

THE GOVERNOR'S SCHOOLS OF TENNESSEE



2009 Counselors Handbook

Middle Tennessee State University ❖ Murfreesboro
www.gsfta.org ❖ www.mtsu.edu/~gschool

Governor's School for the Arts

Purpose, Philosophy, and Goals

The Tennessee Governor's School for the Arts (GSFTA) is a four-week summer program for rising eleventh and twelfth grade students in Tennessee. Administered by the State Department of Education, the program offers intensive study programs in art, dance, theatre, and music. Students are selected in competitive auditions during the month of January at Middle Tennessee State University. Auditions are open to Tennessee residents who attend public or private schools.

The School for the Arts at MTSU focuses on music, dance, visual arts, filmmaking, and theatre. In music, students rehearse daily in major ensembles such as orchestra, band, or chorus. Chamber ensembles and private instruction are available for string, brass, woodwind, percussion, piano, and voice. Dance students concentrate on classes in classical ballet with some experience in modern dance and jazz. Art activities may include painting, ceramics, drawing, graphic design, computer graphics, printmaking, and sculpture. Theatre students explore all facets of the theatrical arts including both performance and technical theatre. They participate in small-group activities in acting, mime, voice improvement, oral interpretation, stage movement, and stage combat as well as in design and production activities in costuming, lighting, sound, and set construction.

Each day, students attend classes for which they receive six hours college credit. Students work in labs and studios and participate in rehearsals. While most of their time and energies are spent on their chosen arts areas, they also have opportunities to learn about other art forms. In the evenings, all students participate in school-wide assemblies that include exhibits, lectures, and performances by outstanding professional artists.

Students who attend the School for the Arts arrive with the skills and abilities they have learned from working with dedicated public and private teachers in their hometown schools and studios. The teachers in the School for the Arts strive to build on those skills and abilities. Through four weeks of exciting and intensive focus on the arts, students have the opportunity to enhance their talents, increase their understanding of their art forms, and develop valuable perspectives about the contributions of all of the arts to the quality of life. It is hoped that after the School for the Arts experience, students will return to their hometowns with renewed commitments to the arts and with fresh ideas and new perspectives. And if students share their experiences and ideas with their family and friends, the School for the Arts will have reached out across the entire state and enriched all of Tennessee's public and private schools and all of its many communities.

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Counselors for the Governor’s School

Counselors live in the dormitories with students and work daily with students, faculty, and staff. Duties include supervising students in the dormitories, helping with student adjustment and discipline, performing various chores in support of daily school operations and productions, and assisting faculty and staff in the instructional and production programs. A successful counselor must be a mature, sensitive, and responsible person who can maintain rapport with teenagers while at the same time maintaining a position of leadership and supportive authority with them. Counselors must also be able to communicate effectively with faculty and students and must make an absolute commitment to enforcing school rules and regulations, which are designed to create a healthy, safe, and positive learning and living environment for gifted and talented adolescents. Counselors must be available for orientation sessions prior to the start of the school and must be free to stay for the duration of the school term. Smoking by counselors is not allowed on campus including in the dormitory. The School for the Arts will not tolerate any use or possession of illegal and/or controlled substances whatsoever.

Counselors General Information

1. **Counselor orientation.** Orientation will be held Friday, June 5, 2009, in Saunders Fine Arts Building, Room 117, at 1:00 p.m.
2. **Name badges.** All GSFTA students and personnel must wear name badges at all times. Badges identify and authorize their presence on campus. For security, persons without proper ID will be subject to questioning by campus police. Report lost name badges immediately to the GSFTA office.
3. **Dress.** Students, counselors, and faculty should dress casually but appropriately for classes, rehearsals, and studio work (no swimwear, short shorts, tank tops, etc.) For safety, shoes should be worn at all times. For evening programs, students, counselors, and faculty should dress more formally.
4. **Insurance.** As a state program, the school cannot provide insurance for musical instruments or personal property and equipment. Lockers and locks will be provided for instrument storage, but the school is not liable for misplaced or stolen instruments. Bicycles brought to campus must be parked in bicycle racks. Bring a lock and chain for security. The school is not liable for stolen or damaged bicycles.
5. **Parking.** If you bring a car to campus, you must get a parking permit immediately after orientation. Parking lots are near the dormitories.
6. **Housing.** School for the Arts counselors will be lodged in dormitory rooms. In most cases, counselors will share a room with one other counselor.
7. **Linens** are not furnished. You will need twin-sized sheets, pillow, washcloths, towels, and a blanket.
8. **Cooking** is not allowed in dormitory rooms. Small refrigerators and microwaves are permitted.
9. **Telephones.** Telephones are not provided, but working phone jacks are located in each room. Plug your telephone into the jack for service. For on-campus calls, just dial the last four digits of the number. Dial "9" plus the number for off-campus calls. An access code is needed for long distance calling card calls. Pay phones are located in main buildings on campus.
10. **Cleaning equipment is not furnished.** You may wish to bring a broom, mop, liquid cleaners, soap, etc. Trash cans are not provided in the rooms.
11. **Smoking is not permitted in any GSFTA classrooms or buildings.**
12. **Laundry.** Coin-operated washers and dryers are located on designated floors in the dormitories. Do not leave clothes unattended in laundry rooms.
13. **Cafeteria.** Personnel will be assigned a dining facility on campus.
14. **Mail.** The MTSU post office in Keathley University Center is open Monday–Friday, 8:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m. You may post mail there, but incoming mail goes to the GSFTA office. Mail should be addressed to (Your Name), GSFTA, Box 38, MTSU, Murfreesboro, TN 37132. Packages should be addressed to (Your Name), GSFTA, MTSU, 1301 East Main Street, Murfreesboro, TN 37132. The fax number is (615) 898-2326.

15. **Television.** Basic cable service is available in each room. If your television is not cable-ready, check with the dean of students to obtain a cable box.
16. **Bookstore.** Phillips Bookstore in Keathley University Center stocks food items, paper goods, nonprescription medicines, etc. You may also cash traveler's checks for \$50 or less at the bookstore.
17. **Clinic/Health Services.** The clinic in the Health, Wellness, and Recreation Center is available to students and staff. Hours will be announced at orientation. Those who need medical attention elsewhere, or upon request, may be taken to the hospital or a local physician. The school is not responsible for any medical expenses of counselors.
18. **Alcoholic beverages and illegal substances on the MTSU campus are strictly forbidden.**
19. **Overnight.** Counselors are not allowed to spend the night off campus during school. Please do not ask for exceptions. In case of emergency, contact the dean of students or the school director.
20. **Walker Library.** Governor's School personnel are encouraged to use Walker Library and its many resources. All services are available except the checking out of materials. Hours of operation are posted.
21. **Check-out.** Procedures will be discussed at orientation. Counselors will be required to remain at the dormitory until all students have checked out.
22. **Dorm keys.** There is a **\$60.00 charge for lost keys**. If you obtained a cable box, return it before leaving. **DO NOT** leave your cable box in your room.

Counselors Dormitory Instructions

1. There will be a rotating counselor duty schedule. Counselors are expected to be aware of and responsible for all assigned tasks. The dean will assign duties for dormitories and extracurricular activities. Counselors will be given some time off during the term. Schedules are distributed at orientation.
2. The dean of students will meet with female counselors each Wednesday night at 10:00 p.m. and with male counselors each Thursday night at 10:00 p.m. Additional counselor meetings will be designated as needed.
3. Each counselor will be assigned a number of dormitory rooms, and students will be under their supervision for the entire term. Counselors should establish a relationship with students as soon as possible and make sure they know where and how to contact their counselors both day and night.
4. At night, two counselors will be assigned to each lobby. Generally, this is the time following convocation until dorm check at 10:30 p.m. Before dorm check, counselors are to make sure that the lobby is in satisfactory condition. Pizza may not be delivered after 10:00 p.m. Abuse or disregard of MTSU property should be documented and reported to the dean of students.
5. Students must attend all evening programs. Counselors should check dormitories, classrooms, and elsewhere to ensure students attend. On certain dates, counselors are assigned to evening duty, when they must arrive thirty (30) minutes before the program. Counselors will hand out programs, assist

in seating, or sell/collect tickets for some events. Counselors should sit in varying areas of the auditorium to help maintain order and set the tone for proper behavior.

6. Counselors may act as hosts during special activities and events.
7. Times and locations of hall meetings will be designated by the dean. Counselors may hold floor meetings at their discretion.
8. There will be a rotating duty schedule for mail distribution. Student mail should be distributed each night at dorm check.
9. Before leaving campus, tell the dean when you will be leaving/returning. Counselors must be on campus by 10:30 p.m. unless they have prior permission from the dean or the school director.
10. After lights out (11:00 p.m.), students/counselors may not leave dormitories.
11. Students may not change roommates without a serious, compelling reason. For security, permission of the dean is required for room changes.
12. Never take a student off campus without permission from the director or the dean. Violation of this important rule may result in dismissal.
13. During dorm check, see trash is in trash receptacles and that rooms are in order. If a room is excessively messy, unclean, or otherwise unsatisfactory, tell the students in a friendly but very firm manner that it must be in satisfactory condition by the next evening. If it is not, inform the dean of students.
14. Always enter a student's room with another counselor, and knock first.
15. Stress to students the importance of locking their rooms when they leave and when they shower or engage in other activities inside the dormitories.
16. Report students not in their rooms at dorm check (10:30 p.m.) to the dean the next day. **If they are not found by 11:00 p.m., tell the dean immediately.**
17. Report disagreements or confrontations between students/counselors and MTSU personnel to the dean immediately! This also applies to any confrontations with personnel from other camps on campus. **Counselors must respond calmly and maturely to defuse the situation and must never lose their composure or act in anger. Counselors MUST NEVER, EVER touch, push, or otherwise establish physical contact with students.**
18. Disagreements, however slight, will not be aired in public. Problems between counselors or students will be resolved by the dean and the director.
19. Due to the intense schedule of the school, there is no time for visitors. Parents/guardians, relatives, and friends are discouraged from visiting during the session. Report visitors to the dean of students. Neither MTSU nor the Governor's School can be responsible for visitors. Students MUST know that boyfriends or girlfriends are not allowed to visit for dates. Under no circumstances should a visitor be allowed to stay in the dormitory.
20. Students who want to leave campus for any reason with parents/guardians must get prior written permission from the director or dean of students.

21. Students are allowed to attend local and regularly scheduled worship services. A list of places of worship and phone numbers is on the GSFTA Web site (www.gsfta.org or www.mtsu.edu/~gsfta). Many places of worship are within walking distance, and others will arrange transportation upon request. Such arrangements should be made by the student and approved by the dean.
22. Minor medical emergencies/illnesses can be treated at MTSU Health Services from 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 to 3:30 p.m., Monday–Friday. A counselor must accompany students to the clinic, and a report must be turned in to the dean daily. Students requiring attention at other times or requesting attention somewhere else may be treated at the local hospital emergency room or by a local physician. In this event, inform the dean immediately. Prescription drugs may be obtained for students by counselors from the MTSU or local pharmacies. Students are responsible for all medical bills.
23. Class/rehearsal attendance is mandatory. You may be assigned to take roll during classes. If so, turn in the names of students who are absent or tardy as soon as possible to the production coordinator in your area. Attendance is checked during both morning and evening classes.
24. Discipline will be maintained at all times. Any infraction should be reported to the dean. Disciplinary codes and procedures are found in this handbook.
25. Quiet hours in the dormitories are 11:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. Counselors and students are expected to cooperate with MTSU housing staff at all times.
26. Dormitory disturbances created by anyone other than GSFTA personnel should be reported to MTSU Public Safety at 2424 immediately. For questions about the security, call security first then inform the dean of students.
27. Check the duty roster daily! Alert your production coordinator and the dean as soon as possible about schedule conflicts. Together, coordinators will make reassignments as necessary.
28. Students will make maintenance requests directly to counselors. Note the request and report it to MTSU housing staff. Air-conditioning problems should be rectified within 24 hours. If not, inform the dean of students.
29. All GSFTA students are minors! Counselors are prohibited from dating students and should make special efforts to avoid even the appearance of romantic alliances. Violators will be dismissed immediately.
30. Smoking is not permitted in the School for the Arts.
31. If you have any questions regarding your role as a counselor, please ask the dean of students or the director for clarification.

School Unity

Counselors can be very influential in the promotion of school unity. In the past, students as well as counselors have inaccurately thought of the School for the Arts as four different schools. Although competition is encouraged in many ways, it should not be applied among the disciplines. This is one school with several components that are equally important. A music student is just as talented and gifted as a theatre student. A visual artist's contribution is just as important as a

ballet student's or a vocalist's. Everyone is to be respected for his or her individual talents. Lack of regard and/or respect for an art area other than your own is the result of a lack of information. It is essential that counselors promote unity among the disciplines at all times.

Although the school is process (not product) oriented, final performances require much time and effort on everyone's part. Different art forms require different amounts of time to prepare for finale events. More time required in a certain area does not mean that more effort or talent has been expended. All counselors and students work equally hard in the long run. Derogatory remarks made against other areas regarding counselor contributions are demeaning to the School for the Arts and cannot be tolerated.

As a counselor, you have been recommended as a highly motivated, mature, and capable individual. Many counselors plan to become future educators, but whether or not you plan to teach, you will find your experience at the School for the Arts to be personally rewarding.

Disciplinary Code

Students are expected to follow the rules and regulations set forth by the Governor's School for the Arts so that all participants may enjoy the full benefit and opportunities provided by this program. School for the Arts students are expected to exhibit a high level of maturity. It is with this, as well as the students' personal safety in mind, that these rules have been established and must be adhered to without exception.

The following are unacceptable acts and will result in disciplinary action:

1. The use or possession of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs.
2. Leaving the dormitory after lights out.
3. Misuse/vandalism of MTSU or Governor's School property.
4. Leaving campus without permission.
5. Riding in any car without proper authorization.
6. Unexcused absences/tardiness from scheduled classes, school programs, or events.
7. Fraternizing with college students or persons other than Governor's School personnel.
8. Failure to be in one's assigned room at the 10:30 p.m. dorm check.
9. Failure to properly display name badge.
10. Failure to complete classroom assignments and projects on time.
11. Physical abuse of any person or conduct that threatens or endangers the health of any person.
12. Failure to cooperate with University or Governor's School faculty, staff, counselors, and other appropriate officials.
13. Flagrant and intentional disrespect for or mistreatment of faculty, staff, counselors, and other students.
14. Tampering with emergency equipment, locks, fire alarms, fire hoses, fire extinguishers, and so forth.
15. Possession of laser pointers or beepers.

16. Willful disruption of programs, rehearsals, and performances.
17. Smoking or the use of smokeless tobacco.

Note: These rules have been provided as a general guideline. Any misconduct or behavior deemed inappropriate will be dealt with on an individual basis.

Disciplinary Procedures

1. Disciplinary reports will be submitted to the dean of students, who will take the appropriate action. A copy of the disciplinary report will be placed in the student's file.
2. Intervention for Encouraging Success (IES) will be held on Tuesdays and Thursdays as needed. Parents will be notified of any student who has been placed in IES more than one time.
3. After the third IES, students will be referred to the director, placed on disciplinary probation, and face expulsion from the school if the behavior persists. Parents will be notified of probation status.
4. A student may be expelled without disciplinary probation and without pre-notification of parent or guardian for either a single incident (such as the use or possession of a controlled substance or damage to emergency devices) or for a pattern of misbehavior deemed as sufficient grounds for expulsion by the director.

Discipline

Counselors are asked to aid the faculty and staff in providing the best possible atmosphere for students to reach their highest potential in their chosen disciplines and as maturing young citizens in our society. The nature of the school lends itself to a wide range of learning experiences and opportunities. For most of these students, this will be their first experience away from home and parents. Counselors must serve as role models of appropriate behavior and actively see that students follow all rules and regulations so that their health and safety are not compromised and so that they do not get into situations that may cause them to be dismissed from the school. Counselors have very heavy responsibilities, and the well-being of students must be their first concern.

Inevitably, there will be instances in which disciplinary action is required. The rules and regulations have been established solely for the purposes of allowing all participants to enjoy the full benefits of the program and of providing for the health and safety of all. As counselors you are expected to remind students of the rules and regulations and to discourage them from breaking the rules. However, unless a student's health and safety are in immediate danger, you are not expected to take disciplinary action against students. Rather, you must report infractions of the rules and regulations immediately to the dean of students, the area coordinator, or the Governor's School director. Sensitive, supportive counselors may often keep students from breaking the rules with just a gentle, kind reminder. And most students will respond cooperatively to counselor requests if they are made in a respectful, nondemeaning manner.

Students and their parents understand the disciplinary code of the GSFTA and the consequences of their failure to comply with the rules set forth. The rules

listed in the handbook are to be used as a guideline and are in no way complete. As a counselor, you will have to rely on your own judgement under certain situations. Just keep in mind the purposes for which the rules and regulations have been developed in the first place. Also, remember that every experience is an opportunity to learn.

Recreation

MTSU Student Recreation Center

Talent Show

Each year, the School for the Arts hosts a talent show. Awards will be presented to the top performers at the annual awards ceremony. Counselors will be assigned to assist in auditioning and in the production of the student talent show.

Various Trips

Nashville Zoo
Frist Center for the Arts
Surrounding universities

Emergency Information

School for the Arts Office: (615) 898-2223

School for the Arts fax: (615) 898-2326

Assistant Director/Dean of Students: (615) 969-3940 (cell)

Assistant Dean of Students: (615) 300-0143

MTSU Public Safety: (615) 898-2424

Maps to Murfreesboro and MTSU

Posted on FSFTA Web site:

www.gsfta.org or mtsu.edu/~gschool

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MU101-0309

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