Tufts UNIVERSITY CHAPLAINCY

E-NEWS 4.28.21

The Allure of Asymmetry: Reflection from our Jewish Chaplain

Beauty is a strange thing. You'd think that we are most attracted to perfection, order and symmetry, and to a certain extent we are. But it's not the whole story. Human beings are often attracted to imperfection and asymmetry. Some of the people we consider most beautiful have asymmetric features, some of the most famous singers possess voices that are rugged and irregular, and what often attracts us to another's personality is not their perfection, but their complexity.

Perfection is boring, it makes no demands on us and so it only holds our attention fleetingly. Complexity is attractive because it challenges us. According to the Jewish mystics, God created a universe prior to our own but it was unable to be sustained because it was too perfect. In its place God created our universe, which like us, is a complex mixture of good and bad, darkness and light, wholeness and brokenness. It is in navigating this conflicting mix that gives our lives meaning and makes them beautiful.

One of the ritual enactments at a Passover Seder, a springtime Jewish holiday of liberation, involves breaking the wafer-like Matzah in half. On the face of it, this gesture of brokenness symbolizes our ancestors suffering and bondage. The Hasidic masters, however, see this as a liberating gesture, for in leaning into our brokenness, we throw off the stultifying tyranny of perfection.

As the summer unfolds, and we take tentative steps back to the world we knew before the pandemic, I invite you to see beauty everywhere. Not a tame, conformist beauty, but rather a beauty all the more magnificent for its wildness, brokenness and unpredictability.

In friendship and with blessing,

Rabbi Naftali Brawer Ph.D
Neubauer Executive Director, Tufts Hillel
Tufts University Jewish Chaplain

Sowing and Growing: An Interfaith Community Celebration
Friday, April 30, 1:30 p.m - 3:30 p.m ET

Celebrate the arrival of Spring with the Interfaith Student Council (ISC) on Friday, April 30 from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. ET. Drop by the Goddard Chapel steps facing Tisch Roof to plant a seed, grab a treat (food and non-food options), and pause for a moment together. At different booths, you'll have the opportunity to: Plant a seed while reflecting on both the past and what is to come for you; celebrate the end of Earth Month and the start of Spring with the Tufts Community; and enjoy fun, quick activities to uplift our relationship with the earth and ourselves. Help make this event as sustainable as possible by bringing a planter container of any kind (i.e. plastic water bottle or tea cup) for your seeds. Also, biodegradable containers and reusable lids for travelling with your seedling will be available for everyone.

Religious and Philosophical Life Programs

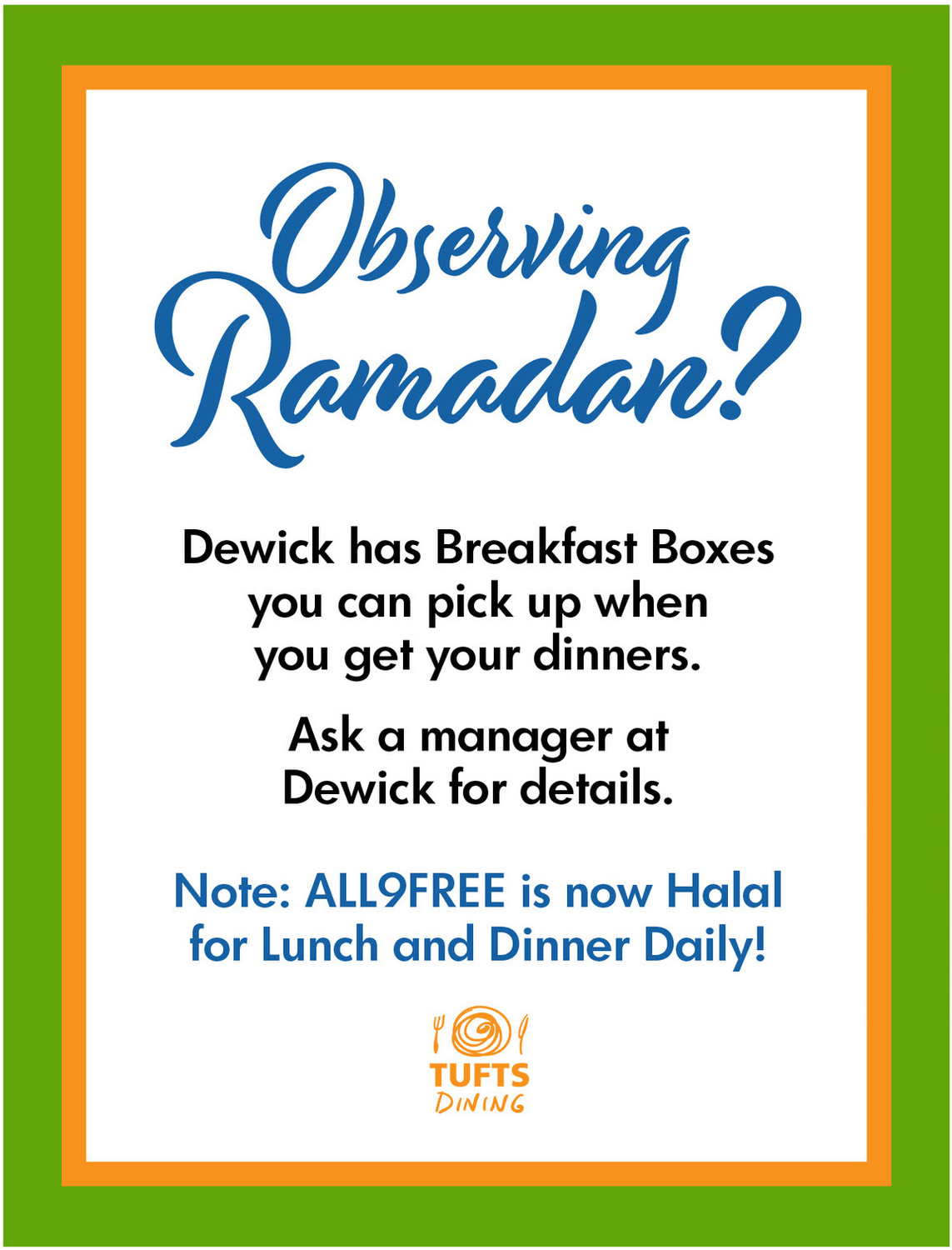
You can find more information about our many weekly gatherings and student group meetings on our website. You can also find the Zoom links for all events and gatherings there. In this section this week, we highlight events and offerings from our chaplaincies. You can always reach out to the chaplain listed for more information, or find details on our website. If you have an idea for how University Chaplaincy programming can better serve you, please contact program manager Nora Bond.

See Our Weekly Gatherings

Apply to be an Interfaith Ambassador with the University Chaplaincy
Applications due May 15

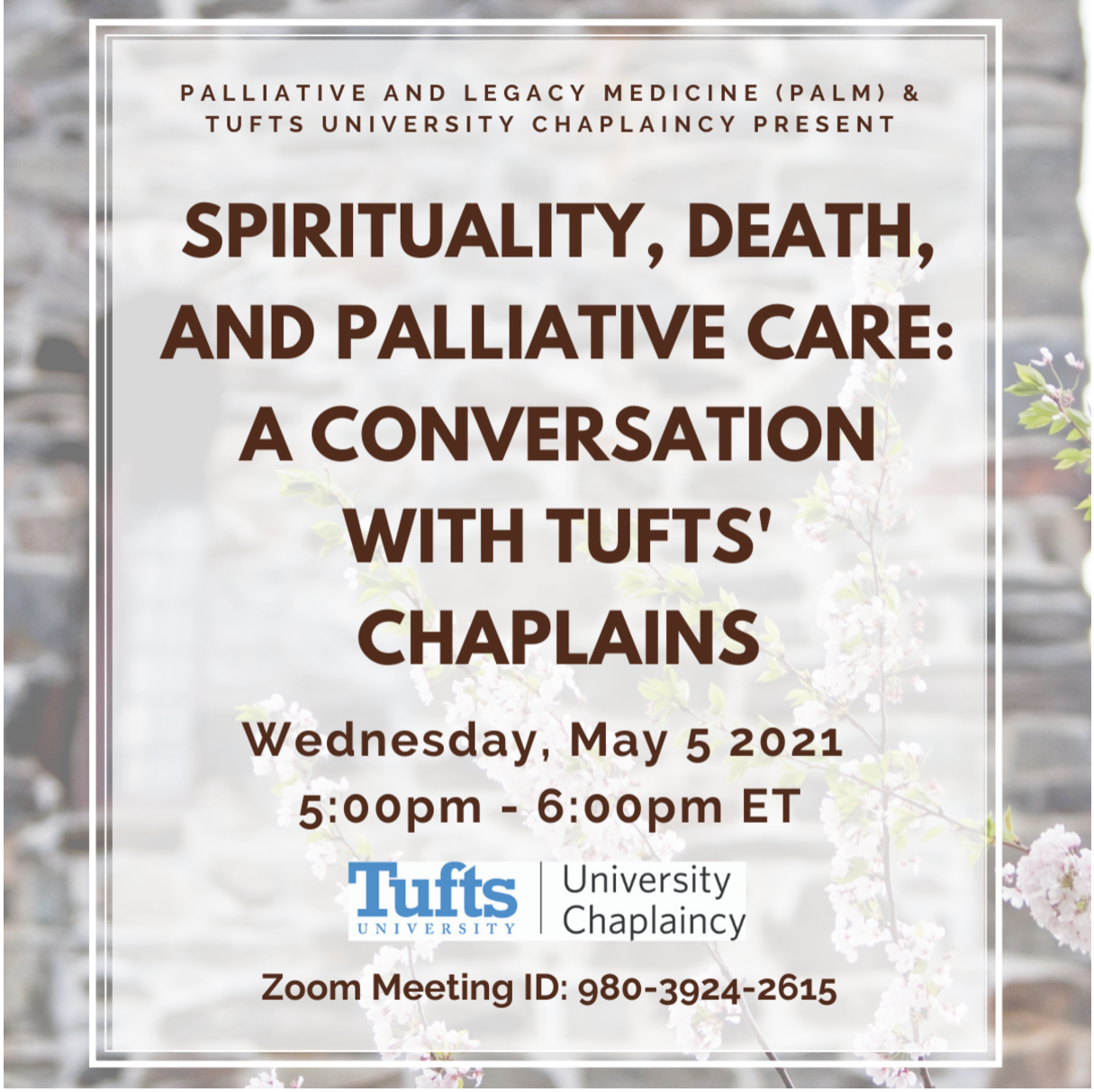
In Fall 2021, the Tufts University Chaplaincy will pilot a new Interfaith Ambassador Program for undergraduate students. This team of Interfaith Ambassadors, drawn from Tufts' diverse religious, spiritual and philosophical communities, will be equipped to understand and engage religious diversity on campus, in their own communities, and in the world. Ambassadors will actively foster interfaith community, which will require a willingness to seek places of both common and contested ground for the sake of learning, cooperation and action. These kinds of questions will be engaged: What does it mean to live democratically with religious diversity? What are the roles of religious communities in civil society? What is the place of faith in public deliberation and work for social justice? How do religious and non-religious communities and individuals work together for the common good? Ambassadors will have the opportunity to learn more about their own beliefs; to explore what interfaith engagement means within their traditions; and to deepen their understandings of civic engagement, justice, and peace in a pluralistic world. We encourage all Tufts undergraduates to apply. Please email Univeristy Chaplain Reverend Elyse Nelson Winger with

any questions. You can find the job application on Handshake.



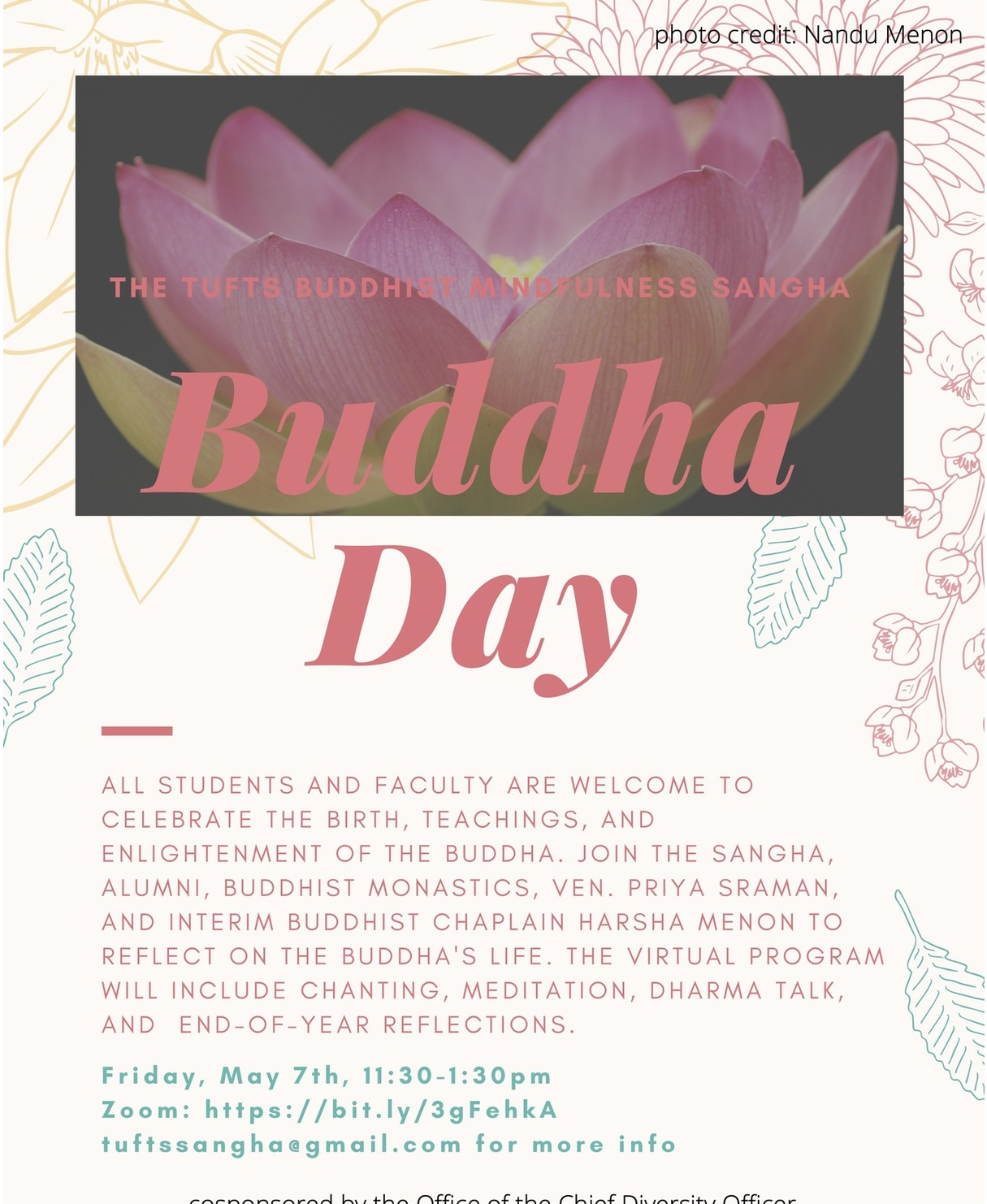
Suhoor/Sehri Kits Available at Dewick
Available for pick up throughout Ramadan

Throughout Ramadan, Tufts Dining has made it possible for students oberserving Ramadan to pick up suhoor kits. These kits are only available at Dewick and to access them, you must ask one of the managers at Dewick. Suhoor kits are now free of charage for students without meal plans, so make sure to email both Imam Abdul-Malik and University Chaplain Reverend Elyse Nelson Winger to be added to the list. Additionally, to pick up a suhoor kit, you need to enter the dining hall at dinner time between 5 p.m. - 9 p.m. where you can also pick up your iftaar. Please also note that for the entire month of Ramadan, the ALL9FREE section at Dewick is halal for both lunch and dinner.



Spirituality, Death, and Palliative Care: A Conversation with Tufts' Chaplains.
Wednesday, May 5, 5:00 p.m - 6:00 p.m ET

Join us for an hour of conversation with Tufts' chaplains as we share stories about accompanying individuals and their loved ones in the dying process and talk together about the ways we've spiritually explored and reckoned with death and suffering through these experiences. Sponsored by the Palliative and Legacy Medicine group (PALM) at the Tufts University School of Medicine and the University Chaplaincy. Questions? Please contact Steven A. Schwab. The Zoom link can be found on our website.



cosponsored by the Office of the Chief Diversity Officer

Tufts UNIVERSITY | University Chaplaincy Buddhist Chaplaincy

Annual Buddha Day Celebration
Friday, May 7,11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

The Buddha Day celebration is an event to commemorate Buddha's birth, enlightenment and passing away. We celebrate with local Buddhist spiritual leaders and other Tufts communities. It is an opportunity to end the academic year with peace, mindfulness, wholesome attitude, and laughter with friends, classmates, and colleagues—as a community. Sponsored by the Tufts Buddhist Chaplaincy, The Office of Diversity and Inclusion at Tufts, and the Tufts Buddhist Mindfulness Sangha.

Amar Chitra Katha (ACK) Reading Group
Friday, May 7, 6:00 p.m - 7:00 p.m ET

ACK is an Indian publisher of graphic novels based on biographies, religious figures and cultural stories, founded in 1967 by Anant Pai. Largely a response to supporting children in learning about their heritage, the series also has equally engaged older readers in important conversations about their relationship to the content including social equity and gender dynamics. Sign up to attend here or email Hindu Advisor Preeta Banerjee to RSVP and to get a copy of the comic as available. This will be the last meeting of the semester, and will include a small ceremony and a discussion of this month's reading on Ganga.

Partner Programs

Critical Times, Critical Thinkers: Art, Activism, Resilience
Wednesday, April 28, 12:00 p.m. ET

This panel aims to present a critical exchange amongst global artists and curators about the response of the arts and artists to current global crises and hierarchies and histories of hegemonic power. We want to explore art and social activism as both “resistance,” or “dissidence” and also as individual and collective “resilience” to crises and political restrictions (praxis). Speakers will discuss how artistic work can support critical thinking, social action, and solidarity among human collectives seeking to free themselves from systems of oppression. Register here.

Embodied Justice: Promoting Justice Through Artistic Mediums
Wednesday, April 28, 7:00 p.m. ET

Join Tisch College, the First Center, the Africana Center, and the School of the Museum of Fine Arts at Tufts for a film screening and discussion of excerpts from *Mezala*, a series of dance movies created by *Danza Orgánica* that explores themes of colonialism, decolonization, racism, and the current pandemic. Register here.

Tufts' Bridging Differences Initiative
presents
"Anti-Asian Hate and Systemic Racism: Breaking the Cycle"
a two-part event

Part I: TUESDAY, APRIL 20, 4:30-5:30pm

"The Return of the 'Yellow Peril': Xenophobia and Anti-Asian Racism in the U.S. Today"

ERIKA LEE (Tufts'91)

One of the nation's leading immigration and Asian American historians, Erika Lee teaches American history at the University of Minnesota, where she is a Regents Professor, a Distinguished McKnight University Professor, the Rudolph J. Vecoli Chair in Immigration History, and the Director of the Immigration History Research Center. Lee is the author of four award-winning books in U.S. immigration and Asian American history, including *The Making of Asian America: A History* and *America for Americans: A History of Xenophobia in the United States.*

Dr. Lee's talk is co-sponsored by the Office of the Provost, The Center for the Study of Race and Democracy, the Office of the President, and the Division of Student Diversity and Inclusion

Register for Part I here.

Part II: THURSDAY, APRIL 29, 4:30-5:45pm

Tufts Table: "Anti-Asian Hate and Systemic Racism: Breaking the Cycle"

Tufts Table is about establishing connections, sharing perspectives, and discussing significant issues. It is an opportunity for students, faculty and staff to gather to talk, think and reflect with one another.

Register for Part II Here.

Tufts Table: "Anti-Asian Hate and Systemic Racism: Breaking the Cycle" Part 2
Thursday, April 29, 4:30 p.m - 5:45 p.m. ET

Envisioning Tufts as an antiracist institution is an urgent discussion that the Tufts Bridging Differences Initative is leading. The virtual tufts table will be led by prominent Asian American historian Erika Lee and will be an opportunity to open a dialogue about Anti-Asian Racism and Xenophobia in the U.S. Dr. Lee's event is co-sponsored by the Office of the Provost, the Center for the Study of Race and Democracy, the Office of the President, and the Division of Student Diversity and Inclusion.

Resources, Scholarships, and Opportunities

Tufts UNIVERSITY | Undergraduate Admissions

Join the Diversity Admissions Council
Apply by Thursday, May 6

The Diversity Admissions Council supports the efforts of Tufts Admissions' Diversity and Access team, which serves prospective students of color, first-generation students, low-income students, undocumented students, and LGBT students. The primary responsibilities for this internship include planning and facilitating diversity outreach programs like the Voices of Tufts Diversity Experiences, assisting in increasing diverse representation in our web presence, and working with admissions staff in research projects. This is a full-year, paid internship, although arrangements can be made for students studying abroad during the spring semester. Diversity Admissions Council members are expected to work 30-40 hours per semester and will be paid $13.50/hour. A successful candidate must demonstrate the ability to articulate the benefits of a Tufts University education with clarity and confidence; outstanding interpersonal and communication skills; willingness to brainstorm ideas, take initiative, and identify gaps or challenges; demonstrated organizational and time management skills; and the ability to work independently for concentrated periods. To learn more, contact Evelyn Ocampo. You can find the application here.

Interfaith for Rookies: A Two-Part Training (Part 1)
Tuesday, May 4, 1:00 p.m. ET

Are you a total interfaith newbie? Rather than teach you what interfaith is via PowerPoint slides, the Interfaith Youth Core (IFYC) would rather show you what interfaith is through dynamic discussion. Join fellow rookies for conversation that courageously and compassionately explores our religious diversity and how to leverage that diversity for the common good. Please note that you must attend both sessions since they build on one another, and this registration is for Part 1.

Temple Shalom
William & Charlotte Bloomberg
Jewish Community Center

Shirah (Singing) Teacher Needed for 2021-2022 at Temple Shalom in Medford

Temple Shalom Religious School, a small and friendly Conservative Movement affiliated school in Medford, is seeking a Jewish Shirah teacher/Song leader on Sunday morning. The job includes teaching Jewish songs to students, preschool through Grade 7. The ideal candidate will play guitar and have experience leading traditional and modern Jewish songs in a camp, school or youth group. We are looking for enthusiastic, friendly and personable candidates. This is a great opportunity for a college student and/or professional. Please send resume and cover letter to the Director of the Religious School. Temple Shalom is a 30 minute walk from the Tufts University campus. Carpooling may be possible.

INTRODUCTION TO JEWISH MYSTICISM & KABBALAH

By Rabbi Naftali Brawer Ph.D

Tuesdays 9:00–11:30 a.m.

This course is a broad overview of the intellectual history of Jewish Mysticism and Kabbalah. It will introduce a wide range of mystical ideas and doctrines spanning millennia. When applicable, it will situate these ideas and doctrines within a wider cultural and historical context. It will pay special attention to the inherent tensions within the mystical enterprise, as well as the conflict between mysticism and rationalism. Finally, it will invite the student to reflect on the uses and limits of mysticism in shaping contemporary religious experience.

FALL 2021 | JS–0092

Introduction to Jewish Mysticism & Kabbalah By Rabbi Naftali Brawer Ph.D.
Tuesdays. 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. ET, Fall Semester 2021

This course is a broad overview of the intellectual history of Jewish Mysticism and Kabbalah. It will introduce a wide range of mystical ideas and doctrines spanning millennia. When applicable, it will situate these ideas and doctrines within a wider cultural and historical context. It will pay special attention to the inherent tensions within the mystical enterprise, as well as the conflict between mysticism and rationalism. Finally, it will invite the student to reflect on the uses and limits of mysticism in shaping contemporary religious experience.

Upcoming Religious Celebrations and Observances

These events are drawn from the multifaith calendar maintained by the Office of Religious and Spiritual Life at Harvard Divinity School. To see more upcoming religious holidays and festivals, please follow the link to the Harvard Divinity School calendar.

Great Lent
Ongoing through Friday, 4.30.2021
Tradition: Christianity-Orthodox
In Orthodox churches, the first day of Lent marks the beginning of the Great Fast, the final six weeks of a 10-week period leading up to Holy Week and Easter (Pascha). In the churches that follow the Gregorian calendar, Lent is a six-week observance (40 days excluding Sundays) beginning with Ash Wednesday and culminating in Holy Week. It is a time of repentance and sacrifice in preparation for Easter.

Ramadan
Ongoing through Wednesday, 5.12.2021
Tradition: Islam
The Holy Month of Ramadan is the month of fasting during which Muslims who are physically able do not eat or drink from the first sign of dawn until sunset in honor of the first revelations to the Prophet Muhammad. The evening meal is celebrated with family.

Ridvan
Monday, 4.19 – Saturday, 5.1.2021
Tradition: Baha'i
Commemorates the 12 days that Baha'u'llah spent in the Garden of Ridvan in the last days of his exile in Baghdad, during which time he proclaimed himself as the one announced by Bab. Work is suspended for the first, ninth, and twelfth days.

Beltane
Friday, 4.30.2021
Tradition: Wicca/Paganism
The final fertility festival, celebrating the Earth's fecundity and anticipating the power of the sun and the Earth in summer.

Orthodox Good Friday
Friday, 4.30.2021
Tradition: Christianity - Orthodox
The day of remembrance of Jesus's death on the cross and is considered a solemn day of mourning.

Lag BaOmer
Friday, 4.30.2021
Tradition: Judaism
Celebrated on the 33rd day of the Counting of the Omer, which occurs on the 18th day of the Hebrew month of Iyar, this day commerates Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai.

Orthodox Holy Saturday
Friday, 5.1.2021
Tradition: Christianity - Orthodox
Holy Saturday is the day between Jesus' death and his resurrection.

Orthodox Easter
Friday, 5.1.2021 - 5.2.2021
Tradition: Christianity - Orthodox
Christian faiths based on the Julian calendar such as Eastern Orthodox honor the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Jamat Al-Vida
Friday, 5.7.2021

Tradition: Islam
The last Friday of the Holy Month of Ramadan before Eid Al-Fitr.

Lailat Al-Qadr
Thursday, 5.8.2021
Tradition: Islam
In Islamic belief, it is the night when the first verses of the Quran were revealed to the prophet Muhammad. It is considered one of the last odd nights of Ramadan.

Jerusalem Day
Monday, 5.10.2021
Tradition: Judaism
Commemorates the reunification of Jerusalem and the establishment of Israeli control over the Old City in the aftermath of the June 1967 Six-Day War.

Support the University Chaplaincy

Supporting dynamic programs at Tufts University in religious, spiritual, ethical, and cultural life is easy and vital to our work. To donate, please click on the button below. Thank you for your generosity.

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ABOUT US

The University Chaplaincy is a dynamic hub supporting religious, spiritual, ethical, and cultural life for all members of the Tufts community. We provide pastoral care, support religious and philosophical communities, educate about spiritual and ethical issues in society and the world, and promote multifaith engagement.

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