Northern Illinois University

College of Visual & Performing Arts

NIU Orientation: Academic Connections

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 many opportunities to create and collaborate and to learn from your fellow musicians, artists, actors, dancers, and future teachers.
CVPA Office

- Dean Paul Kassel
- Acting Associate Dean Janet Hathaway
- Office Administrator Debbie Thompson

815-753-1635
cvpa@niu.edu

Contact Dr. Hathaway 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!
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 navigate NIU – for example, where to get tutoring.
Your Advisor is here to help!

School of Art and Design
- Bethany Geiseman
  815-753-1473
- Stephanie Sailer

School of Music
- James R. Brown
  815-753-1551

School of Theatre and Dance
- faculty advisors according to area (Acting, Design Tech, Dance, Theatre Studies)
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. Questions on regulations, and their interpretation should be addressed to the advising office of the college in which the student’s major department is located."

“Students are strongly encouraged to schedule an appointment with an academic adviser at least once each semester, preferably before registering for succeeding semester course work.”

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.
Any questions so far?
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!

**FERPA** = Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

- If you want to allow your advisor, a mentor, my office, or anyone else 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, and 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** = roughly the number of classroom hours 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 (first 2 weeks of the semester) 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.

**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.

**Withdrawal** = Formal action by which a student officially discontinues participation in a course. A record of enrollment remains on the student’s permanent academic record. After the 8th week of the semester academic jeopardy applies.*

*Transcript will show **W** before academic jeopardy period. During academic jeopardy, grade will be **W** (passing) or **F** (not passing).

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.
Schedule Change Process for 16-week courses (full semester)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Dates Start with First Week of Semester</th>
<th>Steps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drop all courses</td>
<td>Prior to the first day of class</td>
<td>Self-service MyNIU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add a course</td>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Self-service MyNIU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drop a course</td>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Self-service MyNIU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add a course</td>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Contact department/school of course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drop a course</td>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Contact School Advisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdraw from a course</td>
<td>Week 3 through end of week 8</td>
<td>Consult with your School Advisor first, then Request withdrawal though the college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdraw from the university</td>
<td>Week 1 through end of week 8</td>
<td>Consult with your School Advisor first, then Request withdrawal though the college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdraw from the university</td>
<td>Week 9 through end of week 12 (with academic jeopardy)</td>
<td>Consult with your School Advisor first, then Request withdrawal through the college</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Students must contact their advisor and the college office if they need to request university withdrawal!**
Resources

- ACCESS tutoring
- PAL tutoring – Peer Assisted Learning (for example, music theory peer tutors)
- DRC – Disability Resource Center
- Writing Center
- GPA calculator
- Counseling and Consultation Services
Get involved!

- Events calendar [online](#)
- Minor in Art or Theatre!
- Join a musical ensemble, take an art class, sign up for Acting for Non-Majors!
- Take a gen ed in art, music, or theatre!
- Cultural Centers, and more!
- [OSEEL](#), Huskie Research Rookies
- Service opportunities (Huskie Food Pantry)
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” 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.

*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