

Dance BFA

Dance Choreography Proficiency

Goal Description:

BFA candidates will become proficient in the craft and art of choreography.

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS-----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Students Will Demonstrate Proficiency In The Tools Of Choreography

Learning Objective Description:

Each student will demonstrate their ability to use tools of choreography to develop and perform an original, well developed solo that emerges clearly from a proposed concept.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Sophomore Gate Presentation

Indicator Description:

The Sophomore Gate process assesses whether students are progressing satisfactorily towards the BFA.

Each student is paired with a faculty mentor at the beginning of the fourth semester of study, generally in conjunction with enrollment in Choreography 2, DANC 2376. The faculty mentor meets with the student a minimum of three times within the semester as the student proposes and develops a 3-5 minute solo to be performed for the dance faculty at the end of the semester.

A two-part rubric, file attached, is used to assess each student. One part, completed by the student's mentor addresses the process, while the second part is scored by the other faculty and addresses the performance and choreographic elements. Students whose work is assessed as unsatisfactory, less than 80% composite score, will have one opportunity to repeat the Gate; if they do not perform at 80% or higher in the second presentation, they will be advised out of the BFA program.

Attached Files

 [sophomore gate rubric](#)

Criterion Description:

The department goal is that all students will receive composite scores of 80% or better.

Findings Description:

90% of students doing the gate process followed the steps appropriately and presented works that judged as good to excellent.

Due to resignation by the faculty member who had been administrating the process, another faculty member took on this task for the first time. The jurists did not have a rubric to guide assessment during presentation of the solo works. Faculty thus wrote observational notes.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Continue Sophomore gate process

Action Description:

The sophomore gate continues to provide useful information for both students and faculty regarding students' growth, commitment, and professionalism. We will continue this model.

Dance Performance Proficiency

Goal Description:

Dance BFA candidates will demonstrate proficiency in dance technique.

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS-----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Proficiency In Dance Technique

Learning Objective Description:

Dance BFA students will demonstrate proficiency in the development of technique appropriate to their classifications in both modern and ballet techniques through juried presentations each semester.

Attached Files

 [sample rubrics for modern and ballet technique juries](#)

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Ballet And Modern Technique Juries

Indicator Description:

A panel of jurists composed of dance faculty and guest professionals assesses students in designated technique classes at the end of each semester. A variety of rubrics have been used in recent semesters; one example is attached. Students are evaluated on specific technical elements as well as on performance qualities. Jurists are also encouraged to include comments for each student.

Criterion Description:

The department goal is that at least 90% of students receive composite assessment of at least 80% in the jury.

Attached Files

 [sample rubrics for modern and ballet technique juries](#)

Findings Description:

Over 90% of majors were scored over 80% in technique assessment.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Continue to define and implement progression of technique

Action Description:

Follow up on faculty from May 2017 in which technique expectations were defined and agreed upon. Syllabi for modern and ballet techniques should be reviewed for consistency with stated expectations. Dates for jury/skills tests should be in every syllabus.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement

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

1. Improve Assessment Process in Dance Technique

A. Define what we are assessing as students progress through four levels in ballet and modern dance techniques.

*For ballet, a relatively linear progression of skills can be defined. Progressive standards in two areas, jumps and turns, has been drafted and will be used in technique level placements at the beginning of the fall semester. More areas can be defined and potentially implemented.

*For modern technique, the linear progression of skills is perhaps not as useful a model. Instead, assess students' adaptability to new movement styles, their ability to quickly learn and accurately replicate choreography. This skill can be assessed within master classes taught by guests, and/or in auditions for repertory. Faculty need to discuss and determine means to formalize this kind of assessment.

* Review the workshop process launched this year to determine whether it can be an effective and practical assessment vehicle that would replace former juries. Faculty may conclude that we prefer this event to be an informal event that functions primarily as a "sharing" and affirming experience. If so, we will explore other ideas.

2. Increase Proficiency in Choreography

*In DANC 2376 Choreography I, increase the focus on generating original movements within studies that explore elements of time, space, and energy.

* In DANC 3376 Choreography II, provide more extensive practice in the development

of a unique movement vocabulary that will communicate a specific concept for a specific study.

*Review number of assignment showings in choreography II to determine whether students have sufficient opportunities to show their work and receive feedback within the semester. If time constrains against sufficient development in this course, consider limiting enrollment in each section, and adding additional sections.

As we devise and revise measures of assessment for technical and creative achievements, we are conscious of efficient means of implementation.

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:

1. Improve Assessment Process in Dance Technique.

Master classes did not function as imagined for faculty to observe and assess students. Although there were multiple residencies throughout the year, gathering faculty to assess students did not happen, as faculty were either teaching their own classes, or the guest was in residence because a faculty member had an off-campus opportunity, or because other priorities were more important in the moment.

The end of semester "sharing" did not occur, either, since the faculty member who proposed the idea resigned, and the other faculty requested that we cancel the event.

At the end of spring 2017 semester, the faculty met to discuss dance technique. The ideas proposed last year in this report were discarded as being impractical to implement in a consistent fashion, as well as missing the mark of assessing technique per se. Having such a plan to reject, however, inspired a useful brainstorming session. A long list of attributes ranging from movement qualities to specific skills was generated, edited, and approved. Prior to the beginning of the fall 2017 semester, the faculty will meet again to determine how to assess students' progress in the elements we identified.

2. Increase Proficiency in Choreography

An additional section of both choreography I and II was added. The time reserved for the courses was also extended, from 150 minutes per week to 240 minutes, allowing more classroom time for students to workshop material and participate in feedback.

Senior Studio, DANC 4377, is the culmination of the choreography sequence of courses. Weekly video submission of rehearsals by each student/choreographer, is now a requirement. This tool keeps students on track in the semester-long creation of their work. Incidentally, it also creates a record of the work in progress.

As we devise and revise measures of assessment for technical and creative achievements, we are conscious of efficient means of implementation.

Plan for improvement, DANCE BFA AY2017-18

Closing Summary:

Dance will add a new tenure track colleague in fall 2017. As a small department, the replacement of one (now resigned) faculty member with a new one challenges us to review the curriculum, our goals, and our processes, to make those goals explicit and the process of implementation active by the faculty as a whole. We will continue defining what our students need to learn and how we can assess their accomplishments, taking into account the ramifications of having lost one skill set while gaining another.

In a similar way, one year since it has been approved, the dance minor is beginning to gain traction. Beginning with 4 declared minors at the beginning of the fall 2016 semester, there are now more than a dozen--though I do not know how to access the official number of students pursuing the minor. Requirements for the minor overlap with the major, particularly for choreography 1 and 2, dance history, criticism and analysis, and dance pedagogy. Additional sections this fall are scheduled to be taught by graduate students in the MFA program, a new development for our department that will be facilitated by providing the TAs with syllabi detailing objectives and consistent with the department's goals.

An aspect of "performance proficiency" we have not yet investigated is the dancers' literal proficiency in performance. The goal is for dancers to perform well on stage. This requires opportunities to perform. The department has not had a consistent policy or strategy regarding these opportunities. In order to equalize students' access to performance opportunities, we have begun the outlines of a plan to control casting. The initial

plan will limit the total number of works, and hours of rehearsal per week, that a student may commit to. The student's class (Freshman through Senior) and academic standing are factors we will use. The plan will be implemented in the fall 2017. Expected immediate effects include:

- *less fatigue and injuries from dancers who would otherwise be overused
- *more commitment and better focus in technique class from those who are better cast
- *possible resistance to the plan by both the choreographers and the dancers

No plan is yet conceived for assessing the effects of controlling rehearsal and performance commitments on the development of technical proficiency. A first step might be to compare continuing students' jury performances in AY17 to their assessments in the previous year.

Finally, we will look at the composition of the curriculum. For the past decade or more, BFA in Dance majors have followed a uniform curriculum with no choices. This was necessary due to small enrollment in upper division courses; in order for those courses to be run, all the majors needed to enroll in the courses at the designated times within their degree plans. The faculty approve of the concept of choices. With more dance minors, we hope to be able to allow our majors to select more courses by their senior year; establishing an effective means of assessing students in technique and choreography will potentially also guide the advisement of students in their choices.