



BENTLEY UNIVERSITY

Spiritual Life Center

Religious Observances Calendar

Fall 2020 - Summer 2021

Bentley University is committed to supporting and celebrating a diverse and inclusive campus culture. We recognize the diversity of religious traditions represented in the campus community, and affirm the rights of students to receive accommodations for academic absences due to religious observances. This is in accord with Massachusetts state law and Bentley core values. Please view the [Religious Accommodations](#), and the Academic Accommodations Policy at the conclusion of this calendar. Faculty and staff may also note [Human Resources](#) employment policy.

This calendar is a curated guide relative to our campus and is not exhaustive of all religious practices. *Is there a holiday or practice you wish to see highlighted?* Please contact: GA_Spiritual_Life@bentley.edu

Fall Trimester 2020

August 30*-31

Al-Hijra (*begins at sundown)
Islamic New Year

September 18*- 20

Rosh Hashanah (*begins at sundown)
Celebration marking the Jewish New Year

September 27 *- 28

Yom Kippur (*begins at sundown)
Solemn Jewish Day of Atonement and fasting

October 2* - 9

Sukkot (*begins at sundown)
Jewish fall harvest festival. All encouraged to eat meals inside the sukkah booth outside of the Student Center.

October 9*- 11

Shemini Atzeret and *Simchat Torah* (*begin at sundown)

Jewish assembly of the eighth day and completion of the annual cycle of Torah reading

October 17-26

Navratri

One of the greatest of Hindu festivals, this 9 night celebration honors the divine in the forms of Durga, Lakshmi, and Saraswati.

November 1

All Saints Day

Christian day honoring the saints. Catholic day of obligation.

November 2

All Souls Day/Dia de los Muertos

Christian observance honoring loved ones who have passed away.

November 14

Diwali

Indian festival of light celebrated by Hindus, Jains, and Sikhs

November 30

Guru Nanak Gurupurab

Celebration of the birthday of the Sikh founder and first Guru, Nanak Dev Ji

December 8

Feast of the Immaculate Conception

Catholic feast that honors the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary. Catholic day of obligation.

December 8

Bodhi Day

Buddhist holiday commemorating the Buddha's enlightenment

December 10* - 18

Hanukkah (*begins at sundown)

Jewish festival of lights

December 25

Christmas

Protestant and Catholic Christianity celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ

Spring Trimester 2021

January 7

Feast of the Nativity

Orthodox Christian Christmas

February 12

Chinese Lunar New Year

(while not a religious holiday, this day is of great cultural importance)

February 17

Ash Wednesday

Beginning of six weeks of Lent for Western Christians (day of fasting for Catholics)

February 25*- 26

Purim (*begins at sundown)

Jewish celebration of deliverance, book of Esther

February 26

Magha Puja Day

Buddhist holiday commemorating spontaneous gathering of monks to honor Buddha

March 27*- April 4

Passover (*begins at sundown)

Jewish holiday commemorating the biblical exodus from slavery in Egypt

March 28

Palm Sunday

Beginning of Holy Week (March 28- April 3) for Western Christians

March 28*

Holi (*begins at sundown)

South Asian holiday at the beginning of spring. Triumph of goodness over evil celebrated with vibrant colors. Observed by Hindus, Sikhs, Jains.

April 1

Maundy Thursday

Christian commemoration of Last Supper and Jesus' foot washing

April 2

Good Friday

Solemn Christian observance of the passion and death of Jesus Christ (day of fasting for Catholics)

April 4

Easter Sunday

Celebration of Jesus Christ's resurrection, Catholic and Protestant Christians

April 8* - 9

Yom Hashoah (*begins at sundown)

Holocaust Remembrance Day

April 12 *- May 12

Ramadan (*begins at sundown)
Islamic holy month of fasting and prayer

May 2

Pascha (Easter)
Orthodox Christian celebration of Jesus Christ's resurrection

Summer Trimester 2021

April 12 *- May 12

Ramadan (*begins at sundown)
Islamic holy month of fasting and prayer

May 12*- 13

Eid al-Fitr (*begins at sundown)
Festive gathering that marks the end of Ramadan for Muslims

May 13

Feast of the Ascension
Catholic holy day of obligation

May 16* - 18

Shavuot (*begins at sundown)
Jewish commemoration of the giving of the Torah

July 19* - 20

Eid-al-Adha (*begins at sundown)
Islamic Festival of Sacrifice, commemorating Abraham's sacrifice of his son. Follows annual hajj in Mecca.

August 9*-10

Al-Hijra (*begins at sundown)
Islamic New Year

August 15

Feast of the Assumption of Mary
Catholic Day of Obligation

Bentley University

Academic Accommodations for Religious Observances Policy

Massachusetts law requires schools and colleges to provide religious accommodation for students who request such accommodation when the requirements of a class interfere with a student's ability to participate in a religious observance.

Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 151C, Section 2B states:

Any student in an educational or vocational training institution, other than a religious or denominational educational or vocational training institution, who is unable, because of his religious beliefs, to attend classes or to participate in any examination, study, or work requirement on a particular day shall be excused from any such examination or study or work requirement, and shall be provided with an opportunity to make up such examination, study, or work requirement which he may have missed because of such absence on any particular day; provided, however, that such makeup examination or work shall not create an unreasonable burden upon such school. No fees of any kind shall be charged by the institution for making available to the said student such opportunity. No adverse or prejudicial effects shall result to any student because of his availing himself of the provisions of this section.

Policy Procedure

Adherence to this law requires faculty members to allow students who miss a class, quiz or exam because of a religious observance, to make up the missed work without penalty. A student whose religious beliefs or practices require an accommodation should submit a written notification to their faculty member as far in advance as possible. We recommend faculty place a copy of the policy statement and procedure in the course syllabi, so students are aware of the expectations.

Once a request has been made, the faculty member and student should discuss what a reasonable accommodation would include given the specific circumstances of the request. The student must be given the opportunity to do appropriate make-up work provided the request does not create an undue burden. Absence from classes or examinations for religious reasons does not relieve the student from responsibility for any part of the course work required during the absence. To avoid misunderstandings, the agreed-upon accommodation should be shared between the student and faculty member in writing.

If after discussion there is no consensus on the accommodation, either the faculty member or student should seek advice from their department chair and/or University Counsel.

10/21/20 Faculty Senate