

Dear Colleagues,

Below is the February Religious/Ethnic Holiday calendar.

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/>.

Religious/ Ethnic Group	Holiday	Description	Obligations/ restrictions affiliated with the holidays	Date	Traditions or Practices
African American	Black History Month	Black History Month is an annual observance originating in the United States, where it is also known as African-American History Month	N/A	2/1 - 3/1	National and local events and online celebrations will take place throughout the month to focus attention on Black people's achievements and history.

Pagan/ Wiccan	Imbolc	Pagans and Wiccans celebrate this festival as the halfway point between the winter solstice and the spring equinox, which honors light, fire, and the return of life after a long winter.	N/A	2/1	Imbolc means “in the belly” and celebrates the pagan Celtic goddess Brigid, who is the goddess of inspiration and creativity, healing, smithcraft, and poetry.
Catholic	Candlemas	Occurring 40 days after Christmas, Candlemas celebrates the birth of light. It commemorates the presentation of Jesus at the Temple, which occurs in Luke 2:22-40.	N/A	2/2	On this day, all candles to be used in the church for the next year are blessed. Also known as the Feast of the Holy Encounter, the Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary, or the Feast of the Presentation of Jesus Christ.
Muslim	Lailat al Miraj	Muslims remember Prophet Muhammad’s pilgrimage from Mecca to Jerusalem on this holy day. After his arrival, he ascended to Heaven.	N/A	2/8	Many Muslims observe this holiday with prayer (especially at night) and the recounting of the story of Muhammad's Night Journey. Some also share meals with friends and family, and mosques and homes may be decorated with candles and lights.
Asian	Lunar New Year	The celebration of the new year on the lunisolar Chinese Calendar.	N/A	2/10	Celebrations to usher out the old year and bring forth the luck and prosperity of the new one, therefore, often include firecrackers, fireworks, and red clothes and decorations. Young people are given

					money in colorful red envelopes. In addition, Chinese New Year is a time to feast and visit family members.
Christian/ Catholic	Shrove Tuesday	Shrove Tuesday is the traditional feast day before the start of Lent on Ash Wednesday.	N/A	2/13	Shrove Tuesday, Pancake Tuesday or Pancake Day is the day before Ash Wednesday, observed in many Christian countries through participating in confession and absolution, the ritual burning of the previous year's Holy Week palms, finalizing one's Lenten sacrifice,
Christian/ Catholic	Ash Wednesday	Ash Wednesday is a solemn reminder of human mortality and the need for reconciliation with God and marks the beginning of the penitential Lenten season	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.	2/14	Ash Wednesday is a day of penitential prayer and fasting. Some faithful take the rest of the day off work and remain home. It is generally inappropriate to dine out, to shop, or to go about in public after receiving the ashes. Feasting is highly inappropriate.
Buddhist	Parinirvana	Known as Nirvana Day in Mahāyāna Buddhism, this day honors the death of Buddha and his attainment of final nirvana.	N/A	2/15	Buddhists may celebrate Nirvana Day by meditating or by going to Buddhist temples or monasteries. In monasteries, Nirvana Day is treated as a social occasion. Food is prepared and some

					people bring presents such as money, household goods or clothes.
Baha'i	Intercalary or Ayyam-i-ha	This celebration marks the start of the fasting month, where Bahá'ís 15 years and older abstain from food and drink between sunrise and sunset.	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.	2/26 - 2/29	This celebration and period of fasting celebrate giving back to the community and giving gifts to loved ones, which honors the Divine Essence of God.