

Dance Students' Technique and Performance Skills

Dance BA – College of the Arts

Step 1: Student Learning Outcome

Students adequately demonstrate the technique, performance skills and movement vocabulary required of performing artists.

Step 2: Methods and Measures

Performance Reviews/Juried Annual Assessments: Faculty will assess student progress in application of previously learned skills, and concepts to new challenges and problems in studio study, using a rubric (Exceeds Expectations, Meets Expectations, Needs Improvement) designed specifically for each discipline.

Dance studio assessment criteria include:

- A. Application of Technique
 1. Technical accuracy and use of turnout/parallel
 2. Centering, balance, and alignment and posture
 3. Stamina, strength, and flexibility
 4. Spatial awareness and precision of movement

- B. Application of Performance Skills
 1. Timing and musicality
 2. Quality and dynamics
 3. Self-expression, sense of performance, and use of focus

Step 3: Criteria for Success

70% of students will receive an average of “Meets” or “Exceeds” expectations.

Step 4: Results

Data collection took place during the BA in Dance program's 2020 Dance Major Assessments. The freshman, sophomore, and junior level dance majors were assessed in their Ballet and Modern Dance technique and performance skills. All full-time dance faculty members were present and completed assessment using the Ballet and Modern dance rubrics.

Average results across all levels of Ballet and Modern revealed over 70% at the “Meets” or “Exceeds” expectations. Further analysis of criteria within Ballet's “Application of Technique”, concerning the “technical accuracy and use of turnout/parallel”, and “centering, balance, alignment and posture”, which in past years had fallen below the

goal of 70%, well exceeded the established criteria for success. Likewise, Modern's "Application of Technique" area assessment, "centering, balance, alignment and posture", have also improved to be well above 70%.

The Senior Dance Majors who were enrolled in the highest level of Ballet (IV) and Modern (IV) were assessed separately using the same rubrics. Those assessments yielded the following results:

- Ballet: 90% "Meets" or "Exceeds" expectations
- Modern: 98% "Meets" or "Exceeds" expectations

These results indicate that the training given in the program is highly effective in the successful development of the program's dance majors. When comparing the assessment results of the four levels of dance majors, an improvement is noted in most areas. There is an overall percentage of freshman-level students (99%) assessing into the next levels. Throughout the four years of training within the program, data suggests marked improvement in both Ballet and Modern assessments. Senior-level dance majors assessed in Dance 422 and 412 scored well over 70% in all these same areas. The program has been able to rework the Modern class level rotations to better prepare students in all the languages taught by faculty. The program's dance graduates gain a wide range of skill sets by studying the different Modern techniques, which enables them to have the versatility necessary for the profession.

Step 5: Improvement Actions

The Dance Program plans to introduce new courses to complement the Ballet and Modern training of students. Two new courses are a 100 level Experiential Anatomy course and a 200 level Yoga for the Performing Artist course. These both will introduce the freshmen and sophomore dance majors to valuable information to be practiced and mastered in 300 and 400 level courses.