

*This message is intended for all faculty and staff of Western Washington University:*

The holy month of Ramadan started this week on April 13th and it will go through Thursday, May 13th (approximately). The month of Ramadan is a religious observance followed by Muslims all around the world, and it is a time of reflection, selflessness, healing, and strength. Fasting during the holy month of Ramadan occurs from sunrise to sunset, and the first few days are extremely difficult. Please be extra kind to your Muslim co-workers, students, neighbors, and friends.

Senate Bill 5166 passed by Governor Jay Inslee, effective July 8, 2019, states that "educational institutions must develop policies to accommodate students' absences to allow students to take holidays for reasons of faith or conscience... so that students' grades are not adversely impacted by the absences." In response to SB 5166, faculty and staff members should adopt policies that grant extensions to Muslim students on campus regarding 11:59 pm assignment deadlines, quizzes, and exams. When Muslims open their fast — depending on where they are geographically located — it can be late in the evening thus strict deadlines can be very challenging as students transition to complete their assignments after Iftar (the meal that opens/breaks the fast immediately after sundown).

As we fast in this holy month, please be aware of your Muslim students' needs as we are already struggling with remote learning. Please find the attached link of the recent Washington state law here:

<http://lawfilesexext.leg.wa.gov/biennium/2019-20/Pdf/Bills/Session%20Laws/Senate/5166-S.sl.pdf>

With peace and love,

Rukhsar Sadat (she/her)

