Student Handbook

Revised 9/1/2021

DEPARTMENT OF DANCE MISSION STATEMENT

Western Michigan University's Department of Dance is nationally recognized as a community that values aesthetic breadth, student choice and disciplinary excellence. In our mission as a dance community, we are committed to:

- Experiential learning through which students integrate theory and practice to discover, explore, and articulate a sense of themselves as dance artists and leaders
- Providing curricula and special projects that value student choice and aesthetic breadth
- Offering comprehensive, tri-focal training in ballet, jazz, and modern dance techniques
- Engagement with national and international dance communities through artist residencies and

GENERAL PROTOCOL

DO NOT DISTURB A CLASS OR REHEARSAL IN SESSION. Permission to observe should be obtained from the teacher, choreographer or director of the rehearsal prior to the scheduled starting time.

Absence/Tardiness:
A performer may be removed from the cast of a dance for unexcused absences, excessive tardiness for rehearsals and/or inappropriate behavior during rehearsals.

The Department of Dance views performance/production activities as extensions of classroom activities. In the same vein, classroom discipline is an extension of production discipline, particularly in the studio courses.

A professional dancer, or any other performing artist or production technician, would never dream of missing "call." It is unheard of in all dance/theatre circles. This same discipline is expected of students in the studio and classroom. Classroom absence/tardiness policies will be covered in course syllabi.

Technique Classroom Protocol:

DANCE MINOR

Information about the dance minor can be found in the WMU Catalogue. Due to high demand, the Department of Dance has limited enrollment in the dance minor to 50 students and the minor is currently full. A waiting list has been established. To be placed on the dance minor waiting list, a student should submit their name, email address, WIN, and phone number to the dance academic advisor. The student will be notified via email when space becomes available to declare the dance minor.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Currently enrolled dance majors may apply for dance scholarships during the fall for the following academic year. Application information and deadlines will be emailed to students in the fall. Dance scholarship descriptions and criteria can be found on the Department of Dance website: http://www.wmich.edu/dance/apply/scholarships. Additional funding is provided from Differential Tuition and is awarded each summer for the coming academic year based on financial need as demonstrated via the FAFSA.

Students receiving dance scholarships must have declared dance as their first major. Many dance scholarships also require registration as a full-time student (12 credit hours). Dance scholarship students are expected to serve as positive role models for their peers through volunteering to help with department activities such as new student audition days, studio set-up and strike, special department projects, backstage and front-of-house assistance. Students must demonstrate satisfactory academic progress as specified by the office of Student Financial Aid, and strict adherence to the WMU Student Code. Documented violations of the Student Code may be grounds for withdrawal of dance scholarship funding.

GUEST ARTISTS

Differential Tuition is the source for funding of the majority of guest artists brought to campus and also provides funding for live musical accompaniment for ballet and modern technique courses. Guest artists may include: master teachers, performers who present master classes, demonstrations, and lectures. These activities are usually free for students enrolled in dance major courses. Suggestions for future guests are welcome.

If a student wants to participate in a guest master class and is not enrolled in the course the guest teacher is teaching, that student must have permission to participate from the assigned instructor at least 24 hours in advance of the master class. If the teacher of the course is absent, that student must have the Acting Associate Director's permission to take the class. In no case should a student make a judgment about another student's participation in a master class.

Dance faculty may participate in dance classes as their schedule/duties allow.

FACILITY/STUDIO USE

In an effort to maintain our dance facilities, a number of rules and practices should be uppermost in the minds of those who are using studios, classrooms, locker rooms, etc. These rules are in no way meant to inconvenience students or staff. Respectful adherence to these rules better assures a secure, well-functioning, organized environment for the work that needs to be done.

Rules are:

1. Students using studios A and B must enter and exit through the clean foot corridor.
2.

2. Everyone in the MMR will use Miller Auditorium as their reassembly area. The lobby area of Miller will be used in inclement or cold weather. Otherwise, everyone will reassemble in front of the main entrance, under the parking structure/pedestrian bridge.

Fire

Dalton Center will observe the “General Fire Evacuation Procedures for University Buildings

PERFORMANCE RELATED POLICIES

PERFORMANCE CREDIT (DANC4600 Performance and DANC4610 Advanced Dance Studies)
Students may register for DANC4600 Performance

Performance Courses

Students are evaluated on the degree of performance skill proficiency and rehearsal conduct. Final grades are based on daily class assessment and assessment of performances in concerts sponsored by the Department.
An “A” student:

1. Conveys the choreographer’s intent.
2. Is prepared to dance with full physical and psychological commitment.
3. Knows material covered in previous rehearsals.
4. Takes responsibility for mastering the assigned material.
5. Presents and maintains the instrument in accordance with the requirements of the dance and/or choreographer.

A “B” student demonstrates proficiency in four of the above criteria.

A “C” student demonstrates proficiency in three of the above criteria.

A “D” student demonstrates proficiency in two of the above criteria.

An “E” student demonstrates proficiency in one of the above criteria only or fails to fulfill the requirements of the course regardless of their performance skill.

Choreography Courses

Students are evaluated on the degree of mastery of course material. Final grades are based on daily assessment and periodic evaluation of assignments. Each course will specify assignment requirements. Students who meet course requirements should expect to receive an appropriate grade.
An “A” student creates dances or dance studies that:

1. Meet the requirements of the specific assignment.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of the relationship of time, space and force.
3. Are individualized statements.
4. Are unified statements.
5. Demonstrate aesthetic sensitivity.

A “B” student creates dances or dance studies that show proficiency in four of the above criteria.

A “C: student creates dances or dance studies that show proficiency in three of the above criteria.

A “D” student creates dances or dance studies that show proficiency in two of the above criteria.

An “E: student shows proficiency in one of the above criteria only or fails to fulfill the requirements of the course regardless of their choreographic skill.

Evaluation of Writing in Dance Courses

Students are evaluated on their mastery of language arts skills. Each course requiring writing will specify assignment requirements. The student who meets all course requirements should expect to receive a grade reflective of her/his level of mastery.
An “A” student:

1. Demonstrates maturity and originality of thought, reflected by the ability to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate.
2. Sustains the development of a point or idea over the length of the assignment.
3. Uses organized paragraphs and transitional devices.
4. Makes conventional use of capitalization and punctuation.
5. Uses consistently the grammar, syntax, and spelling of standard written English, with particular attention to sentence structure and to agreement between subjects, verbs, pronouns and antecedents.

A “B” student’s written work shows proficiency in four of the above criteria.

A “C” student’s written work shows proficiency in three of the above criteria.

A “D” student’s written work shows proficiency in two of the above criteria.

An “E” student fails to fulfill the requirements of the course regardless of their language arts skills.

INFORMATION, STANDARDS AND CRITERIA FOR THE BFA IN DANCE

Students may petition for entrance into the BFA program after completion of:

1. At least one semester each of ballet, jazz and modern major technique courses.
2. DANC 1800 The Creative Choreographer
3. At least one dance theory course

Students are admitted based upon the faculty's assessment of the student's technical, choreographic and performance skills, and professional commitment necessary to successfully complete the BFA program.

Eligibility of transfer students to petition will be determined on an individual basis by the dance academic advisor. Applications are available from the dance academic advisor at the end of each semester.

STANDARDS AND CRITERIA FOR RETENT ION IN THE BFA PROGRAM
The following policy was adopted by the Department of Dance and is published in the University Catalog:

"Continuation in the BFA program will be determined by the dance faculty during the second semester of the student's enrollment as a BFA candidate. In order to continue in the BFA, the student must: have completed and/or be currently enrolled in at least one technique course in ballet, jazz and modern; have at least B-level skills in technique and performance; have demonstrated potential to succeed as a professional dancer and/or choreographer; and have demonstrated professional commitment in dance coursework and dance-related activities. BFA candidates must meet with dance faculty at least once for their 2nd year review. Any student discontinued from the program may petition again for the BFA after a minimum of one additional semester at WMU."

By this policy, the Department maintains control of the individual student's continuation in the BFA Program. It assures that the student has experienced all thrtr(e p)10.6 nDC -3.0272 0 (or)4.9(m)-5.9(us)8.8 (mlet, jz and moderh
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- 4-6 pages in length and not to exceed 8 pages
- Write in Standard English, in the first person, and with a professional voice.
- Observe standard rules of grammar with attention to consistent verb tense, singular/plural agreement, spelling, overall organization and use of transitional devices

Content

The Junior Jury Essay is a discussion of the development of the choreographic project and a critique of the resulting final dance in the areas of choreography, technique and performance. The essay should include a discussion of how the project reflects or expands on the student's beliefs and aspirations as delineated in the personal artistic statement. A complete essay will include:

- The intent of the choreographic project and any changes that may have occurred during the creative process;
- Aesthetic choices made in developing all aspects of the dance as produced including movement themes/vocabulary, music, costumes, and other design choices; especially as pertains to the application of the student's personal aesthetic;
- An evaluation of the final presentation of the work as performed for the public.

A copy of the student's Personal Artistic Statement should be attached.

DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities have the responsibility to:

- Self-identify concerning disability status to the Center for Disability Services.
- Provide disability documentation that is as recent as within the last five years.
- Request accommodation.

Please contact WMU Disability Services for Students for more information about disability services available to students: www.wmich.edu/disabilityservices

- religion – exhibiting discriminatory practices and/or creating a hostile environment because of an individual's religious belief, affiliation or lack of belief.

- national origin – discriminatory practices, verbal or physical, against an individual because of birthplace, ancestry, culture, or linguistic characteristics common to a specific ethnic group.

- sexual orientation - discriminating against an individual because of the person's identification, perception, or status toward homosexuality, heterosexuality, or bisexuality.

- age - discriminating practices against an individual by making statements of age preference or specifying age preference and limitations or denial of benefits based on age. Note: Age limit may be specified in rare circumstances in employment when age has been proven to be a bona fide occupational qualification (BFOQ).

SEXUAL ASSAULT

Sexual assault, which includes but is not limited to rape, is defined as any sexual contact which involves the use or threat of coercion or intimidation, or sexual contact with someone who has not given consent or is incapable of giving consent because of a physical or mental impairment. (Refer to Michigan Penal Code legislature link for more information.)

Sexual Misconduct

Western Michigan University prohibits sexual misconduct, defined as a non-consensual physical contact of a sexual nature. The W.M.U. Student Code includes "intimidation, threat of force, force, or other coercive behavior on the part of the accused; or taking advantage of the mental incapacitation or physical helplessness of the alleged victim…" as acts of sexual misconduct.

Stalking

Any individual can be a victim of stalking. In a 1968 brochure, entitled "Are You A Victim of Stalking?," published by the Michigan Women's Commission, and in conjunction with the Attorney General's Office and Michigan State Police, stalking can take many forms and all of which a person can be charged under anti-stalking laws with stalking for willfully and repeatedly contacting another individual, without permission, and causing that person to feel terrorized, frightened, intimidated, threatened, harassed, or molested.

Michigan's Penal Code defines stalking as: "…a 'willful course of conduct ' involving repeated or continuing harassment of another individual that would cause a reasonable person to feel terrorized, frightened, intimidated, threatened, 'harassed', or molested, and that actually causes the victim to feel terrorized, frightened, intimidated, threatened, harassed, or molested.

What You Can Do

Western Michigan University has a Policy on Sexual Harassment and Sexism, approved by the Board of Trustees, May 17, 1985. The institution is "committed to an environment which encourages fair, humane, and beneficial treatment of all faculty, staff, and students…Therefore, in that same perspective, neither sexual harassment nor sexism will be tolerated at Western Michigan University…"

The University is also committed to stopping harassment and associated retaliatory behavior.

Every member of the University is responsible for creating and maintaining a campus atmosphere free from all forms of intimidation, harassment, or exploitation.

If you are involved or a witness in an alleged incident of harassment, whether racial, ethnic or sexual (including harassment based on sexual orientation or sexual assault), Western Michigan University is committed to responding promptly and sensitively. The institution will take whatever corrective measures necessary to correct, prevent, and if appropriate, discipline behavior which violates this policy. Federal and State Laws Prohibit Harassment