

# Dance MFA

## Develop and Refine Formal Oral Presentation Skills

### Goal Description:

MFA in Dance candidates will develop & refine the ability to articulate their choreographic process and philosophical understanding of dance through formal oral presentations.

**Providing Department:** Dance MFA

### RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

#### RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

### Applies Formal Oral Presentation Skills in Philosophical Scholarship

#### Learning Objective Description:

Students will demonstrate proficiency in applying formal oral presentation skills and a clarity of understanding within their philosophical scholarship.

#### RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

### Evaluation of Oral Presentation of Philosophical Scholarship

#### Indicator Description:

Required oral presentation of philosophical research will be evaluated on communicative skills, clarity of thought, and a logical approach to the subject matter as shown in the attached rubric. Evaluations take place during required courses.

Attached Files

 [MFA Oral Presentation Rubric](#)

#### Criterion Description:

100% of the students will be evaluated on their proficiency in oral presentation skills with 80% passing with a score of satisfactory.

#### Findings Description:

100% of the students assessed this year in oral presentation skills in philosophical scholarship scored in the range of proficient or higher

and

55% of the students scored in the range of strong

The skills of *clarity of thought* and *general communication skills* scored lower out of the skills assessed. Faculty could work to get the scores higher in these areas to improve overall oral presentation skills of graduate students.

Attached Files

 [Evaluation of Oral Presentation Skills in Required Classes - 2022-2023.pdf](#)

#### RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

### Increase Clarity of Thought in Oral Presentations

#### Action Description:

Last year the faculty identified that increasing the student's ability to orally present presentations with more *Clarity of Thought* was a good goal to help increase the students overall performance in oral presentations. This year the skills of both *Clarity of Thought* and *General Communication Skills* were the lower of the skills assessed. Faculty could work with students to strengthen these

skills. We also had an internal goal of hoping to see three out of the four categories assessed in oral presentation skills to score in the 4.5 to 5 point range. We did not meet this goal this year and therefore could keep this goal for the next year.

Attached Files

 [Evaluation of Oral Pres of Thesis - 2022-2023.pdf](#)

 [Evaluation of Oral Presentation Skills in Required Classes - 2022-2023.pdf](#)

#### RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

### **Applies Formal Oral Presentation Skills in Research-Based Creative Scholarship**

#### **Learning Objective Description:**

Students will demonstrate proficiency in applying formal oral presentation skills and a clarity of understanding within their research-based creative scholarship.

#### RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

### **Evaluation of Formal Oral Presentation of Thesis**

#### **Indicator Description:**

A required oral presentation of the written and creative thesis will be given post thesis performance. Oral presentations are evaluated on communicative skills, clarity of thought, and an informed discussion of subject matter as shown in the attached rubric. Evaluations take place during a 30-minute oral presentation upon completion of the written and creative thesis.

Attached Files

 [MFA Oral Presentation Rubric](#)

#### **Criterion Description:**

100% of the students will be evaluated on their proficiency in oral presentation skills with 80% passing with a score of satisfactory.

#### **Findings Description:**

100% of the students passed with a score of at least satisfactory or above.

43% passed in the excellent range

Attached Files

 [Evaluation of Oral Presentation Skills in Required Classes - 2022-2023.pdf](#)

#### RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

### **Increase Clarity of Thought in Oral Presentations**

#### **Action Description:**

Last year the faculty identified that increasing the student's ability to orally present presentations with more *Clarity of Thought* was a good goal to help increase the students overall performance in oral presentations. This year the skills of both *Clarity of Thought* and *General Communication Skills* were the lower of the skills assessed. Faculty could work with students to strengthen these skills. We also had an internal goal of hoping to see three out of the four categories assessed in oral presentation skills to score in the 4.5 to 5 point range. We did not meet this goal this year and therefore could keep this goal for the next year.

Attached Files

 [Evaluation of Oral Pres of Thesis - 2022-2023.pdf](#)

 [Evaluation of Oral Presentation Skills in Required Classes - 2022-2023.pdf](#)

### **Develop and Refine a Formal Writing Voice**

#### **Goal Description:**

MFA in Dance candidates will develop & refine a formal writing voice that demonstrates analytic skill.

## Providing Department: Dance MFA

### RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

#### RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

##### **Applies Formal Writing Skills within Course Work**

##### **Learning Objective Description:**

Students will demonstrate proficiency in applying formal writing skills to the course work that is designed to prepare students for thesis writing.

#### RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

##### **Evaluation of Required Written Work**

##### **Indicator Description:**

Required written work is evaluated on common standards of writing with a focus on the student's ability to communicate ideas clearly. Four criteria (structure and organization; writing style; MLA format; grammar/usage/mechanics) will be used to measure ability in writing with five possible assessment outcomes (strong, proficient, satisfactory, weak, or unacceptable). Evaluations take place within required history/theory/literature courses.

Attached Files

 [\\*SHSU - MFA in Dance - Required Written Work Rubric.pdf](#)

##### **Criterion Description:**

100% of the students enrolled in history/theory/literature courses will be evaluated on their proficiency in writing with 80% passing with a score of proficient.

##### **Findings Description:**

Observations: All students scored in the satisfactory or higher range but only 77% scored in the proficient range or higher. This means that we fell just short of our goal of 80% of our students passing with a score of at least proficient.

Additionally:

33% scored in the Strong range

44% scored in the Proficient range

22% scored in the Satisfactory range

The category identified this year as weaker for the student writers is *Structure and Organization*. Faculty should work with students to better organize their thoughts as they begin a writing project. Attention to this category of writing may help to bring the overall scoring up to have at least 80% of the student writers score in the proficient range or higher.

Attached Files

 [MFA\\_EvalofRequiredWrittenWork\\_2022-2023.pdf](#)

#### RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

##### **Focus in on identified weaknesses for graduate level writing**

##### **Action Description:**

The faculty will consider adding instruction inside required classwork that addresses *Structure and Organization* since that was the category that scored the lowest in the assessment of required written work in the MFA in Dance program.

Additionally, in the prospectus stage of writing it was noted that the area of *Logic and Flow* could be addressed to strengthen student writing and help them be more successful in the thesis writing elements of the program. This would fall to the thesis committee members to address as they work with the thesis candidates in their writing for thesis.

Attached Files

 [\\*Evaluation of Thesis Writing - 2022-2023.pdf](#)

 [MFA\\_EvalofRequiredWrittenWork\\_2022-2023.pdf](#)

#### RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

### **Applies Higher Level Research and Writing Skills in Thesis Work**

#### **Learning Objective Description:**

Students will demonstrate proficiency in applying higher level research and writing skills to written elements of thesis portfolios.

#### RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

### **Evaluation of Thesis Research and Writing Skills**

#### **Indicator Description:**

As students develop and present an extended creative work, they are required to compose three written documents through their thesis process. Each part of the thesis process has a written component evaluated by a committee. Evaluations for the written component of thesis study takes place within two required courses: Thesis 1 (DANC 6098) and Thesis II (DANC 6099).

**Prospectus:** a proposal situating the student's area of interest within the dance field.

**Literary review:** an 8-10 page paper (approximately 2500-3000 words) providing both summary and synthesis of the breadth of literature existing regarding the student's narrowed line of investigation of a creative research project.

**Reflective paper:** a post-production 6-8 page paper (approximately 2000-2500 words) analyzing and reflecting on the student's creative work. The goal is for the student to sharpen their abilities and summarize their creative agenda in written form.

These documents will be used to evaluate the student's ability to clearly communicate their thesis research through writing. Three criteria (content and focus; analysis and critical thinking; and logic and flow) will be used to measure ability in writing with five possible assessment outcomes (strong, proficient, satisfactory, weak, or unacceptable).

Attached Files

 [\\*SHSU - MFA in Dance - Evaluation of Thesis Writing.pdf](#)

#### **Criterion Description:**

100% of MFA Thesis documents will be assessed by Thesis Committees for each thesis candidate on their proficiency in writing with 80% passing with a score of proficient.

#### **Findings Description:**

All passed with at least a satisfactory score and 4 out of 12 scored in the strong range.

85% passed with a proficient or higher score

15% passed with a satisfactory or higher score

This means that we met our goal of having at least 80% of the students pass with at least a score of proficient.

Attached Files

 [\\*Evaluation of Thesis Writing - 2022-2023.pdf](#)

#### RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

### Focus in on identified weaknesses for graduate level writing

#### Action Description:

The faculty will consider adding instruction inside required classwork that addresses *Structure and Organization* since that was the category that scored the lowest in the assessment of required written work in the MFA in Dance program.

Additionally, in the prospectus stage of writing it was noted that the area of *Logic and Flow* could be addressed to strengthen student writing and help them be more successful in the thesis writing elements of the program. This would fall to the thesis committee members to address as they work with the thesis candidates in their writing for thesis.

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 [MFA\\_EvalofRequiredWrittenWork\\_2022-2023.pdf](#)

## Development of Distinctive Choreographic Voice

### Goal Description:

MFA in Dance candidates will develop a distinctive choreographic voice and demonstrate its skillful application in a performative context.

**Providing Department:** Dance MFA

#### RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

#### RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

### Applies Advanced Concepts in Composition

#### Learning Objective Description:

Students will demonstrate excellence in applying advanced concepts in composition to the creation of extended choreographic works with a sustained artistic vision.

#### RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

### Evaluation of Creative Thesis Presentation

#### Indicator Description:

As the culmination of the creative thesis, students develop and present an extended, original creative work. Members of the thesis committee mentor the process from proposal through performance. The thesis presentation will be assessed on the following points: the choreography is informed by student's research; the choreography stands on its own as a work of art; the creative product is reflective of the student's own distinct choreographic vision.

Attached Files

 [MFA\\_ChoreographicRubric](#)

#### Criterion Description:

100% of MFA Thesis projects will be assessed by Thesis Committee to have at least Satisfactory proficiency in choreography with 75% passing with a score of Excellent proficiency.

#### Findings Description:

100% of the students scored in at least the satisfactory range or higher, but only 71% scored in the excellent range.

This was a large group of thesis candidates for the Dept of Dance and as such we are happy to see that so many of them performed well in this area of their research. We didn't quite make our goal of having 75% of the students present excellent choreographic thesis presentations, however we were



very close. As such, we should keep the same goal for next year.

Secondly, the area of *movement generation* was weaker this year. This area showed up as on the weaker side in the evaluation of required choreographic work as well. This could be addressed by future teachers of graduate choreography to help strengthen the overall choreographic scores of graduate choreographers.

Attached Files

 [Evaluation of Thesis Choreography- 2022-2023.pdf](#)

#### RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

##### **Push students work on movement generation to increase the quality of choreographic work**

###### **Action Description:**

The faculty are satisfied with the assessment plan in place to measure and identify areas of weakness of choreographic skills for the MFA candidates. Movement generation among graduate choreographers was identified last year as a category that could use more emphasis inside the classroom to push students to produce stronger choreographic works. Students still scored lower in this area this year. The Graduate faculty will continue to push students to work on movement generation in their work in the classroom which will hopefully better prepare them to create successful choreographic thesis works.

Attached Files

 [Evaluation of Thesis Choreography- 2022-2023.pdf](#)

#### RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

##### **Evaluation of Required Choreographic Work**

###### **Indicator Description:**

Required choreographic work is evaluated on common standards of choreographic effectiveness as shown in the attached rubric. These choreographic evaluations take place within the three required MFA choreography courses: DANC 5376, DANC 5378, DANC 5380. Extensive, qualitative, face-to-face feedback is also given.

Attached Files

 [MFA\\_ChoreographicRubric](#)

###### **Criterion Description:**

100% of the students will be judged to have at least Satisfactory proficiency in choreography with 75% judged to have Excellent proficiency.

###### **Findings Description:**

We met our goal of having 100% of the students having scored in the satisfactory range. And 75% of our students scored in the range of excellent.

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#### RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

### **Synthesizes and Transforms Ideas and Movement**

#### **Learning Objective Description:**

During the choreographic process, the student will demonstrate an ability to connect, synthesize and transform ideas and movement through the use of appropriate and increasingly sophisticated movement approaches. The student further demonstrates an ability to plan and problem solve during the choreographic process and provides thoughtful responses, in choreographic terms, to critique.

#### RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

### **Evaluation of Creative Thesis Presentation**

#### **Indicator Description:**

As the culmination of the creative thesis, students develop and present an extended, original creative work. Members of the thesis committee mentor the process from proposal through performance. The thesis presentation will be assessed on the following points: the choreography is informed by student's research; the choreography stands on its own as a work of art; the creative product is reflective of the student's own distinct choreographic vision.

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#### **Findings Description:**

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This was a large group of thesis candidates for the Dept of Dance and as such we are happy to see that so many of them performed well in this area of their research. We didn't quite make our goal of having 75% of the students present excellent choreographic thesis presentations, however we were very close. As such, we should keep the same goal for next year.

Secondly, the area of *movement generation* was weaker this year. This area showed up as on the weaker side in the evaluation of required choreographic work as well. This could be addressed by future teachers of graduate choreography to help strengthen the overall choreographic scores of graduate choreographers.

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## **Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement Item**

### **Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify):**

#### **Closing Summary**

The faculty plan to implement the following to increase outcomes in the areas of writing, choreography and oral presentations for graduate students:

1. Although graduate level writing showed improvement, continue evaluating graduate level writing with the recently updated assessment methods and focus on the areas of weakness identified in this year's study.
  1. Required written work: Writing Style and Structure and Organization
  2. Thesis writing: Content & Focus, Analysis and Critical Thinking, and Logic and Flow



2. Mentor students during coursework on presenting oral presentations with an emphasis on improving their ability to present presentations with more *clarity of thought*. The faculty can brainstorm on ways to implement this skill building in the classroom during our Fall faculty retreat.
3. Continue with assessment plan of choreographic skills and encourage faculty to continue to push students to work on movement generation in their creative choreographic work in the classroom which will prepare them to create choreographic thesis works with stronger generation of movement skills.

We are hoping that with the hiring of two new tenure track faculty, bringing us from three to five strong, mentorship efforts of the graduate student body in all these areas will stabilize. The hiring of another tenure track faculty member, bringing us to six tenure track for the unit, and as indicated as needed for a BFA and MFA of our size in the graduate program review (and the graduate numbers were smaller then), would strengthen our ability to effectively mentor the graduate students in all areas.

#### **Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:**

##### **1. Writing:**

A large cohort of thesis candidates moved through the program this year. Some of them were gifted writers and some of them required a lot of mentoring. Also there is a marked difference between the students are currently in prospectus stage and those in thesis. We saw improvement in the categories identified above that needed work such as Writing Style, Content and Focus, and Analysis and Critical Thinking. The areas of Structure and Organization and Logic and Flow are still in need of attention.

##### **2. Oral:**

It was identified through this year's analysis that the faculty still need to focus on helping students with *clarity of thought* in oral presentations.

##### **3. Choreography:**

It was identified through this year's analysis that the faculty still need to focus on increasing the students' ability to generate interesting movement to use in their choreographic works as a means towards successful communication of their ideas in movement.

The hiring of two tenure track faculty in the 2022-2023 year was greatly stabilizing for the program. The hiring of another tenure track faculty member, bringing us to six tenure track for the unit, and as indicated as needed for a BFA and MFA of our size in the graduate program review (and the graduate numbers were smaller then), would strengthen our ability to effectively mentor the graduate students in all areas.

### **New Plan for Continuous Improvement Item**

#### **Closing Summary:**

The faculty plan to implement the following to increase outcomes in the areas of writing, choreography and oral presentations for graduate students:

1. Focusing in on the identified weaknesses of graduate writers combined with updated assessment measures to increase the students' writing skills in classwork and in thesis written work.
  1. Required written work: Structure and Organization
  2. Thesis writing: Logic and Flow
2. Mentor students during coursework on presenting oral presentations with an emphasis on improving their ability to present presentations with more *clarity of thought* and increased *general communication skills*. The faculty would also like to see if students can meet the goal of scoring at least a 4.5 out of 5 in three out of four of the categories assessed.
3. Increase Generation of Movement Skills: Since this was the lower category in choreographic skills assessed two years in a row for graduate students, continued encouragement of faculty to push students to work on movement generation in their creative choreographic work in the classroom should prepare the students to create choreographic thesis works with a stronger display of movement generation.

The hiring of another tenure track faculty member, bringing us to six tenure track for the unit, and as indicated as needed for a BFA and MFA of our size in the graduate program review (and the graduate numbers were smaller then), would strengthen our ability to effectively mentor the graduate students in all areas including the specific categories identified above.