practices</b>
Baha'i	Nineteen-Day Fast	Baha'is between 15 and 70 years of age do not eat or drink from sunrise to sunset and set aside time for prayer and meditation. This fasting period is one of the most important	Please be aware that some student observers may be fasting and you must consider accommodati	3/1 - 3/19	Bahá'ís observe a period of fasting. The Bahá'í fast involves abstaining from food, drink, and tobacco from sunrise to sunset each day.

		obligations for Bahai; the practice is meant to bring adherents closer to God.	ons such as flexible breaks or participation adjustments to support their religious observances.		
Hindu	Maha Shivaratri	Hindu celebration of the birth of Lord Shiva.	Please be aware that some student observers may be fasting and you must consider accommodations such as flexible breaks or participation adjustments to support their religious observances.	3/8 - 3/9	On the day of Maha Shivaratri, people fast the whole day and night. Almost all temples dedicated to Lord Shiva see a huge congregation of devotees from the early hours of the morning. Pujas are performed before the lingam (idol), after which people take a bath in the holy water of the Ganga river.
Muslim	Ramadan	Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, observed by Muslims worldwide as a month of fasting, prayer, reflection, and community.	Please be aware that some student observers may be fasting and you must consider accommodations such as flexible breaks or participation adjustments to support their religious observances.	3/10 sunset - 4/9 sunset	After the sunset prayer, Muslims gather in their homes or mosques to break their fast with a meal called ifṭār that is often shared with friends and extended family. The ifṭār usually begins with dates, as was the custom of Muhammad, peace be upon him
Christian	St. Patrick's Day	Feast day of the patron saint of Ireland. In the U.S., a secular version is celebrated by people of all faiths through appreciation of all things Irish.	N/A	3/17	St. Patrick's Day observes of the death of St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland. The holiday has evolved into a celebration of Irish

					culture with parades, special foods, music and dancing.
Eastern Christian	Clean Monday	The beginning of Great Lent for Eastern Christian churches, which starts 40 days before Orthodox Easter (Pascha), counting Sundays.	N/A	3/18	Clean Monday is celebrated with outdoor excursions, the consumption of shellfish and other fasting food, a special kind of azyne bread, baked only on that day, named "lagana" and the widespread custom of flying kites.
Baha'i	Feast of Naw-ruz	Occurring on the vernal equinox, this day celebrates the Persian and the Baha'i New Year.	N/A	3/20	Nowruz is celebrated by people reuniting with their family and friends. Right before the arrival of the new year, families gather and exchange wishes, with the eldest distributing sweets and young children receiving coins and presents.
Zoroastrian	Nowruz	Nowruz is a celebration that marks the end of an old year and the beginning of a new one and is celebrated on the day of the astronomical vernal equinox.	N/A	3/20 - 3/21	A traditional ancient Iranian festival celebrating the first day of Spring and the Iranian New Year. Also celebrated as New Year's Day in Baha'i tradition (Naw-Ruz). (This date may vary based on region or sect.)
Jewish	Purim	Purim is a Jewish holiday that commemorates the saving of the Jewish people from	N/A	3/23 sunset - 3/24 sunset	Purim is celebrated with food, charity and gatherings. "The four observances of the

		annihilation at the hands of an official of the Achaemenid Empire named Haman, as it is recounted in the Book of Esther.			holiday are to read the book of Esther, give charity to at least two needy individuals, share the gift of food with at least one friend and partake in a festive meal.
Christian	Palm Sunday	Palm Sunday falls on the Sunday before Easter.	N/A	3/24	Palm Sunday is the Christian moveable feast that falls on the Sunday before Easter. The feast commemorates Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem, an event mentioned in each of the four canonical Gospels. Its name originates from the palm branches waved by the crowd to greet and honor Jesus as he entered the city.
Hindu	Holi	Holi is a popular and significant Hindu festival celebrated as the Festival of Colours, Love, and Spring.	N/A	3/25	Holi celebrates the eternal and divine love of the deities Radha and Krishna. Additionally, the day signifies the triumph of good over evil, as it commemorates the victory of Vishnu as Narasimha over Hiranyakashipu.
Sikh	Hola Mohalla	Hola Mohalla, also called Hola, is a three-day long Sikh festival which normally falls in March. It takes place on the second day of the lunar month of Chett.	N/A	3/25 - 3/27	An annual event which is a martial arts parade historically coinciding with Holi, the Hindu festival of colors. Celebrations related to Holla Mohalla may be

					held in various locations over several weekends preceding the actual date of the holiday.
Zoroastrian	Khordad Sal	The Zoroastrian celebration of the birth of Zoroaster, the founder of the Zoroastrian religion.	N/A	3/26	The holiday is specifically celebrated in India and Iran, immediately following the Persian new year, Nowrúz.
Buddhist	Magha Puja/Sangha Day	It commemorates the spontaneous assembly of 1,250 disciples, completely enlightened monks, in the historical Buddha's presence.	N/A	3/28	Those celebrating may spend time together at a local temple, oil lamps are often lit and people might spend a lot of time in meditation.
Christian	Maundy Thursday / Holy Thursday	Thursday before Easter, Holy Thursday commemorates the Washing of the Feet (Maundy) and the Last Supper of Jesus Christ with the Apostles.	N/A	3/28	Holy Thursday features many customs and traditions- holding a communion service, where baptized individuals partake in the breaking of bread and drinking from the cup of life. Additionally, some churches hold a Seder Supper, a Tenebrae service, and strip the sanctuary.
Christian	Good Friday	Good Friday is celebrated to honour Jesus Christ's sacrifice and remember the events leading up to his crucifixion and death.	Please be aware that some student observers may be fasting and you must consider accommodations such as	3/29	It is a solemn day of remembrance and reflection, and Christians worldwide observe it by attending church services, fasting, praying, and reflecting on

			flexible breaks or participation adjustments to support their religious observances.		the meaning of Christ's sacrifice.
Christian	Holy Saturday	The day before Easter, Holy Saturday commemorates the day that Jesus Christ's body lay in the tomb and the Harrowing of Hell.	N/A	3/30	The Easter Vigil is usually celebrated after sunset on Holy Saturday. The liturgy is divided into four parts: the Service of Light, the Liturgy of the Word, the Liturgy of Baptism, and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. The Service of Light begins with the blessing of the new fire and the lighting of the Paschal candle.
Christian	Easter	One of the most important Christian holidays, it memorializes the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is believed that this occurred on the third day of his burial.	N/A	3/31	People celebrate Easter in various ways, including attending church services, exchanging gifts, enjoying festive meals with family and friends, and participating in Easter egg hunts.