**Classroom Attendance and Visitor Policy**

**Purpose:**

To support a professional and academically focused classroom environment, this policy outlines attendance expectations and restrictions on non-enrolled visitors, including parents, family members and supporters. It is intended to preserve instructional integrity, minimize distractions and protect student privacy.

**Policy Statement:**

1. **Enrolled Students Only:**
Only students officially enrolled in a course are permitted to attend lectures, labs, studios, or classroom sessions, unless otherwise approved as outlined below.
2. **Visitor Restrictions:**
Visitors (including parents, family members, or supporters) are not permitted to attend classroom sessions during instructional time without prior written approval from the course instructor and the academic department. This includes participation in instructional roles (e.g., accompanist, assistant, guest contributor etc.), particularly in cases where a familial relationship may pose an actual, perceived, or apparent **Conflict of Interest**, as defined in the [University’s *Conflict of Interest and Commitment Policy for Faculty and Staff*.](https://policies.syr.edu/policies/faculty-teaching-and-research/conflict-of-interest-and-commitment-for-faculty-and-staff/)
3. **Conflicts of Interest:**
Faculty and staff must avoid conflicts of interest and disclose any relationships that could create a situation where personal or family benefit may influence academic decisions or the classroom environment. Per University policy:

*“Conflicts of Interest exist when a faculty or staff member is in a position to influence the University’s business, administrative, academic, or other decisions in ways that could result in personal or family benefits or gains…”*

*“Faculty and staff must avoid Reporting-Line Conflicts by working with the University to develop appropriate management plans so they are not solely responsible for directly supervising or making employment decisions for family members…”*

Any instructional involvement by family members must be reviewed to avoid conflicts and ensure instructional fairness.

1. **Privacy and FERPA Compliance:**
In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), student educational records and classroom discussions are protected. The presence of non-enrolled individuals in class may compromise the privacy and confidentiality of enrolled students.
2. **Special Exceptions:**
In rare or exceptional cases (e.g., accessibility accommodations, medical emergencies, or official college-sanctioned guests), visitors may be permitted, provided that:
* A written request is submitted at least 48 hours in advance.
* Approval is granted by the student, course instructor and the School Director (or their designee).
* The visitor agrees to follow all classroom expectations and college conduct policies.
* In cases involving potential conflicts of interest, a conflict management plan may be required in accordance with University policy.
1. **Enforcement:**
Instructors and departments reserve the right to deny access to any non-enrolled individual who is not authorized to attend. Disruptions or repeated violations of this policy may be referred to VPA leadership, campus security, the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities, or other appropriate offices.