

Subject Line: Student Religious Observances and Course Accommodations

Dear Colleagues:

I hope you were able to enjoy some rest last week during Spring Break. Thank you for your contributions and hard work that got us successfully to the point where we were able to provide a mix of teaching modalities for students before transitioning to all-remote teaching as planned for the rest of the semester.

As we move through these remaining few weeks, I also wanted to remind you that the Islamic holy month of Ramadan began during Spring Break and will continue through May 12, ending with Eid al-Fitr (to mark the end of Ramadan) on May 13 in Colorado. This means the observance will fall within Colorado State University's last few weeks of the semester and finals week where some students may request accommodations around course attendance, final projects or exams.

Affirming Religious Identity at CSU

Affirming religious identity and accommodating participation in faith-based observances are important to our commitment to diversity at CSU, and it allows us to recognize and celebrate our cultural and religious differences. In observance of Ramadan, Muslims fast; taking no food or drink – not even water – between dawn and dusk. The first meal of the day is taken before 5 am with prayer; the daily fast is broken with prayer and a meal after 7:40 p.m. In addition, the observant also increases the time of prayer, both during the day and in late-night or overnight worship services for self-restrain as well as acts of charity and community.

Faculty and staff are not required to excuse students from final exams or work during Ramadan, but are asked to be mindful of the effects of fasting and disruption of sleep cycles, and be as flexible as possible with potential conflicts. To support students who practice the Muslim faith, the University asks faculty and staff to be aware of the general expectations on these students and consider the following:

- Acknowledge Ramadan and wish your students well for those who observe this holy month.
- Give students permission to leave class meetings to pray or break their fast.
- Be aware of students' prayer and meal schedules when scheduling evening remote review sessions or class programs.

Faith, Belief and Religious Observances Calendar

CSU has created a [Faith, Belief and Religious Observances Calendar](#) which depicts a wide diversity of holidays. The calendar serves as a resource to improve faith and belief-based literacy for our community about potential holidays celebrated by our students, faculty and staff. Some students may not feel comfortable contacting faculty directly to request accommodations for faith or religious observances, but there is an option for them to inform you indirectly.

VPSA Religious Accommodation Request Form

The Vice President for Student Affairs Office has an online [Religious Accommodation Request Form](#) for students. Please encourage your students to use this form for anticipated class absences due to a

religious holiday or observance. VPSA will then verify the holiday and notify faculty of whether or not a student's request requires accommodations.

Thank you for your continued support of our students by helping to create an atmosphere of understanding in response to personal religions and faiths, and the religious observances aligned with those beliefs.

Sincerely,

Sue James
Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs

Kelly Long
Vice Provost for Undergraduate Affairs