

October Observances 2026

Thoughtful acknowledgment of cultural, heritage, and religious observances fosters belonging, invites learning, and strengthens connections. The *Office of University Engagement and Enrichment (OEE)* serves as a connector and amplifier in collaboration with campus partners to recognize the richness of traditions represented across our institution.



HERITAGE MONTHS

All month

National Disability Employment Awareness Month

Recognizes the contributions of workers with disabilities and the value of inclusive, accessible workplaces. Observed nationally each October since 1988.

Continues through October 15

Hispanic Heritage Month

Celebrates the histories, cultures, and contributions of Hispanic and Latino/a/e communities with roots in Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Central and South America.

FEDERAL HOLIDAY

MONDAY

**Oct
12**

Indigenous Peoples' Day

Honors the histories, cultures, and resilience of Native and Indigenous peoples, and their continuing presence on these lands. The University of Rochester is located on the ancestral lands of the Onöndowa'ga:' (Seneca) Nation, part of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy.

CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES

**October
2**

Mahatma Gandhi Jayanti:

Marks the birth anniversary of Mohandas K. Gandhi, whose philosophy of nonviolent resistance shaped India's independence movement. Also observed as the UN International Day of Non-Violence.

**October
3-4**

Simchat Torah Tradition:

Celebrates completing the annual cycle of Torah readings and beginning it again, closing the fall High Holy Day season with singing and dancing.

Begins at sundown on October 3.

**October
11-19**

Sharad Navratri:

A nine-night festival honoring the goddess Durga in her many forms, observed with prayer, fasting, and dance, including garba and dandiya raas.

**October
17-20**

Durga Puja:

Celebrates the goddess Durga's victory over the buffalo demon Mahishasura. Especially significant in West Bengal and Eastern India.

Public festivities begin on Maha Saptami, October 17.

**October
20**

Dussehra / Vijayadashami / Bijoya Dashami:

Marks the triumph of good over evil and the culmination of Navratri and Durga Puja. A gazetted holiday in India.

**October
31**

Samhain:

Marks the end of the harvest season and the beginning of the darker half of the year.

Traditionally observed from sundown October 31 through November 1.

STAY CONNECTED

Learn more on the **OEE website**, or follow us on Instagram at **@uofr_oe**.

This product was curated in collaboration with: *Office for Global Engagement, Office for Student Success, Religious & Spiritual Life, University Student Life, URochester Medicine Employee Wellness, Warner School of Education, School of Nursing.*