

**DELAWARE COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

October 19, 2009  
E-107

TO: All Employees

FROM: Jerry Parker  
Ginny Carter  
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RE: Respecting Others

The tradition of a fall and spring semester representing the whole of an academic year no longer seems to be true. Our students now take classes throughout the 12 months of the year – on weekends, in accelerated formats, and throughout the summer. Our faculty also is piloting a 12 month workload for those choosing to be here throughout a 12 month period.

In addition to calendar changes, the population that studies and works at DCCC is also changing. We are fortunate to have a significant population whose place of birth, and permanent residence, may also be outside of the USA. DCCC has identified a goal of globalization as an educational competency of our programs. We talk about multiculturalism and respect for different religions, cultures, and perspectives as an important College value. We must learn to act in accordance with our stated mission and goals, and values.

We are asking each of you to show respect and consideration for religious observations and cultural customs. Given the broad diversity of the DCCC community, coming up with a comprehensive calendar of religious and cultural observances is challenging. Borrowing from area school district calendars, we have put together a calendar that we ask you use as a guide when planning and scheduling College-related activities, including student assignments, tests, projects, etc. The goal is to be as respectful and accommodating as possible and to avoid potential conflicts whenever we can. If food is to be served, we ask that you consider the dietary restrictions of certain religions and have alternative foods that would not force people to forgo eating or be embarrassed by what is available. Will we make mistakes and cause unintended slights? Yes, but our intent should be to offend as few people as possible. We need to make a greater effort to embrace the differences among us. We need to check before we commit to a date/deadline that does not have an alternative. For faculty this means that exams, for which there are no makeups, should not be scheduled on a religious holiday. For administration and staff, this means that one-time events should not be held on a day that precludes attendance by a portion of our population.

We trust that each of you will use your best judgment in the future to consider the rights and needs of others.

Thank you.

## Calendar of Religious and Cultural Observances 2009-2010

The Calendar of Religious and Cultural Observances is compiled by the Office of Human Resources to help faculty, administrators and support staff in Delaware County Community College promote a climate that is sensitive to religious and cultural diversity.

The calendar is not intended to serve as an official, exhaustive, or definitive listing of religious observances. It should be used as a tool to guide instructional and administrative planning.

One asterisk [\*]: denotes religious observances that begin at sundown of the day preceding the date given.

Two asterisks [\*]: denote religious observances that begin the previous evening of the date given, at moon crescent.

A plus mark [+]: indicates events recurring on the same date every year.

### **Work Restricted**

Many dates in this calendar are recognized as denominational, sacred or holy. These dates are observed by persons or groups who are required – through a set or system of religious beliefs, law/doctrines, tenets, canons or theology – to restrict or limit work and/or physical or mental activity directed towards the production or accomplishment of something; toil, labor. This definition may include academic endeavors (e.g. examinations, classroom activities, or out-of-classroom learning experiences).

Individuals who observe and/or follow these religions work-restricted holy days are not permitted to engage in day-to-day occupations, work, attend school, including taking examinations or performing other routine commitments.

### **Not Work Restricted**

Many religious holidays and observances are not work restricted by definition but may involve a special worship or observance in which faculty, staff, or students may feel compelled to participate. Campus community members should be sensitive to requests for accommodating these special observances.

**Calendar of Religious and Cultural Observances 2009-2010**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Annotation</b>
<b>2009</b>		
August 22 – September 20	** Ramadan (work restricted)	<b>Estimated date</b> of the beginning of the 9 <sup>th</sup> month on Islamic calendar' 28-30 days of fasting from dawn to sunset to share experiences of the poor. Also the month when the Qur'an (Koran) was first revealed to Muhammad. Exact date comes from sightings of new moon by religious leaders.
** September 16	Lailat al-Qadr ( work restricted)	<b>Estimated date</b> of the Night of Power that falls on an odd numbered night during last ten days of Ramadan. The Qur'an says this night is equal to 1,000 months of prayer and all prayers are answered.
*September 19-20	Rosh Hashanah (work restricted)	Jewish New Year, 5770. First two days of a ten-day period of repentance and renewal.
*September 21	Eid-al-Fitr (work restricted)	Estimated date for Muslim festival that breaks the fast of Ramadan. Marks completion of the reading of the Qur'an. The date is based on lunar sightings by Muslim clerics and cannot be precisely determined in advance.
*September 28	Yom Kippur (work restricted)	Jewish Day of Atonement. High holy day marked by fasting, repentance, and seeking of forgiveness.
*October 3-11	Sukkot (alternate spelling Succoth) (work restricted)	Jewish Festival of Thanksgiving and remembrance of when the Jews wandered in the wilderness after the exodus from Egypt.
October 17	Diwali	Hindu and Jain 5-day Festival of Lights celebrated as the New Year. Hinduism has no standard calendar, so persons who come from various parts of India may celebrate this holiday on different dates but always sometime in October or November.
November 1	+ All Saints' Day, Dia de los Muertos	Holy day of Obligation for Roman Catholics is important celebration in Mexico and Latin America and also observed by Eastern Orthodox and Anglican churches to honor martyrs and saints who have no special feast day.
November 12	+ Birth of Baha'u'llah (work restricted)	Commemorates the birth of the founder of the Baha'i faith in 1817.
November 24	Martyrdom Day (Guru Teg Bahadur Ji) (work restricted)	Sikh anniversary of Martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur Ji in 1675, the ninth Guru.
November 28	Eid-al-Adha (work restricted)	Festival of Sacrifice marks the obedience of Ibrahim (Abraham) to God's will and is culmination of the Hajj when Muslims from all over the world makes pilgrimages to Makka (Mecca) in Saudi Arabia
December 8	+Bodhi Day	Buddhist celebration of the enlightenment of Buddha as he meditated under a bodhi tree.
December 8	+Feast of the Immaculate Conception	Roman Catholic Holy Day of Obligation in celebration of Mary, Mother of Jesus.

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December 12	+Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe	Celebrates the Roman Catholic patron saint of Mexico and other countries of Latin America.
*December 12-19	Hanukkah (alternate spelling Chanukah)	Jewish Festival of Lights; eight day commemoration of the miracle of oil enough for one night lasting eight nights. Also marks rededication of the Second Temple in 165 B.C.E and victory of Maccabees over the Syrians.
*December 18	Islamic New Year (Muharram 1)	<b>Estimated date</b> for Muslim New year 1431. The precise date is dependent on date of Eid-al-Fitr. Muharram is the first month of the year on the Muslim calendar.
December 25	+Christmas	Celebrated by Roman Catholics and Protestants as the birth of Jesus, founder of Christian faith.
December 26 – January 1	+Kwanzaa	African-American cultural celebration created in 1966 in recognition of traditional African harvest festivals. The name is a Swahili word meaning “first” and signifies the first fruits of the harvest.
<b>2010</b>		
January 6	+Epiphany or Three Kings Day	Celebrates the visit of the Three Kings to infant Jesus and ends the 12 Days of Christmas.
January 7	+Orthodox Christmas	Celebrated by Eastern Orthodox churches as the birth of Jesus, founder of the Christian faith, using date from Julian calendar.
February 15	Eastern and Greek Orthodox Lent begins	For Greek and Orthodox Christians, a period of fasting and self-denial in preparation for Pascha (Easter)
*February 15	+Nehan (Nirvana Day)	Commemorates the death of Buddha and his entrance into Nirvana.
February 17 – April 3	Lent	Forty-day period before Easter observed by Catholics and some Protestants to prepare spiritually through fasting, prayer, and Bible study.
*February 28	Purim	Jewish celebration the dramatic telling of story about how Queen Esther saved the Jews in ancient Persia from plot to destroy them.
*March 9	Mawlid al-Nabi (Prophet’s Day)	Celebrates the birth of Prophet Muhammad, the founder of Islam in 570 C.E.
March 28	Mahavir Jayanti (work restricted)	Birth of Mahavir, the 24 <sup>th</sup> and last Tirthankir (“Church-Founder”) of Jain religion
*March 30 – April 6	Passover – Pesach (work restricted)	Eight-day period marking the deliverance of the Jews from slavery in Egypt. A Seder is held on the first two evenings emphasizing the concept of freedom.
April 1	Holy Thursday (Maundy Thursday)	Roman Catholic observance of the Last Supper when Jesus gave an additional commandment ( <i>maundatum</i> ): “to love one another.”
April 2	Good Friday	Commemoration by Roman Catholics, Orthodox Catholics, and Protestants of the crucifixion of Jesus.
April 4	Easter	Celebration of Christian belief in the resurrection of Jesus from death is the most significant event in the Christian

**Calendar of Religious and Cultural Observances 2009-2010**

		religion. First Sunday after first full moon after spring equinox.
April 4	Pascha	Eastern Orthodox celebration of Easter. In Eastern Orthodox religion, the formula for determining the date of Easter is: the first Sunday after the first full moon after the vernal equinox after Jewish Passover.
April 8	Vesak Buddha's Birthday (work restricted)	Celebration of Buddha's birthday in Japan where it is known as Hana Matsuri. May be celebrated on other dates by other branches of Buddhism.
*April 11	Yom HaShoah	Memorializes the six million Jews who died in the Nazi Holocaust and emphasizes respect for human dignity. Observances not limited to Jews.
April 13 or 14	+Vaisakhi (work restricted)	Sikh observance of rejection of Indian caste system and founding of Khalsa Brotherhood.
April 15	Birthday of Guru Nanak Dev	Commemorates the birth of the founder of the Sikh religion in 1469.
April 21 – May 2	+Ridvan (Riz-wan) (work restricted)	Twelve-day celebration of the declaration of Baha'u'llah, prophet-founder of Baha'i, to his followers in 1863.
May 13	Ascension Day	Christian celebration of Jesus' ascent into heaven is observed 40 days after Easter.
*May 19-20	Shavuot (Festival of Weeks) (work restricted)	Jewish commemoration of Moses receiving the Law (Torah) on Mt. Sinai.
May 23	Pentecost or Whit Sunday	Christian celebration of the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles is observed on the Sunday 50 days after Easter.
May 27	Day of Vesak, Birth of Buddha	Among Buddhist holidays, this day is the most important as it commemorates the birth of Siddhartha Gautama, founder of Buddhism?
May 29	Ascension of Baha'u'llah (work restricted)	Baha'i recollection of the death of Baha'u'llah, the founder.