

Dance (M.A.)

About The Program:

The Dance Department offers programs of study leading to the Master of Arts, Master of Fine Arts, and Doctor of Philosophy degrees. All students are expected to develop a command of the discipline of dance, as a performing art and as both subject and medium of inquiry. The department's mission places high value on the role of dance in a pluralistic, multicultural society.

The M.A. in Dance is a research-centered degree that allows students to follow and integrate strands in cultural, creative and educational studies of dance. Through coursework blending experiential and theoretical inquiry and an in-depth thesis project, the program prepares students for doctoral education in dance and professional development in research, writing, creative process, and pedagogy.

Career Options: Graduates perform and choreograph with companies throughout the world, teach at all levels of education, serve as arts administrators and policymakers for the arts, and publish extensively.

Prerequisites for Admission: Bachelor's Degree in Dance or a related discipline.

Areas of Specialization: The M.A. in Dance is a research-centered degree that allows students to follow and integrate strands in cultural, creative, and educational studies of dance. Through coursework blending experiential and theoretical inquiry and an in-depth thesis project, the program prepares students for doctoral education in dance. It also provides master's level professional development in research, writing, the creative process, and pedagogy.

Requirements of Programs:

- **Total Credit Hours:** 30
- **Culminating Events:**

Master's Thesis:

The M.A. thesis is a substantial research project developed over three terms, culminating in a written thesis of 20,000 words. During Spring term of the first year of full-time study, students carry out bibliographic research, develop an annotated bibliography, and create a thesis proposal in a mentored seminar setting. A thesis advisor, with whom the student works until the completion of the project, is then determined. Prior to graduation, students make a formal presentation of their thesis research for dance faculty, students, and invited guests. Detailed guidelines for the M.A. thesis process and evaluation are found in the Graduate Handbook.

Core Courses

Dancing the City – In Dancing the City students explore the research methods of two powerful modes of inquiry - oral history and dance ethnography - in order to study the dance companies, communities of practice, and artists who interact in the unique spaces and dynamic social patterns of the city. Students theorize and think critically about the concepts of "space" and "the city," as they conduct individual

research studies on dance in its various socio-cultural manifestations in the city. NOTE: Prior to fall 2015, the course title was "Writing the City."

Dancing Self in Community – This course provides a site for autobiographical and community practice research. It enables a diverse entering body of graduate students to retrieve, situate, and articulate their personal histories in dance, including clarification of aesthetic values, both tacit and theorized, and to contribute their individual voices to a community performance project.

Embodied Craft – This is a studio course that also uses readings, group discussion, contemplative practices and writing to inform students' choices about all the elements necessary to craft dance including movement invention, spatial considerations, sound, music, silence, choreographic devices, performance arenas and dancers.

Educating Dance – This course addresses philosophical, historical, and contemporary perspectives in dance education. Topics include: history of education and arts/dance education, philosophical foundations of dance as a mode of learning, critical and feminist pedagogies in dance, social issues in dance teaching and learning (gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, culture, ability, age), and recent developments in cognitive neuroscience (embodied cognition) and technology.

Concepts of Culture – "Concepts of Culture" is a graduate course that seeks to show how dance practice is shaped through cultural production and how the moving body has the capacity to maintain, negotiate or re-imagine the social context in which it exists. It explores the meanings and values of "culture" and conceives culture as a site of contested power relations through which dominant structures are both maintained and challenged.

Research Methods in Dance – The course provides a foundational introduction to theories, methodologies, questions, and themes in contemporary dance research and fosters the capacity for students to develop a critical and analytical voice, as well as independent research skills. Students will immerse themselves in key texts (verbal, audio-visual, and kinesthetic) that illuminate epistemological foundations, historical trends, current practice, and future directions of dance as a mode of human inquiry.

Electives

Corporeal Improvisation (or a Technique course) – This course lays the groundwork for dance improvisation as technique, as inquiry, and as performance. Exercises to develop and deepen an experiential understanding of anatomy and physical laws serve to expand physical range and imagination. Practice of improvisational directives and personal experimentation of movement concepts and the elements of dance increase awareness of individual stylistic and movement preferences and strengths, as well as areas of weakness.

Other Dance Electives (6 credits)

Non-Didactic Courses

Master's Thesis in Dance – Limited to those who plan to complete the master's degree by writing a thesis. Note: This option is available only to those who have successfully completed DANCE 9951: Aesthetic and Philosophical Inquiry. Registration is done in advisement with major advisor.

Courses:

Click [HERE](#) for more information on the courses below.

- Dance Techniques
- Rhythm: Analysis, Performance and Composition
- Dance and the Child
- The Dancer and the Dance Medium
- The Creative Process and the Dance Symbol
- Corporeal Improvisation
- Graduate Repertory
- Performance Environments I: Dance Production
- Performance Environments II: Producing Dance
- Modern Dance Technique I B
- Modern Dance Technique II A
- Modern Dance Technique II B
- Modern Dance Technique III A
- Modern Dance Technique III B
- Modern Dance Technique IV A
- Modern Dance Technique IV B
- African I
- African II
- Intro Laban Movement Analysis
- Ballet Technique II
- Ballet Technique III
- Ballet Technique IV
- Dance on Video
- Pointe I
- Pilates: Body Condition
- Pilates II: Applications
- Movement Theater Workshop
- Apprenticeship in Dance
- Graduate Jazz Dance Level II
- Graduate Jazz Dance Level III
- Sound and Movement Partnerships
- Choreographing Philadelphia
- Modal Practice, Structure and Performance
- Studio Research
- Choreographic Projects
- Non-Western Dance Traditions
- Lighting Design for Dance
- Dancing the City
- Dancing Self in Community
- Embodied Craft
- Dance Science & Somatics
- The Body Politic
- Educational Inquiry in Dance
- Graduate Seminar
- Dance Teaching Seminar
- Apprenticeship in Teaching Dance
- Educating Dance
- Concepts of Culture
- Foundations of Cultural Studies
- Arts Advocacy
- Dance as a Mode of Learning
- Dance Administration
- Graduate Dance Composition
- Prof Portfolio Evaluation
- Special Topics in Dance
- Research Methods in Dance
- Neoclassicism and the Baroque Revival in Twentieth-Century Dance and Culture
- Somatic Theater
- Moving Across Genres
- Experience, Engagement and Multi-Sensory Inquiry
- Black Performance
- Dancing the Popular
- Dance and the Gendered Body: Historical Perspectives
- Bodies, Texts, History
- Meaning in Dance
- Dir Study in Dance Research
- Dance Field Experience
- Aesthetic and Philosophical Inquiry
- Research Structure: Dance Ethnography
- Master's Concert in Dance
- Directed Research-Dance
- Preliminary Examination Preparation
- Master's Project in Dance
- Master's Thesis in Dance