



**Northern Illinois  
University**

# **College of Visual & Performing Arts**

**NIU Orientation: Academic Connections**  
**[go.niu.edu/cvpaorientation](https://go.niu.edu/cvpaorientation)**

# Welcome to CVPA and Your School!



Whether you are a major in the [School of Art and Design](#), [School of Music](#), or [School of Theatre and Dance](#), you have opportunities to create and collaborate and to learn from your fellow musicians, artists, actors, dancers, and future teachers.

**See some of your peers' and professors' work at our [Artists. Never. Quit. blog!](#)**



# CVPA Office



- ▶ Dean Paul Kassel
- ▶ Associate Dean Ed Klonoski
- ▶ Office Administrator Debbie Thompson

815-753-1635

[cvpa@niu.edu](mailto:cvpa@niu.edu)

Contact Dr. Klonoski and Ms. Thompson for questions about overloads, course withdrawals, etc. See your advisor first: she or he will refer you to us if needed.

**We are here to help!**



Music Building, Rm 303, Third Floor  
South-southwest entrance/lagoon side of  
building

# Advising



- ▶ Advising occurs in the School of your major (Art & Design, Music, Theatre & Dance).
- ▶ See your advisor at least once a semester!
- ▶ Check your own degree progress in MyNIU online.
- ▶ Remember that you are responsible for your degree progress and that your advisor and others are here to help!
- ▶ Your advisor will help you make sure you know which major classes to take as well as any gen eds, Human Diversity course, and other requirements for your degree completion.
- ▶ Your advisor is also someone to go to with questions about how to get around NIU – for example, where to get tutoring.

# Your Advisor is here to help!



## School of Art and Design

- [Bethany Geiseman](#)  
Art and Design Education, Art B.A. or B.S., Art History, Design and Media Arts – Time Arts, Photography, and Visual Communication
- [Stephanie Sailer](#)  
Art Studio – Drawing; Illustration; Painting; Printmaking; Ceramics; Fiber;; Metalwork, Jewelry Design, and Digital Fabrication; and Sculpture  
815-753-1473



## School of Music

- [Prof. James R. Brown](#)  
815-753-1551

## School of Theatre and Dance

- [Stephanie Sailer](#)  
815-753-1334



## ▶ ***Student responsibility statement***

"It is the responsibility of students to know and observe all regulations and procedures relating to the program they are pursuing. In no case will a regulation be waived or an exception granted because students plead ignorance of, or contend that they were not informed of, the regulations or procedures...."

*Please ask your advisor or the college office if you have any questions!*



In CVPA, all freshmen are required to have an appointment with their advisor before they start to enroll in classes.

- ▶ The catalog is the authority on all policies, degree requirements, etc.
- ▶ Keep in mind that you will use the catalog year for the term you entered at NIU. You do have the opportunity to change your catalog, if necessary. Talk to your advisor about this.
- ▶ Art, Music, Theatre and Dance majors need to see your advisor every semester to check your progress, get permit numbers, etc.



# Definitions



MyNIU = Online system for checking degree progress, registering for or dropping class, seeing your to do list, grades, financial, etc.

Degree Paths = Simpler way of visualizing the degree path. Remember that the catalog remains the authority. (Please ask your advisor for an updated 2021 path!)

FERPA = Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (federal regulation)

- ▶ If you want to allow your advisor, the college office, or anyone permission to speak to someone about your degree progress, you can let us know that by signing a form and naming the person(s) we can speak to. (Separate form for each office. You may be asked to complete the form once a semester.) Otherwise, we keep your academic info confidential.
- ▶ Shared Access – for MyNIU only: academic and/or financial information

# Definitions



**Degree progress report = Academic requirements report** = in MyNIU, this is the document that shows your degree requirements, both those you have fulfilled and what you still need to do. Go over this report regularly and with your advisor when selecting classes.

**Credit hour = semester hour** = usually the number of “classroom hours” spent in a class. Most academic courses are 3 credits and meet for 3 hours a week. \*This is different from “non-classroom” CVPA classes such as dance, ensemble, lessons, etc.! Ensembles are 1 credit, but rehearse a few hours a week, for example.



# Schedule changes: add, drop, withdraw



**There is a difference between *dropping* a class and *withdrawing* from a class!**

**Add/drop** = The process of making certain changes (adding, dropping, or changing a course) in a student's schedule of courses at the *beginning* of a semester (first 2 weeks of semester).

**Drop** = A procedure which allows a student to delete a course from the schedule through the second week of the semester. This course does not appear on the student's permanent academic record (transcript).

**Withdrawal** = Formal action by which a student officially discontinues participation in a course. Speak to your advisor, then to the Associate Dean if you are considering withdrawing from a class!

After the 10<sup>th</sup> week, you need to provide justification to the Associate Dean with your withdrawal request (may be approved or denied). Transcript will show **W** for withdrawal. W has no effect on GPA, but there is a limit to the total number of Ws a student can request. Partial refunds are possible early in the semester.

⇒ *There may be an impact on your financial aid or scholarship(s) in adding/dropping/withdrawing.  
Please stay in touch with your advisor and the college office and  
consult with the Financial Aid and Scholarship Office.*

# Resources for you



*These are some of the resources that students recommend:*



- ▶ [Huskie Academic Support Center](#)
- ▶ [DRC](#) – Disability Resource Center
- ▶ [Writing Center](#)
- ▶ [GPA calculator](#)
- ▶ [Counseling and Consultation Services](#)

⇒ Ask your advisor and contact the [Center for Student Assistance](#) as well!

# Get involved!



- ▶ Minor in Art, Dance, Theatre or Music!
- ▶ Take a gen ed in art, music, or theatre!
- ▶ Cultural Centers and more!
- ▶ OSEEL Office of Student Engagement
- ▶ Service opportunities (for example, Huskie Food Pantry)
- ▶ Events calendar online



# More Definitions...



**Foundational Study** = core classes everyone takes (Math, English, Communications)

**Gen ed** = large group of classes you get to choose from; part of your “big picture” general education

**Knowledge Domain** = Gen ed classes are grouped in knowledge domains, and you choose classes from each domain

**Human Diversity course** = course or experience that focuses on human diversity – you have choices to select from

**Writing-Infused course** = everyone takes two upper level (300/400 level) classes that have an emphasis on writing. (Not to worry about as a freshman.)

*The catalog lists all of these courses by category (for example, Writing-Infused).*

Remember that some courses might fulfill both a gen ed and a requirement for your major, which can help you in your progress. Talk to your advisor!

# Gen Eds



## Foundational Studies

- Rhetoric and Composition (Writing)
  - ENGL 103
  - ENGL 203
- Oral Communication
  - COMS 100
- Quantitative Literacy
  - MATH 101

## Knowledge Domains

- Creativity and Critical Analysis
- Nature and Technology
- Society and Culture

Must take 6 semester hours ("credit hours") in each domain, plus 3 semester hours in a domain you choose. This is usually two classes per domain plus one more, so 7 classes total.

*CVPA does not require testing. Talk to your advisor if you have questions about testing, AP credits, dual credit, etc.*



# Questions?

## Best wishes for your first semester!

*Contact us anytime! 815-753-1635 [cvpa@niu.edu](mailto:cvpa@niu.edu)*