



University at Buffalo

Department of Theatre and Dance

College of Arts and Sciences

Master of Fine Arts

Dance

2018-2019

Student Handbook

INTRODUCTION TO MFA DANCE PROGRAM & HANDBOOK

Graduate study in UB's Department of Theatre & Dance is comprised of a Theatre & Performance program (MA and PhD) and a Dance program (MFA). The Graduate Studies committee, comprised of the core graduate faculty, oversees the curriculum and administration of the program, headed by a Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) and an Associate Director of Graduate Studies (ADGS) who manage their respective programs.

The policies and procedures outlined in this handbook are a program specific supplement to the university's Graduate School policies and procedures (found on The Graduate School website at grad.buffalo.edu), and serve as a resource for both graduate students and their advisors. The policies and requirements listed here are in effect for the entirety of the academic year. The handbook edition that contain the students' university and degree requirements is determined by their academic year of entry. These policies contain information on official policies and procedures relating to registration, advising, academic standing, degree requirements, and operational standards. All students should consult both handbooks for departmental and university policies.

The MFA Dance program conform to all [Graduate School Policies](#) regarding registration, grading, and degree requirements (e.g., those dictating leaves of absence, course resignation, and course attendance, among others). These are available in their complete listing online, although some material may be repeated here for emphasis. Please be sure that you are familiar with these policies. Students should consult the Office of the Registrar for [class schedules](#) and [academic calendars](#) (including dates for registration, drop/add periods, and class resignations) for related information.

Every effort has been made to ensure consistency with the policies of UB and the Graduate School. In the event of contradiction with established policies, this handbook may be revised accordingly. Students will be informed via the graduate student listserv of any changes or updates to the handbook.

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SECTION I.

MFA DANCE

Description

The MFA Dance Program at the University at Buffalo is a three-year, 60 credit hour program with an emphasis on practice-based, creative research. Students focus on embodied inquiry through choreographic creation and performance while engaging with a comprehensive core curriculum of practice and theory courses that emphasize the development of the whole artist—body and mind. With close faculty mentorship and numerous opportunities to create and present work, students cultivate the knowledge and skills necessary to become the next generation of innovative dance makers, leaders, teaching-artists and artist-scholars.

The program welcomes students from various backgrounds ranging from recent BA/BFA graduates to returning professionals wishing to deeply engage with the dance-making process. Each student is encouraged to integrate her unique interests into innovative ways of seeing, thinking about, communicating and being in the world through dance. Students take advantage of the dynamic range of robust curricular offerings at UB by devising an individualized secondary emphasis, such as new media, embodiment, queer studies, visual studies, cognitive science, affect studies, somatics, ethnography, history, geography, architecture, robotics among many other areas of inquiry. By following a personalized sequence of study, together with their core courses, students create a research path that fits their interests, culminating in an MFA creative thesis project.

UB Dance is a hub for interdisciplinary work on campus. Students gain literacy in dance and related technologies through curriculum and collaborative opportunities that engage musicians, designers, new media artists, and researchers in the digital humanities and STEM fields. Yearly production opportunities, including Dance and Digital Poetry, Open CFA, Zodiaque Dance, and Emerging Choreographers Showcase, provide venues for collaborative exploration and performance. The University at Buffalo is also home to the TECHNE Institute for Arts and Emerging Technologies, the Humanities Institute and the PLASMA speaker series which offer numerous opportunities for students to interact with and learn from world renowned artists and scholars across artistic disciplines.

Objectives

The goal of the MFA in Dance at UB is to provide a comprehensive graduate dance education, focusing on dance making as embodied inquiry. Because the MFA in Dance is the terminal creative degree in higher education, students graduating with their MFA from UB are required to reach a high level of proficiency in the creative research

area of dance making. As part of their training as dance artists, students are given meaningful opportunities to develop and hone their practical and theoretical skills and knowledge in performance, pedagogy, history, aesthetics and criticism, research, production, technology and theories of the body, with the understanding that these skills enhance and support the working artist and provide further career opportunities as teaching-artists and artist-scholars.

Unique to this program is the emphasis on integrative learning and collaborative art making. Thus, students are also required to demonstrate synthesis and integration of a 10 credit secondary area of study and of their collaborative art making experiences through the development and performance of thesis production work and comprehensive oral and written exams.

Program Overview

The MFA in Dance requires:

- A minimum of 60 credits
- A minimum GPA of 3.0
- Successful completion of comprehensive exams
- Successful completion of Master's Thesis Concert with written component

The MFA in Dance is a 3-year, 60 credit hour program intended for returning professionals and recent baccalaureate graduates seeking concentrated study in dance making practice and theory. Students will be accepted to the program through a rigorous selection process that includes an audition, an interview, and review of work samples, writing samples, undergraduate transcripts, and letters of recommendation.

MFA Dance Minimum Requirements
Physical Practice – 10 credits
Creative Process – 9 credits
Creative Thesis Project – 9 credits
History, Research, Theory – 12 credits
Applied Anatomy and Theories of the Body – 3 credits
Pedagogy – 5 credits
Technology – 2 credits
Electives – 10 credits (at least 5 outside Dance)

All MFA candidates will create a 20-minute dance work for a culminating thesis concert or a substantial performance project based on their unique research. Students will also produce a written body of work in the form of 3 comprehensive exam questions. One question is to be completed by spring semester each year of the three years they are enrolled in the program. Exam questions will contextualize the students' work historically, politically, and socially and will serve as additional documentation of the students' creative process and final thesis concert. Exam questions will be reviewed by graduate faculty and rewritten if not satisfactory. A passing grade is required on each exam question for students to progress within the program. Students must also orally defend their thesis project in order to earn the MFA in Dance degree. Content from students' secondary area of study will be integrated into their thesis project and exam questions.

Students must maintain a minimum overall 3.0 GPA and earn a "B" or higher in all dance courses. Students who do not meet these requirements may be put on academic probation and risk dismissal from the program.

Student Learning Outcomes

The common body of knowledge and skills necessary for successful completion of a Master of Fine Arts in Dance at the University at Buffalo is in alignment with the accreditation criteria of the National Association of Standards in Dance (NASD).¹

It is the goal of the MFA in Dance at UB that upon completion of the program, an individual shall exhibit the ability to combine and synthesize the competencies below through demonstrated excellence of artistic skills and a deeply informed personal aesthetic. UB's MFA Dance graduates shall possess the ability to articulate and defend, in both oral and written forms, the principles of this personal aesthetic in artistic, scholarly and pedagogical work; and to use this point of view as a driving principle in artistic creation, collaborative art making, and teaching.¹

Upon successful completion of the MFA Dance Program, students will possess:

1. The creative process skills necessary to create a significant body of work, articulate a well-developed personal aesthetic and explain how this aesthetic informs scholarly and pedagogical work.²
2. A breadth of understanding in dance and related disciplines and the ability to think independently, to

¹ http://nasd.arts-accredit.org/site/docs/NASD_HANDBOOK_AND_ADDENDA/NASD_HANDBOOK_2014-15.pdf

² Student Learning Outcome #1 has been adapted from the NASD standard to specifically focus on dance-making.

integrate, and to synthesize information within the dance discipline and across disciplines.

3. Knowledge and understanding of the forces that have shaped dance throughout history and as an evolving contemporary art form, including representative works, individuals, styles, cultural contexts, events, movement theories, and dance science and somatics.
4. Awareness of current issues and developments that impact the field and the potential to contribute to the expansion and evolution of the art, to advocate for the arts, and to explore and address new questions and issues on local, regional, national, and global levels.
5. Writing and speaking skills to communicate clearly and effectively to the dance community, the public, and in teaching situations.
6. The ability to work collaboratively and productively within a diverse global community of artists and to acknowledge and respect diverse aesthetic viewpoints.
7. Familiarity with current technologies utilized in the creation, documentation, preservation, and dissemination of work.
8. A knowledge of bibliographic resources in dance, including Web-based resources, and the skills to access these resources.³

³ Student Learning Outcomes #2-8 are directly excerpted from the NASD Handbook, pg 111-112.

SECTION II.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Prerequisites

For admission to the program, students must have an undergraduate degree in dance or a degree in another discipline with advanced ability in dance and dance-making as evidenced by successful completion of the audition process. Students must have evidence of undergraduate coursework in Dance History and Laban Movement Analysis. Those without must make up these deficiencies during their first year of study with a grade of B+ or better. It is expected that students will enroll in DAC 350 Laban Movement Analysis in the Fall of their first year and DAC 430 Dance History (18th to early 20th century) in the Spring of their first year. Students who have not taken the equivalent of Anatomy/Kinesiology for Dancers must take the graduate section of the course, DAC 532 Anatomy/Kinesiology for Dancers, which will serve to fulfill their *Applied Anatomy and Theories of the Body* requirement.

Secondary Area of Study

Unique to the program is the requirement for students to have a secondary area of emphasis. This outside concentrated study is intended to broaden student's knowledge beyond dance and to inform their creative, scholarly and pedagogical studies.

Students will articulate a secondary area of study in consultation with and approval from their advisor and the Graduate Director of Dance. Students will be required to communicate, in both written and Oral Defenses, ways in which their secondary concentration informed the research and development of their MFA thesis project.

Requirements (60 credits total)

The MFA Dance curriculum includes coursework in physical practice, artistic creation, pedagogy, history, technology, research and theory. To inform and augment this training, students will articulate a secondary area of study a topic of their choosing. To successful progress through the program, students must maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 and earn a "B" or better on all required credit hours, including non-dance electives. Students will demonstrate synthesis and integration of coursework by completing a choreographic thesis project and by passing comprehensive written and Oral Defenses.

Courses - *Course descriptions can be found in the online catalog.*

1. Physical Practice, 10 credits

- Students are required to take at least 5 credits in one technique area. Remaining 5 credits will be selected in consultation with student's advisor.
- Students, in consultation with their advisor or the graduate director of dance, will select a one or two credit option for each technique class based on individual needs. One-credit courses will consist primarily of in-class work. Two credit courses will also include outside reading, writing and practical assignments.
- The student's advisor and/or the Graduate Director of Dance, in consultation with the Graduate Dance Committee, will determine technique placement.

DAC 500 Improvisation, 1-2 credits

DAC 507 Graduate Tap, 1-2 credits

DAC 510 Graduate Modern I, 1-2 credits

DAC 511 Graduate Modern II, 1-2 credits

DAC 520 Graduate Ballet I, 1-2 credits

DAC 521 Graduate Ballet II, 1-2 credits

DAC 517 Graduate Jazz I, 1-2 credits

DAC 518 Graduate Jazz II, 1-2 credits

DAC 544 Dance Studio: Physical Practice, 1 cr

2. Creative Practice and Thesis Project, 18 credits

DAC 540 Dance Making I: Resources, 3 cr

DAC 541 Dance Making II: Workshop, 3 cr

DAC 542 Dance Making III: Collaboration, 3 cr

DAC 602, MFA Thesis Project, 9 cr

3. History, Research and Theory, 12 credits

DAC 513 Graduate Seminar, 3 cr

DAC 506 Dance Theory, Aesthetics and Criticism, 3 cr

DAC 530 Political and Cultural Approaches to Dance, 3 cr

DAC 582 Creative Process and Embodied Research, 3 cr

4. Applied Anatomy and Theories of the Body, 3 cr

Students choose one of the following:

DAC 515 Body-Mind Integration, 3 cr

DAC 532 Anatomy/Kinesiology for Dancers, 3 cr

DAC 550 Graduate Laban/Bartenieff Movement Analysis, 3 cr

5. Teaching, 5 credits

All MFA students:

DAC 605 Dance Teaching Seminar, 1 cr

Non-supported MFAs⁴

DAC 606 Supervised Teaching, minimum of 4 credits (taken twice, 2 credits each)

Supported MFAs (Assistantships)⁵

DAC 554 Dance Pedagogy in Higher Education, 2 cr

Plus an additional 2 credits of dance electives

6. Design and Technology, 2 credits

Students choose one of the following:

DAC 535 Studies in Lighting Design

TH 541/542 Studies in Design 1 & 2

TH 551/552 Advanced Studies in Scenic Design 1 & 2

TH 556/561 Theatre Technology SEM and LAB

TH 571/572 Advanced Studies in Costume Design

⁴ Non-supported MFA's will gain practical teaching experience and develop pedagogical skills through supervised teaching (606), and the required course (605).

⁵ MFAs with Graduate Assistantships will gain practical teaching experience and develop pedagogical skills through their TA assignments and the two required courses (605 & 554).

7. Electives, 10 credits

In consultation with their advisor, students will choose electives in their secondary area of study, including dance and/or non-dance courses as appropriate to the students' interests. At least 5 credits must be coursework outside of Dance. Possibilities include departmental curricular areas such as Anthropology, Media Study, English, Biology, Engineering, Architecture, Visual Studies, etc., as well as transdisciplinary areas of inquiry articulated across departments, such as embodiment, affect studies, performativity, cognitive studies, somatics, memory studies, queer studies, dance science, health and wellness, postcoloniality, etc.

Dance Electives

- DAC 500 Improvisation, 2 cr
- DAC 507 Graduate Tap 2 cr
- DAC 510 & 511 Graduate Modern I & II, 2 cr each
- DAC 514 Graduate Seminar II, 3 cr
- DAC 515 Mind-Body Integration, 3 cr
- DAC 517 & 518 Graduate Jazz Dance I & II, 2 cr each
- DAC 520 & 521 Graduate Ballet I & II, 2 cr each
- DAC 532 Kinesiology/Anatomy for Dancers, 3 cr
- DAC 543 Graduate Studio: Performance, 1-3 cr repeatable
- DAC 544 Graduate Studio: Physical Practice, 1-3 cr repeatable
- DAC 545 Directed Projects, 1-3 cr repeatable
- DAC 550 Graduate Laban/Bartenieff Movement Analysis, 3 cr
- DAC 554 Dance Pedagogy in Higher Education, 2 cr
- DAC 575 Internship in Dance, 1-3 cr
- DAC 580 Special Topics, 1-3 cr
- DAC 599 Independent Study, 1-3 cr repeatable
- DAC 606 Supervised Teaching, variable

Theatre Electives

- TH 515 Advanced Dramaturgy, 3 cr
- TH 540 Graduate Studio, 3 cr
- TH 610 Performance Research, 3 cr

TH 630 Performance Proseminar, 3 cr

TH 670 Performance Historiography, 3 cr

Outside Electives (Secondary Emphasis)

At least 5 credits as determined in consultation with advisor.

Graduate Transfer Credit

Transfer courses counted toward a previous degree from another regionally accredited graduate school is limited to twelve (12) credits for a Master's degree. Any graduate work transferred from another institution must have commenced not more than ten years prior to the completion of the degree for the credits to be applicable to the graduate degree. Transfer credits do not shorten the duration of the 3-year residency requirement for the MFA. The applicability of course work toward a plan of study is determined by the appropriate area head in conjunction with the director of graduate studies. Students may be required to repeat part or all of a course taken at another institution. The Graduate Director of Dance must approve all transfer credit.

SECTION III.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENT GUIDELINES

Written Exams (see Appendix C for guidelines)

Students will complete a substantial body of written work to complement their MFA thesis project. This will be in the form of three comprehensive exam questions. The third exam question serves as a student's thesis project write-up. Students will complete the questions sequentially: One question to be completed each spring sequencing the three years they are enrolled in the program. Due dates will be set by the Graduate Dance Committee.

Exam questions will contextualize the student's work historically, politically, and socially and will serve as additional record of the students' creative process and final thesis concert. The first exam question will be the same for all first year MFA students. The second and third exam questions will be individually focused on the student's area of interest and thesis project. The student will be expected to integrate content from his/her secondary area of study into exam answers.

Exam questions will be graded by the student's advisor and one other member of the graduate faculty. If there is not agreement as to whether the student has passed or failed, a third faculty member will grade the exam. A passing grade is required on each question for a student to progress through the program. If a passing grade is not achieved, a student will be allowed two attempts to rewrite the first question and one attempt to rewrite the second question. Areas of weakness will be addressed by the committee. If the student fails to pass subsequent attempts they will be put on probation or dismissed from the program. Only one rewrite is permitted for the final written exam.

Students will be required to defend their creative thesis project through an Oral Defense process. The oral defense will take place within two weeks after the thesis concert presentation.

The purpose of the comprehensive exams in both oral and written forms is to monitor students' over-arching progress through the three-year program. Comprehensive exam questions provide a point of assessment for the emerging artists/scholars/teachers to articulate, analyze, and synthesize the intersections of their coursework and creative process.

Application to Candidacy (ATC)

ATC form is due to the Graduate Administrator by May 1st of the second year.

MFA students will complete an ATC form by the spring of their second year. Students must have finalized their Thesis Committee and submitted a final project proposal to their thesis advisor prior to submitting the ATC. The ATC

requires that students specify all courses and the approved concept for their MFA thesis project (i.e., thesis abstract). Adjustments or changes to the ATC require approval by the graduate school through a petition process.

The ATC must include the following attachments:

- Copy of unofficial UB transcript;
- Course syllabi for every course whose title does not clearly indicate the course's relationship to MFA Dance requirements, or which is from another department;
- Copies of any approved graduate petitions for undergraduate courses taken for graduate credit;
- Copies of syllabi and forms for any independent and directed studies courses without an official course description.

Thesis Project Guidelines and Process

All MFA candidates must create an original 20-minute dance work or performance event that is based on a unique research project. Students work closely with their thesis advisor and committee members to create work that showcases synthesis of skills, mastery of craft and a deeply informed personal aesthetic. Students will develop a draft thesis proposal during their third and fourth semesters prior to submitting the Advancement to Candidacy form (ATC). Final thesis proposals are due to the thesis advisor no later than the end of the student's fourth semester. Culminating thesis concerts will be held in the third year of study and will reflect significant preparation and research.

In the third year, after students have completed 48 hours of required courses, students must register for a total of 9 credits of MFA Thesis Project (DAC 602). These credits may be spread out over the final 2 semesters while students complete the remainder of their requirements.

The thesis project is accompanied by written documentation (approximately 20-30 pages) that provides the critical and methodological context for the work. Because every project is different, the specific requirements for the project will be determined in consultation with the major advisor/chair and other members of the graduate faculty. Students are responsible for all logistics related to production, including venue, production rights, and other potential practicalities for production.

Thesis Project Presentation

It is expected that all members of a Thesis Project Committee will attend at least one public performance or presentation of the thesis showing. In the event that a member of the Thesis Committee is unable to attend the Thesis Project, the faculty member and student may agree *in advance* on a suitable form of documentation (e.g., video recording of performance). In the event that a faculty member cannot attend a Thesis Project presentation and no form of documentation is deemed adequate by either the student or faculty member, then that committee member will be replaced by another member of the graduate faculty most suitable to the project. This will necessitate a re-filling of the **M-Form** and may delay degree conferral depending on the timing. To avoid such difficulties, students should confirm the dates of any performances or public presentations with all members of the thesis committee at the earliest possible date and no later than **6 weeks in advance** of the presentation. When the dates of presentation are confirmed, invitations to attend should be sent to all members of the thesis committee, the Director of Graduate Studies, and any other relevant members of the faculty.

Documentation

MFA Thesis Projects require both written and video documentation. The student must provide an electronic copy (DVD or other approved format) of the final thesis project to the Graduate Administrator and Director of Graduate Dance no later than two weeks after passing the Oral Defense or one week prior to commencement, whichever is first. The video must include all appropriate credits.

An MFA Thesis Project write-up (otherwise referred to as the third exam question—see Appendix C for guidelines) should follow conventions and formats consistent with the discipline and agreed to by the student and the major advisor/chair. Generally, MLA or Chicago Manual of Style endnote citations are preferred.

While preparing the thesis write-up, a student should:

- Refer to the Graduate School's General Graduate Degree Requirements to ensure eligibility for degree conferral.
- Recall that the expectations and consequences outlined in this document under **Academic Integrity**. Any violation of these policies may result in immediate dismissal from the program.
- Consult periodically with her/his committee as per the expectations.
- Set a mutually convenient Oral Defense date.
- Submit a full and polished final version to the committee at least two weeks in advance of the Oral Defense.
- Inform the Director of Graduate Dance and the Graduate Program Administrator of the Oral Defense time and location.

Oral Defense

A public oral defense of the creative thesis project is required for all MFA students. The oral defense is attended by the candidate's major advisor, thesis committee, and members of departmental faculty (as agreed to by the candidate and major advisor). The candidate has the prerogative to open the thesis defense to a larger audience, but this is not required.

The oral defense will take place within two weeks of the thesis project presentation. The defense consists of a brief presentation by the student followed by questions and comments from the committee. Alternative formats may be allowed at the discretion of the thesis advisor/chair and in consultation with the committee members. The purpose of this defense is not, as the name may imply, to challenge the candidate's work, but to allow for an open review of the process. The terms set forth in the project proposal appropriately outline the goals for the project and set the parameters for the defense. Did the research unfold as anticipated? Were there new, unforeseen revelations or complications? This is a discussion to explore the various aspects of the project and to understand the thesis project as a process.

After the question and comment period, the committee confers privately to reach a determination on the status of the thesis. The major advisor notes all feedback and recommendations and is responsible for providing the student with a written summary thereof following the defense. The student is then invited to rejoin the committee and is informed of the outcome, which may include:

- **Unconditional Pass.** No revisions needed. Committee members sign and submit the Multi-purpose Form (M-Form) to the Director of Graduate Studies. The student may proceed to the final steps for conferral.
- **Conditional Pass.** The thesis is passed contingent upon adequate revision. Committee members sign the M-Form. The student must make required revisions and obtain the approval of all committee members. The chair signs the M-Form again to attest that revisions have been approved by all committee members. Once the M-Form is received by the DGS, the student may proceed to the final steps required for degree conferral.
- **Determination Postponed: pending revision.** Any committee member who feels that extensive revisions are required and that the thesis is not passable—even on a contingent basis—in its current form may decline to sign the M-Form. In this case, the student must make revisions and submit these to the abstaining committee member(s) to obtain approval. Once the M-Form has been signed by all committee members and all final revisions have been accepted, the student may proceed to the final steps required by the Graduate School for degree conferral.

- **Determination Postponed: pending revision & re-defense.** If the thesis project and defense are considered inadequate, the committee may offer the student an opportunity to make substantial revisions and redefend the thesis. In such cases, a strict schedule for revision and redefense must be established and communicated to the student. If the student does not meet the deadline for redefense or is not passed upon redefense, the student will be dismissed from the MFA Program.
- **Unconditional Fail.** If the committee reaches the unanimous conclusion that the thesis's flaws are unresolvable and that the student's work is without merit, the thesis is considered failed and the student will be dismissed from the MFA Program. There will be no opportunity for revision.
- If a passing grade is not achieved on the thesis project and/or the Oral Defense, a student may be given up to one semester to redress their weaknesses based on committee feedback. This may include partial or complete restaging of thesis project and/or repeating part or all of the Oral Defense. The student will be responsible for any tuition costs associated with the extra semester.

Multi-Purpose Form (M-Form)

The M-Form, which must be signed by the thesis committee members, certifies completion of all degree requirements. It serves as the master control document ensuring a student's compliance with THD and the UB Graduate School requirements. Students should meet with their thesis committee prior to the M-form submission date. Also, students should meet with the Graduate Program Administrator well ahead of time to ensure that courses, thesis/project, and all paperwork are in order by the deadline.

M-Forms should be downloaded from The Graduate School website (grad.buffalo.edu) prior to their oral defense in order to guarantee students have the most up-to-date form. **Please double check that you have downloaded the correct M-Form for your capstone. There are separate forms for a Masters' Thesis and a Masters' Project. Utilizing the incorrect form will delay your degree conferral.**

Graduation Checklist

For candidates completing a Masters' Project, the following must be on file in the Graduate School by prescribed deadlines prior to degree conferral:

- Approved [Application to Candidacy](#) (with all necessary attachments, including original transcripts)
- [M-Form](#)

In both instances, the Graduate School will verify satisfactory completion of all courses to be applied toward the degree.

Degree Conferral

The Graduate School confers degrees three times per year: February 1; June 1; and September 1. Refer to the Graduate School's details on [degree conferral deadlines and requirements](#) (also noted above under **ATC**).

Participation in Commencement

Each May, College of Arts & Sciences holds a commencement ceremony to acknowledge graduating students. This is only a ceremonial event; it is neither equivalent to degree conferral nor is participation required (though it can be very meaningful). Students who pass the oral defense by April 1 may participate in commencement even if revisions are not complete. Otherwise, students must wait until the next academic year's ceremony.

SECTION IV:

ADVISEMENT

Graduate Advisement and Mentorship

Students work closely with the dance faculty, their individual advisor and the Graduate Director of Dance to ensure individual mentoring and student success. Incoming students are assigned an **initial MFA advisor** from the graduate dance faculty. The initial advisor assists the student with course selections and other advising needs; mentors teaching and creative work; helps the student devise a secondary area of study; conducts the first year review; and assigns the first comprehensive exam.

By November 1st of their second year, students select an **MFA thesis advisor**. By December 1st of their second year, students select **one committee member and one alternate**. The advisor and committee member provide direction, mentorship and evaluation of the MFA thesis project; conduct the second and third year reviews; assign the remaining comprehensive exam questions; and conduct the oral thesis project defense. The committee chair and alternate must be from Dance; the committee member should be from the student's secondary area of study and can be from dance or from another discipline. A third committee member may be approved based on student's research. Advisor and committee assignments must be approved by the Graduate Director of Dance.

Annual Review

The Graduate Director of Dance and the student's primary advisor, in consultation with other appropriate faculty, will evaluate MFA students annually. Students are required to complete an **annual progress report** in conjunction with this meeting. Faculty will also submit a written review. A copy of the reports will be submitted to the student's advisor, the Graduate Director of Dance and the graduate administrator for inclusion in the student's file. Students are expected to address any deficiencies or areas of weakness discussed in the review.

The annual meeting will review the student's academic record to include minimally:

- a) Checking overall grade point average;
- b) Monitoring overall progress toward completion of coursework;
- c) Addressing any incomplete and/or resigned courses;
- d) Reviewing student teaching;
- e) Reviewing progress toward preparation and completion of comprehensive exam questions;
- f) Reviewing progress toward preparation and completion of creative thesis project

YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
Fall: Initial Advisor Begin coursework	Fall: Initial Advisor -Develop thesis project concept -Write project abstract NOV 1: Select thesis advisor -Begin Devising exam 2 questions DEC 1: Select committee	Fall: Thesis Advisor Develop thesis concert
Spring: Initial Advisor Devise secondary concentration First written exam	Spring: Thesis Advisor -Submit final project proposal -ATC submitted by June 1 -Second written exam	Spring: Thesis Advisor Present thesis concert Final exams: written and oral

Graduate Development and Support

In addition to individual faculty mentoring, the graduate program will also sponsor regular colloquia and workshops that provide graduate and professional development and supplement the offerings from the UB Graduate School and the College of Arts and Sciences.

Departmental and graduate administrative staff will provide support for registering, completion of forms (ATC and other), scholarship processing, communication and more.

FACULTY ROLES

Supervising Committee

- The **thesis advisor** (committee chair) functions much like an initial advisor but with the added responsibilities of guiding the student's second written exam, Oral Defense and MFA thesis project work. Once formally appointed, the committee chair assumes responsibility for completing progress reviews with a student. The chair may be the same faculty member who served as the student's initial advisor, but this is not automatic or required.
- The other **committee member** may also confer with the student individually and during group meetings, but the degree of their involvement may vary. Preferences with regard to frequency and scope of consultation should be discussed and mutually agreed upon by the student, chair, and committee members. At minimum, committee members will: review work generated by the student for the qualifying examination (all stages thereof), and MFA thesis project; provide constructive feedback; attend and vote at oral defenses; and review required revisions. The committee member should be from the student's secondary emphasis.
- Students must also select an **alternate committee member** from Dance who agrees to serve as committee member or chair if the appointed faculty member cannot fulfill their responsibilities. The alternate is not required to attend any rehearsals or exams; however, the alternate may agree to attend rehearsals, works-in-progress showings or Oral Defenses by special arrangement.
- Students may elect to have **auxiliary committee members** (e.g., faculty from other universities, UB researchers who are not Graduate School Faculty). These individuals may not chair committees but retain the same rights and responsibilities as other committee members. Students should consult thoroughly with all involved parties prior to formally adding an auxiliary committee member.
- A student may approach eligible faculty to inquire about their willingness to serve on her/his committee at any time after entry into the program. Students must find a committee chair by November 1 of their second year and committee members by December 1 of their second year. Students may not file an *Application to Candidacy* (ATC) or proceed with the second comprehensive examination until a full committee has been established. Delaying the selection of the committee chair and members will delay graduation. Committee members should be confirmed with the Graduate Director of Dance.
- Students are encouraged to maintain the same thesis committee throughout the remainder of their program. However, if circumstances necessitate changes in committee composition, students should identify new committee members as soon as possible and inform the Graduate Director of Dance. If students have already filed the *Application to Candidacy*, they must submit an amended form to change committee members.

- As per Graduate School guidelines, a faculty member leaving UB for another institution may remain on a committee (if s/he and the student so choose) if the student will defend the dissertation within one year. If longer, the departing member must be replaced. A retiring faculty member may stay on a committee if the faculty member, student, and Graduate Director of Dance are amenable.

Communication and Email

Students must check their UB email every day. Email is a first point of contact between advisors, administrators, faculty, students and staff. Graduate students are required to use their UB Mail account to communicate university business. Students can expect to receive important information via email regarding scheduling, advisement, courses, guest artists, funding, special events and more. When communicating by email, students should remember that they are representing themselves to potential future advisors, teachers, employers, committee members, colleagues and references and thus should strive to be as professional as possible.

Faculty and teaching assistants have mailboxes on the second floor of the Theatre & Dance offices. These mailboxes are used for communication between faculty, staff, and students as well as for USPS deliveries.

SECTION V.

ETHICAL, PROFESSIONAL, AND ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Graduate programs in the Department of Theatre & Dance abide by the highest standards of ethical practices, academic integrity, research responsibility, and professional conduct. Students are expected to adhere to the standards and policies identified below and may be dismissed by the Director of Graduate Studies for any violation thereof.

Ethics Statement

Training and study in dance and theater occasionally involve material that can be personally disturbing, even offensive. This includes issues of gender, race, sexuality, religion, and various other moral concerns. Trust is an essential aspect of all learning environments, especially environments requiring experiential modes of instruction.

Graduate programs in the Department of Theatre & Dance follow the [Ethics Task Force Report](#) distributed by the Association for Theatre in Higher Education (1997). We are committed to ensuring an environment of mutual respect, diversity, and artistic and academic freedom in all domains of research, scholarship, and practice. Students should be familiar with these guidelines and follow them in all of their collaborative work, both with faculty, and with other students at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Students are also encouraged to report potential violations of these ethical policies to faculty members, the Graduate Director of Theatre or Dance and to the Director of Graduate Study (DGS). If neither departmental faculty nor the DGS seem appropriate for the circumstances, students may wish to seek advice from those outside the department, particularly in the Office of the Associate Dean for Graduate Education.

In cases involving emotional distress or other areas of physical, mental, or emotional concern, students may wish to consult UB's [Student Wellness Team](#). This office offers [Health Services](#), [Counseling Services](#), and [Wellness Education Services](#).

Academic Integrity

Absolute integrity is expected of every member of the UB community in all academic matters. When a student submits any work for academic credit, s/he makes an implicit claim that the work is wholly her/his own, done without the assistance of any person or source not explicitly noted, and that the work has not previously been submitted for academic credit in any other area, unless previously approved by the relevant instructor or advisor.

The MFA in Dance follows the UB Graduate School's academic integrity policy and procedures, found on the UB Graduate School webpage. These apply to all work conducted while a student is in the program including coursework, exams, thesis writing, creative projects, external performances, and any affiliated performance or production work. All students are expected to be familiar with and abide by the University's academic integrity policies. Violations of these policies may result in dismissal from the program.

Professional Conduct

Student enrolled in the MFA Dance program, represent the program, department, and university in all professional engagements. It is expected that students adhere to standard professional conduct in both creative and academic work.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE & PROGRESS

The work required to earn an MFA is held to the highest standards of artistic and scholarly breadth, depth, and rigor. Expectations of excellence apply not only to the quality of students' work but also to the pace of their progress through the program. As per procedures outlined below, students may be dismissed from the program for substandard performance or failure to progress.

Student Records and Plans of Study

The student academic file is a record of the student's complete course of study. This record includes the Curriculum Checklist and plan of study, registration forms, qualifying exam results, thesis materials, assistantship paperwork,

and other materials related to the student's matriculation. Original materials remain in the student's permanent file in the Department of Theatre & Dance, but the student and advisor may retain copies.

Each student, in consultation with their advisor, their program head, and the Director of Graduate Studies, develops their individual course of study. This plan includes projected courses and the projected length of time to complete the MFA thesis project. This plan is intended to guarantee the integrity of a student's matriculation, but it is not a binding agreement and may be changed with the consent of the student, their advisor, and their program head. Plans are generated during the first semester and should be updated every semester during the advising period. The original plan of study should be on file by the end of the first semester.

The MFA program is a full-time, three-year program. Students are expected to complete the program 34-36 months following matriculation, barring extraordinary circumstances. Students who have not completed their degree after 36 months of continuous enrollment without extenuating circumstances may be asked to leave the program. Requests for time extensions must be submitted in writing to the Director of Graduate Study (and copied to the Graduate Studies Assistant) at least 1 month prior to the dismissal deadline. These extensions are available for up to one year total and cannot be extended further as per the policies of the UB Graduate School.

Full-Time Student Course Load

Twelve (12) credit hours is defined as a full-time load for graduate students who are not receiving university assistantship or fellowship. Nine (9) credit hours is defined as full-time for MFA students who are receiving a Teaching Assistantship from the university. Students wishing to enroll in more than full-time credit hours per semester covered by their Assistantship may be liable for the additional tuition charges.

Students working on their thesis project who are enrolling in less than the requisite credit hours per semester may submit a **Certification of Full Time Status** form to the Graduate School to maintain full time status through conferral.

Continuous Registration Requirement (Leave of Absence)

Graduate students are required to maintain continuous registration from matriculation through conferral during the standard academic year (not including summer and winter intersessions). If a graduate student does not maintain continuous registration without filing for a Leave of Absence, this will result in program dismissal.

Students needing to take time away from their program may request a Leave of Absence for one or two semesters, which will preserve your place in the program and your academic standing at the time of leave.

Registration Procedures

Students are required to meet with their advisor once a semester to review curricular progress and approve of course loads. Following advisement, students must submit their approved registration form to the Graduate Program Administrator for enrollment in departmental classes. Enrollment in courses outside the department is the responsibility of each student, including obtaining instructor permission as needed. This may require liaising with other departments as the Graduate Program Administrator cannot enroll Theatre & Dance students in courses outside of the department.

It is the student's responsibility to set up advising appointments, communicate registration needs to the faculty and Program Administrator in a timely fashion, and to confirm accurate enrollment in his/her HUB Student Center prior to the start of the semester. This includes verifying accurate courses, sections, and credit amounts.

Students who do not schedule advising appointments and register by the end of the semester are not guaranteed placement in courses of their choice, which may result in delay in progress toward degree.

Academic Standing

Continuation in the Department of Theatre & Dance graduate programs is contingent on satisfactory progress toward degree completion, academic performance, and general attitude and conduct as displayed in the ability to work with peers and faculty, including timely correspondence and attendance at all mandatory meetings and advisory sessions. In order to remain in good standing, a student must:

1. Maintain a minimum 3.0 overall grade point average
2. Achieve a grade of "B" or better in all required coursework
3. Complete all required academic reviews and meet with your advisor no less than one time per semester
4. Comply with all departmental and university policies
5. Make sufficient academic progress and growth in enrolled program
 - MFA students are expected to be enrolled full-time and complete the program 3 years following matriculation, barring extraordinary circumstances.

Academic Probation

Students who fail to meet the minimum academic standards will be placed on probation for the subsequent semester in which they fail to meet these requirements. Steps necessary to remove the probation status will be discussed with the student at the time s/he is notified of probationary status. In extreme instances, students may be dismissed from the department effective immediately.

Students may receive a warning during the semester if they fail to maintain deadlines, have excessive absences or are not meeting minimum requirements at midterm grades, fail to respond to departmental and advisor communications, or are deemed as in danger of falling below academic standards. Warnings may be verbal or written. If concerns are not addressed by the end of the semester, students will be placed on probation for the following semester.

Probationary notification will specify remedial steps and a corresponding schedule to which a student must adhere in order to avoid dismissal. In addition to consultation with the advisor/thesis chair, the DGS or Director of Graduate Studies also may convene an academic review with the student and advisor to identify obstacles to progress and to devise a plan for improved pace and productivity.

At the end of the probation semester, students are required to meet with their advisor and program head to review progress and timeline as established in the probation letter. Following this review, students may be returned to good academic standing, continue on probation if adequate progress is not made, or be dismissed from the program if student fails to address concerns or make progress.

Steps to address academic concerns may include, but are not limited to:

- **B-, C+ or C in a course:** The student must repeat the course or another that fulfills the requirement. The student must consult with the advisor/DGS about her/his performance and remedial strategies. Others may attend at the discretion of the advisor/chair. A summary of the meeting including any corrective actions must be sent to the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) for inclusion in the student file. Please note that receiving this grade may delay graduation.
- **D, F, or U in a course:** The student must repeat the course or another that fulfills the requirement. The Director of Graduate Study may request an academic review with the student, advisor/chair, and others at the discretion of the advisor/chair and DGS. At the review, specific remedial steps and a corresponding

timeline will be established. These consensual terms will be written up by the DGS, sent to all attendees, and saved in the student file.

- **Below 3.0 overall GPA:** The student is placed on academic probation. The DGS will convene an academic review with the student, advisor/chair, and others at the discretion of the advisor/chair or DGS. At the review, specific corrective actions and a corresponding timeline needed to lift the probationary status will be established. These consensual terms will be written up by the Program Director, sent to all attendees, and saved in the student file.

The Director of Graduate Studies may take additional action if a student does not respond to requests for an academic review; appear at a scheduled academic review; or uphold terms devised at the review. Such action includes but is not limited to one or more of the following: placement on academic probation; withdrawal of funding support; restriction from course registration; or program dismissal.

Program Dismissal

The Director of Graduate Studies may dismiss from the program any student who does not uphold ethical, professional, or academic standards. This includes but is not limited to: ethical or professional misconduct; failure to meet minimum academic standards; and failure to progress. In these cases, students will be notified when in jeopardy of program dismissal. The student will have an opportunity, if reasonable and feasible, to redress the concern or to present claims on her/his behalf.

In addition to circumstances under which the DGS may take explicit action to prompt program dismissal, students may also be effectively dismissed if s/he does not maintain continuous registration or if s/he does not meet Graduate School time limits (i.e., degree conferral within 4 years after beginning MFA coursework). In such cases, a student will not receive advance notice of dismissal risk. Students have the right to petition for retroactive registration and time extensions; however, these will be granted at the discretion of the DGS and only under extenuating circumstances.

As per Graduate School guidelines pertaining to dismissal, students who are dismissed on academic grounds (i.e., violations of academic integrity, substandard performance, failure to progress, failure to maintain continuous registration, or exceeding Graduate School time limits for degree completion) will have a service indicator placed on their record that will prevent them from future registration. If a student wishes to reapply to the same program or another at the university, s/he must submit a formal request for reinstatement.

OPERATIONAL PROCEDURE & INFORMATION

Communication

The Department of Theatre & Dance and the University at Buffalo communicates regularly via email, and students are encouraged to check their buffalo.edu account regularly for updates and announcements. All communication will be sent to university accounts only. Other updates and announcements will also be found in the HUB Student Center, and in UBLearn for individual courses. Additional updates and information can be found on The Graduate School website (grad.buffalo.edu).

Copy Machine & Printers

The Department of Theatre & Dance has one copy machine located on the second floor of Alumni Arena. Graduate students may obtain a copy code from Cindy Guido in 285 Alumni Arena. This machine is for official school business only. Students are also encouraged to use the printers and copiers available in the University Libraries.

Library Privileges

All students of UB have access to the university libraries and the services they offer. For Theatre & Dance reference support:

Laura Taddeo
Arts & Sciences Libraries
421 Lockwood Library
(716) 645-1320
<http://library.buffalo.edu>
gjcooper@buffalo.edu

Mail

Faculty and staff mailboxes are located in 285 Alumni Arena. Mailboxes for the graduate students are located in the Graduate Student Office in 284 Alumni Arena. Individuals are responsible for checking their mailboxes on a regular basis. Campus mail is for official university business mail only. The departmental mailing address is

Department of Theatre & Dance
University at Buffalo
285 Alumni Arena
Buffalo, NY 14260

Mail is delivered daily to the department from Campus Mail and as needed by UPS, FedEx, etc. The mail is sorted and placed in mailboxes as soon as possible after delivery. Large packages and deliveries made to the main office are held in the main office; please pick up any packages as soon as possible after notification of delivery.

Graduate Student Office

Graduate students with an assistantship have use of the Graduate Student Office in 284 Alumni Arena for office hours and course preparation. All graduate students have access to the Graduate Student Office for study, meetings, and other activities related to your program of student. Students will have access to the office computers and printer.

The Graduate Student Office is a multi-purpose space; it is the responsible of all graduate students to maintain the cleanliness and order of the office, and to be respectful of all students and their belongings in the space. Any maintenance issues that arise should be brought to the attention of the Theatre & Dance main office staff immediately. The Graduate Student Office should remain locked when not in use.

Outside Productions/Activity

Outside activity is defined as any private practice, production, artistic work, additional teaching or research, or other professional activity, compensated or uncompensated, which is not part of the students' assigned duties including classes and assistantships. Conflict of interest is defined as any conflict between the private interests of the student

and the public interests of the university, including any activity that interferes with the full performance of institutional responsibilities or obligations. Conflicts of interest, including those arising from university or outside activities are prohibited.

While graduate students may seek outside opportunities, it is important to balance these opportunities within the curricular requirements of the MFA Dance program. Students are advised to share their projects with their advisors, and to seek integration of their creative and research activity into their curriculum.

SECTION VI.

GRADUATE FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Teaching Assistantships

Applicants to the MFA program may audition for a departmental teaching assistantship. If awarded, the student will receive a tuition scholarship and a graduate stipend. Students will be expected to teach non-major courses, TA for departmental courses and perform other related departmental duties as assigned.

Tuition Waivers

CAS provides MFA students who receive a Teaching Assistantship with full tuition coverage. The exact number of credits varies depending on the student's prior experience and education (i.e., how many MFA credits will transfer), but the funding is typically sufficient to cover two years of full-time coursework and one year of Thesis Project credits. Once tuition credits are exhausted, students are personally responsible for registration fees.

Graduate Assistantships

Assistantships may entail a wide range of duties and responsibilities, including research and teaching. TA's are assigned by the DGS or Director of Graduate Dance in consultation with graduate faculty and the Department Chair, and with consideration for student skills and interests. A Graduate Assistantship assignment is equal to 20 hours/week over the academic calendar year starting the week before classes begin and concluding at the end of the spring term. All aspects of the position (e.g., duties, timesheets, feedback) are overseen by the direct faculty supervisor and the DGS or Director of Graduate Dance.

Assistantship Requirements (from the Graduate School Webpage):

- Assistants must be full-time matriculated graduate or professional students at UB who are able to devote their full attention to their graduate program.
- Teaching and graduate assistantship appointments are typically made by individual departments, usually on an annual basis.

- Ordinarily, it is expected that assistants will not hold jobs outside the university; the department chair may grant exceptions to this policy in cases of unusual economic necessity or other extraordinary circumstances.
- Teaching and graduate assistants on the state payroll are unionized at the University at Buffalo and receive benefits through their affiliation with the Graduate Student Employees Union, including state-subsidized health insurance and a transportation fee waiver.

Scholarships and Fellowships

Students may be eligible to apply for UB sponsored funding opportunities:

- **Arthur A. Schomburg Fellowship Program** UB's Arthur A. Schomburg Fellowship Program is sponsored by New York State and offers support for students in doctoral and master's level programs across the university who can demonstrate that they would contribute to the diversity of the student body, especially those who can demonstrate that they have overcome a disadvantage or other impediment to success in higher education.
- **Graduate Opportunity Program (GOP)** The Graduate Opportunity Program (GOP; formerly GEOP) provides tuition scholarships to New York State residents who participated as undergraduates in certified EOP, HEOP or SEEK programs within New York State and completed their undergraduate degrees are eligible to seek support through the GOP. All disciplines are eligible.
- **Mark Diamond Research Fund** The Mark Diamond Research Fund (MDRF) gives grants to graduate students for research expenses related to their thesis or dissertation. PhD students may apply for up to \$2,500, MFA students for up to \$2,000, and Master's students for up to \$1,500. The MDRF grant is only for University at Buffalo graduate students in programs participating in the Graduate Student Association and who have not waived the student activity fee. Applicants should be in the latter stages of research.

Outside Funding

Students are encouraged to seek out grants, fellowships, and scholarships to support academic study, conference travel, or research projects. Students are free to pursue paid positions through other units at UB (e.g., GA positions in the Gender Institute or the Humanities Institute). They may take such positions in lieu of the GA portion of their funding package or once their guaranteed funding package is complete. Students holding assistantships must obtain departmental permission for additional work acquired within the SUNY system.

Students may also qualify for national fellowship programs (<http://www.fellowships.buffalo.edu/>), and can apply for on campus jobs (http://grad.buffalo.edu/FinancialSupport/jobs_assistantships.html).

APPENDIX A.

SAMPLE COURSE PROGRESSION

The MFA in Dance at the University at Buffalo is a three-year program. Accelerated schedules will not be supported.

Semester 1: Fall 1		Semester 2: Spring 1	
Course Number & Title	Credits	Course Number & Title	Credits
500 Grad Improv or 520 Grad Ballet I	2	510 Grad Modern I or 521 Grad Ballet II	2
506 Dance Theory, Aesthetics & Criticism	3	530 Political and Cultural Approaches to Dance	3
513 Grad Seminar I or elective	3	541 Dance Making II: Workshop	3
540 Dance Making I: Resources	3	606 Supervised Teaching or Elective	2
605 Dance Teaching Seminar	1	Elective	2
		Comprehensive Exam Question 1	0
TOTAL	12	TOTAL	12
Semester 3: Fall 2		Semester 4: Spring 2	
Select Thesis Advisor and Committee		Submit ATC by Feb 1	
Course Number & Title	Credits	Course Number & Title	Credits
511 Grad Modern II or other physical practice	2	Physical practice	2
542 Dance Making III: Collaboration	3	532 Anatomy/Kinesiology or 515 Mind-Body Integration	3
544 Grad Studio: Physical Practice or other Elective	1	582 Creative Process and Embodied Research	3
545 Directed Projects or other Elective	1	545 Directed Projects or other Elective	1
554 Dance Pedagogy in Higher Education or 606 Supervised Teaching	2	Elective	3
Elective	3	Comprehensive Exam Question 2	0
TOTAL	12	TOTAL	12
Semester 5: Fall 3		Semester 6: Spring 3	
Course Number & Title	Credits	Course Number & Title	Credits
535 Studies in Lighting Design or other Design and Technology Course	2	602 Masters Thesis Project (remainder of work)	6
544 Grad Studio: Physical Practice	1	Comprehensive Exam Question 3	0
602 Masters Thesis Project (partial work)	3	Oral Defense	0
TOTAL	6	TOTAL	6
PROGRAM TOTAL= 60 credits			

CREATIVE PRACTICE (9 credits)

Course	Course Title	Credits	Semester	Grade	Notes
DAC 540	Dance Making I: Resources	3			
DAC 541	Dance Making II: Workshop	3			
DAC 542	Dance Making III: Collaboration	3			
Total		9			

HISTORY, RESEARCH, & THEORY (12 credits)

Course	Course Title	Credits	Semester	Grade	Notes
DAC 513	Graduate Seminar	3			
DAC 506	Dance Theory, Aesthetics, & Criticism	3			
DAC 530	Political and Cultural Approaches to Dance	3			
DAC 582	Creative Process and Embodied Research	3			
Total		12			

APPLIED ANATOMY & THEORIES OF THE BODY (3 credits) *Students choose one of the following DAC 515: Mind-Body Integration; DAC 532: Anatomy/Kinesiology for Dancers; DAC 550: Graduate Laban/Bartenieff Movement Analysis*

Course	Course Title	Credits	Semester	Grade	Notes
Total		3			

DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY (2 credits)

Course	Course Title	Credits	Semester	Grade	Notes
Total		2			

ELECTIVES (10 credits) *At least 5 credits must be outside of Dance.*

Course	Course Title	Credits	Semester	Grade	Notes
Total		10			

TEACHING (5 credits) *Non-supported MFAs take DAC 606: Supervised Teaching for a minimum of 4 credits (2 credits each time); Supported MFAs take DAC 554: Dance Pedagogy in Higher Education (2 cr.) and an additional 2 cr. Of dance electives*

Course	Course Title	Credits	Semester	Grade	Notes
DAC 605	Dance Teaching Seminar	1			
Total		5			

THESIS PROJECT (9 credits)

Course	Course Title	Credits	Semester	Grade	Notes
DAC 602	MFA Thesis Project	3			
DAC 602	MFA Thesis Project	6			
Total					

	TOTAL CREDITS				
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ADVISEMENT CHECKLIST

	Dept. Rec'd	Dept. Approved	Graduate School Sent	Graduate School Approved	Notes
Signed Acceptance Letter					
Signed TA Offer Letter					
Official Transcripts Received					
Initial Advising					
1 st Semester Registration					
1 st Semester Advising					
2 nd Semester Registration					
2 nd Semester Advising					
Written Comprehensive Exam 1					
Year 1 Review					
3 rd Semester Registration					

3 rd Semester Advising					
4 th Semester Registration					
4 th Semester Advising					
Written Comprehensive Exam 2					
Year 2 Review					
ATC					
5 th Semester Registration					
5 th Semester Advising					
6 th Semester Registration					
6 th Semester Advising					
Written Comprehensive Exam 3					
Year 3 Review					
Thesis Concert					
M-Form					
Exit Survey					
ADVISING NOTES					
Date					

APPENDIX C.

WRITTEN AND ORAL DEFENSE SCHEDULE

Year 1: Exam Question #1

Example questions:

Question #1: Which theories of embodiment/movement/culture are impacting how you see your artistic practice and research? How?

Question #2: What trends are evolving in our contemporary art form? Who were three instigators of those trends? How is your work or creative process informed by or reflect those trends?

Timeline:

Students will receive one exam question during their second semester, prior to Spring Break.

Finished paper is due in electronic form to the Graduate Administrator by 5pm on the Friday three weeks after classes resume from break.

Students will receive assessment no later than two weeks after exam deadline.

If student is required to rewrite exam, the rewrite is due 1 week after receiving assessment, and final assessment will be provided within 1 week.

Guidelines:

Students will generate a minimum of 10 pages of original writing in response to the question.

Answer will be written at home. The use of outside sources is expected.

Format:

10 page minimum (not including cover page and works cited); 12pt Times New Roman font; double spaced; 1-inch margins with page numbers.

Citations:

Citation within the text will be footnotes in MLA style.

Complete "Works Cited" in MLA format, must be attached.

Assessment:

Exam Question #1 will be graded by the student's initial advisor and one other graduate faculty member. A third grader will be used in the event the student receives one pass and one fail.

Three outcomes are possible*:

- **Passing:** No further action is necessary.
- **Revisions needed:** The student will have one opportunity to address the committee's concerns as per terms set by the committee. If corrections are accepted, the exam will be considered successfully completed. If corrections do not satisfy the committee, the exam will be designated as failed.
- **Failure:** In cases of exam failure, students will have one opportunity to retake exams. Upon a second failed exam, the student will be dismissed from the program.

Students will be assessed based on the following criteria:

- Depth of inquiry—how well student answered the question
- Clarity of writing—how well the paper is crafted
- Standard use of grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.

*Students who violate standards of academic integrity are not entitled to a second examination opportunity.

Year 2: Exam Question #2

Timeline:

By March 1st, the thesis advisor in consultation with the student will formulate 3 questions, one in each category specific to the interest of the student: a) seminars, b) choreographic works presented, and c) pedagogical influences and experiences. Students will receive one of the three questions.

Students will receive the question by email from the Graduate Administrator at 8am on the Monday of Spring Break.

Finished paper is due in electronic form to the Graduate Administrator by 5pm on the Friday of the week classes resume.

Students will receive assessment no later than two weeks after the exam deadline.

If student is required to rewrite exam, the rewrite is due 1 week after receiving assessment, and final assessment will be provided within 1 week.

Guidelines:

Students will generate 8-10 pages of original writing in response to the question. Answer will be written at home. The use of outside sources is expected.

Format:

8-10 pages (not including cover and works cited); 12pt Times New Roman font; double spaced; 1-inch margins with page numbers.

Citations:

Citation within the text will be footnotes in MLA style.

Complete "Works Cited" in MLA format, must be attached.

Grading:

Exam Question #2 will be graded by the student's thesis advisor and one other graduate faculty member. A third reader will be used in the event the student receives one passing and one failing grade.

Three outcomes are possible*:

- **Passing:** No further action is necessary.
- **Revisions needed:** The student will have one opportunity to address the committee’s concerns as per terms set by the committee. If corrections are accepted, the exam will be considered successfully completed. If corrections do not satisfy the committee, the exam will be designated as failed.
- **Failure:** In cases of exam failure, students will have one opportunity to retake exams. Upon a second failed exam, the student will be dismissed from the program.

Students will be assessed based on the following criteria:

- Depth of inquiry—how well student answered the question
- Clarity of writing—how well the paper is crafted
- Standard use of grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.

*Students who violate standards of academic integrity are not entitled to a second examination opportunity.

Year 3: Exam Question 3 (Thesis Project Documentation)

This section undergoing revisions.

Year 3: Oral Defense

This section undergoing revisions.

APPENDIX D.

DANCE PRODUCTION POLICIES

Every year the Department of Theatre & Dance produces dance and theatre performances in the CFA Drama Theatre and Black Box and at the Katharine Cornell Theatre in the Ellicott complex. MFA students are eligible to show new works in these productions. MFA students may choose to choreograph for departmental theatre or music theatre productions with permission of their advisor and Graduate Director of Dance; however it is expected that all production work is in line with the student's creative research plans.

The four regularly scheduled dance productions are Zodiaque Dance Company, ChoreoLab, Emerging Choreographers Showcase and the Graduate Dance Concert. Dancers for these productions are chosen by audition.

Graduates can be selected to choreograph for any of the four concerts. Graduates can be selected to perform in guest and graduate work in any of the four concerts.

PERFORMANCE POLICIES

- Zodiaque will consist of primarily undergraduate performers.
- Graduate students can perform as guests in Fall/Spring Zodiaque concerts on a case-by-case basis (through audition or faculty invitation)
- ChoreoLab performers may be undergraduate or graduate students.
- ChoreoLab performers may include faculty/guest on a case-by-case basis.
- ECS performers may be undergraduate or graduate students.
- MFA and MFA Thesis concert performers may be undergraduate or graduate students.
- Graduate performers are eligible to be cast in graduate, faculty or guest work.

Departmental Majors:

- All non ZDC dancers can be in two departmental productions per semester.
- Freshman can only be cast in one piece per production.

Zodiaque Dance Company (ZDC):

- ZDC dancers can be in one production role in ECS in the fall.
- ZDC dancers can be in one production role in ChoreoLab in the spring.

- In addition, returning ZDC dancers can request to accept one additional performance role in an MFA concert or ChoreoLab. (not ECS). * “Returning ZDC member” means after 1 full year.

Emerging Choreographer’s Showcase:

- Freshman can be cast in only 1 piece.
- ZDC dancers can serve in 1 role as dancer or choreographer
- Non-ZDC choreographers can be cast in only 1 piece.
- All other dancers can be cast in up to 2 pieces.

Dancers Workshop:

- Non-senior Zodiaque and ChoreoLab dancers can only be involved in one capacity in Dancers Workshop, as choreographer, performer or director.
- Senior Zodiaque and ChoreoLab dancers can be involved in two capacities.

MFA INFORMAL CONCERT POLICIES

Department Support

- The department will provide a house manager
- The department will provide one technician (Eric B.) for tech and the run.
- The rep plot will be focused and available for basic light cues. All lighting design must work within the rep plot parameters.

Student Roles/Responsibilities

- All MFA’s can choreograph for the concert
- All MFA’s are eligible to perform in the concert
- MFA’s will determine their own casting following the UB Dance PERFORMANCE AND CHOREOGRAPHY POLICIES
- MFA’s will devise the leadership/directorship role (s). These must be clearly communicated (in an email) to the Graduate Director of Dance.
- MFA’s will determine if they would like a faculty supervisor for the concert. Faculty supervisor would serve in an advisory role and would not direct or manage the concert.
- MFA’s are responsible for lighting design and stage management and/or for hiring/securing a lighting designer and stage manager. (SM/LD will not be provided by usual department channels.)
- MFA’s are responsible for ticketing/ushering. Volunteers need to be arranged by the faculty supervisor or the named student lead.
- MFA’s are responsible for all costume design, construction and/or purchase. Access to the Dance Wardrobe has yet to be determined.

Rehearsals

- MFA's are responsible for scheduling rehearsals with dancers and for securing space through Melanie Aceto (B82/B84) or Mike Formato (188, 190, B83, KCT)

Dance Wardrobe

- It has not yet been determined if the MFA Concert Choreographers have access to the Dance Wardrobe.

Faculty Mentors/WIPS

- All MFA's will select a faculty mentor for their work. This can be the student's advisor or another dance faculty member. It is the student's responsibility to discuss the work with their mentor and to invite their mentor to rehearsals.
- MFA's can determine if they would like to participate in a WIPS opportunity. WIPS times can be scheduled concurrently with the undergraduate WIPS time/space permitting or at another time. MFA's are responsible for inviting faculty to WIPS.

Promotion/Marketing

- All promotion and marketing will be done by MFA's, including creating and distributing press release and creating news blurbs for THD website and facebook.

Show Program

- MFA's will be responsible for creating a program for the show.

APPENDIX E.

MFA STUDIO SPACE RESERVATIONS

Reservations for the Current Week

Space sheets for the current week are posted outside the CFA dance studios, B82/84. If there is a blank spot on the sheet, students can write their names in pencil to reserve studio time. If you need to cancel your space, please erase your name, so that another dancer can use the space. Sharing space is encouraged when possible.

Advanced Requests

To request rehearsal or course prep space in CFA B82/84, please email Melanie Aceto (aceto@buffalo.edu).

To request space in Alumni 188, CFA B83 or the Katharine Cornell Theatre (KCT), please email Mike Formato (formato@buffalo.edu).

Include the following information in your correspondence:

Name

Purpose Of Rehearsal (*Course, Teaching Prep, Date Of Concert, Etc*):

Requested Dates And Times:

Reoccurring Time Slot? If Yes, Until When?

Location (*Specify Needed Location If Relevant*):

Keys

Keys for graduate instructors can be signed out from Cindy Guido in the Main Office.

IMPORTANT:

The sound equipment in the studios is not for student use – even if you have access as a TA. Please respect this rule and bring your own speakers.

APPENDIX F.

INSTRUCTIONAL FACILITIES

Theatre & Dance resources at UB and beyond are significant. In addition to the University's multiple performance spaces (see below), including the Katherine Cornell Theatre as a performance space specifically designated for graduate students, UB has two large dance studios, two smaller classroom and rehearsal spaces, and the rehearsal workshop, a large experimental black box space.

MFA students will be encouraged to audition to present choreography and perform in the departmental season, which includes four dance concerts, two in the CFA Drama Theater and two in the CFA Black Box and/or Katherine Cornell Theatre. An additional graduate thesis concert will be presented in the Theatre & Dance season at a performance space appropriate to the students' creative research.

Faculty research collaborations between UB Dance, Theatre, Media Study, Music, Poetry, Architecture, Computer Science and Biochemistry among others offer additional opportunities to develop cutting-edge performance work at UB.

Many historic off campus spaces also offer diverse production experiences (e.g., Silo City), including the annual Buffalo Infringement Festival, the longest-surviving infringement festival in the US. Graduate students will be encouraged to take advantage of these venues to develop new work individually, through collaborations with UB students across disciplines and with regional artists.

Graduate students will have access to programming at UB's Center for the Arts and at other local and regional venues in Buffalo, Rochester and across Western New York. Less than two hours to the north is Toronto—a destination for major performances in North America, and home to a wide variety of professional companies.

MFA Dance students at Buffalo also have access to major new work in related arts fields through internationally renowned arts centers, such as Hallwalls Contemporary Arts Center and the Albright Knox Art Gallery. Both of these venues regularly host performances as part of their programming. In fact, Hallwalls is home to one of the largest performance art archives in the world, including more than 2500 individual pieces of documentation of some of the most important performance artists of the past 30 years. Graduate students at UB will have the opportunity to do unprecedented research in these archives and may also choose to collaborate in the ongoing digital preservation collaboration between Hallwalls and the Special Collections Library at UB.

As a major research university, UB has significant resources in terms of its library collection (see section 6) and a rich history of experimental performance work collected both in the special collections and in the Department of Media Study. Members of the Theatre & Dance faculty collaborate throughout the disciplines, including close working relationships with English, Music, Art, Media Study, and Arts Management.

UB CENTER FOR THE ARTS: VENUES AND FACILITIES

Dance Studios

Most of our dance classes and rehearsals for dance concerts happen in these studios. Each studio has a marley floor, a complete sound system, a projection screen and 18-foot high mirrors on two sides. One of the dance studios is equipped with sliding curtains in front of the mirrors to create an informal performance/lecture-demonstration space.

Drama Theatre

This 388-seat theatre is the venue for most of our shows, from large-scale dramas to Broadway musicals to performances by Zodiaque, the University's resident dance company, housed in the Department of Theatre & Dance.

The excellent lighting and sound systems, along with multiple traps, adjustable proscenium walls, pit-lift, and 40 lines sets, make this a wonderful place for all of our students to practice their craft, whether as performers, designers or technicians.

Black Box Theatre

The department produces and supports several smaller-scale productions and experimental performances/workshops each season in this flexible black box theatre with a 200 seat capacity. The space can be configured for dance in a variety of ways, with seating of 100-120.

This space provides our students with the opportunity to experiment in a more intimate setting and presents a different set of challenges and opportunities for integrating design and technology elements.

Rehearsal Workshop

This space is used for acting classes and as a rehearsal space for department productions. The room is configured like the Black Box Theatre, but more modestly equipped for lighting and sound. Many excellent student-initiated shows are produced in this space.

Scene Shop

This shop houses all the tools and equipment for building a show. Everything is done here, from carpentry to painting to welding. We place particular emphasis on providing a safe environment in which to work, so the shop includes a spray booth and dust collection system.

Costume Shop

With its natural light and windows overlooking Lake LaSalle, this large airy room provides an excellent environment for designing and sewing costumes.

Craft Room

This large well-appointed room is dedicated to props and other craft-related projects.

Design Suite

This suite includes a drafting room, a rudimentary lighting lab and a ten-seat computer lab with design software.

Screening Room

The 210-seat Screening Room is available for motion picture screenings and film festivals, as well as video arts productions, speakers and panel discussions, poetry readings, and press conferences. The projection booth has 35 mm as well as 16 mm film capability that includes surround-sound, along with a state-of-the-art video projection system for 3/4", SVHS, VHS, and DVD. A dual slide projection room has full remote capability.

Dressing Rooms

The Center has seven Dressing Rooms located at stage level that are able to accommodate up to 69 persons.

All rooms have tables, chairs, mirrors, toilet and shower facilities and sinks with hot and cold water.

Wardrobe

A laundry room with washer/dryer, ironing board, iron, sewing machine and steamer are available.

Alumni Arena

Studios

The Alumni Arena houses two flexible use spaces, rooms 188 and 190. These spaces provide for additional classes, rehearsals, and performances.

Teaching Assistant Offices

MFA students with an Assistantship will be provided shared office space and access to shared computers, printers and phone.

Katherine Cornell Theatre

This unique “diamond-in-a-diamond” shaped space seats up to 340 and yet still manages to have an intimate feel. For about a decade, PBS’s Mark Russell political satire shows were broadcast from this theatre. The KCT is currently used as an acting and dance classroom and as a venue for departmental dance concerts and student-produced shows.

APPENDIX G.

REGIONAL VENUES

The following list includes notable performance venues throughout Western New York and Southern Ontario.

Performance Venues for New & Existing Projects

Albright Knox Art Gallery
Allentown Art Festival
ALT Theater
Artists and Models
Big Orbit Gallery
Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society
Buffalo Contact Improvisation Jam Performance Group
Buffalo Infringement Festival
Buffalo Terminal
Burchfield-Penney Art Center
coaxisDance
Elmwood Festival of the Arts
Geva Theater
Hallwalls Contemporary Art Center
Kenan Center
Karpeles Manuscript Museum
Nazareth College
Nina Freudenheim Gallery
Rochester Fringe Festival
Silo City
Squeaky Wheel
Toronto Fringe Festival
Visual Studies Workshop

Other Venues – Buffalo/Rochester (selected):

ALT Theatre (The Subversive Theatre Collective)

Alleyway Theatre

Eastman Theater

FuturPoint Dance

Garth Fagan Dance

Irish Classical Theatre Company

Jewish Repertory Theatre

Kavinoky Theatre

Lehrer Dance

MusicalFare Music Theatre Company

Neglia Ballet

Road Less Traveled

Shakespeare in Delaware Park

Theatre of Youth

Torn Space Theatre

Other Venues - Southern Ontario/Toronto (selected):

Artword Theatre

David Earle Dance Theatre

Hanna Kiel/Human Body Expression

Harborfront Centre

Second City

Shaw Festival

Stratford Festival

The St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts

The Princess of Wales Theatre

The Royal Alexandra Theatre

Toronto Dance Theatre

APPENDIX H.

LIBRARY RESOURCES

Theatre/Dance Collection

Theatre/dance resources serve the Department of Theatre and Dance and support the curricular, research, and performance needs of faculty, undergraduate and graduate students, and staff. Materials also serve the graduate programs of English. Since the collection serves two departments, the scope of interests is diverse and includes: general theatre, playwriting, acting, production design, costume design and construction, stage technology, dramaturgy, dramatic literature, aesthetics and culture, modern/jazz/ballet, musical theatre dance, dance performance, choreography, dance history, dance research, and dance pedagogy. With changes in faculty, the interests of the departments have shifted over the years to a more interdisciplinary and technological focus.

Selection

The theatre/dance liaison librarian has primary responsibility for identifying and selecting items for theatre and dance. Liaison librarians are subject specialists who are responsible for staying abreast of changing areas of research and teaching within the field. Selection of materials is done in consultation with departmental faculty and with other liaison librarians in related areas. The librarian works closely with the department's Library Committee to ensure faculty requests are given the highest priority. Review sources which support the selection process are diverse and include titles such as *American Theatre*, *Dance Research*, *Choice*, *The Times Literary Supplement*, *New York Review of Books*, *New York Times Book Review*, *Dance Magazine*, publishers' catalogs, and many others. Faculty requests are welcome and ordered upon receipt provided budget funds are available. Requests that cannot be honored in a current fiscal year are held until the start of the new fiscal year and ordered on a funds-available basis.

Languages

There are no restrictions as to language of publication, though English titles predominate. Foreign editions generally available for purchase in the United States are also included.

Formats

Materials are ordered in all formats including print and electronic books, DVDs, schematics, statistical data, digital images, and other electronic resources. DVD and/or streaming video is the preferred video format. Audio books are not normally collected. Sound recordings fall within the realm of the Music Library where music collections are maintained.

Geographic Coverage

The collection's primary focus is on American and European materials with the inclusion of resources from other countries as deemed relevant and representative based on curricula.

Serials

When new journals are requested for the collection, ongoing funds must be identified to support them. These funds can be derived from cancellation of journal titles designated by faculty as "low priority," transfer of funds from the monographic budget, allocation of departmental/grant funds, or use of collection funds for interdisciplinary titles from a general collection development fund. Departments are encouraged to regularly review and prioritize serial titles in their subject areas. Support for this process is provided by the subject liaison librarian.

High priority journals for Theatre include *American Theatre*, *Architectural Standards*, *Theatre Journal*, *Theatre Survey*, *TDR*, *Modern Drama*, *Theatre Research International*, *Modernism/Modernity*, and *New Theatre Quarterly*.

Dance high priority serial titles include *Dance Chronicle*, *Dance Magazine*, *JOPERD (Journal of Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance)*, *JODE (Journal of Dance Education)*, *Journal of Dance Medicine and Science*, *Dance Research*, *CORD News (Journal of Congress on Research in Dance)*, *Research in Dance Education*, *Contact Quarterly*, *Dance Teacher*, and *Studies in Dance History*.

New journals are selected on the basis of relevance to curricula, faculty demand, interlibrary loan demand, impact factors, and cost. Ideally, when a new title is selected, a back run of three to five years is acquired, if funds allow. The preferred format for purchase of back files is electronic.

Electronic Resources

The UB Libraries provide access to a wide variety of material through the electronic databases purchased. Major databases serving theatre and dance include:

Academic Search Complete

ACLS Humanities E-Book

American Journal of Dance Therapy

American Song

APS (American Periodical Series) Online (1741-1900)

Arts & Humanities Citation Index

ArtSTOR

CORD News

Dance Chronicle

Dance Magazine

Dance Research

Dance Research Journal

Dance Spirit

Dance Teacher

Humanities Source

Iter: Gateway to the Middle Ages and Renaissance

JODE – Journal of Dance Education

Journal of Dance, Medicine & Science

JSTOR: Arts & Sciences Collections I – VIII

MasterFILE Premier

Music Index

NAXOS Music Library

Oxford Music Online

Performance Journal

Periodicals Archive Online

Periodicals Index Online

Project Muse

Reader's Guide Retrospective 1890 – 1982

Research in Dance Education

RILM Abstracts of Music Literature

SDHS Journal – Society of Dance History Scholars

SPORTDiscus with Full Text

LexisNexis Academic

Section 6b) The subject liaison librarian along with assistance from the department's Library Committee maintains a list of highly desired resources to support the dance program. Each year, these items, from all disciplines are reviewed, prioritized and acquired on the basis of available resources. As new faculty are acquired and research interests grow and change, collections are reviewed and adjusted to reflect new areas of research within the department.

12/2014

University at Buffalo: <http://www.buffalo.edu/>

University Libraries: <http://ublib.buffalo.edu>