A Step-by-Step Guide to Transforming your Daily-Use Outlook Work Calendar into your Interfaith Calendar*
(i.e.: Please don’t pretend you’ll regularly be checking a separate interfaith calendar!)

*Note: You might find it easier to purchase an app that imports holiday dates directly into your calendar (check “holidays” in your app review)....Be sure the app works with your operating system and with your Outlook calendar, and that it gives you the option of choosing religious holidays as opposed to hundreds of national holidays

Downloadable version at:
http://www.du.edu/ahss/cjs

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Transforming your actual online work calendar into your interfaith calendar...

Goal: To integrate 8 religious/cultural calendars into your regular, daily Outlook calendar.

To be sure, this is not ideal as there are more than 8 religions/cultures. We are, however, starting with these 8 because making a start is better than doing nothing, and these 8 calendars are the easiest to add to Outlook based on Outlook’s current (2016) format which

1) has 5 ‘internal’ religious calendars, and
2) requires that any other uploaded religious/cultural calendar be in the format of an ‘.ics’ file; currently, I was only able to find 3 additional religious calendars in ‘.ics’ format.

Based on these parameters, and fully aware that the situation is not ideal, we will start by adding these 8 calendars to your daily work calendar.
To get started, click on ‘Add Calendar’ at the top of the page...

Next, click on ‘Holiday Calendar’ in the pull-down menu...
A ‘Holiday Calendars’ list will appear on the right-hand-side of your screen. This includes national calendars from around the world, as well as 5 holiday calendars; click on the 5 holiday calendars (they are in alphabetical order).
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- Christian Religious Holidays
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- Christian Religious Holidays
- Holy See (Vatican City)
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- Christian Religious Holidays
- Holy See (Vatican City)
- Islamic (Shia) Religious Holidays
- Islamic (Sunni) Religious Holidays
- Jewish Religious Holidays
After you select all 5, hit “Save” at the top of the box.
We are now done adding the 5 “built-in” Outlook religious holiday calendars into your calendar. The holidays associated with all 5 of these religions/cultures will now automatically populate your main calendar (as can be seen on the screen- the different dates are color-coded to the different religious calendars...)

We are now ready to import 3 more religious calendars into Outlook...
Go to CalendarLabs.com and click to the iCal Calendar, Religious Calendar page. The direct link is: www.calendarlabs.com/ical-calendar-holidays.php
At the top of the page, there are a number of national calendars for countries around the globe; this is not what we will be using...
2015 - 2016 Religious Holiday Calendar (Subscribe or Download .ics file)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Festival Type</th>
<th>Subscribe</th>
<th>Download</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015 &amp; 2016</td>
<td>Buddhist Festivals</td>
<td>[Subscribe]</td>
<td>[Download]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015 &amp; 2016</td>
<td>Christian Festivals</td>
<td>[Subscribe]</td>
<td>[Download]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015 &amp; 2016</td>
<td>Hindu Festivals</td>
<td>[Subscribe]</td>
<td>[Download]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015 &amp; 2016</td>
<td>Islamic Festivals</td>
<td>[Subscribe]</td>
<td>[Download]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015 &amp; 2016</td>
<td>Jewish Festivals</td>
<td>[Subscribe]</td>
<td>[Download]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015 &amp; 2016</td>
<td>Sikh Festivals</td>
<td>[Subscribe]</td>
<td>[Download]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Because we already ‘have’ the Christian, Islamic, and Jewish calendars from our earlier Outlook step, let’s just download the files for **Buddhist Festivals, Hindu Festivals, and Sikh Festivals** ...

Click Download and the .ics file will go to your desktop. (During the download it might ask you if you want to add the calendar to your iCalendar or other computer calendar; choose ‘yes’ or ‘no’- for our purposes it doesn’t matter as the main goal is to get the files onto your desktop to upload into Outlook).
Now that these three .ics files are on your desktop, return to Outlook and create 3 additional calendars under “Other calendars” on the left-hand-side.
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Click on the “+” sign, and type in a box called ‘Buddhist’ (it will give you a box to fill in); when done, hit Enter.
Next, click on the “+” sign again, and type in a box called ‘Sikh’ (it will give you a box to fill in); when done, hit Enter.

Now that these three .ics files are on your desktop, return to Outlook and create 3 additional calendars under “Other calendars” on the left-hand-side.
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Next, click on the “+” sign again, and type in a box called ‘Hindu’ (it will give you a box to fill in); when done, hit Enter.
Pull down the “Add Calendar” menu again; this time choose “From File”...
- A new window will open called “Import Calendar.”
- Next to “choose an .ics file” click “BROWSE”...
• From your desktop, choose the ‘Buddhist-Holidays.ics’ file
Next, from the ‘Calendar’ scroll down menu, select “Buddhist”.
• Then, hit ‘SAVE.’
• The Buddhist calendar is now part of your Outlook calendar.
Then repeat these same steps for the Hindu and Sikh files on your desktop, in each case choosing an .ics file from your desktop (Sikh, then Hindu), and matching it to the calendar title (Sikh then Hindu).
Congratulations! Your Outlook calendar is transformed!

Your Outlook calendar should now be populated (automatically) with the religious holidays from 8 religions/cultures.

Your next step is to figure out how to use this interfaith information when you plan events and meetings. Think about your office flow, and come up with a decisive way to ensure that the interfaith calendar is being consulted BEFORE you finalize your upcoming event or meeting.

Simply having access to these religious dates does not on its own help unless you integrate that data into your workflow!

[One idea might be to create an event scheduling checklist for each event, and to have the relevant office member add their signature and date to the form once the ‘interfaith calendar check’ step is completed for the event in question; and: if your office already has an event check-list, please consider adding ‘Check Interfaith Calendar’ to the check-list].
Q: Is it preferable to avoid scheduling my event or meeting on any religious holiday?

A: Not necessarily. Please consider two main factors:

1) If no one in your group celebrates certain religious holidays, then there’s likely no reason not to schedule your meeting on that religious holiday.

2) Keep in mind that not all religious holidays would prevent people from that religion from attending a meeting or event. For example, in the case of Judaism, many Jews (including observant and non-observant Jews) would be unable to attend a meeting or events on the two days of the ‘Rosh Hashanah’ holiday, but no similar issue would come up for the holiday of Hanukkah.

But: How will I know which holiday is which?...
How to know which holiday is which:

Visit the DU “Religious & Spiritual Life” page for a list of holidays; it lists more holidays than the ones we have successfully entered into your Outlook, and the lists include descriptions of whether a holiday does or does not have a “Special Worship” element or a “restriction” of some sort. If the holiday has a “special worship” or “restriction,” it’s more likely to be the kind of holiday that will prevent at least some members of a given religious/cultural community from attending events or meetings on the day in question. But that’s not always true, so approach each holiday on a case by case basis.

http://www.du.edu/studentlife/religiouslife/events-activities/calendar.html
Q: What happens if in spite of all best efforts my office needs to schedule a meeting or event on the kind of religious holiday that will likely exclude members of the DU community from attending?

A: Life is not perfect, and scheduling is no exception. Work mindfully and with care to try to avoid cases like this (including having a robust set of best practices for checking the interfaith calendar before finalizing dates for events and meetings). However, if circumstances lead your office to needing to schedule an event on a religious holiday that will exclude members of the DU community from attending, consider overtly mentioning and acknowledging the less-than-ideal situation in your marketing for the event. Perhaps some language of the following sort:

“We apologize to those who might be unable to attend our event due to [name of holiday]; scheduling and other factors led us to select this date, and we hope to avoid similar outcomes in the future. Inclusivity—including religious inclusivity—is a value we work hard to uphold.”

There is no ideal way to address situations like this, but **acknowledgement + apology** is better than just ignoring that your office is responsible for creating a religious holiday conflict. Adding language like the language above to your marketing and website (in cases where your event conflicts with the kind of religious holiday that might prevent members of the DU community from participating) at least helps show that your office is **(a)** in the habit of consulting an interfaith calendar, **(b)** aware that the event date might exclude some members of the DU community, and **(c)** apologetic for the outcome. *This helps make for a more inclusive community, even when we can’t have ideal outcomes.*