

## 4. Academic Policies

Syracuse Academy is dedicated to upholding the highest standards of academic excellence in all its offerings and preparing students for academic achievement abroad. The institution encourages students to engage with their studies earnestly, diligently, and with integrity, while also respecting their peers and instructors' right to do likewise.

Courses at Syracuse Academy are structured to support its mission by promoting both personal and academic development, providing students with multicultural insights through research, reflection, and critical thinking. This educational strategy aims to equip students with the skills necessary to understand and engage with the complexities of the modern world while immersed in varied cultural environments.

The academic policies outlined in this document are designed to protect these standards. Breaching these policies may lead to grade penalties, disciplinary measures, and/or expulsion from the program. Syracuse Academy may contact students' home universities regarding any issues related to their academic performance while abroad.

### **Credit Transfer**

Responsibility lies with the student to understand how credits earned in a Syracuse Academy program transfer back to their home institution, including the required documentation for credit recognition. It is highly advised that students verify the transferability of credits before their departure. Information on syllabi and Syracuse Academy's credit recommendations is accessible on the institution's website.

Syracuse Academy issues an official transcript that includes notations as to the source of recorded coursework and specific designations of titles, grades, credits, contact hours of the courses. Syracuse Academy courses have been accepted for academic credit by several North American and European higher education institutions since its founding in 1984.

Before departure from the United States, students must arrange credit transfer with their Advisors/Department Heads, Dean, or Office of International Education, who must sign the Syracuse Academy Study Abroad Approval Form signifying that work completed at Syracuse Academy will receive credit toward the applicant's degree.



Students should contact Syracuse Academy in order to start the application process to their Syracuse Academy program of choice and ensure their final transcript will be issued by the School of Record. However, doing so does not guarantee that the credit will transfer or be accepted by a school other than the student's home institution (for example, if the student were to later transfer to a different U.S. college/university). Syracuse Academy cannot be held responsible in such cases. Requests for a School of Record transcript must be received by Syracuse Academy no later than 60 days prior to the program start date.

### **Credit recognition and pre-approval**

Different universities implement varied procedures for recognizing the academic achievements of students studying abroad. It is essential to engage closely with the institution's International Programs/Study Abroad Office and/or Registrar to ensure adherence to the correct protocols. This is crucial for the smooth transfer of credits back to the home university or for reentry without complications. The importance of collaborating with one's university to maintain enrollment and comply with necessary credit transfer procedures prior to departure cannot be overstated.

Most institutions employ a pre-approval process for classes/credits, which typically requires completing a form detailing the courses taken abroad. This form often necessitates the endorsement of specific faculty members, confirming that the chosen courses will equate to certain domestic course equivalents and credit amounts. Ultimately, the faculty of the student's home university is responsible for determining the credit value of overseas courses and their applicability to the student's degree program. Students are advised to consult with their campus's study abroad office to identify the appropriate personnel for credit transfer approval. It is crucial to note that the ultimate authority on credit transfer decisions rests with the student's home university, and students should adhere to any guidelines provided by their institution.

- Students at U.S. universities with the semester system typically receive 1 credit hour for every 15 contact hours at the foreign university.
- Students at U.S. universities with the quarter system typically receive 1 credit hour for every 10 contact hours at the foreign university.

Advisors, department chairs, and registrars require course descriptions to determine the credit or course equivalence for specific courses. Most course descriptions can be obtained from the Syracuse Academy website. It is advisable to keep syllabi,



major written assignments, and exams from abroad, as these documents can be useful for credit evaluation upon return to the U.S.

### **Transcript issuance**

Official transcripts are distributed to students or their home institutions 8 to 10 weeks following the program's end, depending on the home institution's requirements for academic records. Students can access their final grades on their online accounts within this period. Requests for additional transcripts are subject to a fee.

### **Syllabus System**

Syracuse Academy developed its Syllabus System in response to competing needs:

- US academic departments and study abroad offices need to be able to review course parameters well in advance of student participation on a Syracuse Academy program.
- On-site faculty need the flexibility to adjust their courses each term: adding fresh readings, adjusting assignments, and incorporating new field-based components.

To fulfill both of these needs, Syracuse Academy provides two syllabi—a syllabus of record and a term syllabus—for each course on its roster. For direct-enroll programs courses, Syracuse Academy typically provides a link to the relevant department or course list.

### **Syllabi of Record**

Syracuse Academy maintains a syllabus of record for each course. The syllabus of record provides the following course elements:

- general description
- learning goals
- outline of content
- typical readings
- policies and requirements
- methods of assessment



Syllabi of record are not particular to any one term. This means that 1) these documents do not contain term-specific details such as exam dates, field-based course components, or assignments, and 2) they are available for download on the Syracuse Academy website year-round, not merely a few weeks or months before the program begins.

Each syllabus of record is updated annually so that it accurately represents the course as it is taught each term.

## **Term Syllabi**

Once on site, students receive a term syllabus for each course in which they are enrolled. A term syllabus, unlike its syllabus of record counterpart, is specific to one particular term. All readings, assignments, fieldbased course components, and due dates are detailed. A Syracuse Academy term syllabus is similar to what students are accustomed to receiving from faculty on their home campuses. A course's term syllabus works in tandem with its syllabus of record. The former reflects the same general outline, goals, and expectations as the latter, while also providing additional details on the actual academic work performed in the given term.

## **Course Selection and Modifications**

### **Adding/Dropping Courses**

Students can adjust their course enrollments within the guidelines provided by their specific Syracuse Academy program. Details on the Add/Drop policy are provided pre-departure and during orientation.

### **Incompletes**

Incompletes ('I') are provisional grades that can be requested under certain medical, personal, or academic conditions that prevent coursework completion by the program's end. Requirements for an incomplete include a passing grade, at least 75% program completion, and the possibility of fulfilling remaining coursework post-departure. A detailed Completion Plan must be approved, with all work to be submitted within 30 days after the program ends. Failure to meet this deadline results in an 'F'.



## **Course Withdrawal**

Post add/drop period, students may withdraw from a course up to four weeks before classes end (two weeks for summer sessions) with a valid reason and approval from their home institution. Withdrawals are marked as 'W' on the transcript, and students must continue attending classes until withdrawal is approved. Unauthorized withdrawal or failure to complete a course will be reflected in the final grade as zeros for incomplete work.

Withdrawal from a direct-enroll course at a host university may differ from Syracuse Academy courses with regard to timing and what mechanisms for withdrawing, if any, might exist. Regardless, students should inform their home institution and Syracuse Academy staff of their intention to withdraw from a direct-enroll course before doing so.

## **Program Withdrawal**

Students needing to leave their program early must fill out a Program Withdrawal form for approval. Courses will be marked as 'W', and under special circumstances, incomplete coursework may be credited upon completion. A Completion Plan outlines the deadlines and requirements for coursework completion. If not completed in time, an 'I' turns into an 'F'.

## **Pass/Fail and Auditing Options**

Students are not permitted to audit courses or opt for Pass/Fail grading. Syracuse Academy uniformly assigns letter grades for all courses. The conversion of Syracuse Academy's recommended grades to the grading system of the student's home institution is subject to the policies of the latter.

## **Language Commitment**

Participants in Syracuse Academy language programs are expected to consistently use the target language throughout the program's duration, as outlined during orientation. Failure to adhere to the language pledge can disrupt the learning environment for others and may lead to disciplinary measures, including potential dismissal from the program.



## Direct-Enroll Course Policies

Direct-enroll courses at partner universities adhere to the academic rules of the respective institution. Students should be prepared for differing guidelines regarding course administration, assessment, and grade appeals. Syracuse Academy students are expected to respect these differences and fully engage in their coursework. Non-compliance may result in withdrawal from the course without credit.

## Grading

### Assessment Scale

Syracuse Academy employs a specific grading scale to evaluate student performance in its programs (see Annex 4 for additional details on grading rubric).

Quantitative Scale		Qualitative Scale
A+	99 to 100%	A range: Excellent. Consistently outstanding performance throughout the semester.
A	93 to <99%	
A-	90 to <93%	
B+	87 to <90%	B range: Good. A solid performance that is above average, but not outstanding.
B	83 to <87%	
B-	80 to <83%	
C+	77 to <80%	C range: Satisfactory. An average performance wherein the minimum criteria listed in the course syllabus has been achieved.
C	73 to <77%	
C-	70 to <73%	
D+	67 to <70%	D range: Minimal pass. Work is seriously deficient in multiple areas including reasoning, writing, attendance, and participation.
D	60 to <67%	
F	<60% and below	F: Failing. Work that fails to meet the minimum criteria in all aspects.
I	N/A	I: Incomplete. A placeholder for coursework that is being completed after the conclusion of the program, or due to an early withdrawal from it. If the coursework is not completed by the established deadline, the 'I' will convert into an 'F' on the transcript.
W	N/A	W: Withdrawal. Reported when a student withdraws from a course or a program after the program-specific course drop/add deadline.

Different grading scales may exist for direct-enroll courses at host institutions, and for programs transcribed by US partners.



## Grade Dispute Process

Students enrolled in Syracuse Academy courses are entitled to contest their grades within 30 days after their final grades are made accessible on their Syracuse Academy online profile. The grounds for appeal are specified in the Grade Appeal Process and accompanying Form. Appeals based solely on disagreement with the instructor regarding the student's effort or the quality of academic work will not be entertained. Final grades are subject to amendment solely through this appeal mechanism.

The process for appealing grades in direct-enroll courses at host universities may differ from Syracuse Academy's procedures, reflecting the host institution's regulations. Although Syracuse Academy must be informed of any intent to appeal grades in direct-enroll courses due to its affiliations, it does not oversee or influence the outcome of such appeals.

## Assignment Policies

Unless otherwise specified in the syllabus, the following policies apply for all forms of written assessment computer-based, corresponding to essay, research paper, and reflection paper:

- **Format:**
  - PDF or Word file formats for digital submissions
  - Font size 12, in New Times Roman or Arial font.
  - Justify Text
  - 1.5 line spacing
  - Include page numbers
  - Include a word count
  - Use the cover sheets provided
  - Remove any track changes or comments from the assignment
  
- **Word Count**
  - Please be aware that assignments must be within the word count **range and must not be greater or less than 10% than the stated word count**. Text beyond the limits is disregarded by the instructor conducting the assessment. Assignment briefs will include clear instructions about word counts, the inclusion of footnotes, diagrams, images, tables, figures and bibliographies etc. Students are expected to adhere to the requirements for each



assessment. Students exceeding these parameters may receive a reduction in marks.

- **Structure of written assignments:**

The main text file should generally be presented in the following order, unless otherwise advised:

- Cover/Title
- Table of contents (if relevant)
- Main text
- Reference list/bibliography
- Tables & Figures (each complete with title)
- Appendices (if relevant)<sup>7</sup>

- **Referencing:**

For all assignments at Syracuse Academy a version of APA or Harvard style referencing is to be used. These are two systems which use in-text referencing, instead of footnotes. The two systems are very similar. The most important aspect is to be consistent, and to use the same format for all references.

A complete reference list has to be included at the end of the written assignment.

- **Late Submissions:**

In cases wherein pre-approved extensions for extenuating circumstances do not apply, the following penalties apply for late submissions:

- If work is submitted within two working days after the deadline, a penalty of 10 percentage marks, but no lower than the Pass mark will be applied.
- If work is submitted more than two working days but less than five working days after the deadline, work will be capped at a Pass mark, assuming the work merits a Pass
- If work is submitted more than five working days after the deadline, without extenuating circumstances, will receive a mark of 1 percentage grade.

### **Extenuating Circumstances for Assignment**

If a student's assessments are disrupted by events which are unexpected, significantly disruptive and beyond the student's control, such as serious illness or bereavement, they can apply for 'Extenuating Circumstances' by submitting an application via the Syracuse Academy LMS. Students should not wait for supporting

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<sup>7</sup> The word limit does not include cover/title page, table of contents, table of figures, reference list/bibliography and appendices.





evidence to become available before submitting their EC claim. If a student is unable to obtain the necessary evidence within the deadlines they should still submit their form on time and indicate that their evidence is to follow.

## **Class Etiquette**

Students studying abroad are reminded that they are ambassadors for their schools and as such, should act with decorum and respect for others at all times. As participants on our programs, they are subject to student conduct policies of Syracuse Academy and their schools.

Students should seek to play their part in making the class a success and foster safe face-to-face and online learning environments. Students should arrive/connect punctually for all sessions, taking special care to allow for travel time between the various venues and to ensure technical requirements are met. They should come to class with the necessary materials for taking notes and bring with them any books required for the class. Students will be responsible for obtaining their own copies of any missed assignments and materials. Students are also encouraged to comment, question, or critique an idea, but always respecting all opinions and experiences, no matter how different or controversial they may be perceived.

Food and drink may not be brought into the classroom or consumed during class. Cell phones and other electronic devices should be switched off upon entering the classroom or lecture room unless authorized for academic reasons. Students may seek assistance with course-related questions during the weekly one-on-one office hours, or via e-mail.

Email is the official mode of communication between students and faculty and all correspondence should be serious and professional. Faculty are not expected to give out personal cell phone numbers.

## **Student Disabilities and Accommodations**

### **Academic Accommodations Policy**

Syracuse Academy endeavors to provide reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities, as recognized by their home institution's Disability Services Office. Availability of accommodations may vary by location, and cannot be guaranteed for direct-enroll courses at partner universities. Requests for accommodations should be made before departure.



Syracuse Academy will make Reasonable Adjustments to learning, teaching and assessment to ensure that students with a disability are not put at a disadvantage. Syracuse Academy provides Reasonable Adjustments for students who might not consider themselves to have a 'disability' but who nevertheless would benefit from additional support due to an ongoing medical or mental health condition. It is the responsibility of the student to request Reasonable Adjustments, and students are encouraged to make a request as early as possible. Any student who because of a disability may require special arrangements in order to meet course requirements are required to present appropriate verification from their home campus Disability Student Office and should contact the Syracuse Academy Center Director and/or Academic Coordinator prior to or upon arrival to confirm the approved accommodations. Syracuse Academy Directors and/or Academic Coordinators will inform faculty accordingly, and the teams will provide support with the arrangements. Please note that disability status is confidential, and should always be discussed in private.

Syracuse Academy is committed to facilitating welcoming and reasonably accessible programs.

## **Academic Integrity**

Students should remember that they are still subject to the academic integrity provisions of Syracuse Academy and their home university. They are reminded that the principle of honesty must be upheld if the integrity of scholarship is to be maintained by an academic community.

This means that all academic work – research papers, exams, and/or other assignments – will be done by the student to whom it is assigned, without unauthorized aid of any kind. Likewise, any act of academic misconduct, such as cheating, fabrication, forgery, plagiarism, or facilitating academic dishonesty, will result in a failing grade for that assignment and will subject the student to further disciplinary action.

Assignments submitted by students must reflect their original ideas and efforts. Academic misconduct, spanning from the application process through to final examinations, is strictly prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Plagiarism or failure to properly acknowledge sources.
- Utilizing AI-generated content as if it were the student's own.
- Engaging in or aiding cheating.
- Falsifying academic documents.
- Submitting identical work for multiple courses or for courses previously credited.



Students unsure about what constitutes academic dishonesty should seek advice from faculty or academic staff on-site.

## Research Ethics

Students intending to conduct research as part of their Syracuse Academy program must ensure it adheres to ethical standards and any Institutional Review Board (IRB) requirements from their home university.

## Plagiarism

The APA Manual gives the following principle for avoiding plagiarism:

- *“Plagiarism (Principle 6.22): Quotation marks should be used to indicate the exact words of another. Summarizing a passage or rearranging the order of a sentence and changing some of the words is paraphrasing. Each time a source is paraphrased, a credit for the source needs to be included in the text. The key element of this principle is that an author does not present the work of another as if it were his or her own work. This can extend to ideas as well as written words. If an author models a study after one done by someone else, the originating author should be given credit. If the rationale for a study was suggested in the Discussion section of someone else’s article, that person should be given credit. Given the free exchange of ideas, which is very important to the health of psychology, an author may not know where an idea for a study originated. If the author does know, however, the author should acknowledge the source; this includes personal communications. (Publication Manual 292-95)”*

Syracuse Academy will use plagiarism detection software to scan electronic submissions of coursework for evidence of plagiarism against billions of sources worldwide (websites, journals etc. as well as work previously submitted to Syracuse Academy and other universities).

Any student suspected of examination misconduct, plagiarism, self-plagiarism, collusion, falsification, contract cheating, ghost writing (paying and/or instructing someone to write an assignment) or any other form of academic misconduct which is likely to give an unfair advantage to the candidate and/or affect the security of assessment and/ or compromise the academic integrity of Syracuse Academy will be investigated by a Syracuse Academy committee. If misconduct is found, students are likely to be failed for that assignment and/ or course.

Plagiarism will result in an F grade on the assignment.



## **Access to academic resources**

### **Library**

Syracuse Academy maintains a modest lending library for books and audiovisual materials. Please check with staff for access to these libraries. Depending on the program, faculty may be eligible for membership to online research catalogs through the partner institution.

### **Syracuse Academy LMS Academic Platform**

Syracuse Academy operates an online course platform called Syracuse Academy LMS, which faculty will use to upload their syllabus, digital course reading materials, and any other course materials to which students need access. The platform has the following capabilities:

- Uploading/organization of documents, provision of links to readings
- Weekly lesson planning and organization
- Provision of links to video, audio or class recordings
- Creating video-conferencing links
- Private class announcement boards
- Forum for discussion threads
- Gradebook
- Submission of assignments
- Email and messaging

### **Tech & Computer Support**

Syracuse Academy classrooms contain equipment necessary for instructional purposes, including laptops, projectors, sound systems, and Wifi. Faculty are advised to arrive early to ensure they have time to set up their presentations. Syracuse Academy staff will assist with troubleshooting as possible but are not IT specialists.

### **Office Support**

The Syracuse Academy Study Center has photocopiers, scanners, printers and computers available to student and faculty for course purposes. All scanning of readings or printing of class handouts will be the responsibility of the faculty member, with Syracuse Academy staff available for troubleshooting where necessary.

### **Instructional and Office Hours, and Course Scheduling**

Each program has a predetermined number of instructional hours which must be met. The course schedule includes all necessary contact hours, thus any missed classes due to illness or personal emergencies will need to be made up before the end of the course, taking the students' schedules into account. Faculty should be in touch with the Academic Coordinator immediately once they know they will need to cancel a class, in order to propose



a plan for recuperating the instructional hours. Course times cannot be changed once the program has started. Faculty should be available one hour per week for office hours. These can include a set weekly time, or can be arranged via email. Office hours can be conducted remotely, if necessary.

### **Speakers and Visitors**

Syracuse Academy supports professors to invite qualified guests or guest lecturers who can provide students an insightful viewpoint on the course material. All visitors and guest speakers should be listed on the schedule, and the Academic Coordinator and Program Coordinator should be informed of the speaker's invitation. There should be a brief bio given. It is the duty of the faculty member to ensure that the visitor conducts themselves professionally during class activities, offers a worthwhile learning experience, and does not engage in harassing or discriminating behavior toward staff or students. The faculty must always be present while the guest speakers are in attendance.

