

COVID-19 Student FAQ Guide V2 June 2020

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CONTINGENCY SCHEDULES

What is the contingency plan in case there is a spike in cases during the fall?

- Currently, if there is a large spike of cases in the fall and the Academy is required to shut down, we have multiple contingency plans. First, we do not intend to move studio classes online. We would return to in-person teaching as soon as allowable by state and government officials. In the event of a lengthy shutdown, the semester would be extended to include all required time and, if needed, go into next summer. All decisions are based on the most recent information provided by the state, federal government, CDC, WHO, and NY Department of Health.

Some students are considering deferrals if the Academy opens too early. Part of the college experience is being able to discuss, critique, and grow alongside our peers. Many students seem comfortable with the option to open in December as long as we were given time to close back down if cases spike again after reopening. Would it be more beneficial to wait until December or January to reopen?

- The Academy has contingency plans in place should there be a need to pause classes and operations during flu-season or an up-tick in COVID cases during the fall.

Students want continued class meetings every other week. It would be nice if the administration or faculty sat in on some of these so that we can get better feedback. Many people feel like the smaller town halls didn't address things affecting the class as a whole. Some felt like it emphasized one year over the other depending upon how many from each were in a particular meeting. Could we set up another Q&A / Town Hall meeting?

- The Academy administrators are committed to meeting with students monthly in mini-town halls. This format allows time for each student to speak and have their concerns addressed, which is often not possible at a large town hall format and can disproportionately focus on the concerns of a select few. In addition, it's beneficial for each class to hear the other's concerns in these mini-town halls and be aware of the full range of Academy planning and programming. Administrators are available for one-on-one and group meetings anytime by Zoom or phone call and continue to have a virtual open-door policy.

The mini-town hall meetings seem to be about informing students and defending plans whereas it would be helpful to create a dialogue between the students and administration.

- We've had very productive meetings with students that encourage open dialogue. If you felt your concerns were not adequately addressed, please attend another meeting. We will be providing written responses to additional FAQs based on what we hear at the meetings and see on the shared student Google doc. We are not always able to provide answers immediately at the meetings. All questions and concerns are carefully considered by the administration and faculty.

Every group is not getting the same information and therefore a better use of everyone's time would be an informative email followed by a meeting to address questions. These questions will be very different between the class of 2020 and the class of 2021 so the meetings should be separate.

- The Student FAQ guide is a working document that we continue to update. All the information discussed in the mini-town halls will be included in the next iteration of the FAQ guide.

The mini-town halls do not represent the feelings of the entire class because many students are too shy to express their concerns when put on the spot in front of four members of the administration and given only 20 minutes to receive information and talk about plans to make up for last semester, this summer, next year, and possibly the following year if a leave of absence is in consideration.

- Students are encouraged to attend additional mini-town halls if they'd like more time to listen and discuss. Our experience is that large group town halls actually favor the few, and do not always accurately represent the feelings of the majority. Students are often hesitant to speak up in big crowds and time can run short. The majority of these mini-town halls have facilitated conversations between students and the administration with more time for each student to listen and ask questions. In addition to these mini-town halls, we also encourage written communication via email, the student suggestion box, and comments in the Zoom chat function.

CURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES

If there are only seven students in a class, will we have a morning and afternoon session with different students? Or are there going to be more teachers?

How will the Academy provide equal opportunity to students effected by the pandemic?

- The Academy upholds Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), students with disclosed disabilities are offered accommodations provided through the Office of Student Services and are ensured the equitable delivery of the Academy education. Students seeking accommodations should contact Noelle Timmons and provide necessary documents to begin the process.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES

We have concerns about Tribeca Ball disproportionately highlighting the class of 2020 vs. enrolled students, and the Academy needs to further discuss options on how to replace this missed experience.

- If the Academy can hold Tribeca Ball in spring 2021, the class of 2020 will be featured, possibly in place of one of the curated shows that normally hang in a fifth floor classroom, but will not detract from space afforded the classes of 2021 and 2022. Those classes will be featured as students normally are, in their studios and throughout the building's exhibition spaces.
- There are planned portfolio reviews this summer with prominent gallerists for "doctor's hours"-type visits. Students who aren't here in-person can do them over Zoom. We will continue working this summer and fall to create networking experiences and opportunities for exposure.

Students who take a leave of absence will not be eligible to participate in Tribeca Ball 2021. This means that the missed opportunity for Tribeca Ball for the class of 2021 will not be made up for those who do not return next year.

- Tribeca Ball is an annual event which raises funds for Academy programming and scholarships. It showcases currently enrolled students. Our inability to hold Tribeca Ball this year was heartbreaking for our entire community. However, the Academy was able to build a new online platform for student artwork in the Tribeca Ball online sale. Appointments with prominent gallerists are being set up during summer studios for "doctor's hours"-type portfolio visits, and studio tours with collectors and prominent art-world professionals will start up as soon as it is safe. Since it is not safe to hold a large event now or in the near future, through this smaller-scale programming, this is how the Academy has made up for Tribeca Ball.
- Tribeca Ball is a voluntary experience for students. It is not a mandatory part of the program. Taking a leave of absence is an option for every student, however students who take a leave of absence will not be enrolled in the class of 2021.

What's happening with residencies and studio grading for the class of 2021?

- Residency selection will take place this summer online, on July 24. Students can submit their applications via Slideroom by Wednesday July 22. Four students from the class of 2021 will be chosen to attend Kylemore and La Ceiba during summer 2021. Three students from the class of 2021 will be chosen to attend Leipzig in summer 2021. If a student requests a leave of absence for the 2020-21 academic year, they will not be considered for a residency in summer 2021 because they won't be an enrolled student. Students from the class of 2021 who return for their 2nd year at another date will be eligible for 2nd year residencies (including at this time: Fogo Island Arts Internship, Altos de Chavon Teaching Residency, and West Nottingham Teaching Residency.)

From our understanding, students who defer will no longer be able to participate in the full amount of residencies offered. They will miss the first-year residencies and only have second year residencies as an option. This is still unfair to those who defer as the number of residencies offered to second year students will be limited.

- We acknowledge that situation. It is an unfortunate consequence of the pandemic. Students who decide to take a leave of absence cannot be considered for a residency in the summer of 2021 because they would not be a currently enrolled student during the prior academic year and will be joining the class of 2022. Students taking a leave of absence will be considered for the 2nd year residencies for the summer of 2022.

Studio grading for residency selections was supposed to occur March 18. Many of the students who are considering a leave of absence/deferment were full-time students at that time. They should be given the same opportunities as students who are returning.

- The Academy had to pause all functional programming and suspend classes on March 12. We announced the transition to online instruction on March 17 and the temporary building closure on March 18. In-person programming was postponed indefinitely. With the rapidly evolving health and safety considerations of the global pandemic and the severity of cases in New York City, the Academy was not able to conduct residency grading procedures at that time. We have adjusted our plans and will conduct online residency grading on July 24.

Students who take a leave of absence will not be eligible for residencies in the summer of 2021 because the school requires grading artwork in person and is planning to do so in the fall. Some students would prefer summer grading. An easy solution would be an online grading system where each interested student submits a number of images to be considered.

- The Academy aims to provide a level playing field for the greatest number of students. Normally, in-person grading is more effective. Some students have requested summer studio residency grading. The Academy is prepared to offer summer studio grading to the class of 2021.

Are residencies a guaranteed offering?

- Residencies offered by the Academy are not guaranteed to any student and are subject to change and evolve based on global status and international relationships. These are valuable opportunities for creative and professional growth, but they are extra-curricular and not linked to student tuition nor guaranteed available to enrolled students. Residencies are made possible by donations and not covered by tuition. The residencies this summer were cancelled by the country of origin or the residency.

Can MFA students follow along with a summer CE class?

- We are inquiring with the CS department to see whether instructors for summer CE would be open to an MFA student sitting in.

It is very important to make up model and studio time over the summer if possible. Drawing from the model is essential to the core curriculum and a major part of why we are here.

- Yes, life drawing with models is being scheduled with some of our most sought after faculty.

We'd like talks scheduled with gallerists to learn more about process / behind the scenes / tips of getting into galleries.

- This is a great student-led and focused idea and is something that the student reps could help coordinate. The reps should email Director of Student Services Noelle Timmons to start the process of weekly art prompts and communication.

We'd like weekly art challenges or prompts that allow for constructive meet ups. The prompts could be a result of a lecturing artist whose work would be the focus of that week's meet up.

- This is a great student led and focused-idea, and is something that the student reps could especially help coordinate. The reps should email Noelle to get the ball rolling for weekly art prompts and communication

We want tips for selling on Instagram, and suggest Jennifer Gennari as lecturer.

- We will look into having Jennifer for summer programming.

We want guidance for artists/students who are trying to apply for aid during the pandemic.

- [We've compiled funding resources here](#), and will continue to update. Make sure to also check out Matthew Deleget's [professional practice lecture](#) on fundraising for guidance on fiscal sponsorship, grant writing, and crowd funding.

Adding online workshops does not provide compensation for what we missed in spring 2020. Feedback from students on their equivalency to in-person learning was mostly negative. Some things simply do not translate well to online lessons. Students stated that they could look up YouTube videos of similar lessons.

- The Academy intends to offer in-person demonstrations in anatomy, drawing, painting, printmaking and sculpture. These offerings are subject to change pending state and local regulations. Given the circumstances, our faculty members worked their best to ensure their course content was delivered effectively. They often put in significant extra time to record demos and create dynamic online lesson plans. Many students reported that the online platform provided additional positive learning experiences.

Will the make-up demonstrations be in the form of a one-to-three hour demonstration projected on a screen in the cast hall?

- In-person demonstrations can use projection as a tool for greater visibility. Having the demonstration recorded, filmed, and projected would allow a student to stay at their station, and be able to see and learn from multiple viewpoints. It would also allow these demonstrations to be available online to those who couldn't be there. Students are allowed to walk around the room in a socially distanced manner in order to view the demonstration, ask questions, and remain engaged. Ideally, the demonstrations will be in the Cast Hall to allow as much space between students as possible. The demonstrations and additional audit opportunities are intended to supplement the online instruction, not replace or substitute other learning opportunities. Demonstrations are still TBD and are subject to change pending state and local regulations.

We need more options for students who cannot make use of the programming, studio, and model time this summer because they are out of state, international, or have health issues. It is unacceptable to say it's their loss if they can't use these options now. How will the Academy provide equal opportunities for students?

- We have this summer to offer limited programming and facility access to students. We also plan to open the building during the winter break. This will afford students several extra weeks of studio time.
- Additionally, all students can audit an MFA class during the spring 2021 semester, subject to availability. If they cannot take on an extra course next spring, we will keep this option open in the future.
- Students have 63 credits built into their tuition, and most only use 60 (the MFA program's requirement.) We are encouraging all students to take advantage of these three credits. Along with the additional class audits offered, students have the option to take two extra classes.
- The Academy has provided online Zoom critiques throughout the spring and is continuing them into the summer. It is an incredible opportunity for students to have access to visiting artists, gallerists, critics and curators who would not normally be able to visit us.
- Students with a disclosed disability are offered accommodations provided through the Office of Student Services and the faculty. They ensure the equal delivery and attainment of the Academy education. Students seeking accommodation should contact Noelle Timmons and provide necessary documents to begin the process.

FACILITIES

There has been talk of plexiglass dividers. This is very difficult for sculpture students and those working on large scale paintings and drawings. How will that work?

- This is an evolving idea. It is meant to be flexible and offer students, faculty and models protection. Mike Smith is researching this safety measure. He will be ready to construct temporary enclosures if we need them. The implementation will be dictated by federal and state guidelines.

FACULTY

How do social distancing and safety measures affect faculty? Who will be returning? What will smaller classes mean for them? Are classes going to be part-time or online? If so, will there be a reduction of tuition? People have considered continuing with some online classes as long as there is a price reduction.

- With the exception of one or two new hires, all faculty are confirmed and scheduled to teach this fall in person. Classes are full-time as scheduled, and only select non-studio classes like Art & Culture and Comp & Design will be held online in order to offset the number of people in the building and to allow in-person classes to be spread out in the building. We found the non-studio classes held online this spring offered more engagement and rich discussion. Students will still have access to the facilities and resources needed to support online instruction. Tuition costs will not be reduced. The Academy's costs are the same whether in-person or online.

FINANCIAL CONCERNS

Could the refund time for tuition be extended so that people can have more time to weigh their options and risks when attempting to return to school?

- Students have five weeks from the start date of the semester to receive full to partial tuition refunds on a sliding scale.

We are asking for more budgetary transparency and would like to know the breakdown of how our tuition is used. Specifically, in funding our studio spaces.

- New York Academy of Art is a not-for-profit institution. Tuition is only one source of revenue and covers only 47% of the Academy's expenses. The rest must be fundraised each year. We do not isolate studio space as a separate expense in the budget.

We missed approximately seven weeks of studio time on top of the time in the summer we were unable to attend school. We need better compensation.

- This was an unfortunate and unavoidable consequence of the pandemic. We have done our best to provide the same quality of education and offer additional opportunities to offset the loss. We are also providing emergency grants and scholarships.

Will the Academy offer refunds like NYU has done?

- NYU's Tisch School of the Arts is offering refunds only on the relevant fees associated with courses and services that did not continue as scheduled. In the Academy's case, model fees will be utilized this summer, and access to facilities will be provided by request. We know that nothing can fully make up for the losses created by this pandemic, however, we continued teaching and completed spring courses.

How will students know whether to keep their apartments this summer?

- This summer is a unique one, but for students who leave the city over the summer, there is always a question as to whether to hold on to a lease or keep your space for the following year. We are working hard to ensure students receive an education that meets or exceeds Academy standards. We understand that there are many factors out of our control that will influence each student's decision and we will work to accommodate their needs where possible. If anyone decides to take a leave of absence, we will be happy to have them back whenever they would like to return.

Students who take a leave of absence will not be eligible for extra merit scholarships aimed to make up for the spring 2020 semester. How will the Academy give all students an equal opportunity?

- The Academy is fundraising to provide additional scholarships for students enrolled during 2020-21 academic year. The class of 2021 will be equally eligible for these scholarships. Students who choose to take a leave of absence will be eligible for the additional grants and scholarships offered during the 2021-2022 academic year. It is the Academy's intention to continue to raise funds for additional merit and emergency scholarships in the future. However, the amount of funds varies year to year and you must be enrolled to take advantage of them.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

What accommodations is the school offering for international students? They may not have the choice to return and take advantage of things being offered because of closed borders. What can we do for them?

- We are doing everything we can to offset the disruption caused by the pandemic. Extra studio time, online critiques, online lectures and in-person programming like demos and workshops will take place during the time we have, which is our summer. Some of these things can be accessed online. Students can also audit a class in the spring 2021 semester. Additionally, 63 credits are included in regular tuition, with only 60 required which means students can elect to take an additional class next year. Along with the credit for a spring 2021 audit, students will be able to take two extra classes.

If international students defer is there a way for them to remain in the country until they can return to school?

- In order to maintain legal status in the US under the F-1 visa requirements, students must be enrolled full-time. If an international student takes a leave of absence and is not enrolled for studies, they will have to leave the country. International students should contact Katie Hemmer or Sarah Sager to discuss their individual circumstances and reasons for taking a leave of absence.

ONLINE CLASSROOMS

If the school decides to do online classes for certain required classes, please keep in mind some of us only have computers at home and live an hour away. Classes will have to be scheduled so that they don't conflict with studio courses and so that students have time to get home to their computers, to avoid classes on phones.

- The Academy is doing everything in its power to hold as many classes in-person as possible. Circumstances allowing, online classes will only be offered for non-studio courses like Art & Culture which will hopefully be phased back to in-person toward the latter part of the semester. Each student should only have one or two classes online. The majority should be in-person. As always, we will do our best to accommodate individual needs.
- Students with a disclosed disability are offered accommodations through the Office of Student Services. Contact [Noelle Timmons](#) and provide the necessary documents to begin the process.

Will there be a price reduction as the quality of online classes are not equivalent to in person lessons?

- Non-studio classes were offered online with great success this spring and did not face the same challenges as studio courses. In some cases, classes were better focused and students were more engaged. There will be no tuition reduction for these courses.

SAFETY & HEALTH

If the school reopens in September will students and staff be required to wear masks at all times?

- Yes. The Academy will require everyone entering the building to wear PPE and will provide masks and gloves to be worn by all students, staff and faculty if needed while in the building.

Many student's deferment plans are based on the school's preventative measures in ensuring our health and safety. We need an outline of what the school is putting into action for returning students..

- The Academy is developing a thorough re-opening plan and will share it with the student body once it is approved by New York State.

We need a schedule for what the school proposes to do when someone appears sick.

- The Academy will follow CDC and state guidelines and will work closely with our local health officials to determine if a short-term closure is needed. This initial short-term suspension of activity allows time for local health officials to gain a better understanding of the situation impacting the school.
- After a confirmed COVID-19 case, we will follow the CDC guidelines for cleaning and disinfecting the building, including all shared areas (e.g., bathrooms, hallways, staircases) used by the ill person, focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces.
- Depending on the areas used by the infected person, the NYAA may shut the building for 24 to 48 hours or longer upon consultation with the local health department after notification of a confirmed case.
- Currently the summer limited access plan is being reviewed by the state to see if we can open prior to Phase 4 for professional services. [Phase 2 limited access guidelines.](#)
- Fall plans are currently in construction, the state just issued guidelines for Higher Education institutions this week. An official plan is being constructed and will be made available as soon as possible.

How will we get to school safely?

- This is a serious consideration for all students, faculty and staff. There is no one answer that will satisfy everyone. For some, a Citi Bike will allow for quick access. For others, public transportation is a must. Safe social-distancing and PPE measures should be taken by all and will hopefully allow for a reduced-risk commute. We understand that this is not ideal for some people and that students at higher risk of infection may consider taking a leave of absence until there is a vaccine.

When a student gets sick and needs medical attention or is hospitalized with these plans in place, what responsibility lies on the school?

- The Academy will follow guidelines of state and local governments, and will open for instruction in phase 4. For summer access to the facilities, students will sign a waiver and must follow provided guidelines for continued access.

STUDIOS

How will social distancing affect the school experience?

- Students, staff and faculty will need to exercise safe social distancing practices while in classrooms, studios, and public spaces. This will change how we normally interact and function in our building, but with everyone's cooperation and willingness to work together, we can create a safe space that allows for the same advanced level of instruction, engagement, and exchange. Students will have individual studios for the 2020-21 academic year, and class size will be limited to 10 students. The Academy is considering converting existing spaces or acquiring more space to allow classrooms and studios to be spread out as much as possible.

Students need to have access to the studios to prepare works that have sold before they are shipped out. For students who have left the city, it is important to have enough time to return and prepare the works and clean out studios.

- The building is likely to open on a limited basis this summer. The Academy will know more about opening in Phase 2 soon and hopes it will coincide closely with our intended June 29 reopening date. We are aiming to give students a week's notice, so they can plan whether to return to NYC, and if they are able to take part in summer studios, give them time to prepare and clean their studios.

Studio spaces are typically free over the summer for students who did not get residencies. By offering us what was already an option to compensate for what we didn't receive is not acceptable. Six weeks of summer studio time is not making up for lost time but, rather, giving students what they already could expect from the school.

- The Academy aims to provide free access to a limited number of studios over the summer break for currently enrolled students. The Academy offers this as a courtesy when possible, and budget permitting. Studio fees cover fall and spring only. In recent years, during construction, summer studio space was not provided. During this time, the Academy provided space for storing supplies and artwork only. The current circumstances are dramatically different than any prior year, but we cite this example to provide context and show that extenuating circumstances have affected summer studio availability before.