

# ATTENDANCE POLICY

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New York Campus ONLY

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## OVERVIEW

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The New York Film Academy holds our students to the highest standards. Students are expected to attend all classes and shoots for each course. Full participation is essential to the quality of the educational experience for all, particularly in courses where group work is essential. The institutional attendance policy is detailed below however, instructors may have their own attendance policies which are required for their course that will be detailed in the syllabus. Students will be held accountable to understand and adhere to each instructor's policy as well as the institutional policy. Lateness or early departure from class may be recorded by the instructor as a full absence. Habitual absenteeism may result in lower grades or dismissal from the course. Students are responsible to make up any work that they have missed.

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## NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCE

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Should there be any unavoidable extenuating circumstances causing the student to miss three (3) or more consecutive days of class, students must submit a Notification of Absence Form with supporting documentation to the Registrar's Office. Supporting material must be presented either with the form or immediately upon return to class.

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## INSTITUTIONAL ATTENDANCE POLICY

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Student attendance will be recorded daily. Students who miss 10% of the total classroom hours in a semester will receive a warning. Students who miss 15% of the total classroom hours in a semester will be placed on Attendance Probation. Students who have exceeded 15% of unattended classroom hours for the semester are subject to dismissal.

Students will be notified via email when they are in violation of their Attendance Probation through a Notification of Dismissal. **Students have the right to appeal this dismissal.** To initiate the appeal process a student must email the Campus Dean within forty-eight (48) business hours from receiving the Notification of Dismissal. Students must attend all classes, class exercises, production workshops, and official school productions during the appeal process.

A review board set up by the New York Film Academy administration reviews each appeal on a per-case basis. Documentation will be requested and required.

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## PROGRAM RESTARTS

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Students who are approved to withdraw from their current program of study and restart at a later date because of unavoidable extenuating circumstances must enroll to restart their studies no later than four (4) terms after their last date of attendance in their current program.

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## MILITARY EXEMPTION

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Students who are mandated to serve military duty in their home country may defer enrollment for up to three (3) years upon proof of the call to military duty. Documentation of a student's call to military duty must be submitted to the Dean of Students no later than their last date of attendance in their current program.

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## LEAVE OF ABSENCE

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Students who wish to take a leave of absence must consult their department chair and submit a Leave of Absence Form to the Registrar's Office. To qualify for a leave of absence, you must be in good academic standing and be making satisfactory progress towards the completion of program. All leaves of absence must be requested in writing and approved in writing. Not all leave requests will be granted.

Students are permitted a leave of absence if they meet one of the following reasons:

- Medical emergencies due to illness or accident.
- Family emergencies that require a break from full-time study.
- Financial issues which affect a student's ability to continue to matriculate.

Typically, NYFA students are granted a leave of absence of up to 180 days (6 months), before they are asked to withdraw and re-apply to the program. The department chair, Registrar, Dean of Students, and Campus Dean evaluate each student's request.

Veterans must contact the Veteran Affairs Office before requesting a Leave of Absence. Veterans Benefits paid during the Leave of Absence may result in a debt to the VA and all students are advised to determine this debt **prior** to taking leave.

Federal Student Aid recipients should contact the Financial Aid office **prior** to submitting a Leave of Absence Form, or risk of entering loan repayment of their Federal student loans.

International students on a student or educational exchange visa must consult with the International Student Office if they are considering a leave of absence for any reason. An international student who needs time off due to a documented medical condition and wishes to remain in the U.S. must provide a doctor's letter so that the reduced course load can be approved and reported in the SEVIS system. Any deviation from the original program of study (or length of study) requires students to consult the International Student Office.

It is the student's responsibility to contact the respective offices, and it is not sufficient to only speak with an instructor or staff member prior to taking a leave of absence.

When a student returns from an approved leave of absence the school shall assess the student's retention level either through a counseling session with the student or by an aptitude test to measure a student's level of retention in the curriculum. Depending upon the result of this assessment the student may either perform make-up classes that are required to demonstrate understanding of the topics covered during the missed

classes or be placed in the instructional workshop at the point commensurate with the skill level retained by the student at the time of his or her return. The new status will then be recorded in the student's file with an Absent/Drop Record/Leave of Absence form.

If the student fails to return on the agreed upon date, the student will be dismissed and a refund calculation performed. Experience has shown that most students do not return from a leave of absence. Some programs are too short to make a leave of absence practical.

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### BFA CLASS ADD/DROP/CHANGE & WITHDRAW

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Liberal Arts & Science courses can be added or dropped. Students have two (2) weeks after the start of a semester to file a Petition to Add/Drop/Change a course. **The Petition to Add/Drop/Change a course must be submitted to the Registrar's Office by 5:00 pm on Friday, at the end of Week Two (2). The Campus Dean or an Academic Advisor must sign the Petition to Add/Drop/Change form.** Please note, students may only change sections during the two (2) week period, if the class is not already full. A Petition to Add/Drop/Change a course submitted after Week Two (2) will only be accommodated with valid documentation of emergencies, such as illness, injury, or death in the family.

### INSTITUTIONAL ADD/DROP/CHANGE

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The New York Film Academy may automatically add/drop/change a student's class schedule. The Registrar's Office will automatically add/drop/change a student's class schedule if a class prerequisite is not met or if transfer credits apply. Students will be notified of the add/drop/change prior to the start of a semester.

### WITHDRAW FROM A LIBERAL ARTS & SCIENCES CLASS

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Withdrawing from a course constitutes an attempt to completing the course past the Add/Drop/Change period (first two weeks of a semester). The course remains listed on the transcript and the students receives a "W" instead of a grade. All units in "W" status will be considered attempted but not completed in the student's calculation of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP).

**The Petition to Withdraw from a course must be submitted to the Registrar's Office. The Department Chair, and the Campus Dean or an Academic Advisor must sign the Petition to Withdraw.** In a LAS course, students may not withdraw after the end of Week Twelve (12) of a semester, without incurring an academic penalty.

Withdrawing from all courses constitutes a program withdraw and is subject to a separate policy. Please refer to the refund policy. International students, students on the GI Bill, and student's receiving Financial Aid must consult with appropriate departments to ensure full-

time enrollment before dropping a course. Non-attendance does not automatically withdraw a student from a course.

The student may petition to have a “W” removed from their transcript upon successful completion of the course. The student may do so by submitting a petition in writing to the Campus Dean. This process does not guarantee rescinding the “W” from the transcript.

Under rare, special circumstances, such as a medical emergency, students may be permitted to withdraw from a class after Week Twelve (12). The student may do so by submitting a petition in writing to the Campus Dean. This process does not guarantee rescinding the “W” from the transcript.

### FLAT - FEE TUITION

Students on the flat-fee tuition system are those who complete their course of study without transferring in any credits. Those students are not eligible for a refund for courses dropped at any point in the academic year, as all courses are required within the prescribed curricula.

Students must repeat the dropped course in a subsequent semester when it is offered, by re-registering at no additional cost. However, students must pay for courses that they repeat due to the “F” grade, on a per-credit basis. The determination of the per-credit costs will be based on their flat-fee tuition and will be provided to the student.

### PER - CREDIT TUITION

Students who transfer credits into their program pay per-credit, based on the number of credits they complete each semester. These students are eligible for a per-credit refund for any courses dropped during the first two (2) weeks of a semester. Withdrawing from any courses after the two (2) week Add/Drop/Change period does not permit a refund.

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## CONSERVATORY WITHDRAW POLICIES

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If a student must leave NYFA, the student is required to submit a Petition to Withdraw Form, to the Registrar’s Office. **The Department Chair, and the Campus Dean or an Academic Advisor must sign the Petition to Withdraw.**

Withdrawing from the program can affect a student’s financial aid, veteran benefits, balance, and visa status.

Students may not withdraw from any specific class without withdrawing from the program or workshop as a whole. “Incomplete” is not a valid grade at the New York Film Academy.

Current students who do not attend a NYFA program or workshop for fourteen (14) calendar days from the last date of attendance will be administratively withdrawn with a grade of “W” from NYFA. Courses already completed and issued a letter grade will remain. Being administratively withdrawn from a program can affect a student’s financial aid, veteran benefits, student account, and visa status.

Any student wishing to withdraw or drop out of a workshop or program will be refunded according to the New York Film Academy Refund Policy.

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## VOLUNTARY MEDICAL WITHDRAW POLICY

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NYFA recognizes that serious medical issues can compromise a student's functioning and prevent students from performing to the best of their abilities. In prioritizing our students' health and wellness, NYFA encourages students, when necessary, to suspend their studies in order to access the healthcare they need.

NYFA offers a flexible, individualized medical withdraw policy designed to accommodate a wide range of medical issues that may arise or become escalated during a student's course of study.

### **The Exit Process**

Students requesting a medical withdraw to address significant health issues that are interfering with their academic performance and/or attendance are required to contact the Dean of Students ([deanofstudents@nyfa.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@nyfa.edu)) to either schedule an initial meeting, or if no longer attending classes, to announce the need for medical withdraw. In the event the student is incapacitated, a parent or legal guardian may contact the Dean on the student's behalf. During a meeting or conversation, the Dean of Students or the Dean's designee will inform the student or the parent/guardian of the exit and return process for medical withdraw. Only parents/guardians granted FERPA permissions will be able

to initiate a medical withdraw on behalf of the student.

The following is required to request a medical withdraw:

- The student completes, signs, and submits the NYFA Petition to Withdraw
- The student's health care provider submits documentation to the office of the Dean of Students verifying illness, substantiating the leave as medically necessary, and stating course of treatment/duration recommended for program reentry.

Only the Dean of Students or the Dean's designee can grant medical withdraw requests. Requests are officially granted once the Petition to Withdraw is signed and submitted by the student (to either the Dean of Students or the Registrar) and after consideration of medical documentation submitted to the Dean of Students' office.

The medical documentation required must be a letter composed on letterhead stationary, written and signed by a healthcare professional stating: the nature and severity of illness; recommended duration and course of treatment; and verification that the requested leave of absence is medically necessary.

The exit process must proceed as quickly as possible allowing the student a prompt dismissal in order to access the medical and social support needed to appropriately address the identified illness. When necessary, both the Petition to Withdraw and the medical documentation can be submitted after the student has already left the program

and is home and/or engaged in treatment. The needed documentation to initiate the medical withdraw can be submitted no later than 3 weeks after the student's final day of attending classes.

After the initial documentation is submitted and reviewed, the Dean of Students or the Dean's designee may need to contact the student's treatment providers to request clarification or request additional information regarding recommendations for course and duration of treatment. At the time of the student's initial meeting with the Dean of Students or the Dean's designee, the student will be requested to sign a Limited Release of Information form. Signing this form will authorize the mental health care provider supporting the student's medical withdraw to share with the Dean of Students or the Dean's designee specific and limited personal health information.

Within ten (10) business days from the student filing the Petition to Withdraw and the medical documentation being submitted and received, the Dean of Students will prepare a Voluntary Medical Withdraw Program Restart Agreement detailing for the student terms for readmission, based on consideration of the student's individual needs and the recommendations offered by the student's healthcare provider. Terms for readmission will include documentation from health care providers verifying wellness, successful treatment completion, and readiness to resume academic life and other criteria including but not limited to a personal statement, transcripts from other academic institutions attended during

leave, and additional documentation from healthcare providers recommending accommodations and/or continuing care needed to ensure safety and academic success.

The medical withdraw policy is individualized and flexible. Because students and illnesses differ, the recommended length of leave will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Students are granted a voluntary medical withdraw in order to be relieved of those stressors that exacerbate illness as well as to gain the time needed to participate effectively in treatment, recover and stabilize. The NYFA medical withdraw policy encourages students to follow medical recommendations, take the time needed to heal, and return to NYFA when they are fully recovered and ready to endure the rigorous NYFA educational experience and achieve their academic goals.

### **The Return Process**

Students returning from a medical withdraw will need to comply with the terms of readmission, as stated in the Voluntary Medical Withdraw Program Restart Agreement.

When planning to return and restart a NYFA program, students must submit all requested documents to the Dean of Students' office by the deadline noted on the Voluntary Medical Withdraw Program Restart Agreement Form. Deadlines for submission of the restart application is typically 3 weeks prior to the start date of each particular program. Applications received after the deadline will be considered on an individual basis. If there is missing information and/or the Dean of Students or the Dean's

designee needs time to contact the student's treatment provider(s) as discussed below, consideration for return may be deferred to the following semester when the desired program is next being offered.

The Dean of Students or the Dean's designee gives significant weight to the documentation provided by student's healthcare providers. During the process of reviewing an application, if the Dean of Students or the Dean's designee determines that information provided by health care provider(s) is incomplete or needs further clarification, the Dean of Students or the Dean's designee will contact the provider(s) to obtain additional information.

The student will be required to sign and submit to the Dean's office a second Limited Information Release Form as part of the reentry process. The Limited Information Release Form is sent to the student as an attachment to the Voluntary Medical Withdraw Program Restart Agreement. The Limited Information Release Form is returned to the Dean of Student's office as part of the student's application for restart.

In extraordinary circumstances (if there is concern, for example, regarding the healthcare provider's credentials), the Dean of Students or the Dean's designee may request the student to undergo an additional assessment. In such rare instances, the Dean of Students or the Dean's designee will provide the student rationale for this request.

The Dean of Students or the Dean's designee will review the documentation received and make a determination

regarding restart within seven (7) business days of having received the student's complete reentry package. The Dean of Students or the Dean's designee will notify the student via email of the potential and terms of restart.

If the Dean of Student or the Dean's designee concludes, based on review of documentation provided, that the student is not ready for restart, the Dean of Students or the Dean's designee will provide the student rationale for the decision and include suggestions for how the student can increase likelihood for restart at a later date.

### **The Appeal Process**

If it is determined that the student is not yet ready to return to NYFA and the application for restart for the semester requested is denied, the student has a right to file an appeal. To appeal, the student must submit a letter to the Campus Dean within 3 business days of receiving notice of the negative recommendation. The student may submit any information relevant to the appeal. The Deal of College will review the student's submission, make a final determination regarding restart, and communicate that decision to the student within 3 business days of receiving the letter of appeal.

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## **INVOLUNTARY WITHDRAW POLICY & PROCEDURE**

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### **Overview**

NYFA considers the safety and welfare of its students, faculty, and staff a top priority. When a student engages in behavior that violates NYFA's rules of

conduct, the behavior will be addressed as a disciplinary matter under the applicable Student Conduct Code. The Student Conduct Code defines prohibited conduct and outlines a process for conducting disciplinary proceedings.

This Involuntary Withdraw Policy and Procedure is not a disciplinary code, policy, or process. It is not intended to apply to situations in which a student engages in behavior that violates the college's rules of conduct. It is intended to apply when a student's observed conduct, actions, and/or statements indicate a direct threat to the student's own health and/or safety, or a direct threat to the health and/or safety of others. There may be situations in which both this Involuntary Withdraw Policy and the Student Conduct Code may apply. In all cases, the Dean of Students or the Dean's designee shall have final authority regarding the decision, enactment, enforcement, and management of the involuntary withdraw of a student.

## **Policy Details**

### ***Criteria***

A student may be withdrawn involuntarily from NYFA if the school determines that the student represents a direct threat to the health and safety of himself/herself or others by (1) engaging or threatening to engage in behavior which poses a high probability of substantial harm to himself/herself or others; or (2) engaging or threatening to engage in behavior which would cause significant property damage, would directly and substantially impede the lawful activities of others, or would

interfere with the educational process and the orderly operation of the New York Film Academy.

### ***Procedure***

When the Dean of Students (or the Dean's designee) based on a student's conduct, actions, or statements, has reasonable cause to believe that the student meets one or more of the criteria for involuntary withdraw, the Dean or the Dean's designee may initiate an assessment of the student's ability to safely participate in NYFA's program.

The Dean of Students or the Dean's designee initiates this assessment by first meeting with the student to (1) review available information concerning the behavior and/or incidents which have caused concern; (2) provide the student with a copy of this Involuntary Withdraw Policy and Procedure and discuss its contents with the student; (3) provide the student an opportunity to explain his/her behavior; and, (4) discuss options available to the student, including counseling, voluntary withdraw and evaluation for involuntary withdraw. If the student agrees to withdraw voluntarily from NYFA and waives any right to any further procedures available under this policy, the student will be given a grade of W for all courses, will be advised in writing on any conditions that must be satisfied prior to re-enrollment, and may be referred for appropriate mental health or other health services. If the student refuses to withdraw voluntarily from NYFA, and the Dean of Students or the Dean's designee continues to have reasonable cause to believe the student meets one or more of the criteria for involuntary withdraw, the

Dean of Students or the Dean's designee may require the student to be evaluated by an appropriate mental health professional.

***Evaluation***

The Dean of Students may refer the student for a mandatory evaluation by an appropriate mental health professional or other appropriate professional. The Dean of Students or the Dean's designee will provide the student a referral to the appropriate professional. Should the student elect to seek an evaluation from a provider other than the professional to whom the student is referred, the school will retain the right to approve or disapprove of the student's selected provider on the basis of the provider's credentials, expertise, and willingness to perform the evaluation and nature of report required. The student will be responsible for covering all financial costs associated with undergoing the mandatory evaluation. The Dean of Students or the Dean's designee will provide the student written notification of the referral once the provider is determined and his/her availability confirmed.

The evaluation must be completed within five (5) school days after the date the referral letter is provided to the student. Prior to the evaluation, the student will be required to sign a written authorization authorizing the exchange of relevant information among the mental health professional(s) (or other professionals) and NYFA. Upon completion of the evaluation, copies of the evaluation report will be provided to the Dean of Students or the Dean's designee and the student.

The professional making the evaluation shall make an individualized and objective assessment of the student's ability to safely participate in the NYFA program, based on a reasonable judgment relying on the most current professional knowledge and/or the best available objective evidence. This assessment shall include a determination of the nature, duration and severity of the risk posed by the student to the health and safety of himself/herself or others, the probability that the potentially threatening injury will actually occur, and whether reasonable modifications of policies, practices, or procedures will sufficiently mitigate the risk. The professional will, with appropriate authorization, share his/her recommendation with the Dean of Students or the Dean's designee who will take this recommendation into consideration in determining whether the student should be involuntarily withdrawn from NYFA. A copy of the professional's recommendation will be provided to the student, unless, in the opinion of the professional, it would be damaging to the student to do so.

If the evaluation results in a determination that the student's continued attendance presents no significant risk to the health or safety of the student or others, and no significant threat to property, to the lawful activities of others, or to the educational processes and orderly operations of NYFA, no further actions will be taken to withdraw the student.

If the evaluation results in a determination that the continued attendance of the student presents a

significant risk to the health of safety of the student or others, such that there is a high probability of substantial harm, or a significant threat to property, to the lawful activities of others, or to the educational processes and orderly operations of the college, the student may be involuntarily withdrawn from NYFA. In such an event, the student shall be informed in writing by the Dean of Students, or the Dean's designee, of the involuntary withdraw, of his/her/their right to an informal hearing, of his/her/their right to appeal the decision, and of any conditions necessary for re-enrollment. In most cases, a student who is involuntarily withdrawn will be given a grade of W in all courses in which the student is currently enrolled.

#### **Informal Hearing**

A student who has been involuntarily withdrawn may request an informal hearing before a hearing officer appointed by the Dean of Students or the Dean's designee by submitting a written request within two business days from receipt of the notice of involuntary withdraw. A hearing will be set as soon as possible. The student shall remain involuntarily suspended pending completion of the hearing.

The hearing shall be informal and non-adversarial. During the hearing, the student may present relevant information and may be advised by a NYFA faculty or staff member, or a health professional of his/her/their choice. The role of the adviser is limited to providing advice to the student.

At the conclusion of the hearing, the hearing officer shall decide whether to

uphold the involuntary withdraw or whether to reconsider, and the student shall be provided written notice of the officer's decision as soon as possible.

#### **Appeal to the Campus Dean**

The student may appeal the hearing officer's decision by submitting a letter to the Campus Dean within 48 hours of receiving notification from the hearing officer of the confirmed involuntary withdraw. The Campus Dean shall review the appeal letter and all information presented and make a final decision as to whether or not to uphold the hearing officer's decision and involuntary withdraw.

#### **Emergency Suspension**

NYFA may take emergency action to suspend a student pending a final decision on whether the student will be involuntarily withdrawn, in situations in which (a) there is imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others, (b) there is imminent danger of significant property damage, (c) the student is unable or unwilling to meet with the Dean of Students, (d) the student refuses to complete the mandatory evaluation, or (e) the Dean of Students determines such other exceptional circumstances exist that suspension is warranted. In the event emergency action is taken to suspend the student on an interim basis, the student shall be given notice of the emergency suspension and an initial opportunity to address the circumstances on which the emergency suspension is based.

#### **Conditions for Re-enrollment**

Because this Involuntary Withdraw Policy applies to cases in which there is a concern about the safety of the student or others, the Dean of Students or the Dean's designee may require a student

who has been involuntarily withdrawn under this Policy to be re-evaluated before he/she is readmitted in order to assure that he/she presents no direct threat to himself/herself or others.