

Alternative Instruction Day for Eclipse April 8, 2024

On April 8, 2024, Vermont will witness a full solar eclipse. This is a rare event in that it will not occur again in Vermont this century. An organizing committee headed by Ellen Brennan has proposed that April 8, 2024 be designated as an Alternative Instruction day, during which regularly-scheduled classes will not be held. Instead, faculty will be able to select from a range of opportunities for integrative learning and alternative instruction related to the solar eclipse. The organizing committee will work with campus partners to provide academic programming around the theme of the solar eclipse and will work with CTL to provide online resources to support these efforts. In recognition that losing an additional Monday of instruction may impact the learning experience of students in certain classes (e.g. clinical days, lab sections, seminar courses that only meet on Mondays) faculty will be able to register an "opt out" through an online form to hold their class as scheduled on April 8th.

Resolution:

Whereas on April 8, 2024, Vermont will experience its only full solar eclipse of this century and;

Whereas this event offers a unique opportunity for integrative learning experiences across disciplines and campus units and;

Whereas the eclipse falls on a Monday when classes are in session for the Spring semester and;

Whereas scheduled classes may limit the opportunities for engagement with this integrative learning opportunity and;

Whereas the SGA, GSS, senior leaders, faculty and faculty senate have discussed the educational impact of both holding and not holding traditionally scheduled classes on this day and support designating a day of Alternative Instruction;

Whereas the Registrar has proposed that April 8, 2024 be listed on the Academic Calendar as a day of Alternative Instruction, when most traditionally scheduled classes will not be held.

Therefore be it resolved that the Faculty Senate supports this designation with the understanding that the day will be dedicated to learning through events and activities associated with the eclipse. Those faculty who are unable to adjust their class and substitute it with an alternative instructional day without significant impact to students' educational experience will be able to opt out of Alternative Instruction by noting this in their syllabus and filling out an online form prior to February 1, 2024.