

SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS (DRAMA) ATTENDANCE POLICY

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

In Drama courses, regular and punctual attendance at all classes, and labs, practicums, seminars, and performance/production projects is essential for the successful completion of all courses and programs. This is for the following reasons:

1. Trust

Success in a professional career in theatre or media, and indeed most fields, is contingent on your ability to build positive working relationships on a foundation of trust. It is therefore essential to establish that you fulfill your commitments by meeting the attendance and punctuality expectations as outlined in this policy, on course syllabi, and/or project or Greystone contracts.

2. Experiential Learning

All drama classes are, in varying degrees, developmental in approach and experiential in nature. If classes are missed, there is no way that you can experience certain elements of the work by independent study or by reviewing someone else's lecture notes. Missed classes equal missed learning. Chronic lateness or absence may mean you have not learned enough of the course material to earn a passing grade.

3. Minimum Standards of Practice

A passing grade in a course is an official acknowledgement that you have achieved a required level of competence or professional development in a particular area of knowledge. If you miss too much, even for very legitimate reasons such as an extended illness or family problems, you may not be able to gain the level of knowledge or competence required to meet the minimum standards of practice commensurate with a passing grade.

4. Collaboration

All drama courses demand a significant degree of collaborative and interactive work. Chronic lateness and absenteeism don't just impact your own learning and growth, but your classmates' as well. This is especially the case in production- and performance-oriented courses which are highly collaborative and interactive in their methodology.

5. Safety

The physical, hands-on nature of the classes in the performance and production areas may involve special and unique safety considerations. This means that chronic lateness and absenteeism, may, in some instances, not only impede your ability to learn how to use equipment (including your voice and body) properly, but potentially threaten your or others' safety.

Consistent attendance and punctuality, proactive communication, and continuous participation are expectations for all in-person and/or synchronous courses.

The following behaviours will result in the substantial lowering of a student's participation grade:

- **Chronic Absenteeism**
More than three missed classes in a term for classes occurring 2-3x per week. For night courses meeting 1x per week, missing more than a single class.
- **Habitual Lateness**
If you are late three times, this will be seen as the equivalent of one unexcused absence. If you are more than 5-minutes late for a practical, studio-based course (i.e. Acting, Movement or Voice), permission to join the class is at the instructor's discretion, as your late arrival could disrupt activities already in progress and thusly your classmates' learning. If you are 15-minutes late for studio-based class and the instructor permits you to join learning in-progress, your attendance status for that day is at the instructor's discretion. They may still mark you as absent as you may have missed crucial context and key concepts for the exercises being performed.
- **If there are conditions that will routinely prevent you from being on time** (i.e. A class on the other side of campus that ends 10-minutes before the start of your drama class), you should communicate this to your instructor at the beginning of the course to assess the potential impact on your learning, and your attendance grade.
- **Failure to Attend practicums, performances, or laboratory sessions designated as mandatory**
- **Poor Communication**
Being absent or late without prior notice or prompt follow-up.

Communication

Being late or absent requires due notice. If you are unavoidably late or absent for a class, end up registering late, or need to leave early for any reason, please give your instructor, and, where relevant, your classmates notice as soon as possible. Discuss what you can do to minimize the impact of that absence on others.

Failure To Meet Discipline-Specific Minimum Standards Of Practice

If the following circumstances occur, a student will have missed one-quarter of the classes in a course. At that point, they will be seen as not completing the necessary learning to meet discipline-specific standards of practice, and where course credit indicates a student has demonstrated capacity to perform and apply requisite practical skills. When possible, the student will be asked to withdraw from the course as a courtesy. If the student does not withdraw or the deadline for withdrawal has passed, the instructor must assign a failing grade of 49%:

- A student misses 3 or more classes for a course that meets 1x per week
- A student misses 6 or more classes in a course that meets 2x per week
- A student misses 9 or more classes in a course that meets 3x per week

Note: there are no unexcused absences from rehearsals and technical crew calls. If you must be absent for legitimate reasons, you should inform your director/instructor at least 48 hours in advance, when possible. If you are absent from rehearsals without notice, this is considered grounds for immediate failure of the attendance portion of the course grade. In addition, you may be removed from your role and/or asked to withdraw from the production/course. Removal or continuance in a Production, regardless of whether or not participation is associated with credit units, is subject to the instructor and/or director's discretion.

Excused Absences

In the event of a health or medical issue or personal/family emergency, students may be granted an excused absence. At the department level, valid grounds for an excused absence beyond personal illness requiring students to refrain from coming to campus (i.e. the [university's covid policy](#)) are at the discretion of the instructor. These may include attendance at a workshop, field trip, or event directly relevant to a student's training or education. An excused absence involves more than simply telling your instructor that you will be absent—you should not assume that an email or verbal exchange where you state something to the effect of "I won't be in class on this date" will automatically be categorized as an excused absence. You should follow-up with your instructor if you are unclear about the status of an absence from class and how it affects your attendance record. The department encourages students to take ownership of their learning, and this includes being responsible for tracking your own course attendance.

Barring exceptional circumstances, instructors may grant a maximum of three excused absences per term for classes meeting 2x-3x per week, and one excused absence for classes meeting 1x per week.

Accommodations

Students who have been approved for various kinds of AES accommodation (i.e., to be absent on occasion; or to have additional time and supports to complete exams, projects, and other assignments) or are facing special challenges have a responsibility to approach the instructor as early as possible to discuss how needs can be accommodated without compromising the integrity, safety, or professional requirements of the class. Due to the specific and unique health and safety considerations of the discipline, some conditions or characteristics cannot be reasonably accommodated, such as instances where accommodations may imperil the students' capacity to meet discipline-specific minimum standards of practice, or cause undue hardship as per the university's [duty to accommodate policy](#). Students should contact the department and AES to discuss non-academic requirements before registering. If they do not do so, they may have their registration withdrawn and/or deferred to a future term.

Given the particular demands of the discipline, accommodation to be "absent on occasion" cannot be viewed as a blanket excuse to miss an indefinite number of classes, with or without notice, over the

term. Accommodations to be absent on occasion are generally seen as falling within the category of allowable Excused Absences, outlined above in this policy.

Requests for extra time and support, especially on collaborative and time-sensitive projects, need to be submitted well in advance of the deadline (at minimum one week), or the instructor may not be able to accommodate them given the nature of the work and instructor/course/departmental/university schedules.

Even with accommodation for special circumstances, by the time a student has missed 25% of a course with all the lab, seminar, and practical work involved, they are in imminent danger of not meeting minimum standards of practice and achieving a passing grade in a course. While an instructor may do you the courtesy of warning you if you are getting close to the limit, students are ultimately responsible for keeping track of their own absences.