

Date	Aug 10 2015 09:20:55 AM
Sender	Claude M. Steele, Executive Vice Chancellor & Provost (campus-wide)
To	Faculty; Staff; Students
Orgs	UCBKL
Subject	Academic Calendar and Student Accommodations - Campus Policies and Guidelines
Body	<p>Dear Campus Community,</p> <p>We call your attention to important campus policies and guidelines concerning the academic calendar and accommodations for students in their academic programs. Please convey this information to your students by incorporating the information in your syllabi and reviewing in class.</p> <p>The first implements the California State Law for accommodating students whose religious creed would be violated by their taking examinations on certain holy days.</p> <p>The second sets forth the guidelines for resolving conflicts between extracurricular activities and academic requirements.</p> <p>The third outlines procedures around and expectations for the handling of absences related to illness.</p> <p>The fourth reminds instructors of their responsibilities for accommodating disabilities in the classroom.</p> <p>The fifth informs instructors of their responsibilities for accommodating pregnant and parenting students.</p> <p>The sixth provides the guidelines for permissible activities during the Reading, Review, Recitation (RRR) period before final exams.</p> <p>The seventh 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.</p> <p>Additional details, including key dates to keep in mind, are provided below.</p> <p>1. ACCOMMODATION OF RELIGIOUS CREED In compliance with California Education Code, Section 92640(a), it is the official policy of the University of California at Berkeley to permit</p>

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 (<http://registrar.berkeley.edu/DisplayMedia.aspx?ID=Religious%20Creed%20Policy.pdf>) section of the Academic Calendar webpage.

2. CONFLICTS BETWEEN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTSThe 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. These policies 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.

These policies were updated in Spring 2014 to include the following statement:

-The pedagogical needs of the class are the key criteria when deciding whether a proposed accommodation is appropriate. Faculty must clearly articulate the specific pedagogical reasons that prevent accepting a proposed accommodation. Absent such a reason, the presumption should be that accommodations are to be made.

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 complete guidelines (http://academic-senate.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/committees/cep/guidelines_a_cadschedconflicts_final_2014.pdf) are available on the Academic Senate website. Additionally, a checklist (<http://teaching.berkeley.edu/checklist-scheduling-conflicts-academic-requirements>) to help instructors and students comply with the guidelines is available on the Center for Teaching and Learning website.

3. ABSENCES DUE TO ILLNESS

Instructors are asked to refrain from general requirements for written excuses from medical personnel for absence due to illness. Many healthy people experience a mild-to-moderate illness and recover without the need to seek medical attention. University Health Services does not have the capacity to evaluate such illnesses and provide documentation excusing student absences. However, UHS will continue to provide documentation when a student is being treated by Tang for an illness that necessitates a change in course load or an incomplete.

From time-to-time the Academic Senate has issued guidance concerning missed classes and exams due to illnesses such as influenza advising that students not attend class if they have a fever. Should a student experience repeated absences due to illness, it may be appropriate for the faculty member to ask the student to seek medical advice. The Senate guidelines advise faculty to use flexibility and good judgment in determining whether to excuse missed work, extend deadlines, or substitute an alternative assignment. Only the Committee on Courses of Instruction (COCI) can waive the final exam. However, a department chair can authorize an instructor to offer an alternative format for a final exam (e.g., paper, take-home exam) on a one-time basis (<http://academic-senate.berkeley.edu/committees/coci/toolbox#16> (<http://academic-senate.berkeley.edu/committees/coci/toolbox#16>)).

4. ACCOMMODATION FOR DISABILITY

Instructors are reminded of their responsibilities for accommodating disabilities in the classroom in the following areas:

- Confidentiality: Information about a student's disability is confidential, and may not be shared with other students.
- Role of Instructor: Course instructors play a critical role in enabling the University to meet its obligation to appropriately accommodate students with disabilities who are registered with the Disabled Students Program (DSP) and who have been issued a Letter of Accommodation.

- Reading Assignments:

- o In advance: Because students with print disabilities usually need assistance from the DSP Alternative Media Center, reading materials should be provided well in advance (two or more weeks) before the reading assignment due date.

- o Required or Recommended: Always indicate which course readings (including bCourse postings) are either “required” readings, or “recommended.”

- o Accessible Format: Reading materials (especially bCourse postings) should be provided in an “accessible format,” e.g., clearly legible, “clean” (without stray marks, highlighting, or mark-ups), and whenever possible, in a Word Document or word-searchable PDF.

For more information about accommodations for students with disabilities, please contact the Disabled Students Program at 510-642-0518 (tel:510-642-0518) or email DSP Director Paul Hippolitus hippolitus@berkeley.edu (<mailto:hippolitus@berkeley.edu>). For more information about providing reading assignments in an accessible format, please contact Martha Velasquez directly at dspamc@berkeley.edu (<mailto:dspamc@berkeley.edu>).

5. ACCOMMODATION FOR PREGNANCY AND PARENTING

In compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and with the California Education Code, Section 66281.7, it is the official policy of the University of California at Berkeley to not discriminate against or exclude any person on the basis of pregnancy or related conditions, and to provide reasonable accommodations to students as appropriate. Instructors are reminded of their responsibilities for excusing medically necessary absences for pregnancy and related conditions and making reasonable accommodations in the areas of class sessions, exams, tests, project deadlines, field trips, and any other required activities. For graduate students, faculty advisors are reminded of policies regarding parental leave and the extension of normative time for academic milestones, as set out in the Guide to Graduate Policy.

Reasonable common sense, judgment and the pursuit of mutual goodwill should result in the positive resolution of conflicts. The regular campus appeals process or Title IX complaint process apply if a mutually satisfactory arrangement cannot be achieved. For more information about accommodations for student who are pregnant or parenting, please contact the Office for the Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination (<http://ophd.berkeley.edu/>) or (specific to graduate students) email the Graduate Division at graddean@berkeley.edu (<mailto:graddean@berkeley.edu>).

6. READING, REVIEW, RECITATION (RRR) WEEK

The Reading, Review, Recitation (RRR) period—which are instructional days—before final exams provides students time to prepare for exams, to work on papers and projects, and to participate in optional review sessions and meetings with instructors. For the coming semesters, please keep these dates in mind:

In Fall 2015, formal classes end on Friday, December 4, 2015. RRR Week will take place between the last day of classes (December 4) and the first day of the final exam period (Monday, December 14, 2015).

In Spring 2016, classes end on Friday, April 29, 2016. RRR week will take place between the last day of classes (April 29) and the first day of the final exam period (Monday, May 9, 2016).

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

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 RRR week activities

(http://academic-senate.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/committees/coci/rrrguidelines_web_1.pdf) are available on the Academic Senate web site. The Office of the Registrar has posted answers to frequently-asked questions (http://registrar.berkeley.edu/DisplayMedia.aspx?ID=050714_Campus%20Policies%20and%20Guidelines%20Concerning%20the%20Academic%20Calendar.pdf) about the academic calendar.

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

7. COMMENCEMENT CEREMONIES AND FINAL EXAMS

Campus policy stipulates that graduation ceremonies must take place after the conclusion of final examinations, with the exception

of professional school ceremonies with graduate students only.

For Fall 2015, final exams end at 10pm on Friday, December 18, 2015

For Spring 2016, final exams end at 10 pm on Friday, May 13, 2016.

The Spring 2016 Graduates Convocation will be held Saturday May 14, 2016. For more information, please see the Commencement Convocation Events Office website (<http://commencement.berkeley.edu/>).

If you have additional questions, please contact vcue@berkeley.edu (<mailto:vcue@berkeley.edu>).

Thank you and have a great semester.

Claude M. Steele
Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost

Benjamin Hermalin
2015-16 Chair, Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate
