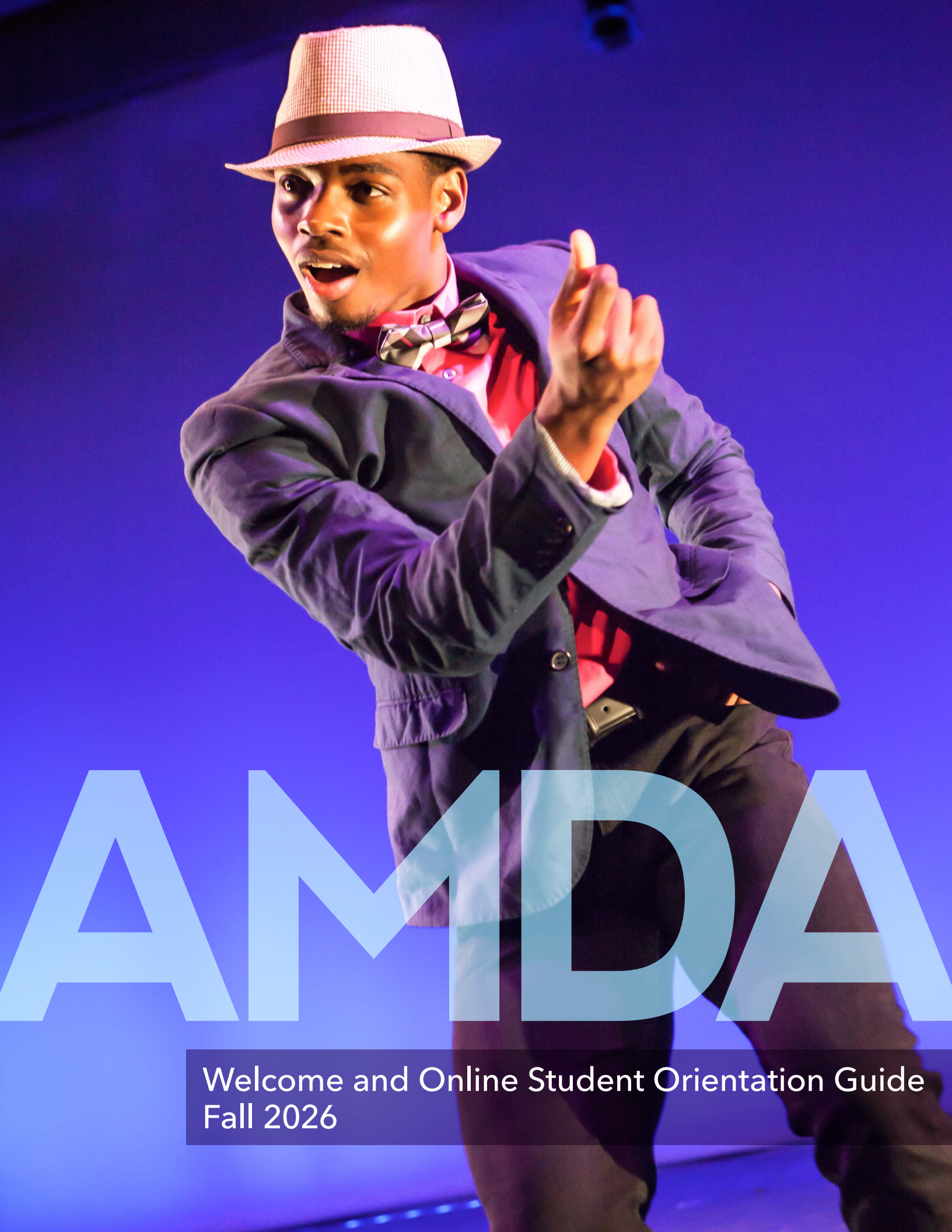




AMDA

Welcome and Online Student Orientation Guide
Fall 2026

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Dear Online Student,

I'd like to extend my warmest welcome to you.

AMDA's Online BFA program has been thoughtfully designed for continuing or returning students like you—who have already completed at least four semesters at one of our two on-ground campuses. Transitioning to an online format offers exciting flexibility, allowing you to balance your artistic training with life's other responsibilities.

Our online curriculum mirrors the upper-division courses from the BFA program on the LA Campus. You'll build directly on your previous training by diving deeper into character work in your performance courses, while also developing essential skills in **self-filming**, lighting, sound recording, and remote production. This program will empower you to self-produce high-quality digital content, master self-tapes, and excel in virtual callbacks—practical abilities that give you a real competitive edge in today's market.

To provide the flexibility you need, we've adapted the training into a fully **asynchronous** online format. That means greater freedom, but also greater personal responsibility for managing your time effectively each week to meet course learning outcomes. To support you, we've created this **Online Orientation Handbook**, packed with helpful information—including what you'll need before the semester begins and guidelines for navigating your coursework successfully.

Your **Online Student Orientation** is a required and critically important step. It's your opportunity to get oriented, connect with your new online community, and set yourself up for success. The AMDA staff and faculty are thrilled to have you continue your AMDA journey with us. If you have any questions, concerns, or simply want to talk through your experience, please don't hesitate to reach out to me. I'm happy to meet with you, answer questions, address concerns, or connect you with the right person.

I look forward to watching your growth and artistry flourish over the coming semesters.

Welcome to AMDA Online!

Warm regards,
Tom O'Leary (he/him)
Director of Online Curriculum and Instruction
toleary@amda.edu



WELCOME TO AMDA

We are happy that you are joining our community of online student learners. To ensure you receive all necessary information and updates regarding Orientation visit the Orientation webpage at amda.edu/LAOrientation.

ORIENTATION SCHEDULE

Online Student Orientation will be hosted on Saturday, October 17th beginning at 10:00 AM Pacific and lasting until 12:00 PM Pacific.. The Online Student Orientation session has been carefully planned to prepare you for the online program at AMDA and is mandatory meaning students must attend the entire session.

Should you have questions about the Orientation schedule or process, please email your Admissions Advisor or email LAOrientation@amda.edu.

MORE INFORMATION

AMDA CATALOG

The Catalog is the primary source of information on academic life at AMDA: academic policies, program information, course descriptions, financial aid, and student accounts. <https://amda.catalog.amda.edu/>

STUDENT HANDBOOK

The essential guide for student life at AMDA, the Handbook contains information about AMDA including the Code of Conduct.

<https://www.amda.edu/student-life/student-handbook>

IMPORTANT NOTES ABOUT DATES

The Fall 2026 semester dates are October 19th - February 12, 2027. Students are expected to be engaged and submit assignments per due dates as assigned, through the final day of the semester.

[Learn more about the Academic Calendar of AMDA here.](#)

STUDENT SUPPORT

FINANCIAL AID

For Students:

If you are receiving Federal Direct Stafford Loans, AMDA will not be able to process your Stafford loan funds until you submit your Federal Stafford Master Promissory Note (MPN), and Stafford Entrance Counseling. These are required federal documents that must be submitted prior to disbursement of your loan funds.

For Parents:

If you are receiving Federal Direct Parent PLUS Loan, parent borrowers must also complete a Federal PLUS Master Promissory Note (MPN). If there is a co-signer on the loan, parent borrowers must also complete Federal PLUS Loan Credit Counseling.

Please submit these documents as soon as possible at www.studentaid.gov so we can process these funds and post them to your student account. If these documents are not received prior to the scheduled disbursement date of your loans, your loans may be canceled. If canceled, you will be billed for these full loan amounts.

In order to complete the Stafford and/or PLUS Master Promissory Note and Stafford Entrance and/or PLUS Credit Counseling, you will need to have your US Department of Education federal login information, which you used to sign your FAFSA. Once you have your federal login information, please follow link to complete these forms: www.studentaid.gov.

STUDENT ACCOUNTS

Please be sure that required payments are completed and that you have your correct billing and mailing addressed documented before your arrival. If you have not done this prior to your arrival, you will need to check in with Student Accounts during Orientation Check-In. A Student Accounts representative will be available to answer questions. Please direct any questions about your student account to LAStudentAccounts@amda.edu.

PASSPORT TO BLACKBOARD

All students will receive an invitation to our Blackboard training course: Passport to Blackboard. Passport to Blackboard consists of eight modules of content that takes students through everything they need to know about using Blackboard as a student. We encourage students to go through the modules prior to the first day of class and continue to use the course as a reference for any questions they may have throughout the semester.

Within Blackboard students have the ability to indicate their pronouns, as well as change their Full Name, Display Name, and Sortable Name. This is available under Account, Settings, Edit Settings. Students are encouraged to review this information to be certain their name and pronouns appear exactly as they would like to be referred to in the classroom course communications among instructors and classmates.

-

Full Name: This name will be used by instructors for grading.

Display Name: Faculty and classmates will see this name in discussions, messages and comments.

Sortable Name: This name appears in grade reporting by faculty & staff.

STUDENT ID

All online students, including AMDA alumni or students enrolling in the Online BFA Program directly from the NY or LA campus, are required to receive a new online student AMDA ID. This ID Card will permit you access to both the Los Angeles and New York campus. In order to receive your new AMDA Student ID please fill out the form below in its entirety, including a picture, following the specifications below. New online students will need to complete the form to request a student ID. When submitting your picture for your ID, please keep a few things in mind:

- This picture should be a clear image of your face, from the chest up against a blank wall.
- This photo can be a headshot, class photo, or passport photo.
- This cannot be a selfie with filters on it.
- The photo must be in color not in black and white
- Please rename your photo submissions using this format: "Last Name_First Name_[Starting Term]." For example, if Bretman Rock started in the Fall 2026 term would label their submission(s) "Rock_Bretman_FA26."

Please fill out the form as soon as possible or by September 30th in order to receive your ID before Online Student Orientation. Students who complete the form after September 30th may experience short delays in receiving their ID cards.

NEW STUDENT ID REQUEST FORM

Online Student IDs will be mailed to students the week of October 5th. Please note your address and preference below. Failure to provide an accurate address will result in delays to you receiving your new student ID.

If you plan to visit the NY or LA on the first day of classes, please visit campus at least 1-2 days before the start of the term. If you have any issues, please email Laid@amda.edu and a staff member will assist you.

If after Orientation you need support with accessing the Los Angeles campus please email Laid@amda.edu.

If after Orientation you need support with accessing the New York campus please email NYID@amda.edu.

ACCESSING AMDA EMAIL

To learn more about accessing your AMDA email, [please click here to view the information on our website](#).

From Desktop / Laptop:

On the left-side menu, click My Profile.

Click My Information to access your account information.

Click My IT Information to access your personal AMDA email

From a Mobile device:

Tap on the 3-line Menu icon on the top right

Tap on My Profile

Tap on My Information

Tap on My IT Information

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS FOR ONLINE STUDENTS

Please read carefully for items that are optional and items that are required.

1. Laptop or Desktop Computer with minimum 16GB Ram - required before 1st semester begins.

2. NLE (Non-Linear Editing) System Options

a. Required: Start with iMovie for Mac (free) or a PC equivalent. This can offer the support you need.

If you choose to upgrade later, you may want to consider these options:

- a. Final Cut Pro (Use Education Pro Apps Bundle discount if you purchase this - Mac only)
- b. DaVinci Resolve (for Mac or PC - if you choose the base software, it's free)
- c. Adobe Premiere Pro (Use Education subscription)

3. Hard Drive Required early in 1st semester. (Minimum 1TB drive recommended)

a. Recommended: [Samsung T7 Shield 1TB](#)

4. Smartphone - required by the time 1st semester begins.

a. Required: 4K camera with minimum 128GB drive

5. Smartphone Filming App - Only One Required

- a. Blackmagic Camera App (Free and Recommended)
- b. Beastcam - Pro Camera
- c. ProMovie Recorder +

6. LED Light (Please avoid using a ring light for main light)

a. [Lume Cube RGB Panel GO](#) or [iVii G2](#)

7. Microphone Highly Recommended for All Self-Tapes and Videos of Scene Assignments

a. Shotgun Mic: [Deity V-Mic D4 Mini Microphone](#)

OR

b. Lavalier Mic: Many options in a range of price points.

8. Digital Audio Workstation (DAW) (required for Music Theatre students)

- a. Recommended: [GarageBand](#) (included with all Apple devices)
- b. Or [Soundtrap](#) (free website)

9. Tripod

- a. [Victiv 80" Camera Tripod](#) - High End
- b. [JOILCAN Tripod for Camera Phone](#) - Good Discounted Option

10. Headphones, Earbuds, or Wireless EarPods

- a. Required for Music Theatre: Wireless EarPods
- b. Recommended: [Sony ZX Headphones](#)

11. Bluetooth Speaker (strongly recommended for Music Theatre for playing tracks when self-taping)

a. [Bose SoundLink Flex](#) - High End

b. [Anker SoundCore Portable Bluetooth Speaker](#) - Good Discounted Option

12. Self-Tape Backdrop (recommended for Music Theatre; and in later semesters for Acting)

a. [Kate 5x6.5ft \(1.5x2m\)](#) - choose color that work for you

b. [Kate Abstract Backdrop](#) - (various color options) stand not included

c. Using a plain wall or corner without distracting elements can work, if using good lighting

d. Painting a wall can also work (discuss color with Foundations of Remote Digital Production instructor first)



RESERVING SPACE ON CAMPUS

To book a space on the Los Angeles or New York campuses, please follow these simple steps:

- Visit the AMDA Student Portal:

[STUDENT PORTAL LINK](#)

- Log in to the system with your username and password.
- On the left side of the page, if using a laptop/computer/tablet, please click "My Schedule.

The next step to reserve spaces includes an additional pop-up window/screen. Please allow pop-up windows to continue; if pop-up windows are disabled you will not be able to continue.

- When prompted on the new pop-up window, log into your AMDA gmail account using your username and password.
- On the left side of the page, select "New Booking.
- Complete required/necessary information requested.
- Confirm your booking.

Additional Notes:

- Students are allowed to reserve space for one up to one (1) hour per session.
- Spaces can be reserved up to five (5) days in advance.
- Students are expected to know and abide by expectations outlined in the [Student Handbook](#).
- Please report any emergencies to the nearest AMDA Receptionist or Security member.
-

If you have issues reserving a space please contact the following office:

Los Angeles

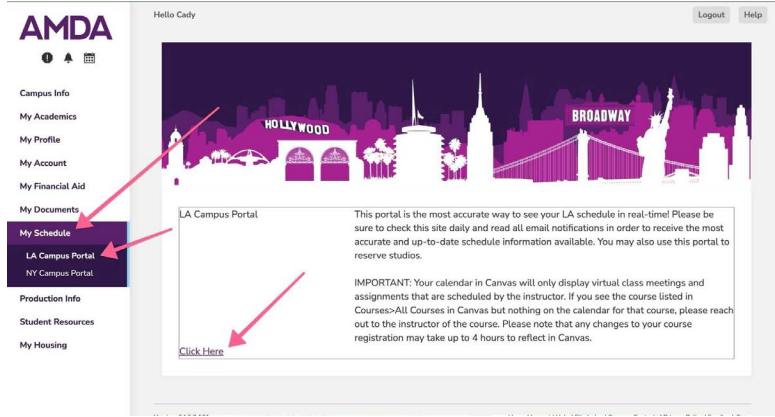
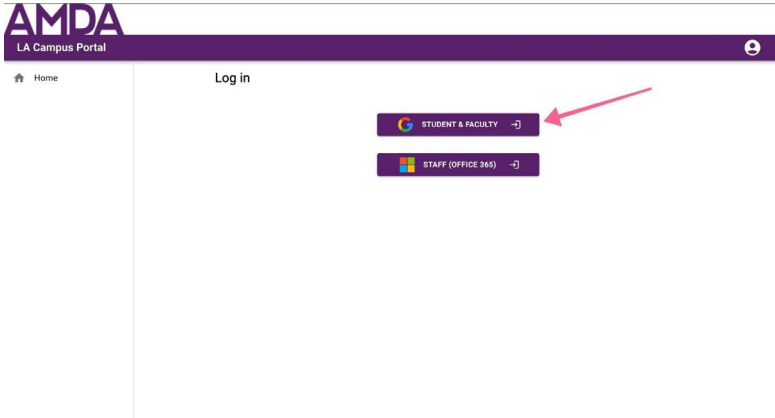
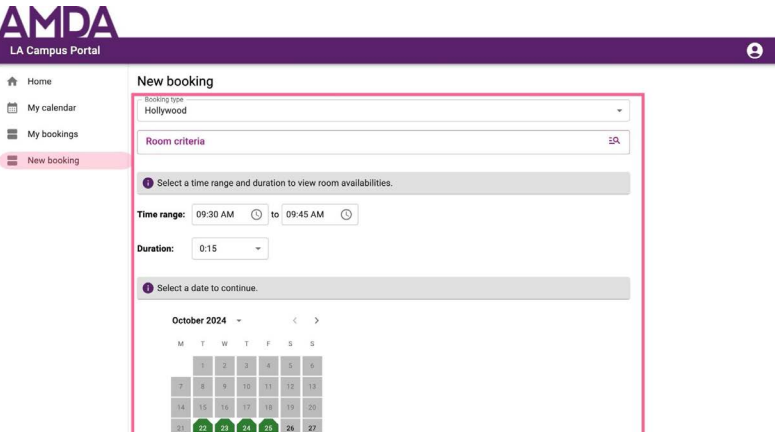
- LAScheduling@amda.edu
- Phone Contact (Reception): (323) 603-5901

New York

- NYScheduling@amda.edu
- Phone Contact (Reception): (212) 787-5300

General questions can be directed to LAStudentSuccess@amda.edu and/or Tom O'Leary, Director of Online Curriculum and Instruction, at TOLeary@amda.edu.

VISUAL IMAGES

Accessing Room Reservation Page From Portal)	
Additional Pop-Up Screen To Access Booking Sight	
Booking Page	

Space Reservations 2

LIFE AS AN ONLINE STUDENT

Self-Care and Time Management

As you navigate the balancing act of your online training with life's other responsibilities, it's crucial to remember that your health and well-being are key to your success as a student. We understand that many of our students juggle work, family obligations and their studies. While this balancing act can be rewarding, it can also lead to feeling worn out or run down. Here are some guidelines to help you stay physically and mentally well:

- **Self-Care and Wellness:** Prioritize your health by getting enough rest, eating well and getting exercise. Remember, taking care of your body and mind is essential for your academic success.
- **Manage Your Workload:** You should dedicate at least two hours of work per week for each credit hour of a course. You can prevent burnout by planning and managing your time. Use a calendar or planner to schedule your study times, assignments and deadlines.
- **Take Breaks:** While studying online offers great flexibility, it's important to step away from the screen regularly. Short breaks during study sessions can help reduce eye strain and increase productivity. Longer breaks are essential for rejuvenation and maintaining a healthy balance.
- **Establish a Routine:** Creating a consistent daily schedule can help you stay organized and focused. Set up a routine for the things you do every day: warm-ups, vocal and physical exercises, studying, breaks and personal time. This will help with time management and reduce stress.
- **Seek Support:** If you find yourself struggling or life's challenges become overwhelming, please contact us. We're here to support you through your academic journey and can provide resources to help manage stress and other concerns.
- **Stay Connected:** Communication with your teachers is key. Don't hesitate to contact your teachers if you have questions about your coursework or need guidance. Engaging with your peers through online forums and study groups can also provide support and enhance your learning experience. Remember, being an online student requires self-motivation and excellent time-management skills. Taking care of your well-being, managing your workload effectively and staying connected with the online community are crucial steps to ensuring your success in the program.

Attendance/Absence Policy for Online Students

Attendance for classes taught asynchronously is determined on a per-week basis. The "Attendance Check-In" requirement, which is due on Tuesday midnight (12 AM), Pacific Time, of each week, determines attendance for that week. NOTE: "Attendance Check-in" requirements are completely separate from the "Course Assignment" information referenced above. Any missed "Attendance Check-In" requirement will result in an absence and cannot be offset by late submissions. The maximum number of absences that can be accrued (total accumulated, not sequential) for any Asynchronous or Hybrid course is four. Any absence that exceeds the maximum means a student cannot fulfill the necessary engagement required for course outcomes and will result in a grade of Withdraw Fail (WF).

- Example: A student accrues four total absences due to lack of submitted "Attendance Check-In" requirements. A fifth such absence results in a posted WF for the course.

Weekly Assignment Due Dates

Students are required to submit coursework assignments (separate from the weekly "Attendance Check-In" requirement referenced above) by the due date and time as communicated by the instructor. Most course assignments are due by Sunday midnight (12 AM), Pacific Time. Always double-check the due date and time for each course. Missing a due date for an online course assignment can domino into additional missed or late assignments and can cause a student to quickly fall behind; this can overwhelm and derail a student's course progress and impact their ability to meet course outcomes.

Course assignments submitted after a communicated due date/time, but within one week from the original due date/time will be considered "Late." Late course assignments will be graded and lowered 10% due to lateness. Course assignments submitted later than one week from the original due date/time will not be accepted and will result in a zero for that assignment.

IMPORTANT DATES FOR FALL 2026 SEMESTER

- **Saturday, October 17 at 10:00-Noon, Pacific Time / 1:00-3:00, Eastern Time:** Required Orientation for all Incoming Online Students
- **Monday, October 19:** First Day of Classes
- **November 25, 26, 27:** Thanksgiving Break
- **December 3-8:** Livestream Midterm Demos for Primary Performance Courses: TBD
- **December 21-Jan 01:** Winter Break
- **February 1-7:** Livestream Final Demos for Primary Performance Courses: TBD
- **February 12, 2027:** Last Day of Classes



EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION AT AMDA

AMDA is committed to dismantling existing structures that historically exclude and oppress minoritized groups. This commitment requires each of us to take responsibility to actively grow and preserve AMDA's diverse community and culture. AMDA will actively elevate and prioritize equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging in our curriculum, creative productions, services, and administration. Most crucially, we will continue to work towards the recruitment, retention, and advancement of students, faculty, and staff from underrepresented populations in higher education and the performing arts.

As an integral part of our mission, AMDA expects all of its community members to exemplify the following principles:

ACCOUNTABILITY

We build trust with others by following through on our mission and commitments. We endeavor to normalize giving and receiving feedback in the inevitable areas of growth in this work and continue to confront implicit biases and systems of oppression.

COLLABORATION

We acknowledge that our work is a shared responsibility and we best achieve our goals when we work together in an effort to create a more equitable and inclusive campus.

INNOVATION

We empower our community to define and own their unique artistry, connecting our personal experiences to our creative work. Through intentional representation, narrative reframing, and personal agency, we allow the art we create to increase our understanding of one another.

INTEGRITY

We live our institutional values in our work across campuses and with each other. We show up authentically when challenged, and acknowledge that part of our wholeness is the continuation of growth and learning.

TRANSPARENCY

We develop healthy relationships by sharing information, policies, and procedures openly with each campus and with each other while protecting confidentiality where needed.

AMDA recognizes that honoring this commitment requires us to create and maintain campus resources, offer frequent EDI-focused learning opportunities, and establish consistent and clear systems of accountability for all community members. Accordingly, AMDA rejects and condemns all forms of harassment, wrongful discrimination, and disrespect, and expects that this core value will be reflected in the behaviors of all its employees and students.

PHILOSOPHY AND STANDARDS REGARDING CASTING PRACTICES

At AMDA, we are committed to creating and upholding the best standards and practices regarding casting for our students in our classrooms, on our stages, and for our on-camera work. We hope one day soon to see these standards and practices realized across platforms for performing artists including Broadway, national and international stages, film and television. [Click here to view the full casting policy.](#)

LIVED NAME

AMDA firmly believes that everyone should be addressed by the name with which they would like to be referred, and which authentically reflects their identity. AMDA acknowledges the importance that a change of name may have to students during their time with us, and therefore the institution allows for students to provide a lived first and middle name that is different from their legal name. At this time, last names/surnames can be changed only with legal name change documentation.

PRONOUNS

An individual's pronouns are not a preference. They are a statement of fact, and a form of self-expression and self-affirmation. Accordingly, students may indicate pronouns to be used within the College & Conservatory's information systems. This includes AMDA's Learning Management System (Blackboard), as well as the Student Information System known as Anthology Student. Pronouns may be added, edited, or removed at any time during enrollment. In cases when government verification is involved, such as federal loan processing, a student's sex assigned at birth may also be required. In all cases, AMDA strives to approach this with care and discretion. While students may make changes to their pronouns within Blackboard at any time during enrollment within the account settings, changes to pronouns on the student record can only be made on the administrative level. [Click here to view our full lived name & pronoun policy](#)

TITLE IX

AMDA is committed to providing an academic environment free from sex discrimination, where all members of the school community are treated with respect and dignity. Sex discrimination includes both sexual and gender-based harassment and violence. All members of the AMDA community, including students, employees, and third parties, are protected under this policy. [Click here to view AMDA's full Title IX policy.](#)

REPORTING BIAS INCIDENTS

A bias incident is a hostile act of conduct, speech, or expression motivated, in whole or in part, by intolerance, bias, or prejudice against another. Unlike a hate crime, the hostile act is not a criminal act; like a hate crime, the hostile act is motivated by prejudice. It differs from a hate crime in that no criminal activity is involved but its effect is to discriminate, demean, embarrass, assign stereotype, harass, or exclude individuals because of their identities, including but not limited to: race, ethnicity, national origin, language, sex, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, age, veteran status, or religion.

It should be noted that the mere expression of viewpoints and disagreements on political or social issues as protected under the First Amendment, and which does not create a material disruption to the operations of AMDA or the rights of individuals, does not constitute a bias incident.

AMDA is committed to addressing incidents of bias and needs your assistance in bringing these incidents to our attention. [To report information about bias related incidents please submit this form.](#) By documenting incidents, we can better protect and educate our community and best enable the college and conservatory to prevent this behavior and to address it properly when it occurs.

If you have any questions about the form, its use, or the Bias Incident Protocol, please contact Student Affairs at LAStudentAffairs@amda.edu. Once an incident is reported, you will receive an acknowledgement of the report.

DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER

If you are a student with a disability and feel as though accommodations are needed for you to enjoy equal access to AMDA's programs or services, the Disability Resource Center (DRC) is here to support you. To make an accommodation request, please follow the steps below:

STEP 1: SUBMIT DOCUMENTATION TO THE DRC

Please use [this form](#) to request accommodations. The form will ask you to describe in your own words your disability and any barriers you are experiencing or anticipate experiencing at AMDA. It also asks you what reasonable accommodations you feel will best remove those barriers. Please be as detailed as possible, as this helps us approve the accommodation(s) that best provide equal access. If you don't know for sure what accommodations you need, that is fine. Suggest any ideas you have, and specific accommodations will be discussed with you in your access meeting.

You will be required to upload supporting documentation within your request form. We recommend that you have your treating professional fill out our Disability Information Form and then submit that. If you already have other documentation, or your provider prefers to use their own form, that is fine, but please ensure that the documentation you submit is from a healthcare professional who is licensed to diagnose and treat your condition, is treating you for your condition, AND includes ALL of the same information as is asked for in the form. More detailed information about documentation requirements is included in the [Disability Accommodations Policy](#).

STEP 2: HAVE AN ACCESS MEETING WITH THE DRC

After you have completed the request form and submitted your supporting documentation, the DRC will reach out to schedule an Access Meeting. During this meeting, we will engage in what is called the interactive process, where we will discuss your individual situation and needs so we are able to determine what accommodations are appropriate. Your accommodations will be officially determined shortly after this meeting. Note that while the DRC may confer or inquire with other staff in general terms in order to thoroughly explore all accommodation options, the office will NOT share your diagnosis or information from your documentation with anyone unless you expressly give us permission to do so.

More information about the accommodations process can be found through the [DRC website](#).

STUDENT SUCCESS

The Office of Student Success is dedicated to providing equitable, inclusive, and comprehensive academic and non-academic support services to all AMDA students. Through a student-centered approach, the office fosters strong, collaborative partnerships with students, faculty, and campus departments to support the successful achievement of students' educational and career goals.

Serving as a vital resource, the Office of Student Success connects students to essential campus services and enhances their overall college experience.

We recognize that students may encounter a variety of challenges during their college journey—academic, financial, personal, interpersonal, and wellness-related—or may simply seek connection and support. In alignment with the many outstanding offices at AMDA, the Office of Student Success is committed to addressing the holistic needs of every student.

The Student Success team is here to guide and empower students by helping them navigate campus resources, build meaningful connections, prepare for their careers, and develop a strong sense of belonging within the AMDA community.

Services Provided by Professional Staff

- One-on-One Advising
- Personal Development & Conflict Mediation
- Academic Support
- Department Referrals

Additional Services Provided from Pro-Staff

- Resume & Cover Letter Development
- Tutoring and Academic Coaching Spaces
- Connections to Community Resources & Services

Contact Information

LAStudentSuccess@amda.edu

DEPARTMENT CONTACTS

ADMISSIONS OFFICE

admissionsteam@amda.edu

800-367-7908

STUDENT ACCOUNTS DEPARTMENT

LAStudentAccounts@amda.edu

323-603-5960

STUDENT AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT

LAstudentaffairs@amda.edu

323-603-5960

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ADVISING

InternationalLA@amda.edu

STUDENT SUCCESS DEPARTMENT

LAstudentsuccess@amda.edu

323-603-5960

DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER

DRC@amda.edu

STUDENT ORIENTATION COMMITTEE

LAOrientation@amda.edu

323-603-5960

PERFORMING ARTS LIBRARY

Lalibrary@amda.edu

(323) 603-5924

FINANCIAL AID DEPARTMENT

LAfinaid@amda.edu

323-603-5960

DIRECTOR OF ONLINE CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Tom O'Leary

TOleary@amda.edu

310-739-6394

A man wearing a light-colored fedora, a purple blazer, a red and white checkered shirt, and a patterned bow tie is dancing on a stage. He is pointing his right index finger towards the camera. The background is a bright blue stage with some lights visible.

CONNECT WITH AMDA

LEARN MORE: amda.edu

LIKE US: facebook.com/amdanyla

FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM: [@AMDAofficial](https://instagram.com/AMDAofficial)

WATCH: amda.edu/videos