



# **STUDENT HANDBOOK**

2024-25 Edition

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### **MISSION:**

It is the mission of the Waldorf Teacher Institute to prepare students to become capable and enthusiastic Waldorf educators. By introducing them to the principles of human development described in the work of Rudolf Steiner as well as contemporary researchers, we help them begin a journey of soul-spiritual growth and transformation that will enable them to recognize, understand, and meet the needs of children growing up in the ever-changing landscape of the 21st Century.

The Waldorf Teacher Institute is committed to supporting students by establishing and implementing documented policies and practices that are effective and that foster professional and personal growth.

### **INCLUSION POLICY:**

WTI does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, sexual orientation and national and ethnic origin in the application of admissions, educational policy, and any other aspect of institute programming.

### **COURSES OF STUDY OFFERED:**

- **Foundation Studies-** these classes may be taken as a stand alone course for those exploring self development. For those taking the grade school program these classes are a requirement for course completion. This course of study also meets a prerequisite for those wishing to attend an institute offering high school teacher preparation programs.\*
- **Early Childhood Education Program-** This course includes Foundation Studies, the Online Seminar Series and two Summer Intensive Programs.
- **Grade School Education Program-** This course includes Foundation Studies, the Online Seminar Series and two Summer Intensive Programs.

- **Online Seminar Series-** these classes may be taken as professional development classes for practicing teachers. They are a requirement for those taking Foundation Studies and the Grade School Education Program \*\*
- **Summer intensives-** these programs have a different theme each year. While a requirement for the Grade School Education Program they may be taken individually as professional development for practicing teachers and anyone interested in the theme offered. This course is in-person only.

**Note:** A certificate of attendance can be obtained upon request by those attending the Foundation Studies program in its entirety.\*

A certificate of attendance can be obtained upon request by those taking one, or any number, of the Online Seminar Series for professional development.\*\*

A certificate of attendance can be obtained upon request by those taking a Summer Intensive in its entirety.\*\*\*

## **CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENTS:**

**Foundation Studies Program Only:** To receive a certificate of course completion, the following requirements need to be met:

- Attendance at and active engagement with the required Foundation Studies program. [see courses pdf for full list of classes required]

**Early Childhood Teacher Education Program:** To receive a certificate of course completion, the following requirements need to be met:

- Attendance at and active engagement with the required Foundation Studies program. [see courses pdf for full list of classes required]
- Attendance and active engagement with classes in art, handwork and eurythmy as well as the professional grade school classes. [see courses pdf for full list of classes required]
- Attendance at and active engagement in required Early Childhood specific courses.
- Attendance at all online seminars. [10 total over 2 years]
- Attendance at mentoring meetings
- Completion of two summer intensives.
- Completion of first and second year research projects.
- Successful completion of two three week teaching practices.

- Completion of 40 journal observation hours, including 5 in Grade School and 5 in HS.

**Grade School Teacher Education Program:** To receive a certificate of course completion, the following requirements need to be met:

- Attendance at and active engagement with the required Foundation Studies program. [see courses pdf for full list of classes required]
- Attendance and active engagement with classes in art, handwork and eurythmy as well as the professional grade school classes. [see courses pdf for full list of classes required]
- Attendance at and active engagement in required Grade Level specific courses.
- Attendance at all online seminars. [10 total over 2 years]
- Attendance at mentoring meetings
- Completion of two summer intensives.
- Completion of first and second year research projects.
- Successful completion of two three week teaching practices.
- Completion of 40 journal observation hours, including 5 in EC and 5 in HS.

### **MENTORING:**

While not a course of study, meeting with a mentor provides an opportunity for dialogue that enriches both the student's and the mentor's experience of the program. Problem solving or free ranging conversation can allow for unexpected sources of strength and clarity.

Each student is assigned a mentor upon entering the teacher preparation program. Both group and individual mentoring are a requirement for completion of the program and are scheduled.

### **PRACTICE TEACHING:**

#### **Early Childhood**

- **Pre-service Students** complete teaching practices with experienced lead Waldorf early childhood teachers in order to put what they are learning into action and prepare for lead teaching in an early childhood classroom. WTI students meet with their supervising teachers regularly and are fully engaged in the life of the kindergarten during their practicums. Students who are not currently practicing Waldorf teachers or teacher assistants who are working at least three days per week in a Waldorf early childhood classroom are required to complete two three-week student teaching practices.

- **In-service Students**- currently practicing Waldorf teachers or teacher assistants who are working at least three days per week in a Waldorf early childhood classroom- are required to complete student-teaching practicums as well, although the requirements are different. They must have a minimum of three weeks (fifteen days) of observation and practicum during the course of their training (of which at least two weeks must be in classrooms other than their own), and two days of mentoring per year in their own classrooms. Currently practicing assistant teachers are also required to complete two weeks of student teaching. One week can be in the classroom that they are the assistant in and one week needs to be in a classroom that they do not normally work in.

### Grade School

- **Pre-service Students** are required to complete two three-week teaching practices with different teachers and at different grade levels. It is advised to complete one in a lower grade and one in a higher grade to have as rich and diverse an experience as possible. The assessment forms must be completed by the host teachers. See the Pre-service Teaching Practice Guide for detailed information and a copy of the Assessment Form.
- **In-service Students** may complete one three week teaching practice in their own classroom. The assessment form must be completed by a fully trained Waldorf teacher following two days of observation. The second teaching practice must take place in a class other than their own and the assessment form completed by the host teacher. See the Pre-service Teaching Practice Guide for detailed information and a copy of the Assessment Form.

[Link to Teaching Practice Guides and Forms](#)

### INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES:

#### Admissions:

Admission is open to all adults. The minimum educational requirement is a high school diploma. Students under 21 will generally not be admitted but the Core Group may make exceptions in individual cases. As part of the application process, applicants must show proof of graduation from High School and/or Higher Education classes completed in the form of a copy of the diploma or transcripts. In addition the applicant will complete a short personal biography and add a resume together with a \$100 non-refundable application fee. Upon receipt of these, we will schedule an interview either in person or online. Personal interviews may take up to one hour and may be conducted over the phone or in person. We want to ensure that the applicant is joining the program with a clear picture of the expectations, the challenges, and the learning opportunities offered.

Final notice of acceptance into the program will be emailed to the applicant.

WTI Admits Students Of Any Race, Color, Gender, Sexual Orientation, National And Ethnic Origin.

### **Prospective Student Visitation:**

Prospective students are encouraged to visit classes. Please contact the administrator, Marrakesh Glasspool-Frugia via email at [admin@waldorfteachertraining.org](mailto:admin@waldorfteachertraining.org) to make arrangements.

### **Waldorf Training Transfer Students:**

Transfer students should follow the process outlined above with the added requirement of attaching an official transcript released by the previous institute where the classes were taken. This will be reviewed by a member of the Core group to assess the credits based on comparable coursework. A member of the Core Group and the administrator will meet with the prospective transfer student, share the credits assigned, outline the classes that are accepted for credit and go over those needed to complete the training.

A maximum of 40 credits earned in other Waldorf teacher training programs may be transferable upon review of the student's transcript and course descriptions provided by the previous institution. WTI does not accept ability-to-benefit students.

### **Coursework:**

- **Credit/Grading:** The Waldorf Teacher Education Program does not issue grades for class work. Complete or Incomplete status will be based on the teacher's evaluation of the required course work done by the student, including class participation, reading assignments, written work, and artistic presentations. Students must also meet the minimum requirements for the attendance policy in each class.
- **Extensions:** In exceptional circumstances a student may ask for an extension. The request must be per course. Notification of extending the completion of course work must be made at the same time as handing in of the evaluations for the other students. On the extension form the date by which a final evaluation may be made should be indicated. It is up to the instructor to gather the missing course and notify WTI administration to change the grade from incomplete to complete.

Please note: Extension to complete arts courses may require a longer period of extra work by the student. This should be noted and agreed upon between instructor and student.



[Link to extension Form PDF](#) [coming soon]

- **Final Incompletes:** These are given if the student, despite one or several (but no more than three) extensions for the work, has not satisfied the instructor. Meetings with the student's mentor and members of the COre Group Are required to verify such a final incomplete, and determine further procedure or action at such a meeting.

To receive a certificate, students must meet the following criteria: they must have completed all three years with no incompletes on their transcripts and all outstanding tuition and loan balances must be paid in full.

- **Online Classes:** WTI is committed to offering in-person classes with a minimum of online classes. Online classes are offered when needed and helpful in augmenting the in-person program. Attendance is taken in these classes and assignments given are expected to be completed on time and uploaded in the shared drive provided. The same rules apply as in the in person classes regarding attendance, absence and make up work

### **Self-Evaluations:**

Students will submit three self-evaluations a year at the end of each term, fall, winter and spring. Each self-evaluation needs to be submitted within two weeks after the term ends. The intention of this process is to engage the student in active self reflection and goal setting for the next term's work. If the self evaluation is submitted on time it will be read and commented on, entered into the student's transcript and a copy sent to the student. If it is submitted after the deadline it will be registered as received and entered into the transcript without comment.

### **Student Progress Report/End of Year Interview:**

The WTI Core Group and Faculty request that all students who wish to go on with their studies undergo an interview towards the end of the academic year to determine their readiness to proceed. This interview and report is a record of the students standing in the program and is submitted at the end of each year. It includes attendance, incomplete work, and courses completed. The report provides the basis for decisions about re-enrollment for the following year and completion of the program.

### **Interview Process Guidelines:**

- During April and May of the concluding year an interview schedule will be drawn up.

- Students will be asked to sign up for slots.
- A final roster of assigned interview slots will be sent out to the cohort.
- All interviews will be held in person on campus at CWS [unless necessity dictates otherwise].
- Interviewer will take notes of the salient points made by the student.
- The interview process will include the student sharing their perceptions, experiences and reflections on their learning experience so far, and their goals for the coming year. Discussing areas of improvement in the program, as well as areas of strength, is important for the relevance of the institute and is encouraged.
- The interview will be conducted by a member of the Core Group or a designated faculty member in person or online.

### **Re-Enrollment Policy:**

Students must complete a Returning Student Application each year of the program to continue into the following year of the training. Completing this form is not a guarantee that a student will be accepted into the following year of the program. The Director, in consultation with the faculty, will decide and communicate with the student at the end of the Summer Program if there are any questions or concerns with the student continuing with the training. Students must sign an Enrollment Contract, ELate Assignment/Absence Make-Up ("green sheet"): This sheet documents submission of make-up assignments for missed classes or assignments. Students may request the "green sheet" from their class secretary. A student who has not completed all assignments may ask for an extension or a deadline.

### **Withdrawal:**

- **Unexpected Discontinuation of Classes During a Term:** Due to unexpected circumstances a student may have to drop out of the program. If such a situation should arise, please let the Program Administrator know immediately of this emergency.

The following policy applies regarding financial responsibilities:

- ❖ Any fully paid registration fee will NOT be refunded.
- ❖ Any tuition paid for the courses taken in the current term i.e. the term in which the emergency arises, will NOT be refunded to the student.
- ❖ Any tuition paid in advance for courses not yet begun at the time of the emergency, that is in advance of the current term, WILL be refunded in full, after any outstanding balances have been deducted.

- ❖ Payments for materials such as books or musical instruments or any other items covered by the supply fee will NOT be refunded, as this is an expense which has already been incurred by WTI.

NOTE: Any courses that are completed (with all work handed to the instructor by the deadline, and with the instructor's evaluation on file), will be credited towards future re-enrollment.

- **Unexpected Discontinuation of Classes During a Break:** In addition to the above conditions, the following policies are also in effect.
  - ❖ If a student decides during a break not to continue in the subsequent term, or take a break from classes for a term, Administration must be notified 7 days prior to the first day of the term.
  - ❖ A late cancellation fee not exceeding \$100 may be charged, and all books and materials will have to be charged, as they will have been ordered.

## Records:

- **Transcript:** The program administrator transfers credits from the Student Progress Report to the Transcript. This is done at the end of each academic year. A copy of the progress report is sent to each student at the end of each year. One official transcript is sent to each student upon completion of all requirements for the enrolled program. The fee for additional transcripts will be \$25.00.
- **Completion Certificate:** After completing all the program requirements, if there are no incompletes on the transcript, and the student is paid in full, the student is awarded a certificate of completion (Certification in Waldorf Education). They will receive an electronic copy for their records as well as a hard copy at graduation or through the mail if they are unable to attend the ceremony in person. The fee for a replacement hard copy is \$25.00. Request for replacement should be emailed to the Program Administrator at [admin@waldorfteachertraining.org](mailto:admin@waldorfteachertraining.org)
- **Student Records Retention:** The following policies govern the retention of student records and transcripts:
  - Records and transcripts of students that completed the program will be permanently retained. These files are stored in a fire-proof file cabinet in the main office.

- Records and transcripts of students that have withdrawn after one year or more will be permanently retained.
- Records and transcripts of students that have withdrawn before completing one year will be permanently retained.
- All student financial files will be retained for 10 years

### **Digital Media Communications:**

Only use email to convey information or to arrange appointments. Be advised that emails are public documents and civility guidelines apply. It is recommended to arrange a meeting to talk in person.

### **Weather Closures:**

Because it is very difficult to reschedule classes, we avoid snow and severe weather cancellations as much as possible. If there is an impending storm, we will communicate the night before or early Saturday morning about any decision to delay or cancel classes. Sometimes impending weather conditions dictate that we should close early or reserve the right to move classes to zoom if safety becomes an issue.

## **FINANCIAL POLICIES:**

### **Tuition:**

The first payment is due in September and the last payment is due in June. Tuition agreements are kept on file. Contact the Program Administrator, with questions on anything concerning student tuition or finances at: [admin@waldorfteachertraining.org](mailto:admin@waldorfteachertraining.org) or call at 773-985-1511.

There are a number of different ways to make payments:

- Paypal monthly invoice payment installments - setup and approved by the Program Administrator.
- Lump sum payments for the entire school year, term, or class directly on the student payment page on the website.
- Cash or check payments will also be accepted. These must be handed directly to the Program Administrator.

All balances must be paid in full by June of the current school year.

Should you fall too far behind in your payments you will be contacted to discuss how the issue can be resolved.

### **Financial Aid:**

At this time, WTI itself offers no individualized tuition reduction plan. The Association of Waldorf Schools of North America, AWSNA, offers a loan-to-grant program for full-time education year students only, who intend to become full-time Waldorf teachers. More information below.

- [AWSNA Teacher Education Loans](#): The Association of Waldorf Schools of North America offers a Loan-to-Grant Program exclusive to Education Year Students. These students must be in good standing with our institute, have shown previous financial responsibility, and intend to work as teachers in AWSNA or WECAN affiliated schools.

This loan is forgiven 1/3 each year that the teacher teaches at least 3/4 time in an AWSNA member Waldorf School, becoming a Grant after 3 years.

WTI will coordinate the application for the Loan to Grant monies in the fall of the student's Education Year after classes have begun in September. Each student signs a legal contract with AWSNA. The funds are sent to WTI and applied to tuition directly. Prospective applicants should plan to make tuition payments until the loan process is finalized, generally late fall. The amount of the loan fluctuates annually as it is shared among all teacher education institutes which are members of AWNSA.

- **Currently Practicing Teacher Matching Grants Program:** For those teacher education students already employed at an affiliated school and enrolled full time in WTI, there is a "currently practicing teachers" grant which may be applied for through WTI. This grant requires a dollar for dollar or pay what you can match from the employing school or other acceptable source.

More about AWSNA fundings programs can be found at <https://waldorfeducation.org/TELG>.

### **STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT:**

#### **Premises:**

WTI classes take place at the Chicago Waldorf School. Our programs take place in designated rooms – all other areas are off limits to WTI students – no exceptions. As

guests, all rooms must be left in good order before WTI students leave for the day. (trash, desks, personal belongings, etc.)

Chicago Waldorf School is a non-smoking, alcohol free campus.

### **Safe Spaces:**

The doors to the school must remain locked at all times when classes are in session. Doors may NOT be propped open at any time – no exceptions.

### **Punctuality:**

Students are expected to arrive in their classroom before class begins so that each class can begin promptly and use the full time allotted for each subject. In turn, faculty members will make every effort to end their classes on time. Frequent tardiness disturbs the flow of learning and is disruptive to the teacher, the class and the student concerned. Ongoing tardiness will be addressed .

### **Absences:**

Students are responsible for notifying their instructors of absences prior to class. Students must make arrangements for completing make-up work for classes/assignments missed.

AWSNA and WECAN require our program to contain a certain amount of attendance hours, with only a small allowance for absences.

No more than two absences in a 7 week term are permitted to receive credit for the course. Three or more absences and the course must be repeated in order to receive credit.

Our time together is very limited and critical to all there is to learn. Most topics are addressed once, with some of our visiting faculty members only coming in for one or two presentations. It is difficult to catch up on class discussion time, and dialog is an essential component of the program.. Still, we understand that emergency or important personal absences cannot be avoided. In that case, students are expected to contact the teacher of the class ahead of time and make arrangements about making up the class and the work involved.

### **Harassment/Bullying:**

Students should be mindful and respectful of each other at all times. Any form of bullying/harassment is incompatible with WTI's ideals of social inclusivity and mutual respect and will not be tolerated. WTI faculty will immediately address, defuse and stop any form of teasing, cyber-bullying, or unwanted aggressive behavior of any kind should it occur

**Non-Discrimination:**

WTI prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, nationality, ethnicity, religion, creed, disability, age, sexual orientation, and gender identity and expression.

**Drugs and Alcohol:**

Chicago Waldorf School is a non-smoking, alcohol free campus. WTI's mission is to nurture and educate each student's capacities for clear thinking, sound judgment, and strength of will. The use of consciousness-altering substances is an impediment to our mission. Anyone found with alcohol or illegal drugs on campus will be suspended from the program. Ongoing infractions will be cause for dismissal.

**Concerns and Complaints:**

WTI is committed to offering a rich and engaging adult education to all students. If you have a concern or complaint, please bring it to the attention of your mentor and a Core group Member at an early stage. We will listen to you and address the issue with sensitivity and confidentiality.

**Disputes:**

Do not attempt to resolve disputes or conflicts by email, text or social platform. Arrange for a face-to-face meeting.

**Student/Faculty Relations:**

Confidential conversations, evaluations, and mentoring support are essential, encouraged and available. Each member of our community bears the responsibility for the social well being of the whole.. Courtesy, confidentiality and tact are hallmarks of a thriving community of learning where all can participate with confidence.

**Communication Protocol:**

Communication with teachers and administration will be through email. Phone or zoom conversations need to be arranged ahead of time unless there is an emergency.

Recordings, slides or photographs used in classes may not be shared or reproduced without prior permission from the instructor.

**Cell Phones:** Use of Cell phones is not permitted in class.

**AI:** Use of AI generated writing or other course work is not permitted. [put text back in from faculty handbook]

**Plagiarism:** Issues of plagiarism will be taken up by the faculty and decisions regarding the work of the student concerned will be made on a case by case basis.

**Practice Teaching:** When engaged in practice-teaching remember that your host school and host teacher are providing you with an invaluable learning experience. You are a guest and are expected to work with the agreements and protocols living in that organization. You are also a representative of WTI.