Department of Theatre and Dance

Dance Division Student Handbook

2016-2017
(updated February 2017)
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The MSU Dance Division offers a BFA degree in Dance, which is a four-year performance oriented degree, a BA in Dance with Certification P-12, and a BA in Dance with a concentration in Studio Teaching. Therefore, the core of the BFA program and the first two years of the BA Program is comprised of technique (ballet, modern, and jazz), creative studies (improvisation & choreography), theoretical studies (rhythmic analysis, Laban movement analysis, dance history, pedagogy and danceaturgy) and performance (repertory). The first two years of the BFA and the BA degrees are almost identical. At the end of the sophomore year, a student wishing to pursue the BA Degree with Certification for P-12 must submit a formal application and have completed four prerequisite courses.

The Dance Division has a commitment to training that emphasizes anatomical soundness over style. We also believe that a number of movement styles and approaches, if complementary, make for a more versatile dancer. Your teachers come from a variety of backgrounds, which makes for a great variety in both classroom and in repertory.

Dance is a powerful art form that encourages communication and helps us find our commonalities. In the hours of dance class and rehearsals over the next few years you will come to know your classmates with an intimacy that very few people in other fields will ever experience. If you participate fully in this spirit of team-consciousness you will develop your humanity and citizenship in equal proportion to your performance abilities. We believe that these qualities are absolutely vital in today’s world.

All the good energy that you send out will come back to you.
DANCE UNIT MISSION STATEMENT

The dance unit holistically educates its students by developing and cultivating a deep knowledge of dance in many facets. We seek to enhance the student’s mind/body connection and their technical facility; encourage their sense of play and creativity; deepen their appreciation/understanding of the historical and cultural relevance of dance in our global society; and promote their engagement as global citizens as well as their understanding of the democratic principles that enable them to be free-thinking artists.

PROFESSIONALISM
Over the next four years you will receive an excellent education in dance and in the other skills that will make you a more successful person in the world. We will accomplish this by providing you with highly skilled, caring teachers who are dedicated to helping you attain the highest level of excellence in dance. Equally important is the development of your professionalism, which will help you function in the professional field, and to be a more successful and resilient personality in all that you undertake.

You will be expected to develop what we call a “professional attitude” from the very beginning of your career at MSU. This means that you will begin developing the ability to make positive, mature choices and responses even when personally you may feel unhappy about a situation. You will develop the ability to see a “bigger picture,” one that encompasses more people and circumstances than might be immediately discernible. This is a skill, and, like any other skill, must be practiced in order to perfect it. You will be called upon to be supportive of those around you in many ways during your time at MSU. While you may be personally disappointed in casting outcomes at times, you can be supportive by “practicing gladness” for others who have a more positive outcome. This is difficult and takes great maturity, but you will grow more from this positive effort than by being visibly unhappy.
If you develop this professional attitude, you will be a happier, more well adjusted, successful person. If you don’t, you will find yourself feeling victimized, angry and unsuccessful. You are ALWAYS welcome to come in to discuss distressing situations in private. In public, however, you are expected to have a “professional attitude.”

PROFESSIONALISM:  
EXPECTATIONS IN THE CLASSROOM, REHEARSAL HALL, AND IN GENERAL

1. Be on time and appropriately dressed and prepared for class and rehearsal. If you are not in the dress code as stated in your syllabus, you will not be allowed to stay for class and you will receive an absence for that day.
2. Be prepared to spend the entire class period inside the classroom. Attend to personal needs such as bathroom, snacks and water prior to entering the classroom. You may bring a water bottle to class with you. Anyone who leaves the classroom or rehearsal without permission will be marked absent from the class/rehearsal; this may result in being replaced in the dance, a lowered grade in repertory, etc.
3. Cell phone use during class or rehearsal is not permitted. That includes texting, checking the phone, etc.... Anyone found to be using the phone will be asked to leave the class or rehearsal immediately. This will result in an absence from the class and may result in being replaced in the rehearsal which will affect the repertory grade.
4. If you are not present when attendance is taken, you will be marked absent. See the teacher immediately at the end of class to have the ABSENCE changed to LATE in the roll book (see also Attendance Policy). If you are more than 5 minutes late you will not be admitted to the classroom or rehearsal which will result in an absence.
5. When guest teachers are present, please show your respect by being ready and on the floor when the teacher is introduced. Please applaud for the teacher and accompanist at the end of class. NEVER, EVER disrupt the rehearsal or class by inappropriately talking, laughing, or doing anything that would be considered inattentive or unprofessional.
6. Read your Canvas messages and MSU email and check the rehearsal board every day! You are being sent much information on an almost daily basis. IT IS ABSOLUTELY IMPERATIVE THAT YOU CHECK YOUR MSU EMAIL EVERY SINGLE DAY. Anything you miss as a result of not checking your email will result in dire and unwanted consequences.
7. Do not wear jewelry of ANY KIND (including small nose rings) to dress rehearsal or performance. Do not wear fingernail polish or toenail polish to dress rehearsals or performance. If you have a tattoo, it must be covered in make up during dress rehearsal and performance. Failure to follow this rule will result in a lowering of the
repertory grade, removal from the piece(s) for the evening, removal from the piece(s) for the rest of the concert.

8. Be present and on time for all warm-ups for dress rehearsal and performance. Failure to do so will result in a lowering of repertory grade, removal from one or more pieces of choreography for that night, removal from one or more pieces of choreography for the duration of the concert.

9. When guest students are visiting or auditioning, please be courteous, helpful and friendly.

10. Think before you speak or act. Take a moment and reflect on the consequences of your actions.

**ACADEMIC CREDIT FOR OUTSIDE TRAINING**

Senior students enrolled in ballet and modern dance technique who attain the IV level in both ballet and modern dance technique, may be selected by the Dance Division to take professional studio classes one day a week as partial fulfillment of the requirements for their required technique courses. Selection for this special privilege is based on a careful assessment of the student’s technical and artistic proficiency, and the arrangement of a professional situation that will further the student’s professional growth. Students interested in applying for this special program must submit a written request indicating their professional and technical goals, proposed schedule, and a justification for attending a selected professional training situation one month prior to the MSU registration period for the semester in which the professional studio classes will be taken. As the professional day constitutes a portion of the student’s technique requirement for the semester, he/she should expect to pay for the professional studio classes in addition to registering for the advanced level of technique. Receipts for all professional studio classes will be submitted to the instructor in addition to a reflection paper or journal.

Students who wish to transfer credits taken at summer intensive programs, must petition the department prior to registration for said programs or before the end of the previous academic spring semester. Only work taken at accredited institutions will be considered for transfer credit. While summer work is encouraged to promote continued growth and development, it is not intended to replace coursework in the Dance Program. Essentially, the MSU Dance Program is a 4-year course of study. The dance major is expected to be in both ballet and modern dance classes during their entire tenure in the Dance Program, whether or not credit has been granted from another institution. It is not the intention of the Dance Program to artificially speed up the 4 year course of study by allowing the student to transfer in credits from outside universities or institutions. Outside work is meant to supplement, not replace, the 4-year program. In certain cases, a student who is working at their technical level may be behind in credits due to
double majoring or transferring in from another university. In these cases, transfer credit is appropriate and acceptable. A student may not “double up” on credits without the permission of the Program Coordinator. If they do so, he/she will still be required to take, and sign up for, ballet and modern classes for the duration of their program at MSU.

**ADDITIONAL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

- B.F.A. students must attain the level IV in one technique and the Level III in the other technique for graduation
- B.A. students must attain level III in both ballet and modern technique. This is because of the lower number of required technique courses.
- Four passing dance division juries for BFA and three passing juries for BA
- Residency requirement - the last 24 credits must be taken at M.S.U.

**ADVISING AND SCHEDULING**

Each B.F.A. Dance Major is required to attend advisement with their dance faculty advisor before registration each semester. All students with concentrations in either the B.A. in Dance with P-12 Certification or Studio Teaching should see Dr. Beth McPherson for advisement. Watch the Canvas Announcements for notices about advisement. Bring your curriculum guide to your registration appointment.

When making your schedule it is important to remember that we have concerts, dress rehearsals, and the American College Dance Association, all of which require you to miss classes. This is especially true in the Spring Semester as we have two concerts AND the ACDA all in one semester. If you do decide to take an evening class, it is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to inform your professor at the beginning of the semester of these conflicts. If he/she feels that your grade will be jeopardized as a result of these absences you should consider whether to remain in that class. You should also “save your absences” for these events. You may not be excused from a technical rehearsal, dress rehearsal, or performance for a class.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR TECHNIQUE CLASSES**

For classes that meet four times a week, four absences plus an observation are allowed. If a student does not utilize his/her observation they may have an additional absence. Each absence above the attendance policy results in the lowering of a final grade by one increment on the eleven point scale (A, A-, B+, B, etc.). Students who observe classes must fill out an observation form (located in the Department Office) in order to receive attendance credit for the class. **There are no make-ups granted for technique classes. There are no excused**
absences except for religious holidays. In extreme situations resulting from injury, illness, or personal circumstances, the student should see the instructor and either request an incomplete or withdrawal from the course. Note: all incomplete grades must be made up by the third week of the next semester.

If you are not present when attendance is taken, you will be marked absent. See the teacher immediately at the end of class to have the ABSENCE changed to LATE in the roll book (see also Attendance Policy). If you are more than 5 minutes late you will not be admitted to the classroom or rehearsal which will result in an absence.

Reminder – During the lesson, students should not leave the studio unless it is an emergency. Please do not inappropriately sit down or lie down between exercises. In addition, please do not engage in commentary or social chatter with your neighbors during class. Questions regarding the material taught in the lesson are welcome and should be addressed to the instructor. Appropriate dance attire, which allows the teacher to see alignment and technical skills, is mandatory. Water bottles, kneepads, valuables, notebooks, and any necessary warm-up clothing may be brought into the studio and placed neatly in designated areas, which do not infringe upon the performance space.

BIG SISTER/LITTLE SISTER/BROTHER PROGRAM

As a freshman or transfer student, you will be assigned a big sister or brother whose job it is to look out for you. Some of the ways in which they may help include:

- assisting in advisement or registration
- providing guidance in all aspects of production including technical and dress rehearsals (what are they? when do they typically occur? what to expect?)
- answering questions about other divisional functions such as dance day, juries, exams
- providing support and assisting in social interactions
- being a friend when needed

CANVAS WEB SITE

The dance division faculty will post information on casting, rehearsal schedules, technique placements and other policies on Canvas in the Dance Major course.

CLASS REPRESENTATIVES
Class representatives will be elected every year from the freshmen, sophomore, junior and senior classes. One representative from the Dance Division will also serve on the Department’s Student Council. Class representatives will meet at least once a semester with the Dance Division program coordinator and/or other division faculty.

**Google Calendar**

Check the Google Calendar on the Dance Major course website everyday.

You are also responsible for all information sent to you on EMAIL and CANVAS. Canvas has a free smartphone app that gives alerts on your phone whenever a message is received. Students are highly encouraged to download this app.

Messages are sent on an almost daily basis and you MUST check it at least once a day. With the exception of emergency information, students are responsible for all messages posted by 9am.

**COMPUTER**

There are numerous computer labs on campus. All students are required to use computers in all written work. For your protection, always save a copy of your work. It is recommended that students purchase a computer and printer for their academic needs.

**DANCE DAY**

Dance Day is a recruitment tool that allows high school students to visit our campus, meet faculty and students, take sample classes, and see our students perform. Dance majors are assigned various tasks to facilitate the running of this event. These tasks include registering guests, demonstrating in technique classes, showing material in workshops, and performing. All students who “work” Dance Day receive a thank you letter that is placed in their advisement file. In addition they receive a “free” absence off of a ballet or modern class of their choice, except for Freshman in the Fall semester, as assisting with Dance Day is part of the course requirements for New Student Seminar.
**DINING SERVICES**

Rehearsals or evening classes may make it difficult to make the dining hall hours. We have worked out some alternatives for you:

1. Students can use the meal equivalency at the RAT until 8 p.m.
2. Box lunches or dinners can be arranged to be picked up by contacting:
   - the manager for Blanton Dining Hall- x4414
   - the manager for Freeman Dining Hall- x4424
3. Students can arrange to pick up meals early or arrange for a designated person to pick them up. To prevent this arrangement from being abused, students should expect to show proof of conflicts or difficulties in schedules.

If you encounter difficulties, contact Dora Lim, General Manager of Dining Services, at x6895.

**DISABILITIES**

(see common section of the Department Handbook)

**GRADING**

Incompletes- If a student has an injury, a medical problem, or personal crisis which prohibits them from successfully completing a course, there are several options. If the injury or illness occurs before the deadline for dropping a course, the student may be encouraged to drop the course. If the injury or illness occurs after the deadline for dropping, they may petition the faculty member for an incomplete. An incomplete is not guaranteed for each and every student and will be decided by the faculty member and the program director on a case-by-case basis. (Incompletes granted for medical reasons require that a doctor’s note accompany the student’s request). If a student is granted an incomplete, it is his/her responsibility to fulfill the work as specified on the incomplete form by the date listed. If the student is unable to fulfill the work by the stated date, it is the student’s responsibility to initiate an extension of incompletion through his/her faculty member.

**IMPORTANT**- A note from either a physician is required for missing divisional tests, quizzes, and paper deadlines.

**GRADES**

The following grades are used at Montclair State.

A  4.0  Excellent
In order to determine final grades, dance faculty may incorporate an assessment system based on 100 points in individual courses. Consult individual course syllabi for details.

97-100 A(+) [Note a grade of A+ is not awarded at MSU in final grade Submissions]
93-100  A
90-92   A-
87-89   B+
83-86   B
80-82   B-
77-79   C+
73-76   C
70-72   C-
67-69   D+
63-66   D
60-62   D-
59 or below F

Note: Each course has its own policy concerning make-up work which depends on the structure of that class. Consult the individual syllabi for guides for make-up work.

For all movement/performance-based courses, the Dance Division also incorporates a strict attendance policy, which impacts final grades. Consult the Dance Division
HOW TO TAKE A TECHNIQUE CLASS

Taking responsibility for your training process is an important part of the overall discipline required to becoming an artist. Merely showing up for class and going through the motions is often an insufficient effort for making significant progress. It is each student’s responsibility to come to class with a positive attitude that indicates a readiness and willingness to work and to learn.

Try to prepare for class by getting a good night’s sleep and by having a nourishing meal to start the day. Taking care of your body directly impacts your performance and grades. You should consider a good night's sleep part of your "homework" for technique classes. Bring healthy snacks that you can eat between classes. Dress appropriately and leave plenty of time before your first technique class to go to the restroom. Bring the following items with you to class:

- Knee pads
- Water bottle
- Towel (if desired for stretch class)
- Notebook for assignments, class notes, personal notes

When you enter the studio, place your gear in the appropriate place and find a location at the barre or on the floor where you want to take class. (Occasionally vary the place you choose). Begin to do some quiet exercises to help focus your mind and gently warm up such as breathing, constructive rest position, movements to gently increase range of joint motion, gentle stretching, eye exercises to stimulate the brain, etc... If you need to pick up your energy, try jogging around the room, doing a series of full body swings, shaking different body parts, scratching your head to stimulate blood circulation, etc...

If there is no particular focus stated by the teacher for the day, you might choose a theme for yourself such as alignment, musicality, spatial connection, specific corrections you have been given by a teacher, or personal areas you want to work on. Sometimes learning new material will require your complete attention or the activities presented in the lesson will require a different kind of concentration. Be prepared to adjust or abandon your personal agenda depending on the activities presented in the class.

Try to remain alert and focused throughout the class. In general, try to learn and execute exercises and combinations with the following priorities:

- movement accuracy
- timing
concept or quality required
physicality and commitment
performance elements

When general corrections are given, check to see if you can apply them to yourself. Ask the teacher questions when you don’t understand something. Make every attempt to remember and continue working on corrections that apply to you in subsequent classes. Do not engage in commentary or social chatter with your neighbors. This behavior is a distraction to the rest of the class and to the teacher and it will result in a lowering of your grade.

At the end of the class allow some time for reflection. It is helpful to keep a journal in which you can note the following:

- General information—themes presented, your mood or energy
- Things stressed by the teacher
- Corrections you have received as well as any general corrections that apply to you
- Things you can do to improve your technique based on the specifics of the class
  (Note when you have made positive improvements)

If possible, review these items before the end of the day or before the next class. Practice specific exercises or combinations you will see again. If you are having trouble with a particular aspect of the class, see the teacher after class or make an appointment to review the material at another time. Set small goals for yourself that are possible to achieve. Success is a great motivation for future achievements. A mid-semester evaluation will be provided to you by each of your technique teachers. At the end of the semester note the overall progress you have made.

Professional etiquette in a dance class/choreography class or rehearsal includes:

- No lounging around on each other
- No cell phone or texting in class
- No use of computers in technique, choreography or rehearsal unless asked for by the teacher
- Proper dress code and confinement of hair

Dress Code

- Dark colored leotards with pink, flesh-colored, or black tights
- No yoga pants, shorts, scarves, baggy shirts, dangly earrings or other jewelry
- Leg warmers and tight fitting sweaters may be worn if weather dictates
- Hair must be confined close to the head—no pony tails
HEALTH AND SAFETY INFORMATION

Emergency Phone: In case of emergency, dial 5222 (MSU Campus Police). If someone is injured and needs assistance, first call the Campus Police at 5222.

First Aid Kits, Purell dispensers, Ice:
First aid kits are mounted to the wall in each studio. Purell dispensers are located outside of the studios.

There is an ice machine and baggies in the Department Production Office which is downstairs next to the Department Office (LI050). You are welcome to use this ice anytime. During performances we will have portable ice packs available for emergency use.

For Acute Injuries:
Ice packs are applied immediately and the Campus Police (5222) are called. The police contact the health center and arrive with an ambulance. After assessing the situation, the student may be taken to a local emergency room for x rays, treatment, etc.

Anatomically Sound Training:
Awareness and application of anatomical knowledge is a serious consideration when hiring teachers. The teachers currently on the staff teach with an anatomical awareness and are sensitive to student injuries. The absentee policy for technique classes allows students to have 4 absences and 1 observation. Students with prolonged injuries are encouraged to take an incomplete for the semester. When an incomplete is given, every effort is made to help the student make up missed technique classes in a manner that benefits the student.

HEALTH WAIVER

Prior to participation in technique classes each student is asked to return a Health Waiver signed by their physician stating that they are healthy and strong enough to participate in the Dance Division. If the student is unable to have an outside physician perform the physical, they will be asked to have it done by the MSU Health Center. This needs to be done no later than the first two weeks of class. The student will not be allowed to participate if this waiver is not in by then.

JURIES

All BFA dance majors are required to take and pass a total of four jury examinations (two at the freshman/sophomore level which are held in May and two
at the junior/senior level which are held in December). BA dance majors are required to complete and pass 3 juries. The number of juries for transfer students is pro-rated based upon class status when entering the BFA or BA programs at MSU. (For example, BFA sophomores entering in the fall, take four juries; two at the freshman/sophomore level, two at the junior/senior level. Juniors entering in the fall, take three juries; one at the freshman/sophomore level, two at the junior/senior level.) Please consult the jury coordinator (Maxine Steinman) if you have any questions.

The adjudication panel is composed of a combination of three to four full-time and part-time faculty members from the dance division.

**Content**
A class structure is used for all of the juries. The class is composed of a mini-barre dealing with alignment and basic ballet movement vocabulary followed by exercises and combinations in ballet and modern dance that cover such aspects as technical difficulty, phrase complexity, coordination, weight shift, rhythm, breath, flow, etc.

In addition to the ballet barre and technique combinations, the **junior/senior jury** requires the students to prepare and perform a creative portion (choreographed solo), which must be prepared by the student him/herself.

**Organization**
Approximately one month prior to the jury examination, instructions and a sign-up sheet are posted on the rehearsal bulletin board. Both the freshman/sophomore and junior/senior juries are divided into morning and afternoon sessions. Each student selects and signs up for one session. For each jury session, students arrive and submit their previously completed information forms. The class portion of the jury is followed by individual, private conferences with the adjudication panel.

If a student is going to be absent from a jury examination because of an emergency, he/she should send an email to Maxine Steinman immediately. A doctor’s note that explains the emergency situation must be submitted to the dance office within a reasonable amount of time. This note will be placed in the student’s jury file for future reference. Transfer students with junior status need 3 juries.

**Evaluation**
The evaluation of the students for the jury exam is done in two formats—written and oral. The written format requires each adjudicator to fill out an evaluation form on each jury participant. The sign up list for each jury as well as organizational notes are filed in the jury coordinator’s office.
The performance of each student is discussed by the adjudication panel in the conference following the movement portion of the exam. It is at this time that the student’s overall progress within the program is reviewed. Strengths and weaknesses are cited with recommendations offered for continued growth. Issues and/or challenges from the faculty or student’s point of view are discussed in hopes of finding workable solutions. Students are expected to bring a notebook to the evaluation conference and take notes pertaining to the feedback given.

MAINTAINING OUR DANCE SPACES
We spend a huge amount of time in the studios. To make our time there as pleasant and productive as possible there are a few guidelines that we all need to follow:

- Leave all excess clothes, books, etc... in the changing room in your locker.
- Remove street shoes BEFORE entering any dance studio.
- **DO NOT EAT IN THE DANCE STUDIOS.**
- Before leaving the studio, remove all personal items, trash, etc...
- Turn out all lights and shut the windows.
- Lock the door (if possible).
- Turn off all sound equipment and lock up all equipment. (See also “Use of Sound Equipment”)

MINOR OR DOUBLE MAJOR
Statistics show that people will have 2-3 careers, not just jobs, in a lifetime. Therefore it pays to be as prepared as possible. The undergraduate tuition at MSU is reasonable enough to allow a student to do a minor or double major while majoring in dance. Students are encouraged to consider the investment of time and money necessary to pursue a minor or second major that would complement their specialized dance skills and knowledge.

MSU REPERTORY COMPANY
All BFA Dance Majors must register for repertory every semester while at MSU. All non-BFA students performing in a concert must be registered for repertory and at least one technique class during the semester they are in the show. (This includes all DAED and DAST majors, minors, theater students, etc.) **Students must maintain an overall 2.5 GPA in order to be cast and perform in any of the shows.**

Repertory is a class and, as such, will be graded on skill acquired, attendance, readiness, attitude, and performance. Any infraction will lower the repertory grade. Please see the grading rubric in the Dance Major course for more specifics.

Performance Opportunities
Concerts on Campus - The MSU Repertory Dance Company has numerous performance outlets. Each year the company presents three home concerts featuring works by faculty, alumni, guest artists and students. Two concerts are held in Memorial Auditorium and one is held in the Kasser Theatre.

Informances - In addition to these more formal presentations, the Division presents an Informances each spring semester. In recent years, this Informance is organized and run by the Danceaturgs under the direction of Professors Maxine Steinman and Neil Baldwin.

ACDA - The American College Dance Association is a national organization dedicated to the development and enrichment of students in college and university dance programs. Each year the Dance Division attends a regional American College Dance Association to present works for adjudication and to participate in master classes, lectures, etc. In addition to providing many of our students with this extracurricular opportunity, our attendance at the ACDF is also undertaken to enhance our national reputation. By presenting choreography and performers that we feel represent the very highest ideals in both creativity and performance, we have strengthened our University’s national profile as well as our Departmental profile. While we strive to take seniors or upperclassmen when it is possible, this experience should not be viewed as a senior class trip. If a piece of choreography is selected for performance at ACDF it is considered to be a repertory assignment and, as such, it is a priority for the performers in the piece. A student may not choose other performances over this assignment. If attending the festival presents a hardship, the student must submit a request, in writing, asking to be excused from the assignment. Participation in ACDA is funded by the Department.

Performances Off Campus - Each year, there are opportunities to perform off campus as part of the Dance Division. These may include performances at professional venues such as the Joyce Theatre and the 92nd Street Y, as well as performances at K-12 schools and community colleges. Students are expected to comport themselves in a professional manner, keeping in mind that they represent Montclair State and the Dance Division. In professional venues, members of the professional dance community are often present.

Musicals - Dance Majors must obtain permission slips from the Dance Director prior to auditioning for any musicals. If there is any conflict with production dates between the dance shows and the musical, the dance major will not be granted permission to audition for the musical. If a student begins to miss class or rehearsal, or if their work (written or performance) suffers as a result of performance in the musical, the student will be required to drop the musical.
Auditions
All BFA dance majors must register for repertory each semester, and are required to audition each September for Dance Division concerts. BA Dance Education students must fulfill their repertory requirement but may opt to audition for dance concerts beyond their required repertory courses. Each semester they are performing, BA Dance students must be registered for repertory and taking at least one technique course. Student choreographers interested in choreographing for Dance Collage submit a written proposal that will be reviewed by the adjudication committee.

Student Choreography
Student choreography is an important component of the Dance Division Concerts; however, the work selected must reflect the high standards that are developed and practiced in creative course work and in Repertory. All prospective work will be adjudicated by the artistic directors and/or faculty panel at selected showings. **Each dance will be presented one at a time for the faculty panel.** Student choreographers will receive feedback from the faculty and the artistic director(s) will make the final decision as to which pieces are included in the concert as well as the order of the program. Students who wish to choreograph will be asked to fill out a proposal/audition form which indicates choreographic intent, themes, or areas of choreographic exploration and preliminary needs such as dancers, props, etc. Upon selection of a piece for a concert a production form may be utilized that indicates program information and initial thoughts about production values.

Rehearsals
All pieces which are cast for an upcoming concert will be in rehearsal throughout the semester or year. To ensure excellence in all concerts and to make the time valuable for both choreographers and performers, attendance at all rehearsals is absolutely mandatory for all cast members and understudies. The penalty for missing a rehearsal will involve being removed from the choreography, being removed from the concert, receiving a lowered grade in repertory, receiving a failing grade in repertory, and/or being placed on probation. Each case is considered individually and in terms of impact on the dance, the choreographer, and the other dancers. Do not make any appointments during the rehearsal period. If you are ill or have an emergency, you must call Lori Katterhenry BEFORE the rehearsal explaining the situation. You will not be penalized if you follow these rules. This bears repeating:

YOU MUST CONTACT LORI KATTERHENRY AT katterhenrl@montclair.edu BEFORE MISSING THE REHEARSAL. DO NOT TELL THE CHOREOGRAPHER OR ANOTHER DANCER. YOU MUST SPEAK TO LORI (LEAVE A MESSAGE ON #7080 IF THERE IS NO ANSWER) Failure to do so will result in whatever repercussion is deemed appropriate.
Rehearsal Assistants
Freshmen will serve as rehearsal assistants for the fall and spring semesters of their freshman year. They will be assigned to a faculty or guest choreographer and will attend all rehearsals for that particular piece through the fall semester. They will be cast in a freshman piece which is generally performed in both the Works-A-Foot and Dance Collage concerts. They are eligible to be cast as performers for the spring Dance Collage concert, Senior Project concerts, as well as guest choreographer and faculty work in the Works-A-Foot and DanceWorks concerts.

Duties of the Rehearsal Assistants

- Create a **Contact Sheet** of e-mails and phone numbers of cast, stage managers, rehearsal assistants, rehearsal directors, and designated designers. Distribute to all personnel involved with the dance production and bring a copy to each rehearsal.

- Check the rehearsal board for any information regarding the dance such as rehearsal/tech times, costume measurements, fittings, and/or the distribution of copies of CDs or DVDs or special notices. Keep a record or a log of this type of information and also include in rehearsal reports.

- Take Attendance at each rehearsal
  Note who is absent; call anyone who has not contacted the Repertory Director, Choreographer, and/or Rehearsal Directors.

- Set up, run equipment, and strike (sound, video)

- Facilitate set-up of props/costumes; spike/tape floor

- Take notes for the choreographers/rehearsal directors

- For every rehearsal fill out a **Rehearsal Report** which includes notes from the choreographer, memos/announcements from the rehearsal board, stage managers, and designers, etc. and **e-mail that night** to everyone on the contact sheet (concert directors, choreographers, rehearsal directors, dancers, designers, stage manager.)

- Maintain a folder of all rehearsal reports

- Optional: Include a quote for the day
● If stage manager is not present facilitate any running of errands

● Optional – learn phrases/segments from the dance

● Attend tech and dress rehearsals, take notes. You may be assigned to sit with the repertory directors and/or the choreographers or rehearsal directors.

● This is your primary repertory assignment for the Repertory course. You will be graded by the choreographers/directors in conjunction with the repertory directors.

● Rehearsal assistants should plan to continue their work in the spring semester unless otherwise directed.

Production Definitions, Tentative Dates, Etc...
As we approach our performance date you will be given dates for Technical Rehearsals, Dress Rehearsals, Strike, etc... You must attend all of these production rehearsals.

**Technical Rehearsals** are held shortly before the concert (usually in the week or two before the concert). The purpose of the technical rehearsal (usually called a “tech rehearsal”) is to set the lights, sound, scenery, and any other technical element. These are often slow and tedious for the dancers as they are required to stand quietly in place while light levels are adjusted. They are generally done in costume and without make-up generally. It is impossible to say exactly when the tech rehearsals will occur as they must be coordinated with a lighting director. It is fairly safe to assume, until further information is available, that the Tech rehearsals will either fall on **the weekend before the concert** or on a few evenings **before the concert**. These arrangements are dependent upon the availability of the technical crew and are therefore impossible to accurately predict in advance. **NO ONE IS EXCUSED FROM TECH REHEARSALS.**

**Dress Rehearsals** are usually held in the day(s) immediately prior to the actual dance concert and are meant to run exactly as the dance concert would run. This means that they are in costume, make-up, and run straight through without stopping unless there is an emergency of some sort. They are generally held in the evenings and can run from 1-3 nights depending on the concert. Works-A-Foot and Dance Collage generally run 2 nights, whereas DANCEWORKS runs 2-3 nights. **NO ONE IS EXCUSED FROM DRESS REHEARSAL**. This will require getting out of work, class, etc... in order to attend.

**Strike** is the term used to break down the theater space after a concert has concluded for the final performance. **In Memorial Auditorium the strike includes**
rolling up the floor, lights and cables taken down and put away, costumes and props removed and stored, etc... Everyone is required to strike. If anyone leaves without striking and checking out with the Technical Director, his/her grade will be lowered in Repertory.

Casting Information:

For Campus Concerts- Our goals are:
● to provide a performance opportunity for each major in at least one concert every year
● to provide a performance opportunity for students who are judged by the artistic directors to have choreographic work that is unique, well-crafted, well-rehearsed, and representative of the standards exercised in the MSU Choreography classes
● to present to the public a show that best represents the department.
Selection of pieces is based on the aesthetic whole. Considerations include content, music, costume needs, length of program, technical level of dancers, choreographers’ needs, etc... Note- Some dances presented in the studio are not deemed strong enough for the mainstage performance. Casting of dancers is based on student readiness.

For the American College Dance Association-
Our goals are:
● to select pieces which most adequately reflect the highest caliber in choreography and/or performance from MSU
● to select dancers based on seniority, readiness, and value to the piece.

All casting and repertory decisions are determined by the Artistic Directors for that particular show with input from the Dance Faculty. Program content for each concert is based on the needs and standards of the program.

Casting-Understudy
Casting for the MSU Repertory Dance Company and for the individual pieces of repertory is posted on the rehearsal board the day following the audition. Always initial beside your name each time it appears on a cast list. Do this on the day that it is posted. This signifies that you have seen your name and understand which pieces you are responsible for. Occasionally you will be cast as an understudy. This means that you are required to attend every rehearsal and work AS IF YOU WERE GOING TO PERFORM THE DANCE. Some people are cast as understudies to further strengthen their ability to pick up certain kinds of movement and qualities and to move them more quickly to the point of readiness for future performances. Some people are cast as understudies because it is believed that they are ready, or nearly ready, to take on this role. In either case, neither is guaranteed a
performance. However, many understudies have been granted a performance experience when they exhibited readiness, enthusiasm and a positive spirit.

Responsibilities to our entire Dance community
All individuals in the Dance Program and in the Dance Company are tightly interrelated and responsible to the whole. Your actions affect everyone around you. This is important enough to repeat...YOUR ACTIONS AFFECT EVERYONE AROUND YOU. We each have a responsibility to pay attention in class, at the rehearsal board, in the changing rooms, and in conference with each other. We have a responsibility to try and make our speech and our actions as constructive and helpful as possible. We have a responsibility to work as a team by being on time, meeting deadlines, being prepared, contributing a positive energy and lending a hand when one is needed.

Body Decorations
As dancers we are constantly having to portray different characters or ideas which may be in conflict with our daily personae. If you choose to have a radically unusual hairstyle or body piercing which makes a statement in and of itself, you will be asked to “neutralize” your own personal look to take on the needs of the piece. Tattoos must be completely covered and are highly discouraged because they cannot truly be covered. In rehearsals and performance long fingernails are not permitted because they are dangerous to the other performers and they inhibit the hand from being able to make a solid contact with the floor and with other dancers. They also change the character of the hand, call attention to the hand for reasons other than choreographic, and are generally a distraction. Jewelry should be minimal for safety reasons and a choreographer may ask you to remove jewelry in rehearsal. No jewelry may ever be worn in performance unless it is part of the costume. Fingernail and toenail polish MUST be removed before the Dress Rehearsal and may not EVER be worn during the concert. Failure to remove nail polish before the Dress Rehearsal may result in being removed from the dance, removing the dance from the concert, and a lowering of the repertory grade.

Professional Attitude
You will be expected to develop what we call a “professional attitude” from the very beginning of your career at MSU. This means that you will begin developing the ability to make positive, mature choices and responses even when personally you may feel unhappy about a situation. You will develop the ability to see a “bigger picture”, one that encompasses more people and circumstances than might be immediately discernible. This is a skill, like any other skill, and must be practiced to acquire it. You will be called upon to be supportive of those around you in a number of ways during your time at MSU. Sometimes you will not be cast in a piece that you really wanted to be in. While you may be personally disappointed, you can be supportive by “practicing gladness” for someone who did get in the
piece. This is difficult and takes maturity but you will get more from this effort than by being “sour grapes” at the rehearsal board. You will be called on to volunteer your time and energy at various functions. You will also be asked to help fund-raise so that we can send dancers to the American College Dance Festival each year.

If you develop this professional attitude, you will be a happier, more well-adjusted, successful person. If you don’t, you will find yourself feeling victimized, angry and unsuccessful. You are ALWAYS welcome to come in to discuss distressing situations in private. In public, however, you are expected to have a “professional attitude.”

**PARTICIPATION IN OUTSIDE EVENTS**

A student must petition the Dance Division for permission to participate in outside activities such as other dance companies or events which require outside rehearsal. The Dance Division will grant permission to the student if:
1) the Dance Division feels that this outside experience is one that will enhance the student’s experience in the Dance Division
2) it will not conflict with the student’s schedule at MSU
3) it will not overtax the student’s energy so that his/her work suffers
4) the student is maintaining a 3.0 overall GPA

The student must petition the Division in writing before the semester in which the extra activity is to occur.

**PERMISSION TO MISS AN EVENT**

Special master classes, events and meetings are scheduled throughout the semester. Many events are scheduled during the Wednesday common hour class and rehearsal. Since the University strives to limit classes during the common hours, please reserve this time in your schedule for the scheduling of special events. If the student, for ANY reason, needs to miss a dance event other than a class, the student must take the Permission to Miss An Event quiz on the Dance Majors page in Canvas as soon as possible. In the case of events that are posted at the beginning of the year (performances, tech rehearsals, dress rehearsals, informances) the form must be submitted at the beginning of the year if a conflict exists with the published schedule. In the case of meetings, master classes, or rehearsals the form needs to be handed in a minimum of one week prior to the event. Failure to turn in the form in a timely fashion will result in penalties to the repertory grade. Unexcused absences from special events will also result in a lowering of the student’s repertory grade.
If the student has a “permissible” request, although permission may be granted to miss the event, it may require that the student is cast as an understudy or not at all if the conflict is with dress or performance dates. This form must be filled out BEFORE the audition as it will affect how the student is cast. If you fail to fill out this form in September before the auditions and then miss a performance for anything other than injury or death in the immediate family you will receive a failing grade for repertory.

The form has been sent to you for your use throughout the year and can also be obtained in the Dance Office.

**PHYSICAL CONTACT**

(see common section of the Department Handbook) B.F.A. and B.A. candidates should realize that most modern choreography requires physical contact; any hesitancy to engage in physical contact can be dangerous to other dancers especially in lifts, and shared supports. Students who cannot engage in physical contact in a professional manner should not pursue the B.F.A. or B.A. in Dance degrees.

**PROBATION**

Probation is defined as “subjection of an individual to a period of testing and trial to ascertain fitness.” In keeping with this definition, all freshmen are essentially on probation during their first year. Because of this extended probationary period, the student should take great care to do the best work that he/she is capable of doing all year. If, at the end of the first jury, a student’s performance in the program has been unsatisfactory, a student may:

1) be placed on probation for a semester if the faculty feels that the student may be able to address the concerns in a timely fashion.

2) be asked to leave the program at the end of the jury if the faculty feels that the student will not be able to address the concerns in a timely fashion. The student will then need to initiate a change of major form removing him/herself from the major.

Probation may be initiated at a jury examination or at a specially called meeting with the Program Director, one other faculty member, and the student by the conclusion of the preceding semester. At that time, reasons for the probation and specific steps for the student’s improvement and removal of probation will be outlined.

During the semester of probation, each of the student’s teachers will fill out a progress evaluation at mid-semester. The results of these evaluations will be made
available to the student at a meeting with a faculty member. If a student has not made sufficient progress, he/she will be notified at this time that he/she faces potential dismissal from the program. At the end of the semester the student will complete another jury exam. At that time the student can either be removed from probation, placed on probation for an additional semester if warranted, or removed from the program.

If the majority of the faculty deem it appropriate to remove the student from the program, she/he is notified in a meeting with the Program Director and at least one other faculty member that he/she is to be removed from the major due to extreme behavior or unusual circumstances. In this case, the written documentation from all of the student’s teachers, and supporting evidence from students or other parties will be presented.

A student may be placed on probation or removed from the dance major if:

1. Student earns poor grades in major courses (Ds and Fs) or the student’s GPA in dance major classes is below a B-.
2. Student’s work in ballet and modern dance technique does not advance to the intermediate level in one technique and the advanced level in the other at least one semester prior to graduation. (For BA students, intermediate level in both ballet and modern.)
3. Student’s technical work at the college level does not reflect the (anatomical) principles presented in the program.
4. Student’s attitude, behavior, and involvement (or lack of ) in the program become a detriment to the other students in the program.
5. Student has excessive lateness to classes and/or rehearsals.
6. Student has excessive absences from classes or rehearsals.
7. Students initiates repeated disruptions in class or rehearsals.
8. Students misses tech, dress rehearsals or performances.
9. Student fails to demonstrate an understanding of course concepts and fails to progress
10. Students shows a lack of preparedness in classes and/or rehearsals.
11. Student demonstrates inability to be cast in repertory due to lack of technical, rehearsal and performance skills.
12. Student’s completion of written work for dance courses is unsatisfactory.

Students on probation may not be able to perform in the MSU dance concerts or have very limited participation, as determined by faculty. A GPA below 2.5 means no performing with no exceptions.

**PROFESSIONALISM:**

**EXPECTATIONS IN THE CLASSROOM, REHEARSAL HALL, AND IN GENERAL**
1. Please be on time and appropriately dressed and prepared for class and rehearsal. If you are not in the dress code as stated in your syllabus, you will not be allowed to stay for class and you will receive an absence for that day.
2. Be prepared to spend the entire class period inside the classroom. Attend to personal needs such as bathroom, snacks and water prior to entering the classroom. You may bring a water bottle to class with you. Anyone who leaves the classroom or rehearsal without permission will be marked absent from the class/rehearsal and may result in being replaced in the dance, a lowered grade in repertory, etc...
3. Cell phone use during class or rehearsal is not permitted. That includes texting, checking the phone, etc.... Anyone found to be using the phone will be asked to leave the class or rehearsal immediately. This will result in an absence from the class and may result in being replaced in the rehearsal, which will affect the repertory grade.
4. If you are not present when attendance is taken, you will be marked absent. See the teacher immediately at the end of class to have the ABSENCE changed to LATE in the roll book (see also Attendance Policy). If you are more than 5 minutes late you will not be admitted to the classroom or rehearsal which will result in an absence.
5. When guest teachers are present, please show your respect by being ready and on the floor when the teacher is introduced. Please applaud for the teacher and accompanist at the end of class. NEVER, EVER disrupt the rehearsal or class by talking, laughing, or doing anything that would be considered inattentive or unprofessional.
6. Read your MSU email and Canvas emails every day! You are being sent much information on an almost daily basis. IT IS ABSOLUTELY IMPERATIVE THAT YOU CHECK YOUR MSU and CANVAS EMAIL EVERY SINGLE DAY. Anything you miss as a result of not checking your email will have dire and unwanted circumstances.
7. Do not wear jewelry of ANY KIND (including small nose rings) to dress rehearsal or performance. Do not wear fingernail polish or toenail polish to dress rehearsals or performance. If you have a tattoo, it must be covered in make up during dress rehearsal and performance. Failure to follow this rule will result in a lowering of the repertory grade, removal from the piece(s) for the evening, removal from the piece(s) for the rest of the concert.
8. Be present and on time for all warm-ups for dress rehearsal and performance. Failure to do so will result in a lowering of repertory grade, removal from one or more pieces of choreography for that night, removal from one or more pieces of choreography for the duration of the concert.
9. When guest students are visiting or auditioning, please be courteous, helpful and friendly.
10. Think before you speak or act. Take a moment and reflect on the consequences of your actions. Angry actions are seldom rewarded in the way you
PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC HONESTY
It is expected that students will conduct themselves with a high level of integrity and professionalism. One’s professional reputation at MSU begins with your acceptance to attend Montclair State University. Your professionalism has a direct impact upon your academic relationship with your teachers and your fellow students. It will have a direct bearing on class attendance and participation, Repertory assignments, course and jury evaluations, and letters of recommendation. Develop excellence in your professional reputation by being honest, responsible, punctual, and keeping lines of communication with faculty and administrators open. Enhance your reputation by being respectful, motivated, committed to your work and the Dance program, by volunteering, taking leadership roles, being a role model, and being a team player. The professional presentation of yourself includes adhering to dress policies and the manner in which you present projects and written work. (See also the Common Section of the Department Handbook and University Code of Conduct.) Plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated and may result in your dismissal from MSU.

http://www.montclair.edu/facultyhandbook/academic_dishonesty.html

RETENTION POLICIES
Retention in the Dance Program is dependent upon the student completing all requirements of the program. These include:

1. Passing all dance major courses each semester with an overall average of B- or higher. (Failure to make an overall average of B- or better in all dance courses will result in being removed from the MSU Repertory Company and all performances for the following semester.)

2. Active participation in the Repertory Dance Company each semester while a BFA major in the Dance Program. (BA majors must participate in performances for 2-3 years, and may continue to do so all 4 years as long as they are registered for repertory and at least one technique course.)

3. Satisfactorily completing each Jury.

4. Satisfactorily meeting all attendance and assignment requirements in the performance courses (all technique, improvisation, choreography, repertory). THERE ARE NO EXCUSED ABSENCES IN TECHNIQUE CLASSES. Students with attendance problems are subject to a lowered grade, a failing grade in the affected course, and probation. Excessive absences or unsatisfactory completion of written
assignments in dance courses will result in review of the student and possible removal from the Dance Program.

5. Demonstration of a positive, professional attitude in class, rehearsal and performance at all times.

6. Demonstration of potential for professional success. Failure to meet any one of the above requirements may result in the student’s being on probation for a semester or may be cause for the student’s automatic dismissal from the Dance Program.

**SCHOLARSHIPS**

During each school year it is possible to apply for certain scholarships. Criteria and deadlines are posted on the rehearsal board well in advance of the deadline. It is the student’s responsibility to pursue these scholarships in a timely fashion. This will require putting together a resume, gathering letters of recommendation, editing a video to show samples of your work as both a performer and choreographer, and putting together a portfolio with programs from past MSU and MSU-related performances, your resume, letters of recommendation and your letter of application. Your “packaging” should be neat, comprehensive and attractive. Ask for letters of recommendation early (several weeks in advance) to give your faculty enough time to write a thoughtful letter. Always follow this up with a thank you letter to the recommender. Maxine Steinman is the Scholarship Coordinator. Please ask for help EARLY. Some of the Scholarships in the School of the Arts for which you may apply are:

- Dean’s Scholar Artist Award
- Henningburg Award
- College of the Arts Talent Award
- Cento Amici Award

Other campus scholarship opportunities on campus can be found in the back of the academic catalog or on the University website.

The Dance Division grants several end of the year awards which are determined by the faculty. They include:

- The Linda Roberts Outstanding Senior Award
- The Choreography Excellence Award
- The Service Award
- The Dance Education Award
- The Danceaturgy Award
- The Outstanding Performer Award
- The Dance Spirit Award
**SENIOR AUDITS**
When you receive your senior audit for graduation, if there are courses listed as outstanding besides the ones that are in process, you must take care of the problems (i.e. credit adjustments, transfer evaluations, etc...) and **REAPPLY** for another audit.

**USE OF SOUND EQUIPMENT**
Professional quality sound systems are located in all dance studios. Please purchase your own 1/8” connector for phone use with sound system in each studio.

**VIDEO PORTFOLIO**
All of the choreography classes require video documentation and it may vary from class to class as to how this is accomplished. Your teacher will go over this on the first day of the choreography class.

Concerts are videotaped but how they are being made available is under review. Due to contractual limitations, some choreographers do not allow their work to be copied, thus students may not have permission to copy MSU performances of a particular choreographer’s work. You may be able to obtain a small portion of the work for your portfolio.

**Dance Directory**
Department of Theatre and Dance Office- Lower level of Life Hall
Randy Mugleston, Chair LI050 655-7343; main office 655-7000
Sue Mandzik, Secretary LI050 655-7738
Eric Diamond, Deputy Chair LI055B 655-3120
Michael Allen, Deputy Chair LI129A 655-4496
Lori Katterhenry LI224 655-7080
Kathleen Kelley LI224 655-4115
Maxine Steinman LI224 655-7893
Beth McPherson LI225A (2217A) 655-7831
Christian Von Howard LI225B (2217B) 655-3260
Nancy Lushington LI224 655-3524
Lynne Grossman LI224 655-4011
Neil Baldwin LI229C 655-7340
Kim Whittam LI055A 655-7201
Female Dance Adjuncts in front of Memorial Auditorium- 655-7000
Male Dance Adjuncts in front of Memorial Auditorium- 655-7000
Student Signature Page

Date

Name

I, .........................................................., have read this entire Handbook and understand that I am now responsible for everything in it. If I have any confusion or concern about any of the contents, I will contact Lori Katterhenry, Dance Program Director, immediately for clarification.

Signature..........................................................