

Inclusive Scheduling – Proposed Dates to Avoid or Consider

Please share comments to db33@drexel.edu by December 14, 2023.

The following proposal was drafted with reference to official [Drexel University holidays](#) and [winter break closure](#), [a list of religious observances maintained by the Drexel Interfaith Council](#), and [the Philadelphia School District calendar](#). A target was to hold the list to approximately 12 (averaging once per month) special dates or religious observances or beyond official university closure dates. Although this is fewer than the full list of observances linked above, the aspiration was to encourage prioritization and focused attention while limiting the complexity of this incremental process improvement, while staying open to revisions or additions in the future. Members of our Dornsife School community were invited to share suggestions to inform a more proactive approach to scheduling in 2024, including input sought from multiple contingencies:

- School Council,
- Staff Coordinating Council,
- Executive Committee of the Faculty,
- Associate Deans for DEIB and Education,
- Collective Resilience Fellows, and
- An open staff and faculty comment period December 1-14 with input invited via [Dornsife.info](https://dornsife.info) and the Dean's Weekly Newsletter.

Proposed dates for 2024 include 10 University Closures (Table 1); 4 other special dates for consideration due to celebrations, school closures, or political participation (Table 2); and 7 religious observances marked on a single date, a pair of adjacent dates, or a start and end date (Table 3). Feedback is welcome on alignment of this set with the greatest needs for consideration, awareness, and inclusion at our school, and ideas are also welcome for improving labeling or short descriptions (to which we also propose to add a link to the [Dornsife.info](https://dornsife.info) post about this process).

The proposed use of dates and corresponding text listed in the tables below is for Diane Benckert to send outlook invitations to all faculty and professional staff prior to the 2023 Winter Break, to increase consideration and awareness of these dates during 2024. [Time off benefits such as floating holidays](#), supervisor or instructor [flexibility for religious observances](#), and strategies allowing all to provide input and receive relevant information (e.g., agenda circulation in advance and minutes afterward, with opportunity to comment by those not present) should continue.

Format note: "Show as" options in the tables below are specific to Outlook, with guidance on suggested schedule implications provided in "Description". **Out of Office** is used for university closures. **Busy** is used for dates to avoid when scheduling group meetings. **Working Elsewhere** is for dates for which scheduling should be reconsidered or planned to include flexible options (e.g., remote participation, or input in advance and then receiving minutes), and **Free** for dates to note for awareness of the start or end of a multi-day religious observance. Individuals receiving such Outlook invitations can modify how these appear on their own calendar to appropriately inform the availability visible to others. Meanwhile, all are encouraged to have a system for maintaining and communicating availability (whether through Outlook or other tools) to ease schedule coordination in the coming year, and to consider tips to [manage meetings with inclusion and well-being in mind](#).

Table 1. University Closures for Holidays and Winter Break in 2024

Date	Label	Show as	Description
1/1/24	New Year's Day	Out of Office	Avoid scheduling on this University Holiday
1/15/24	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	Out of Office	Avoid scheduling on this University Holiday
5/27/24	Memorial Day	Out of Office	Avoid scheduling on this University Holiday
6/19/24	Juneteenth	Out of Office	Avoid scheduling on this University Holiday
7/4/24	Independence Day	Out of Office	Avoid scheduling on this University Holiday
9/2/24	Labor Day	Out of Office	Avoid scheduling on this University Holiday
10/14/24	Indigenous Peoples' Day	Out of Office	Avoid scheduling on this University Holiday
11/28/24	Thanksgiving Day	Out of Office	Avoid scheduling on this University Holiday
11/29/24	The day after Thanksgiving Day	Out of Office	Avoid scheduling on this University Holiday
12/25/24-12/31/24	Winter Break	Out of Office	Avoid scheduling during Winter Break Note: Christmas is on 12/25/24, Hanukkah is from 12/25/24 to 1/2/25, and Kwanzaa is from 12/26/24 to 1/1/25.

Table 2. Special Dates Recommended for Consideration During Scheduling at Dornsife School in 2024

Date	Label	Show as*	Description
2/10/24	Lunar New Year	Working Elsewhere	Reconsider scheduling or allow for flexibility. Our Dornsife School community may benefit from flexibility due to celebrations for the Lunar New Year.
2/19/24	Presidents' Day	Working Elsewhere	Reconsider scheduling or allow for flexibility. Our Dornsife School community may benefit from flexibility due to school or other closures on this federal holiday.
11/5/24	Election Day	Busy	Avoid scheduling group meetings. Our Dornsife School community may benefit from flexibility to vote or to engage in other election-related activities (see also https://drexel.edu/hr/resources/policies/dupolicies/hr70/)
11/11/24	Veterans' Day	Working Elsewhere	Reconsider scheduling or allow for flexibility. Our Dornsife School community may benefit from flexibility due to school or other closures on this federal holiday.

Table 3. Religious Observances Recommended for Consideration During Scheduling at Dornsife School in 2024

Date	Label	Show as*	Description
3/11/24	Ramadan Begins	Free	Be aware of upcoming fasting and consider options for flexibility. Ramadan begins sundown on March 10, and ends at sundown on April 9, with observances including a dawn to sunset fast.
3/25/24	Holi	Busy	Avoid scheduling group meetings. Holi is a Hindu festival of colors which marks the arrival of Spring.
3/29/24	Good Friday	Working Elsewhere	Reconsider scheduling or allow for flexibility. Good Friday is a solemn day in advance of Easter Sunday.
4/9/24-4/10/24	Ramadan Ends with Eid al-Fitr	Busy	Avoid scheduling group meetings. Ramadan fasting ends at sundown on April 9 with observances including a feast, and associated school closures in some districts also include the following day.
4/23/24	Passover Begins	Working Elsewhere	Reconsider scheduling or allow for flexibility. Passover observances include a seder meal and avoidance of leavened food products (such as bread, pasta, etc.) from sundown on 4/22/24 to sundown on 4/30/24.
4/30/24	Passover Ends	Free	Be aware of observances continuing until this date and consider options for flexibility. Passover observances include avoidance of leavened food products (such as bread, pasta, etc.) from sundown on 4/22/24 to sundown on 4/30/24.
10/3/24-10/4/24	Rosh Hashanah	Working Elsewhere	Reconsider scheduling or allow for flexibility. Rosh Hashanah is the first of the Jewish High Holidays.
10/12/24	Yom Kippur	Busy	Avoid scheduling group meetings. Yom Kippur is the peak of the Jewish High Holidays, with observances including fasting and a focus on atonement.
10/31/24	Diwali Begins	Working Elsewhere	Reconsider scheduling or allow for flexibility. Diwali is a 5-day festival of lights from 10/31/24 to 11/4/24. Note: 10/31/24 is also Halloween, which may affect attire, time dressing and taking photos of children, or candy consumption.