

Dance Students' 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

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

Dance studio assessment criteria include:

- 1) Application of Technique
 - a. Technical accuracy
 - b. Centering, balance, and alignment
 - c. Stamina, strength, and flexibility
 - d. Spatial awareness and precision of movement
- 2) Application of Performance Skills
 - a. Timing and musicality
 - b. Quality and dynamics
 - c. Self-expression, sense of performance, and use of focus

Indirect Measure: Newly implemented Self-Assessment Surveys are administered to Juniors and Senior Dance Majors. Students were asked to rate themselves as Excellent / Good / Fair on the following dance criteria:

- a) Improvement in Skeletal Alignment and Efficiency
- b) Use of Center for Support and Initiation of Movements
- c) Dancing with Gravity and use of Opposition
- d) Coordination of Torso with Legs
- e) Use of Imagination and Intention
- f) Use of Breath to Express Movement Qualities
- g) Spatial Awareness and use of Focus
- h) Musicality within the Physical Rhythmic Structures
- i) Phrasing and Self-Expression

Step 3: Criteria for Success

Direct: 70% of students will receive an average of “Meets Expectations” or “Exceeds Expectations” based on evaluation of the demonstration of technical skills, application of performance concepts, and understanding of movement vocabulary.

Indirect: 70% of the students will rate themselves an average of “Excellent” or “Good” on their technical and performance dancing skills.

Step 4: Results

Technique and Performance Skills data collection took place in Spring 2022 during the BA in Dance Program’s Dance Major Assessments. The 28 Dance Majors were assessed on their Modern and Ballet Technique and Performance skills. The Dance Major Seniors are in the fourth levels of Ballet and Modern Technique, the highest levels reached in the Dance Program.

Direct: 2021-22 Ballet Technique Assessment Results for Seniors

1) Application of Technique

- a) Technical accuracy = 99% Meets, 1% Needs Improvement
- b) Centering, balance, and alignment = 72% Meets, 29% Exceeds
- c) Stamina, strength, and flexibility = 57% Meets, 43% Exceeds
- d) Spatial awareness and precision of movement = 86% Meets, 14% Exceeds

2) Application of Performance Skills

- a) Timing and musicality = 86% Meets, 14%, Exceeds
- b) Quality and dynamics = 64% Meets, 36%, Exceeds
- c) Self-expression, sense of performance, and use of focus = 57% Meets, 43% Exceeds

2020-21 Modern Technique Assessment Results

1) Application of Technique

- a) Technical accuracy = 46.2% Meets, 53.8% Exceeds
- b) Centering, balance, and alignment = 69.2% Meets, 30.8% Exceeds
- c) Stamina, strength, and flexibility = 53.8.8% Meets, 46.2% Exceeds
- d) Spatial awareness and precision of movement = 30.8% Meets, 69.2.% Exceeds

2) Application of Performance Skills

- a) Timing and musicality = 15.4.5% Meets, 84.6%, Exceeds
- b) Quality and dynamics = 76.9% Meets, 23.1%%, Exceeds
- c) Self-expression, sense of performance, and use of focus = 84.6% Meets, 15.4% Exceeds

The Dance Majors Assessed in their Modern Technique IV and Ballet Technique IV scored well over 70% in all areas of the rubrics. In addition, overall results are consistent with prior year assessments:

- 2021-22:
 - Ballet IV students who Meet Expectations or Exceed Expectations 99%
 - Modern IV students who Meet Expectations or Exceed Expectations 95%
- 2020-21
 - Ballet IV students who Meet Expectations or Exceed Expectations 99%
 - Modern IV students who Meet Expectations or Exceed Expectations 100%

Indirect: End of the semester self-assessment surveys were administered to the Juniors and Senior Dance Majors in Modern III and IV classes in Fall 2020, Spring 2021, Fall 2021, and Spring 2022. In examining results from the same 17 students who did self-assessments from when they were Juniors in

Modern III in Fall 2021 compared to seniors in Modern IV in Spring 2022, consistent progress was revealed as expected.

- Dancing with Gravity and Opposition:
 - Juniors 57.1% Excellent 42.9% Good
 - Seniors 64.7% Excellent 35.3% Good
- Use of Spatial Awareness and Focus:
 - Juniors 57.1% Excellent 42.9% Good
 - Seniors 82.4% Excellent 17.6% Good
- Musicality within the Rhythmic Structures:
 - Juniors 57.1% Excellent 42.9% Good
 - Seniors 76.5% Excellent 17.6% Good

When comparing 19 Seniors in Modern IV in Spring 2021 (taught on ZOOM) and 17 Seniors in Spring 2022 (taught in person), there was a marked difference in the results in the following areas:

- Use of Center for Support and Initiation of Movements
 - Seniors Spring 2021: 47.4% Excellent, 47.4% Good, 5.2% Fair
 - Seniors Spring 2022: 76.5% Excellent, 23.5% Good
- Dancing with Gravity and Use of Opposition
 - Seniors Spring 2021 57.9% Excellent, 42.1% Good
 - Seniors Spring 2022 64.7% Excellent, 35.3% Good
- Use of Imagination and Intention
 - Seniors Spring 2021 36.8% Excellent, 57.9% Good, 5.3% Fair
 - Seniors Spring 2022 58.8% Excellent, 35.3% Good, 5.9% Fair
- Use of Spatial Awareness and Focus
 - Seniors Spring 2021 57.9% Excellent, 42.1% Good
 - Seniors Spring 2022 82.4% Excellent, 17.6% Good
- Musicality within the Physical Rhythmic Structures
 - Seniors Spring 2021 63.2% Excellent, 36.8% Good
 - Seniors Spring 2022 76.5% Excellent, 17.6% Good, 5.9% Fair

When comparing the 18 Juniors that were in Modern III in Fall 2020 (taught on ZOOM) and those 17 Juniors in Fall 2021 (taught in person):

- Use of Center for Support and Initiation of Movements
 - Juniors Fall 2020 61.1% Excellent, 33.3% Good, 5.6% Fair
 - Juniors Fall 2021 71.4% Excellent, 28.6% Good,
- Use of Imagination and Intention
 - Juniors Fall 2020 55.6% Excellent, 27.8% Good, 16.7% Fair
 - Juniors Fall 2021 78.6% Excellent, 14.3% Good, 7.1% Fair
- Use of Spatial Awareness and Focus
 - Juniors Fall 2020 44.4% Excellent, 50% Good, 6.6% Fair
 - Juniors Fall 2021 57.1% Excellent, 42.9% Good

Analysis of these results reveals the Dance Program's enormous challenges while under the COVID Pandemic Restrictions. The skills most affected were center strength, use of space, musicality, and

performance skills of use of imagination and intention. Results demonstrated that students regained their confidence and increased their skills in these areas since returning to in-person learning.

Step 5: Improvement Actions

The Student Self-Assessment results were in alignment with faculty appraisals and concerns. Instructors will use results to emphasize these skill sets within their technique classes to better prepare students. In addition, the faculty have added elements of mindfulness practices for students to assist them with the various challenges affecting them as they traverse their time in the program and beyond.