



# Resolved to Educate

## Educational support for: Respect for Diversity of Religious and Cultural Holidays

Respect for Diversity of Religious and Cultural Holidays (2007, 2021) – BEST PRACTICE

*All College Panhellenics should schedule recruitment or other major Panhellenic events so they do not conflict with religious or cultural holidays.*

Throughout the academic year, there are a number of religious and cultural holidays that may overlap with Panhellenic programs. Scheduling recruitment events and other programming opportunities (especially mandatory programming) to occur during those holidays forces potential new members and Panhellenic sorority members to make a choice between belonging to and participating in the Panhellenic community or participating in an important piece of their cultural or religious practice. It is exclusive and hurtful to members to program over holidays or other celebrations and College Panhellenics should not program over religious or cultural holidays. NPC encourages College Panhellenics to have community-wide discussions about scheduling for all major Panhellenic and chapter events.

This document is a good starting place as you reflect on how to create a more equitable and intentionally inclusive Panhellenic experience and how to celebrate diversity while also being respectful of our individual differences.

### Why is this best practice important?

All members of the Panhellenic community should feel welcome and the College Panhellenic should avoid creating unnecessary barriers for joining or participating in Panhellenic activities. For example, if hosting a fall primary recruitment, scheduling preference round during Rosh Hashanah or scheduling a mandatory educational program during Ramadan would mean that members would have to forego either celebrating a holiday or participating in Panhellenic sorority life. Recognizing and respecting the diversity of religious and cultural holidays members may celebrate is a step in the right direction toward a more inclusive sorority experience.

### What resources exist?

There are many resources to reference when implementing this best practice. Consult and collaborate with institutional resources on your campus such as diversity, equity and inclusion offices or religious/cultural centers. To find religious or cultural holidays that members in the community might observe and learn more, visit [The University of Southern California's Holy Days Calendar](#).

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### How can we make sure to use this best practice in our community?

- Create a cultural and religious holidays community calendar to avoid over-programming. Ask current Panhellenic members to submit holidays that may be relevant for them to make sure it is reflective of holidays that current members celebrate. Add the "Holidays" calendar option to any [Google](#) or [Outlook](#) calendar.
- Panhellenics should not only avoid programming on holidays that are celebrated by their current membership, but on all cultural or religious holidays. Make it a practice to not program on these holidays so that your membership experience does not have any barriers and is inclusive to any woman who might want to participate.
- Evaluate Panhellenic's accessibility when it comes to scheduling and programming. For example:
  - When scheduling a virtual event, are you mindful of timing to ensure it does not infringe on sabbath days when members may not use technology?
  - Does the Panhellenic programming schedule keep in mind any fasting schedules that members may adhere to? Scheduling spring programming or social programming during Ramadan will affect members' ability to participate.
  - Does the Panhellenic provide meaningful and substantive alternatives instead of a simple accommodation?
    - For example, if a potential new member cannot attend in-person recruitment, is she able to make up a time to meet with the chapter or is the absence simply excused, but they do not get an opportunity to meet with the chapter?
- Post on social media about the holidays members of the Panhellenic and campus community celebrate.