The Equity Calendar

The UVic Faculty of Law is committed to inclusion and enabling the participation of community members in events at the Law School. An ongoing concern is that some events are scheduled on days that prevent or limit the participation of community members due to a community member’s religious observances. To respond to this and a motion by Faculty Council that addressed this concern, the Equity and Diversity Committee (EDC) has created the Equity Calendar. We would like you to consult the Calendar before you schedule an event so that if possible your event is not scheduled on a day that may prevent the participation of those who wish to attend.

While simple in concept, the following are some comments.

- In addition to ensuring that a day does not preclude attendance, please also be attentive to whether your event has activities that some community members would be unable to participate in. For example, on some days members of some faith traditions are unable to partake of certain types of food.
- If a conflict cannot be avoided, please acknowledge the conflict when publicizing your event.

We would like to receive feedback on the Calendar and how to improve it, so please contact the EDC with any comments or suggestions you have.

Thanks.

The Equity and Diversity Committee, on behalf of the Faculty of Law, 2013-14

Contact: Tim Richards, trichard@uvic.ca

Questions and Answers

*Who should consult the Calendar?*

All community members scheduling an event for the law school community: faculty, students, staff.

*How do I consult the Calendar?*

The Equity Calendar is in the form of an Excel spreadsheet with tabs. Each calendar year is accessed through the tabs at the bottom. Within the spreadsheet for each year, there is a chronological listing of days of religious observance. Knowing the options for the dates for your event, scroll down the date column and check whether the dates fall on dates that preclude participation based on the information in the Description and Observance/Accommodation Required column. Choose a day which avoids or
minimizes scheduling conflicts. The link to the Equity Calendar spreadsheet is on the Faculty of Law’s Student Wellness and Equity webpage.

*What do I do if it is not possible to avoid a scheduling conflict?*

In this case, choose a date that best enables participation. In the materials that publicize the event you can note that although you attempted to avoid a conflict this was not possible. You could also express regrets to any who wish to attend but are unable to do so.

*How was the Equity Calendar created?*

In 2012-13 the EDC received a Law Foundation block grant to create the Equity Calendar. Two students created the Calendar by consulting existing multi-faith calendars as an initial framework, adding contextual information about the holy days, including their significance, common methods of observance and specific accommodations that adherents may require.

*How does the Equity Calendar relate to the University’s Days of Religious Observance?*

The University’s policy on Days of Religious Observance identifies days on which professors at UVic are obliged to accommodate the religious practices of UVic students in their courses. It is available at http://web.uvic.ca/eqhr/observances.htm. The Equity Calendar serves a different purpose and has a more expansive listing of days of observance.