

Montclair State University
Department of Theatre and Dance MFA in Dance student Handbook

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Message from the Director of the Graduate Program in Dance

We would like to extend a warm welcome to our MFA in Dance students. We have assembled a world-class faculty with whom you will study, both face to face and online, over the next two years. It is our intention to make this course of study as informative, engaging, refreshing, and stimulating as possible. This Handbook has been assembled to orient and guide you as you begin this exciting journey. Please feel free to contact me if you have questions about this or any part of your MFA course of study. We are thrilled to be on this journey with you!

Lori Katterhenry, Dance Program Director

Objectives

The objectives of this program are:

1. Provide an opportunity for artists to examine and enhance their artistic skills with an eye toward developing an articulated creative research practice
2. Prepare leaders in the field who will contribute to shaping the future of dance by engaging in the ongoing theoretical discussions surrounding the field
3. Encourage students to become conversant in new digital media technologies and their impact on dance as an art form and discipline in higher education
4. Nurture pedagogic ingenuity by encouraging mid-career artists to deeply examine and develop their teaching practice
5. Foster students' development of their own areas of interest and specialization to create a unique voice in the dance field

Admissions

Interested students should first submit an application to the Montclair State University Graduate School. See guidelines for graduate school application here: <http://www.montclair.edu/graduate/prospective-students/applications/>. Admission to the MFA in Dance program is by interview and portfolio review to be conducted by the Program Director and other members of the Dance Program faculty. Prospective students will either attend an on-site interview or they may elect to be interviewed by video conferencing.

Applicants are required to submit the following materials for review:

- Transcripts – one from each college attended. Please note that an Undergraduate degree is a prerequisite for acceptance.
- Two letters of recommendation that speak to your contribution to the field
- A portfolio including a resume and evidence of creative work (personal performance and/or choreography). Please submit these as video links.

- A statement of artistic purpose of 1 – 2 pages which should describe your creative interests and goals as well as how you believe that an MFA in Dance will facilitate your artistic progress.

Financial Assistance

The Office of Student Financial aid can provide assistance in financing your college education. Financial aid is comprised of various forms of scholarships, grants, loans and work-study. Financial aid comes from federal, state and institutional sources. By applying for financial aid, you may reduce the costs of your college education making it an affordable reality.

Detailed information regarding financial assistance can be found on the MSU website at <http://www.montclair.edu/financial-aid/>

Curriculum and Course of Study

DANCE

Complete 60 semester hours including the following 6 requirement(s):

ARTISTIC PRACTICES

Complete two times for a total of 6 semester hours

DNCE500Special Topics: Contemporary Dance Practices (3 hours studio)3.0

Complete 3 course(s):

DNCE501Improvisation (3 hours studio)3.0

DNCE502Creative Practices I (3 hours lab)3.0

DNCE503Creative Practices II (3 hours seminar)3.0

THEORY AND RESEARCH

Complete 4 course(s):

DNCE510Performance Perspectives (3 hours seminar)3.0

DNCE511Research, Writing, and Publication (3 hours seminar)3.0

DNCE512Dance and the Arts in the 20th Century (3 hours lecture)3.0

DNCE513Danceaturgy: The Performer as Spectator (3 hours seminar)3.0

TECHNOLOGY

Complete 2 course(s):

DNCE520Dance Technology (3 hours seminar)3.0

DNCE521Application of Digital Media (3 hours seminar)3.0

PEDAGOGY

Complete 4 course(s):

DNCE530Survey of Pedagogical Perspectives (3 hours seminar)3.0

DNCE531Laban Movement Analysis and its Applications (3 hours studio, 1 hour seminar)3.0

DNCE532Business of Academia (3 hours lecture)3.0

DNCE533 Functional Anatomy (3 hours lecture) 3.0

THESIS

Complete:

DNCE540 Thesis Project 6.0

Submit the completed Thesis original and one copy to the Graduate Office. See Thesis Guidelines for details.

GENERAL ELECTIVES

Complete three times for 9 semester hours.

DNCE509 Special Projects

Course Descriptions

DANCE

Complete 60 semester hours including the following 6 requirement(s):

ARTISTIC PRACTICES

Complete two times for a total of 6 semester hours

DNCE500 Special Topics: Contemporary Dance Practices (3 hours studio) 3.0

This technique course presents students with approaches in the modern and postmodern dance vernacular, developing in-depth understanding of contemporary dance techniques and practices. Offered each summer by alternating instructors, this class is led by innovative dance artists in the field of contemporary movement. May be repeated for a maximum of 6 credits.

Complete 3 course(s):

DNCE501 Improvisation (3 hours studio) 3.0

In this class, students will engage with various approaches to improvisatory movement to further artistic practice, develop kinesthetic sensitivity and spontaneity, and both deepen and broaden personal movement capabilities with an eye towards teaching improvisation skills.

DNCE502 Creative Practices I (3 hours lab) 3.0

In this workshop, led by a renowned choreographer, students will create and present works-in-progress, dialogue about current creative practice challenges and strategies, and reflect upon the relevance of art to the world of ideas through assigned readings and viewings. Critical reflection and provocative conversations will enable students to better understand themselves as active players in the cultural landscape, capable of challenging social norms and dominant attitudes.

DNCE503 Creative Practices II (3 hours seminar) 3.0

Building on the foundations of Creative Practices I, Creative Practices II is designed to facilitate the student's ability to develop a substantial choreographic work, culminating in a public performance (site-specific, studio showing, theater, shared program). Prerequisites: DNCE 502.

THEORY AND RESEARCH

Complete 4 course(s):

DNCE510 Performance Perspectives (3 hours seminar) 3.0

In this online course, students will observe dance performances in person and through digital and online platforms to discern new trends, philosophies, and directions in the dance field. Reflection on the student's personal performance perspective with respect to what they are seeing in the field will be encouraged and fostered in online discussion groups facilitated by a faculty member. Students will also read and evaluate dance criticism related to the performances they are viewing.

DNCE511 Research, Writing, and Publication (3 hours seminar) 3.0

This online course will engage students in the process of research and the creation of a written body of work. Through various writing assignments (for example reviews, narratives, grants, and research-based essays) as well as revisions of that work, students will gain experience and confidence in presenting their knowledge in written form.

DNCE512 Dance and the Arts in the 20th Century (3 hours lecture) 3.0

Embracing dramatic similarities, surprising disjunctions, and formal innovations in poetry, music, painting and sculpture, this course will be an immersive experience through the trajectory of dance within the context of the literary, visual and performing arts, spanning from pre-World War I early Modernism to the turn of the new millennium.

DNCE513 Danceaturgy: The Performer as Spectator (3 hours seminar) 3.0

In this workshop/seminar course, students will bear witness to self and others as well as self with others, finding the words to objectify the processes informing her/his singular performance, as well as describing those sharing the stage. Guided out-of-body prompts in intentional over-thinking will result in short- and long-form writing, in class and outside. These pieces, critiqued around the table, will ensure that students emerge from the course with refreshed spirits of kinesthetic insight and empathy.

TECHNOLOGY

Complete 2 course(s):

DNCE520 Dance Technology (3 hours seminar) 3.0

Through this course, students will gain a broad understanding of the use of visual and audio technology in live performance, dance film, and digital media. This course will develop students' practical skills in technology through hands-on creative experiments, as well as provide an overview of historical and current uses of technology in the field.

DNCE521 Application of Digital Media (3 hours seminar) 3.0

In this online course, students will expand on skills developed in DNCE 520 to apply their technological knowledge to the production of a creative work that utilizes digital media to further artistic aims. Prerequisites: DNCE 520.

PEDAGOGY

Complete 4 course(s):

DNCE530 Survey of Pedagogical Perspectives (3 hours seminar) 3.0

This online course will provide students with experiential activities leading to greater knowledge of the art of teaching dance. Students will observe master teachers, and then through online discussion groups and written analysis, compare teaching strategies and the content of classes with a goal towards developing and strengthening their own teaching.

DNCE531 Laban Movement Analysis and its Applications (3 hours studio, 1 hour seminar) 3.0

In this course, students will learn the rudiments of Laban Movement Analysis (LMA) and strategies to apply it to the teaching of dance technique, improvisation, and choreography. Widely used and respected as an aid to teaching dance technique, improvisation and choreography, LMA is a method and language for describing, visualizing, interpreting and documenting all varieties of human movement. Created by Rudolph Von Laban, it enables the observer/ teacher/practitioner to analyze every movement with regard to Body, Effort, Space, and Shape.

DNCE532 Business of Academia (3 hours lecture) 3.0

This course offers a preparatory tool kit for working in education that covers the spectrum from getting the job to succeeding and advancing, including: job search and application; interview skills; syllabi and course preparation; curriculum and program development; advising; expectations beyond the classroom; remaining current while teaching; collegiality; and the host of details that attend the teaching professional of today.

DNCE533 Functional Anatomy (3 hours lecture) 3.0

This online course will provide students with core knowledge of bones, joints, and muscles; body orientation terminology; biomechanics; and an anatomical basis for lifelong learning within the discipline. This course will include information on teaching from an anatomically safe viewpoint, emphasizing injury risk evaluation, exercise/combination selection, and skill progression that supports execution of the desired aesthetic while minimizing injury risk.

THESIS

Complete:

DNCE540 Thesis Project 6.0

In this capstone course, students will create a significant work that can manifest in the format most in keeping with the background, goals, and future objectives of the student. Examples of acceptable formats are: choreographic work, dance on film, or other project with supporting written documentation. The thesis will be completed during the final spring semester, remotely. The thesis project must be a performative project with documentation. The project will need to be documented and made available for viewing by the thesis committee.

GENERAL ELECTIVES

Complete three times for 9 semester hours.

DNCE 509 Special Projects 3.0

Students will have the opportunity to add or deepen specific areas of expertise by the selection of courses of study unique to their own interests. Examples include: Butoh, Laban Movement Analysis, Somatic Practice, Body-Mind Centering, Community Building, Dance for Special Populations, Technology in Dance, and Dance Science. May be repeated for a maximum of 9 credits.

Academic Rules and Procedures

- Students are expected to complete the program in the order in which it is designed and as part of a cohort.
- Every effort should be made to complete assignments on time. This is an intensive program, and falling behind can make it difficult to continue progress towards graduation.
- Plagiarism is defined as the act of using another person's words or ideas without giving credit to that person. Any use of another's work must be documented, whether using direct quotes or paraphrasing.
- See also <http://www.montclair.edu/dean-of-students/handbook/graduate/policies-procedures/>

Campus Map

A detailed campus can be found on the Montclair State University website or by using this link: <http://www.montclair.edu/campus-map/>

Travel and Transportation

To promote the use of public transportation and reduce the number of single-occupant vehicles driven to campus, MSU and NJ Transit have partnered to offer full-time undergraduate and graduate students a 25% discount on a rail, bus, or light rail monthly pass when they enroll online through NJ TRANSIT's Quik-Tik program.

Buses – MSU's shuttle fleet runs on low sulfur diesel fuel. In addition to MSU's shuttle fleet, fine bus lines currently operate on campus – four from NJ Transit and one private carrier.

Trains – There are two train stations adjacent to MSU's campus – Montclair State University station at the north end and Montclair Heights station at the south end.

On campus parking – Everyone who parks on campus needs to register their vehicle and obtain a parking permit. The only exceptions are for those who will park only in metered spaces in Lot 19, pay the hourly rate in the Red Hawk Garage, or pay the daily rate in the NJ Transit Garage. You can register your vehicle and get your permit online.

Detailed information regarding on-campus parking may be found on the Montclair State University website or by using this link: <http://www.montclair.edu/facilities/logistic-support/parking-services/>

Health and Safety Information

An emergency campus phone is located on the wall in the hallway between studios LI-1200 and LI-1210. In case of emergency, dial 5222 (MSU Campus Police).

First aid kits are mounted to the wall in each studio. Purell dispensers are located outside LI-1200 and LI-1210. Instant ice packs are available for emergency use and are located in the Department of Theatre and Dance Production Office LI-052.

In case of acute injury ice packs are applied immediately and the Campus Police (X5222) are called. The campus police then contact the health center, who arrive with an ambulance. After assessing the situation, the student may be taken to a local emergency room for appropriate treatment.

Housing

On-campus housing is available upon request. Please contact the Office of Residence Life directly at 973-655-5188 or via email at reslife@mail.montclair.edu. Residence Life staff is available to answer questions weekdays from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm.

Computer/Email/Lab/etc.

Incoming students are required to have sufficient computer skills to use web browsers and word processing programs, along with the ability to watch and upload videos online. Many online courses will be taught using *Canvas*, which is the University's Learning Management System. The Office of Information Technology offers both face-to-face and online training classes for assistance with using *Canvas*.

The "A Student's Guide to Information Technology" guide is available online to all new and existing students. This guide provides students with pertinent information regarding email accounts, lab hours, printing and Blackboard.

For questions regarding this guide, please contact the University Help Desk at <http://www.montclair.edu/oit/contact-us/>.

Contact List

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