

Missouri Fine Arts Academy

2026 Student Handbook

Dear Missouri Fine Arts Academy Student:

Welcome to the Missouri Fine Arts Academy! This 2026 MFAA Student Handbook outlines the two weeks of your experience. Read it carefully with your parent/guardian before you come to the Academy.

As a participant in MFAA, you will learn new skills within your discipline, explore other artistic disciplines, make new friends, and grow to know yourself more fully. At MFAA, you will be respected and valued for who you are and for the potential for artistic achievement you have already demonstrated. Your integrity, responsibility, and respect for others will be fundamental to the success of the program. In accepting the invitation to participate in MFAA, you agree to share fully in the studies and community life we will create together.

Please make special note of the Policies and Procedures section. All students, faculty, and staff are responsible for knowing the policies and procedures of the Academy, including the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities, Safety and Security Procedures, and Missouri State University's Nondiscrimination Policy and Declaration of Principles.

Questions and concerns may be directed to me, Dr. Fatih Benzer, at mfaa@missouristate.edu, or by calling 417-836-6607.

Sincerely,

Dr. Fatih Benzer
Director of Missouri Fine Arts Academy

Missouri Fine Arts Academy Mission Statement

MFAA offers unique opportunities for students to enhance their artistic abilities and creative strategies, to explore the various roles that the arts play in society, and to encounter the arts in an interdisciplinary forum. It has three primary purposes: to help artistically gifted students achieve their full potential and motivate them to use their abilities in attaining higher goals; to encourage social and cultural awareness and the role the arts fulfill in society; and to develop the interpersonal skills that are essential to being a productive member of a community.

Commitment

One of the purposes of the program is to achieve a cohesive, community environment in which students can study, learn, and come to know one another with a minimum of external distractions. Therefore, when you accept your spot at the Missouri Fine Arts Academy, you are making a *commitment* to attending the entire Academy, from **Opening Convocation on May 31** through **Closing Convocation on June 13, 2026**. Students who cannot make this commitment or who are unsure if an immersive, intensive residential arts program is for them should think carefully before accepting their spot at MFAA. Our structure doesn't allow for departures and returns to MFAA unless special circumstances demand it. It also doesn't allow visitors. Parents or legal guardians may be on campus to visit only on opening and closing days.

Stay in Contact

This is important as your letter of acceptance will be your only physical mailing. Carefully read and fill out any required forms. It's up to you to make sure you **return the necessary registration paperwork on time**.

Here's how:

*Check the MFAA website at mfaa.missouristate.edu and the MFAA Facebook page at www.facebook.com/mfaa.msu often for updates on registration paperwork and deadlines.

*Provide a **minimum** of one email address that you and/or your parents check regularly. We will use this address to distribute important MFAA information and paperwork. Please contact the MFAA office if your email address changes before MFAA begins. **If your only email address is a school one, you'll want to start an email account that you maintain yourself.**

***Remember to check your email regularly.** Failure to turn in important paperwork by the deadline may result in the loss of your spot at MFAA.

First Day at MFAA

Registration Schedule (Sunday, May 31, 2026: 12-3 p.m.)

Register in the lobby of Woods House when you arrive on Sunday, June 1. All students must have completed the registration by 6:00 pm. (Note: You will receive a detailed map and instructions by email the last week of May.)

Welcome Reception

A Welcome Dinner is scheduled near Woods House from **5-6 p.m. on Sunday, May 31**. **The welcome dinner is only for students** to attend and get to know each other and the MFAA staff.

Academic Days*

Breakfast (served 7:00-8:30 a.m.)
Interdisciplinary Class
Lunch (served 12:00-12:45 p.m.)
MFAA assembly (1:00-1:30 p.m.)
Discipline-specific classes *or*
Elective classes A and B (on alternate academic days)
Dinner (served 5:00-6:00 p.m.)
Artist Workshops/Special events (7:00-9:00 p.m.)
Curfew and house meetings (10:00 p.m.)
Lights out (10:30 p.m.)

*Schedule is subject to minor changes per faculty/staff annual planning meeting.

Registration Procedures

The registration procedure takes place at a series of stations in Woods House. During registration:

1. Update your medical and/or contact information, if necessary.
2. Optional: Turn in a Pre-Arranged Departure form for religious services off campus.
3. Have your picture taken.
4. Receive your Woods House ID and holder, lanyard, and name badge.
5. Meet your Resident Assistant (RA) and many members of the MFAA faculty and staff.
6. Move your personal belongings into your room.
7. Attend the welcome reception and opening convocation.

Opening Convocation

Opening Convocation for MFAA 2026 will begin at **4-4:30 p.m. in PSU Theater on MSU campus**. This is for students and their families. Parents/guardians will have a brief opportunity to say goodbye to their student following the convocation.

Last Day at MFAA

Closing Schedule (Saturday, June 13, 2026)

Breakfast for students on Saturday, June 13, is the last meal served at MFAA. MFAA won't provide lunch on June 13. You must check out *after* the Closing Convocation. The Closing convocation is 11am-12 noon. The check-out time is 12 noon-4pm. **Woods House must be completely vacated by 4:00 p.m.** Your parents and family members will be invited to the MFAA Art Showcase and our Closing Convocation program, which is your graduation ceremony. Your parents, family, and friends are encouraged to attend.

Classes

- **Non-Academic Interdisciplinary classes:** You will be assigned to a two-hour interdisciplinary course. Each class is team taught by two MFAA faculty. Interdisciplinary classes meet every curricular morning.
- **Discipline-Specific classes:** You will be assigned to applied instruction in the discipline for which you were accepted into MFAA: Creative Writing, Dance, Instrumental Music, Vocal Music, Theatre, or Visual Art.
- **Elective Classes/Workshops:** You will choose two courses and one workshop for which you meet the prerequisite skills/background. You will be asked for first, second, and third choices for each elective period and classes/workshops will be filled as requests are received. While we make every effort to place you in classes/ workshops of your choice, space and instructor constraints may not enable us to accommodate every first choice. You'll receive Course Choice Forms in the spring.

Non-Academic Days

- Classes will not be held on Sunday (June 7) and Tuesday (June 9). Special programs, community outreach, and artistic/educational events are on the schedule for those days. Most events are required, but some time is built in for rest and relaxation, practice, laundry, etc.
- On Sundays you may join a group attending any of the three churches within walking distance of campus: Presbyterian, Baptist, and Catholic denominations. Attendance at these churches will be supervised. If you wish to attend services elsewhere or at any other time, you must have a Pre-arranged Departure form on file.

What to Bring to MFAA

Clothing and personal items to bring:

- umbrella or rain gear
- school-appropriate casual clothing that allows for movement (bring layers to accommodate both summer weather and air-conditioned spaces)
- 1-3 “dressy” outfits (not formal) for special events
- comfortable shoes for walking (please bring more than one pair of shoes!)
- sunscreen
- a refillable water bottle (there are water stations throughout campus)
- personal grooming items such as hair dryer or straightener, shampoo, lotion, cosmetics, shavers
- over-the-counter or prescription medications, etc. (students are responsible for administering and safely storing their own medication)
- towels, washcloths, pillowcases (sheets are provided)
- alarm clock
- snacks in closed containers
- comfort items such as pillows, blankets, and personal sheets (if desired; beds are extra-long twin)
- Students may bring cash, ATM or credit/debit cards, Starbucks cards to purchase snacks, toiletries, apparel, or other items at the Student Union or Bookstore. There are ATM machines in the union, bookstore, and other campus locations. We discourage bringing large sums of cash.

Things you may want:

- Art supplies: The Academy will provide all necessary supplies for classes. You may bring other items as you wish.
- Musical instruments: Even if you are not attending for music, guitars, ukuleles, drums, percussion, and other instruments can be useful for classes and jam sessions.

What NOT to bring:

- Cars, motorcycles/scooters, or other motor vehicles.
- Skateboards, in-line or other skates, or scooters.
- Televisions.
- Pets, including fish.
- Any unnecessary items of significant value due to the potential for loss.
- Any item prohibited by the [Missouri State University Student Code of Rights and Responsibilities](#).

Living at MFAA

Woods House and Blair-Shannon Dining Center:

- You will live on the MSU campus in Woods House and have three free meals a day provided either in Blair-Shannon Dining Center or catered on campus. Students are grouped by houses in separate sections of the residence hall and are not allowed to visit one another's houses.
- The first floor of Woods House has a laundry facility and a lounge with a television. Vending machines are also available in the building. The common areas will be off-limits after 10:30 p.m. No laundry load can be started after 9:00 p.m. MSU personnel staff the Woods House front desk 24 hours a day.
- **During the academic day, you won't have access to the residence hall when classes are in session.** You will be able to re-enter the residence hall at lunchtime and the end of the academic day. For security reasons, you may not leave the building (or your floor) after house meetings.
- Both fire and tornado evacuation drills may be conducted at unannounced times.

Your room

Air-conditioned Woods House includes rooms equipped with a mirror, closets, chests of drawers, desks, beds, a microwave, and small refrigerator. Bed sheets (unfitted only), blanket, and pillow are provided. University-provided linens are changed weekly. Bathroom facilities are centrally located and shared by hall residents. The rooms are inspected before move-in and after check out to identify damage.

Please **do not**:

1. Hang anything on the walls of your room.
2. Remove furniture from the room or rearrange furniture (this includes bunking or un-bunking beds)

3. Remove window screens.
4. Use an open flame, candles, or incense.

To prevent theft, keep your room locked, even if you are only planning to be out for a short while. Never leave unattended valuables in the laundry room. Report lost items or property damage to your RA immediately. Personal belongings found in the lounges or recreation rooms should be returned to an RA. MFAA is not responsible for any personal property loss, regardless of reason, including damage caused by employees in the performance of their work.

**Because of the sense of community established at MFAA, theft and disappearance of personal items have not been a problem. However, MFAA cannot take responsibility for personal items, including musical instruments. Classes, events, and activities take place in public spaces that cannot be totally secured. It is recommended that you lock personal items in your dorm room when they are not being used and that families be certain that their personal property insurance covers items of value.*

Loss or damage

Parents/guardians are financially responsible for any loss or damage to property incurred by their student while at MFAA, including missing/damaged keys/access cards, damage to rooms or facilities, or university equipment.

Messages:

- Check the main bulletin board on your floor each time you pass to make sure you keep up with these events.
- Daily assembly and nightly house meeting are crucial times for making sure everyone has complete information. You are required to attend assembly every academic day and house meeting with your RA every night.
- The MFAA Office is in the Dean's Office (Strong Hall 251) of the Reynolds College of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (Phone: 417-836-6607). You may use the office as a place to get information, drop off lost and found items, etc. You may also leave messages for staff and faculty here. If needed, your parent or guardian may reach staff at the MFAA office during the day or through the Contact Numbers.

Mail

Family and friends may send you mail while you are away. RAs will distribute mail each weeknight. Your MFAA address will be:

Student Name
Missouri Fine Arts Academy
Woods House, Room # _____
1115 E. Bear Blvd.
Springfield, MO 65807-1596

You will probably not receive mail sent after June 10.

Packages also may be dropped off between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. at the front desk of Woods House. You may pick up packages when you return to the residence hall at the end of

the day. Refrigeration for packages cannot be provided. Because visitors are not allowed, please do not use package delivery as an opportunity to visit with parents, friends, or other non-MFAA people.

Phones

A phone in each hall will also be available for you to make calls home (collect or with a calling card). Parents can leave a message at the Woods House front desk (417-836-5338) or the MFAA Office (417-836-6607).

Personal cell phones must be turned off during classes, co-curricular activities, performances, assemblies, meetings, and other Academy activities. Faculty and staff reserve the right to make additional restraints on the use of cell phones as necessary to encourage engagement in MFAA activities.

Identification

At registration, you will be given an MFAA nametag and lanyard. You must always wear your nametag to allow MSU personnel and MFAA faculty/staff to easily identify you as an MFAA student. This nametag will also be your means of identification for meals at the Dining Center.

Behavior Expectations and Guidelines

The primary goal of the Academy is to maintain an atmosphere that is conducive to the pursuit of artistic, intellectual and personal growth. The administration, faculty and staff of the Academy are committed to fostering an environment that encourages exploration, interaction and freedom while respecting the rights and safety of each person and the Academy community. Students are encouraged to learn responsible decision-making skills, develop an appreciation of community standards, respect individual rights and property, practice good citizenship, and understand the policies of the Academy within the context of a community environment.

MFAA participants are students of Missouri State University, and are therefore governed by the [Missouri State University Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#).

In addition, the Missouri Fine Arts Academy reserves the full power and authority to adopt all additional and necessary rules and regulations for the guidance and supervision of the conduct of all students while attending the Academy, and the authority to enforce obedience to those rules and regulations, and to delegate disciplinary authority.

There are a few offenses that will result in **immediate expulsion** from MFAA. These include:

- Violation of federal, state, or local laws and ordinances on University premises or at MFAA-sponsored or supervised activities.
- Use, possession, or distribution of narcotic or other controlled substances (including tobacco products) or drug paraphernalia, except as expressly permitted by law. ***This includes the use or possession of marijuana on the Missouri State University campus.***
- Use, possession, or distribution of alcoholic beverages.
- Use, possession or distribution of firearms or other weapons, explosives, or fireworks on University premises or at MFAA-sponsored or -supervised activities.

- Physical harm or abuse, or threat of physical harm or abuse, to self and/or others.
- Disruption of the normal operations of the Academy or University and/or infringement on the rights of the Academy or University community.

If the administrators of MFAA determine that a student must be sent home, a parent, guardian, or agent authorized by the parent or guardian must arrive on the Missouri State University campus within 24 hours to take responsibility for that student.

Other Policies

The officers of MFAA and MSU reserve the right to set other policies as required to ensure the health, safety, and well-being of MFAA participants, and to ensure against loss, misuse, or destruction of property. The university's policy library can be found here:

www.missouristate.edu/policy. MFAA students will be expected to follow all applicable University policies.

Health and Safety

All faculty and staff members receive specific training in MFAA safety protocol and crisis management before the students' arrival. Students are briefed on safety protocol by the MSU Residence Life staff on the first day of MFAA.

Medical Treatment

MFAA does not pay for the cost of medical bills, doctor visits, and prescriptions. Students are expected to pay for the doctor visits and related expenses at Mager Health Center. Please note that Mager Health Center does not accept credit cards as a payment method over the phone. Please make sure that your student has a way to pay for doctor visits or prescriptions. It is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to fill an insurance claim if needed. Medical help is always available. If you're ill or injured, you must notify a faculty/staff member or administrator. If you miss classes or events due to illness or injury, you must talk to an MFAA administrator or visit a health care facility. Basic first aid kits are available in the MFAA Office, all RAs' residences, RA Headquarters, and the art building.

Parents or guardians will be notified of any illness or injury requiring transport to a health care facility, including [Magers Health and Wellness Center](#) on the MSU campus, which will be the first health care facility to be consulted. Parents/ guardians will be charged for all medical services.

Students are responsible for the administration and safe storage of their own over-the-counter and prescription medications. Providing incomplete/inaccurate medical information and/or sharing medications may be grounds for student dismissal.

Medical facilities

The following facilities and services are available to MFAA student, faculty, and staff:

Magers Health and Wellness Center (including an in-house pharmacy) 417-836-4000

8:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday-Friday

Processes all insurance.

health.missouristate.edu

Mercy Urgent Care Facility 417-820-8991

3045 S. National, Suite 110

Open daily 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Processes all insurance except Blue Cross/Blue Shield

Mercy Emergency Room 417-820-2115

1235 E. Cherokee (Corner of National Ave. and Sunshine)

Processes all insurance.

Cox South Urgent Care Facility 417-269-9812

1000 E. Primrose

Open 24 hours daily

Processes all insurance.

Cox South Emergency Room 417-269-6000

3801 S. National Ave.

Processes all insurance.

CVS Pharmacy 417-831-0380 1153 E. Elm St.

Walgreens Pharmacy 417-881-6836 1955 S. National Ave., 417-890-7924 2951 S. Campbell

Wal-Mart Pharmacy 417-351-6679 444 W. Grand St.

Shelter and evacuation locations

You must be aware of safety and evacuation specifics in case of emergency. Your nametag identifies you as an MFAA student and must be worn at all times. It has emergency phone numbers printed on the back and will also assist staff if emergency procedures are necessary. Maps with evacuation and severe weather procedures are posted in each building used by MFAA. See the campus map: search.missouristate.edu/map for building locations.

Important phone numbers

On-Campus:

- To dial on-campus phone numbers, dial only the last five digits of the number.
- To dial off-campus phone numbers, dial “9” first for an outside line
- 911 calls from campus phones will ring directly to the campus police substation.

MFAA Contact numbers:

Refer to the phone numbers on the back of MFAA nametags:

Campus Security 417-836-5509

Woods House Front Desk 417-836-5338

MFAA Office 417-836-6607

Facilities on Campus

Plaster Student Union:

- Chick-fil-A
- Subway
- Panda Express
- Freddy's Frozen Custard and Steakburgers
- Starbucks
- Bear Necessities Convenience Store - snacks, drinks, and school supplies
- Post Office
- Copy This (self and full copy services)

The University Bookstore:

- ATM
- Personal items, clothing, books, gifts, and souvenirs

Carrington Hall:

- Bursar's Office
- ATM

Meyer Library:

You'll need a temporary library card to check out materials. You may get that card from the staff of the Library. See your RA for details.

Practice Rooms:

Practice rooms are available on a first-come, first-served basis.