

School of Dance

Susan Jaffe, Dean

I. Overview

The purpose of the School of Dance is to identify and prepare young, talented dancers for professional performing careers. Our rigorous and nurturing conservatory approach develops technically sound, artistically sensitive and stylistically versatile dancer-artists. Distinguished full-time faculty work closely with students and share their professional expertise through a unique and comprehensive curriculum. Visiting guest artists, choreographers and company residencies bring fresh perspectives on current trends in the field. Recognizing that performing is an integral component of dance training, the School of Dance offers regular performance opportunities and is committed to presenting world-class repertory in our concerts.

The University of North Carolina School of the Arts awards the High School Diploma with concentrations in Ballet or Contemporary Dance. Both concentrations emphasize the strong fundamentals particular to each, while looking to the other discipline for cross training, collaboration and inspiration.

II. Specific Admissions and Transfer Requirements

A. Admission

Admission to the School is based on talent and potential (as assessed in an audition before the arts faculty) and academic transcripts.

Ballet students must be at least thirteen years old and be entering into the ninth grade to be admitted to the program. Contemporary students may begin in the tenth grade.

B. Required Physical and Mental Abilities

A student must demonstrate adherence to professional ethics and integrity necessary to work in a collaborative environment. Emotional stability, responsibility, and ethical performance of all assigned duties are necessary to succeed in the program. A successful dance student must be able to recognize when the support of professionals is necessary to maintain psychological and physical health.

Equally important, the student must be able to sustain a high level of physically challenging movement sequences for extended periods of time and execute a full range of body movements and elements of dance (including but not limited to, turning, jumping, balancing, falling, stretching, lifting, flexing and running) while responding to musical and visual cues.

In addition, a student must be able to:

- View and reproduce sequences of classroom exercises and complicated choreography, which requires specific movements for the head, arms, hands, torso, legs and feet.
- Demonstrate the ability to work precisely with live and recorded music.
- Respond appropriately to verbal instructions and warnings to ensure the safety of the student and his/her fellow dancers.
- Physically participate in solo, duet and group work that may include lifting and manipulating his or her own body, or that of another dancer, many times above the top of one's head.

- Maintain a healthy, toned and energized physique, one conducive to achieving the aesthetics necessary to express the art form through his/her body.

C. Class Placement

Ballet students are placed by the faculty at the beginning of each academic year into one of eight levels:

- BL1 through BL6 – (BL stands for “Ballet Ladies”)
- BG1 or BG2 – (BG stands for “Ballet Gentlemen”)

Levels are determined by age and technical proficiency.

All new Contemporary Dance students upon entering the program are placed into the M1 level for contemporary technique, partnering, composition and repertory. (M stands for “Modern”) Contemporary majors’ level placement for their ballet technique class is determined through audition.

D. Adherence to Policies

At the beginning of the academic year, each student, regardless of age, and their parent or guardian, must sign a form indicating that they have read the Student Handbook and agree to abide by the School of Dance Policies.

E. Dance Requirements

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F. Diploma Requirements

To earn the UNCOSA high school diploma, a student must complete the required academic courses prescribed by the UNCOSA High School Academic Program. Specific information about academic graduation requirements is available in the High School Academic Program section of the Bulletin.

G. Diploma with Designation “Concentration in Dance”

Successful completion of at least four units of high school dance credit, as well as satisfactory progress in assigned dance courses is required for a student to receive the designation “Concentration in Dance” on their high school diploma.

III. Standards of Achievement and Evaluation

A. Attendance and Participation

The School of Dance has a detailed attendance policy which promotes professional commitment to sustained practice while offering flexibility to accommodate injury, illness and professional, school and religious activities. It is the students’ responsibility familiarize themselves with the Attendance Policies found in the Student Handbooks.

B. Evaluation

Students are evaluated each term by their faculty and informed of their progress. In addition to assigning grades as an evaluation of a student’s work, the major technique teacher provides written commentary at mid-term. Students are also assessed by the full faculty during jury classes in the Spring semester. Students are encouraged to discuss with the faculty, at any time, problems and progress in their work.