

TYPE:	Administrative
TITLE:	Recognizing Days of Awareness
NO.:	ADMIN-207
RESPONSIBILITY:	Associate Vice President, Communications & Marketing and President
APPROVED BY:	Durham College Leadership Team
EFFECTIVE DATE:	February 2026

1. Introduction

Durham College (DC) is committed to fostering a welcoming and inclusive community where all students and employees feel a sense of belonging. Guided by the college's values of respect, diversity, inclusion, collaboration, and social responsibility, DC recognizes a range of notable dates throughout the year. These observances may serve different purposes, including bringing visibility to the human rights of Indigenous peoples and equity-deserving groups; broadening students and employees' awareness, knowledge, and empathy; and highlighting our programs and initiatives.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the policy and procedure is to provide a framework that supports a strategic and coordinated approach to the identification and public recognition of key days of awareness at Durham College.

3. Definitions

Refer to [Durham College's Standard Definitions](#).

4. Policy statements

4.1. DC identifies and recognizes specific Days of Awareness guided by the following principles:

- Relevance to the DC community.
- Local, national, or global significance.
- Alignment with DC's values and commitments.
- Alignment with DC's programs, initiatives, services, and supports.
- Organizational priority.

4.2. Days of Awareness may include notable secular and cultural observances and holidays, historical events, public holidays, days connected to DC's programs or services, or days related to social awareness.

- 4.3. DC's official Days of Awareness calendar is the sole, comprehensive list of dates formally recognized by the college on an annual basis.
- 4.4. Each date and its impact on the DC community determines the communication profile and channels used to acknowledge it. Recognition will be pre-determined using a three-tier approach to ensure consistency and equity.
- 4.5. DC census data, Durham Region data, the Ontario Human Rights Code, relevant legislation, and government direction will determine equity, diversity and inclusion days to be acknowledged.
- 4.6. The Days of Awareness calendar will be reviewed annually by Communications & Marketing (C+M) in consultation with key departments for input and subject matter expertise, with approval by the Executive Leadership Team (ELT).
- 4.7. All members of the campus community are welcome and encouraged to identify awareness days for consideration based on their expertise and experience.

5. Procedure

5.1. Identifying and Adding Days of Awareness

5.1.1. The Days of Awareness calendar is based on the principles outlined in 4.2 and 4.3 and uses the following categories:

- Public – a designated public holiday by the federal or provincial government.
- Historical – commemorates a socially important event, person, or period in history.
- Religious – a special day or observance recognized and celebrated by a particular religious group.
- Cultural – a day or celebration that is associated with the customs, traditions, and values of a particular culture or ethnic group.
- Indigenous – a date recognized by one or more Indigenous communities.
- Education – connected to DC's programs or services.
- Social awareness – focused on raising awareness and promoting action around a specific social issue or cause.

5.1.2. Departments/Faculties and individuals may recommend dates by submitting requests to Communications & Marketing at marketing@durhamcollege.ca by October 1 annually.

Recommendations are reviewed by the Director, Communications, with input from relevant departments, and shared with ELT for the annual calendar review and approval.

5.2. Annual Review of the Days of Awareness Calendar

- 5.2.1. The process to update and review the calendar annually will be led by C+M and in consultation and partnership with departments and subject matter experts across the college.
- 5.2.2. The calendar will be shared with the Durham College Leadership Team to ensure it is reviewed by each department/Faculty across the college.
- 5.2.3. The calendar will be updated with the approved days for the following calendar year, as well as any additional days or date removals, annually by November 1. Communication channels will also be reviewed to ensure ongoing alignment.
- 5.2.4. The final calendar will be reviewed and approved annually by the ELT in November.
- 5.2.5. The updated calendar will be available on ICE for employees to reference each year by December.

5.3. Communicating Days of Awareness

- 5.3.1. To ensure clarity, consistency, and alignment with organizational priorities, a three-tier model will be used to determine communications support and reach through corporate channels. Decisions will be guided by the criteria in Section 4.1 and by the significance and relevance of each date to the DC community.

a) Institutional recognition

Days of awareness that align directly with organizational priorities or community commitments and have broad relevance across the DC community.

- Fully supported by C+M, in consultation with lead department.
- Receive maximum reach through corporate communication channels, including a message from the President, web content, and social media.

Identified dates:

- Black History Month (February)
- International Women's Day (March 8)
- International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (May 17)
- Pride Month (June)
- National Indigenous History Month (June)
- National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (September 30)
- Remembrance Day (November 11)

- National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women (December 6)
- International Human Rights Day (December 10)

b) Departmental recognition

Days of awareness with relevance to specific departments, programs, or communities.

- Departments/Faculties can draft their own content, consistent with how other similar events are recognized, consistent with section 5.1.1.
- C+M will provide guidance, review and optional amplification through corporate channels such as social media resharing or calendar listings.

c) Independent recognition

Days of awareness with limited scope or relevance.

- Departments/Faculties can develop and distribute content independently through their existing channels.
- C+M may review content on request but will not provide proactive support.

5.3.2. Communication from corporate channels will be guided by the following criteria:

a) Email from the President to employees and students

- Reserved for Institutional Recognition dates that support organizational priorities or community-focused commitments.
- Acknowledgement from leadership that represents and reflects the college's values and corporate commitments.
- Relevance across most employee groups and/or students.
- High importance, based on the day of awareness's context locally/nationally/globally.

b) Corporate Social Media Channels

- Used to promote Institutional Recognition dates and select Departmental Recognition dates with relevance to DC community.
- May include amplification of DC programs and initiatives connected to a notable date.
- May include resharing of content from other DC departmental or Faculty social accounts.

c) ICE, DC Digest and DC's Public Website Calendar

- Used to promote awareness of public holidays, religious, cultural and Indigenous events.

d) Flags

- Based on [Durham College Flag Protocol](#).

5.3.4 Individual departments or Faculties can develop additional communication regarding specific events, resources or other relevant information. Channels could include ICE posts, DC Digest, email to all students, or department- or Faculty-managed social media channels.

5.3.5. Process for communication

- a) At least one month in advance of an Institutional Recognition or Departmental Recognition day of awareness, C+M will consult with the lead department/faculty to discuss approach and content.
- b) For Institutional Recognition dates, C+M will lead the development and implementation of the corporate content, including a message from the President, in collaboration with the department/Faculty.
- c) For Departmental Recognition dates, the lead department is responsible for developing content, with C+M providing review and optional amplification.
- d) If other activities in addition to communication are required (such as flag raising, event support), a [Project Request Form](#) should be submitted to C+M to request support through the marketing@durhamcollege.ca email.

6. **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act considerations**

This policy and procedure was developed to comply with Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act standards. The College is committed to upholding the AODA standards as demonstrated by its Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

7. **Non-compliance implications**

Identify the possible consequences of non-compliance with this policy and procedure and any timelines associated with compliance. These implications could include financial, reputational and human rights challenges, or potential legal or other sanctions against the college.

8. **Related forms, legislation or external resources**

- List any forms, legislation or external resources
- [Project Request Form](#)