

Northwestern University National High School Institute



Playwriting
General Information

Northwestern
NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL INSTITUTE

617 Noyes Street
Evanston, IL 60208-4165

Phone (847) 491-3026
nhsi@northwestern.edu
nhsi.northwestern.edu



2025 Playwriting Intensive
Cherubs National High School Institute
Northwestern University

Dear Incoming NHSI Class of 2025,

Congratulations and welcome to the Cherubs! We are thrilled that you have accepted our offer to join the 2025 Summer Playwriting Intensive. Your application was selected with great care and we are overjoyed to welcome you into this year's program; an experience that we hope will live well beyond your time with us this summer.

The National High School Institute summer program (CHERUBS) dates back to 1931 and boasts an alumni network well into the thousands (over 30,000 by last count). This truly is a program built on the transformative experience of students, in multiple disciplines, from all corners of the globe, coming together to learn new skills and create bonds that will last a lifetime. We are so happy that you will be a part of this once-in-a-lifetime summer!

In this packet you will hopefully find many answers to questions you may have right now. Please read everything very carefully and do not hesitate to contact our office directly if you have any additional questions/concerns as they arise. We are here to help, and we look forward to getting to know you.

I look forward to meeting you all in person very soon, and most importantly, I cannot wait for you to meet the NHSI faculty and your fellow Cherubs.

I hope you have a wonderful rest of your school year, and I'll see you at Northwestern this summer.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jennifer Avery".

Jennifer Avery
NHSI Director
Northwestern University

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2025 NHSI Playwriting Intensive Information Packet

Please review this document carefully. *Parents/guardians and students are responsible for reading and understanding all information in this document.* If printing, we suggest that you make a copy of this document so that both the student and the parent/guardian can each have a copy with them this summer.

Contact Information

NHSI Main Office

Phone: (847) 491-3026

Email: nhsi@northwestern.edu

Website: nhsi.northwestern.edu

Regular Office Hours:

Monday-Friday

9am-5pm, CST

NHSI Director

Jennifer Avery

NHSI Program Assistants

Corrine Glanville

Samantha Kingzette



Playwriting Staff

Playwriting instructors

John Corwin

Laura Schellhardt

Playwriting Instructor and Final Reading Director

Ian Merrigan

Faculty Associates

Nora James Eikner

Nathan Gilbert

Important Dates

Playwriting Intensive: Sunday, June 29th - Saturday, July 19th

Sunday, June 29th: Move-in day with orientation taking place that evening following dinner.

Friday, July 4th: Students will have programming on the July 4th holiday. The NHSI Office will be closed.

Thursday, July 17th: Day 1 of the Play Festival

Friday, July 18th: Day 2 of the Play Festival

Saturday, July 19th: Departure Day

Pre-Arrival Preparation

Registration Forms, Headshot, & Elective Preferences: details are on the [Attendee Information page](#).

Reading: Please read the below plays and bring a copy of each with you to campus (links to full copies, no need to purchase). You do not need to understand these plays, just read them and think about them.

[3:59 AM: A Drag Race for Two Actors by Marco Ramirez](#)

[Lonely by Ann Marie Healy](#)

Arrival (all times listed in Central Standard Time)

The residence halls will be **open starting at 9:00 am** on arrival day. All students should plan to arrive at the residence halls **no later than 2:00 pm**. Meal service begins with dinner on arrival day.

If unforeseen circumstances arise and you decide at the last minute not to attend the Intensive or you are forced to arrive after 2:00 pm on arrival day, please be sure to call the NHSI Office at (847) 491-3026 to explain the situation. *On Sunday, June 29th, the NHSI office will be open starting at 9am.* The residence hall staff are responsible for your safety and well-being and must remain on duty until they have accounted for all students in their division.

There will be an orientation on the evening of June 29th after dinner. Daily schedules will be distributed at this meeting. ***All Students Are Required to Attend Orientation.***

Residence Hall & Boarding Info

Playwriting Cherubs will be housed in the [1838 Chicago Ave Residence Hall](#). Students will be assigned roommates based on their responses to the [Roommate Survey](#), and will receive their room assignments at check in. **Do Not Send Mail to the Residence Hall: It Won't Be Delivered. Please See Mail and Delivery Info on Page 8.**

Linen service is **not** provided. Students should bring their own toiletries, washcloths, towels, as well as blanket(s), pillow, and linens for a **twin extra-long** bed. The residence halls are VERY well air- conditioned, so we do recommend a blanket. The rooms are well furnished with a bed frame, mattress, desk and chair, and wardrobe with drawers and mirror. We urge Intensive participants to bring a **minimum** of personal furnishings.

Laundry

Students have 24/7 access to washing machines, free of charge, in the residence halls. Students will need their own laundry detergent. Laundry detergent can be purchased in downtown Evanston or on campus.

Identification

NHSI ID: At check-in, students will be issued a National High School Institute ID card for the purpose of identification.

Conference Card: Students are issued a conference card to gain entry to the residence halls and the dining halls for meals, which must always be kept on your person. *If your conference card is lost, there will be a [\\$25 fee to get a replacement card](#).*

Photo ID: A photo ID is required for use of some University facilities. Please bring a school ID, driver's license, or other ID with a current photo on it.

Meals

Students receive three meals daily in the University's dining hall. The first meal will be dinner on arrival day; the time will be provided upon check-in, along with the student's meal card. Specific mealtimes for the rest of the program will be distributed at the orientation meeting. The final meal will be breakfast on July 19th.

The dining hall has a station free of the top 9 allergens, and there are dining options for vegan and vegetarian students at every meal. Northwestern has a dietitian on staff for its summer programs to address any specific dietary needs that students may have. However, Dining Services is limited in what they can offer during the summer, and accommodations for dietary needs vary from year to year in availability. **Please note all food allergies and/or dietary restrictions in both the required Health Form and the Dietary Needs form. If you keep kosher or consider yourself/your student to have significant dietary restrictions, please contact our office.**

Clothing Requirements

Dress on campus is casual. We suggest packing a sweater/sweatshirt, as Chicago weather can be unseasonably cool, and the residence halls can be chilly with the A/C. Raincoats and/or umbrellas are strongly advised as it usually rains at least a few days each year.

Do Bring:

- Sneakers and clothes you can move in during class and production time
- At least one nice outfit for the final staged reading event and field trips to see theater
- A few hangers

Please avoid bringing sandals, heels, crocs, flip-flops, and other shoes of this kind; they are especially functionless between classes. Flip-flops/sandals may only be worn as shower shoes.

Money Matters

Charges for fines, damages, missing library books, and past-due tuition balances will be billed to you through your Northwestern CAESAR account.

Additional spending money that you bring is at the discretion of you and your parents. The activities of the Intensive do not necessitate the expenditure of any money. Discretionary spending money is used for eating in downtown Evanston, shopping, the occasional movie trip, and other entertainment options.

The residence halls do not provide banking services. Northwestern University and most local businesses will not cash personal checks. There are several US Bank ATMs located on campus where you will be able to obtain cash. You may want to check with your personal bank to confirm where ATM's will be available for your use. Parents are advised not to send cash in the mail as we cannot be responsible for it.

Religious Observances

Students will receive their detailed schedules in the first few days of the Intensive; however, students can expect programming every single day. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to notify the NHSI in writing of any religious holidays or observances that may prohibit their student from participating in programming as scheduled, prior to arrival day. Students will not be penalized because of religious observances, and NHSI faculty will be happy to make appropriate accommodations. The parent/guardian should provide information about the obligations entailed in the observance of the relevant day/timeframe (such as fasting, not riding in a vehicle, etc.) to ensure we are able to make accommodations.

Student Check Out/In and Departure Requests

Student Check Out/In

During mealtimes, free elective periods, or other down time, students may check out with Residence Hall staff to walk to any of the shops, restaurants, etc. in downtown Evanston provided they check out with at least one Cherub buddy and keep a cell phone on their persons in case they need to be reached in an emergency. **Students may not leave the city limits of Evanston or ride in a vehicle of any kind while checked out with a buddy.** Students must check back in before scheduled programming or curfew. More details for this checkout process will be discussed during orientation. No formal departure requests are required for this process.

Relatives & Visitors

If you wish to visit friends or relatives in or near Chicago, it is best to do so before and/or after the Intensive. Time permitting, you may have friends or relatives visit you while you are at the Playwriting Intensive, however, **guests are not allowed in residence hall rooms outside of move-in/move-out days.**

Due to the large NHSI population, it is not possible to entertain visitors for meals in the dining hall. You may elect to have occasional meals with your family or other visitors in Evanston at any of the local restaurants. Visits with parents, relatives, or friends must not interfere with programmed activities. **Residence hall curfews still apply for students visiting relatives.** If students are spending time with anyone not in the program, their parent/guardian must submit a **Student Departure Request** via email, stating that the student has permission to be with the relative/visitor during the specified time—**this includes the parent/guardian.**

Student Departure Request:

The student's **parent/guardian** must email the NHSI Office (nhsi@northwestern.edu) 48+ hours in advance, granting permission for their student to leave campus. **Any requests received less than 48 hours from the requested departure may not be approved, including requests received on a Friday for the upcoming weekend, unless it is an emergency.**

Please refer to the email template sent along with this packet. The email must include:

- Student's name and Division (Playwriting)
- Name of person checking the student out and their contact info + relationship to the student
 - *Must be an adult (21+), students will not be released to other minor persons*
- Date & time of student departure
- Date & time of student return
- Mode of transportation student will be taking – **we must receive explicit written permission from the parent/guardian for a student to ride in a vehicle of any kind, even if the parent is the one picking up the student.**
- Destination & Purpose of absence

All student departure requests must be approved by the division leadership. Parents/guardians and students will be notified of their departure *approval* or *denial* via email.

Absences during Scheduled Programming

Absences from scheduled activities are **strongly discouraged**. If your student needs to depart from campus for any reason and will miss curriculum or curfew, we must be provided with context. Absences during the program are only allowed with prior written parental permission via a **Student Departure Request**. *Students will not be released to other minor persons under any circumstances.*

Instructors & RAs

The Intensive instructors and staff have been selected with great care. They will be in general supervision of residence hall life and all social functions. All are disciplined, enthusiastic, and each is dedicated to the success of your summer.

Classroom Supplies

You should bring standard classroom materials such as pens, pencils, highlighters, paper, and notebook.

Laptops

Bring a digital copy of your play. You MUST bring a laptop or tablet with keyboard attachment. **Please understand that the NHSI and Northwestern cannot be responsible for your personal electronics.**

If you are unable to bring a laptop or tablet with a keyboard attachment, please inform the NHSI office at nhsi@northwestern.edu or (847) 491-3026 before June so that we may help make accommodations for you.

Wi-Fi is readily available on campus. You will use your NetID to access campus Wi-Fi.

Cell Phones

Students must bring a cell phone as a safety precaution. When you check in, you will be asked to confirm this number in case NHSI staff need to reach you. **Please be aware that cell phones should only be used during non-academic times. The use of cell phones is not allowed in any classrooms, rehearsals, or during any curricular activity unless prescribed by the instructor.**

The best time to reach students is after 10:30 pm or Sunday mornings before 12:00 pm. Generally, students are in classes or other activities from 8:00 am to 10:00 pm on weekdays and most weekends.

Emergency

In the event of an **Emergency**, parents should call the NHSI Director, Jennifer Avery at the NHSI central office (847) 491-3026. If an emergency occurs after hours, please call (312) 952-2792. Please only use this number in emergencies. The office will be closed on July 4th.

Recreation

Depending on the academic schedule, you may have time to use Northwestern's recreational facilities, workout facilities, tennis courts, or the Northwestern University Beach. Costs for all of these recreational facilities are extra and are not included in the tuition amount. Visit [NU Recreation](#) for more information. There are jogging paths along the lake and across campus students can use free of charge. Please do not bring bicycles.



Health Information & Service

You are required to submit a standard health record via an online form. Please be sure to answer all questions honestly, as it is crucial for us to have a complete picture of your students' health. We cannot adequately care for your student without all the information available to you.

Northwestern Medicine Immediate Care Evanston Clinic provides medical services for NHSI students. The contact number there is (312) 694-2273, and they are located at 1704 Maple Ave Suite 100, Evanston, IL 60201. Services are not covered in tuition, and it will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian to pay for any charges due at the medical visit. Students must always carry their health insurance card and a method of payment on their person, and should be prepared to contact your own medical personnel, if necessary. Any hospitalization or Emergency Room visits during the Intensive are also the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

Prescriptions & Routine Care

Please list all prescribed medications on the health form. Students are responsible for the safekeeping and administration of their own medications. Northwestern Medicine does not include a pharmacy where prescriptions can be filled/re-filled. It is suggested students use the CVS in downtown Evanston if they need a prescription filled over the summer or any over-the-counter medications/vitamins.

If a medical professional is required to administer the student's medication (e.g. allergy shots) or other routine care while they are on campus, the **parents/guardians must make the necessary arrangements with a local clinic and note this on the student's health form.** An NHSI staff member will arrange transportation and accompany the student to and from their appointment.

Mental Health Support at The Family Institute

NHSI partners with The Family Institute on the NU campus to offer one free counseling session to students in need of mental-health support during the NHSI programming. For over 10 years, we have worked with staff therapist Chaaaze Roberts, who specializes in treating young adults. You can find out more about Chaaaze at this link: <https://www.family-institute.org/therapists-locations/staff/chaaze-roberts>

If your student requests a counseling session or a staff/faculty member at the Institute suggests it might be helpful for your student, NHSI Director Jennifer Avery will reach out to parents to talk about and schedule an appointment with the Family Institute. If, after the initial appointment, the student and therapist conclude that regular appointments are necessary, the student's parent/guardian will be contacted and billed for all subsequent appointments. Students who have their own regular therapist may schedule appointments during the summer if they do not interfere with the Playwriting Intensive programming.

Health Related Absences

If, while attending the NHSI, a student is experiencing a medical, psychological, or other health-related concern that exceeds the NHSI's ability to ensure their safety – or the safety of other NHSI students or staff – the student's caregiver(s) will be notified and will need to arrange for an adult to take over care and check the student out of the program within 24 hours. Any instance in which a student is absent for more than 4 days (health related or otherwise) will result in the student's withdrawal from the Intensive with no refund.

Mail & Deliveries

All student mail must be addressed to the NHSI Main Office in order to be received by your student:

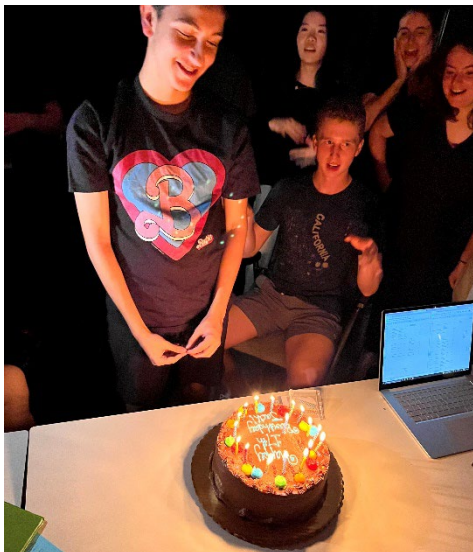
**Student Name
NHSI Playwriting
Northwestern University
617 Noyes Street
Evanston, IL 60208**

Do NOT address mail directly to the residence hall address. Mail is delivered from the NHSI Office to the residence halls by NHSI staff in the afternoon/evening Monday-Friday.

NHSI cannot take responsibility for mail arriving before or after session dates. You may **not** send boxes or packages to arrive before you do. **Mail/packages/shipments arriving prior to your arrival will be refused and returned to sender.** Please set a reminder to update your shipping addresses before the end of the program. Any packages received after July 19th will be donated.

The following guidelines will ensure mail is delivered to your student:

- Do not send anything to the residence hall in which your student is staying because it will not reach them. **All mail/delivery services should use the NHSI address above, and ONLY that address**
- We do not accept packages on weekends or July 4th.
- For time-sensitive deliveries arriving on weekdays, FedEx is the fastest way to deliver packages.
- USPS mail (and often UPS and Amazon mail) is first delivered to the University Mail Center, sorted, and brought to our office the following day. For this reason, the carrier may mark the package as “delivered” before it has arrived at our office. *Please allow an additional 1-2 business days for delivery to your student once it is marked as “delivered” by the carrier.*
- Amazon: when entering the NHSI as a new shipping address, be sure to check that this address is closed for Saturday and Sunday delivery. **Amazon tends to leave packages after hours despite our best efforts. We cannot be responsible for packages left on our porch after hours.**



Birthday Deliveries

We are happy to coordinate birthday deliveries such as cake/desserts, balloons, etc. Please ensure these deliveries are sent to the office as outlined above. For sweet treats, we recommend Bennison’s Bakery, a local bake shop that is familiar with our address:

Bennison’s Bakery

Website: <https://bennisonscakes.bakesmart.com/>

Phone: (847) 328-9434

Sample Daily Schedule

Times are subject to change. However, the structure of schedule will remain the same.

9:00-10:30 Writing Room – Student playwrights work with faculty in a writers’ room-like setting to craft and read their plays

10:45 – 12:00 Writing/Revisions – Students work to edit their plays

12:00 – 1:00 Lunch

1:00-2:30 TV Pilot Elective – Ever had have an idea for a TV series? That’s great! Now all you have to do is turn that idea into a pilot. This elective will help. While we discuss TV basics and tricks of the trade, we will watch and discuss the first episodes of hour-long dramas and half-hour comedies, dissecting them, finding out what makes them work, how they succeed and how they fail. Students will then take what they’ve learned and apply that to their own ideas, assembling an outline for the pilot and even writing the teaser and first act.

2:45 – 4:15 Theatre Institute Elective – Playwrights join the Theatre Institute students in their afternoon electives. Playwrights choose from several electives ranging from directing to Shakespeare to movement to design classes. We will send you a catalog and a form to submit your preferences in late May/early June

5:30 – 6:30 Dinner

Evenings – Evenings are spent attending live theater events, watching films, or taking master classes along with other divisions.

Weekends – Weekends will be spent taking theater electives, master classes and rehearsing for the final play readings.

Play Festival

Family and friends are welcome to attend the staged readings during the last two full days of the program, **Thursday, July 17th and Friday, July 18th**. The readings will be split between two events: Thursday evening and Friday evening. More information about exact times of the readings, as well as parking and location details, will be provided at the beginning of the program.



Departure (all times listed in Central Standard Time)

Students should be prepared to check out and depart the Intensive on Saturday, **July 19th**. University residence halls must be vacated by **12:00 pm CST**.

Travel Arrangements

Evanston is 12 miles north of downtown Chicago (known as the “Loop”). You should make travel plans and reservations that will guarantee your arrival to the residence hall between 9:00 am and 2:00 pm (CST) on arrival day, as well as your departure from Evanston by 12:00 pm (CST) on your departure date. ***The NHSI does not provide transportation or shuttle service to/from campus. Students and parents/guardians are responsible for all travel plans and expenses.***

Chicago’s O’Hare Airport is approximately 30 minutes from campus. Chicago’s Midway Airport is approximately 1 hour from campus.

Many cab companies, including [American Taxi](#) and [Norshore Cab](#), offer flat rates & scheduling to/from the airports. Families have also used taxi apps (Curb) or rideshare apps such as Uber or Lyft, but please double check their policies relating to minors as these are subject to change.

Parking details will be sent to families closer to arrival time.

If you are unable to make travel arrangements that will permit you to arrive on arrival day, and you choose to arrive the day before, the hotels on the next page are within a 10-mile radius of the campus.

Hotels within walking distance from campus:

Hilton Garden Inn, Evanston
1818 Maple Avenue
Evanston, IL 60201
(847) 475-6400

Hilton Orrington
1710 Orrington Avenue
Evanston, IL 60201
(847) 866-8700 or (888) 677-4648

Holiday Inn Chicago North
1501 Sherman Avenue
Evanston, IL 60201
(847)-491-6400

Hyatt House Chicago/Evanston
1515 Chicago Ave
Evanston, IL 60201
(847) 864-2300

Graduate Hotels, Evanston
1625 Hinman Ave
Evanston, IL 60201
(847) 475-3300

Hotels within driving distance:

Hampton Inn & Suites
5201 Old Orchard Road
Skokie, IL 60077
(847) 583-1111

North Shore Doubletree
9599 Skokie Blvd.
Skokie, IL 60077
(847) 679-7000

Residence Inn by
Marriott Chicago
Wilmette/Skokie
3205 Old Glenview Rd
Wilmette, IL 60091
(847) 251-6600



Packing Check List

Remember, we cannot accept packages for students before they arrive on campus; **any packages received prior to Monday, June 30th will be returned to sender.** If you are looking to pare down your luggage for your trip to campus, we suggest waiting to purchase some basics (e.g. shampoo/conditioner, laundry detergent, non-perishable snacks, notebooks, pens/pencils, etc.) at the nearby CVS or mini-Target.

Please make sure that anything valuable is marked or labeled with student's name. It is also a good idea to have labels in clothing.

Required

- Pillow, sheets, and blanket (*Twin Extra Long mattress*)
- Washcloth, towels, and toiletries
- Alarm clock and wristwatch
- A collection of casual wear for hot and cool weather
- At least one semi-formal outfit
- Laundry detergent
- Sweatshirt or light jacket
- Raincoat and/or umbrella
- A digital copy of your play
- Laptop
- Cellphone
- A swimsuit and towel for a day at the beach



Suggested

- USB/Flash drive
- School supplies:
 - Notebook
 - Pens/pencils
- Reusable water bottle
- A supply of N95/KN95 masks
- Shower shoes (flip flops)
- Hairdryer/hair care tools (curling and clothing irons are allowed)
- Clothing hangers
- Sunscreen
- Bug spray
- Camera (other than your phone)
- Mini Refrigerator

The following are NOT allowed in Northwestern's Residence Halls

- Microwaves
- Popcorn poppers
- Televisions
- Hot plates
- Bicycles or skateboards
- Tea kettles

International Student Information

The ability to communicate with our international students and families is paramount to your success and wellbeing in the Intensive.

Arrival

International students traveling from overseas are encouraged to arrive in the Chicago area prior to arrival day, so that you can rest and get a head start on recovering from jetlag. This would require a parent/guardian to travel with you so that you can stay in a hotel on Saturday, July 28th. As of May 2025, we cannot accommodate early arrivals in the residence halls. We will let you know if that changes.

Contact Information

Students: As mentioned above, **students must have a US cell phone number while on campus.** You cannot use your international phone number. If necessary, you can purchase a cell phone in downtown Evanston at any of the mobile stores or CVS. If you will be purchasing a phone once in the states, please let us know that in advance so that we can know when to expect to receive your phone number. Otherwise, we expect this number to be provided on your health form.

Parents/Guardians: We must be able to reach a parent/guardian in case of emergency. If you as the parent/guardian do not have a cell phone with service in the US, please download [WhatsApp](#) and provide us with that phone number on the Health Record form or via email.

If, while attending the NHSI, a student is experiencing a medical, psychological, or other health-related concern that exceeds the NHSI's ability to ensure their safety – or the safety of other NHSI students or staff – the student's parents/guardians will be notified and will need to arrange for an adult to check the student out of the program within 24 hours. **You must provide us with a contact in the United States who speaks English that can be reached in case of an emergency of this nature.** Please provide this contact information via email or on the Permission to Treat & Transport form.

Insurance

In case of medical emergency, students must carry proof of health insurance. Please check with your current health insurance to make sure they offer coverage in the U.S. If they do not, please obtain travel health insurance. Students must also carry a credit card or debit card to cover incidental medical costs (such as co-payments required at medical visits).

Visa Information

All NHSI programs are taken as non-credit. International students only need a [B-2 Tourist Visa](#), which covers "Enrollment in a short recreational course of study, not for credit toward a degree." Neither a Student Visa nor an I-20 are necessary.

English Language

All NHSI programs require proficiency in the English Language. Submitting an English Language test score as part of your application was required to help us determine whether you meet that level on paper. Please expect all programming, instruction, and assigned reading to be conducted in English.

