

January 8, 2014

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Dear Campus Community,

We call your attention to important campus policies and guidelines concerning the academic calendar. Please convey this information to your students by incorporating the information in your syllabi and reviewing in class.

The first implements the California State Law for accommodating students whose religious creed would be violated by their taking examinations on certain holy days.

The second sets forth the guidelines for resolving conflicts between extracurricular activities and academic requirements.

The third provides the guidelines for permissible activities during the Reading, Review, Recitation (RRR) period before final exams.

The fourth stipulates that no commencement ceremonies may be held before the conclusion of the final exam period in either fall or spring, with the exception of graduate professional school ceremonies with graduate students only.

Additional details, including key dates to keep in mind, are provided below.

## 1. ACCOMMODATION OF RELIGIOUS CREED

In compliance with Education code, Section 92640(a), it is the official policy of the University of California at Berkeley to permit any student to undergo a test or examination, without penalty, at a time when that activity would not violate the student's religious creed, unless administering the examination at an alternative time would impose an undue hardship that could not reasonably have been avoided. Requests to accommodate a student's religious creed by scheduling tests or examinations at alternative times should be submitted directly to the faculty member responsible for administering the examination by the second week of the semester.

Reasonable common sense, judgment and the pursuit of mutual goodwill should result in the positive resolution of scheduling conflicts. The regular campus appeals process applies if a mutually satisfactory arrangement cannot be achieved.

The link to this policy is available in the Religious Creed section of the Academic Calendar

webpage: <http://registrar.berkeley.edu/DisplayMedia.aspx?ID=Religious%20Creed%20Policy.pdf>

## 2. CONFLICTS BETWEEN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

The Academic Senate has established Guidelines Concerning Scheduling Conflicts with Academic Requirements to address the issue of conflicts that arise between extracurricular activities and academic requirements. They specifically concern the schedules of student athletes, student musicians, those with out-of-town interviews, and other students with activities (e.g., classes missed as the result of religious holy days) that compete with academic obligations. The guidelines assign responsibilities as follows:

-It is the instructor's responsibility to give students a schedule, available on the syllabus in the first week of instruction, of all class sessions, exams, tests, project deadlines, field trips, and any other required class activities.

-It is the student's responsibility to notify the instructor(s) in writing by the second week of the semester of any potential conflict(s) and to recommend a solution, with the understanding that an earlier deadline or date of examination may be the most practicable solution.

-It is the student's responsibility to inform him/herself about material missed because of an absence, whether or not he/she has been formally excused.

The link to the complete guidelines is available on the Academic Senate website: <http://tinyurl.com/schedconflictguidelines>.

A useful checklist to help instructors and students comply with the guidelines is available on the Center for Teaching and Learning website: <http://teaching.berkeley.edu/checklist-scheduling-conflicts-academic-requirements> .

### 3. READING, REVIEW, RECITATION (RRR) WEEK

In Fall 2009, the campus instituted a Reading, Review, Recitation (RRR) period before final exams. Guidelines have been posted online: [http://academic-senate.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/committees/coci/rrrguidelinesweb\\_1.pdf](http://academic-senate.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/committees/coci/rrrguidelinesweb_1.pdf)

For the coming semesters, please keep these dates in mind:

In Spring 2014, classes end on Friday, May 2, 2014. RRR week will take place between the last day classes (May 2) and the first day of the final exam period (Monday, May 12, 2014).

Please note that the regular semester classroom will NOT be available during the RRR week unless the instructor requests it through the departmental scheduler.

RRR Week is intended to provide students time to prepare for exams, to work on papers and projects, and to participate in optional review sessions and meetings with instructors. Presentations of capstone projects, oral presentations, and performances are permitted, although flexibility in scheduling may be required to accommodate students' individual schedules. The introduction of new material is not permitted.

Mandatory exams or quizzes and other mandatory activities are also not permitted, with some very limited exceptions (capstone presentations, for example).

Please keep in mind that final exams and papers or projects substituting for final exams may not be due before the final exam week.

Detailed, updated guidelines on permissible organized activities during the RRR week are available on the Academic Senate's web site: [http://academic-senate.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/committees/coci/rrrguidelinesweb\\_1.pdf](http://academic-senate.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/committees/coci/rrrguidelinesweb_1.pdf)

FAQs are available on the Office of the Registrar's web site: <http://registrar.berkeley.edu/RRRFAQ.html>.

In addition, the Center for Teaching and Learning has prepared some suggestions on making RRR week productive for instructors and students <http://teaching.berkeley.edu/ideas-rrr-week> . If you have tips or ideas you would like to have added to this page, please contact the Center for Teaching and Learning [teaching@berkeley.edu](mailto:teaching@berkeley.edu) .

#### 4. COMMENCEMENT CEREMONIES AND FINAL EXAMS

Campus instituted a policy that graduation ceremonies must take place after the conclusion of final examinations, with the exception of professional school ceremonies with graduate students only.

For Spring 2014, final exams end at 10 pm on Friday, May 16, 2014. The Spring 2014 Graduates Convocation will be held Saturday May 17, 2014. For more information, please see the Commencement Convocation Events Office website at <http://commencement.berkeley.edu/>.

If you have questions, please contact Assistant Vice Provost Cynthia Schrager at [schrager@berkeley.edu](mailto:schrager@berkeley.edu) .

Thank you and have a great semester.

George W. Breslauer □ Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost

Elizabeth Deakin □ 2013-14 Chair, Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate