

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
WSU Program: Dance
Self-Study Document, Fall 2021

Author's Contact Information: Amanda Sowerby, asowerby@weber.edu

The following is a summary of the self-study document, highlighting important points. For complete information, please refer to the full self-study document itself.

Brief Introductory Statement

The dance area lives within the Department of Performing Arts (DPA) and participates in an annual strategic planning report that combines the three areas of Music, Dance, and Theatre.

Dance offers a BA in Dance, BA/BS in Dance Education K-12, an AA in Dance, a Dance Minor, and a Dance Teaching Minor. The program resides in the Val A. Browning Center for the Performing Arts and provides students with a broad study centered upon the art form's power to transform the individual and the community. The dance area's prioritization of community engagement weaves throughout all of our degree offerings, enhancing the quality of student learning and professionalizing experiences. Increased proficiency in written and oral communication skills, framed within the context of experiential learning, are the foundations for our dance courses; technique, composition, pedagogy, theory, culture, history, and performance studies.

Within the DPA, a primary responsibility of the dance area is to provide educational opportunities for majors, minors, and the general student body. Because of its position within the institution, dance actively aligns its goals to coordinate with the mission and vision of the University, the College of Arts & Humanities, and the Department of Performing Arts. The dance area is committed to providing a diverse and comprehensive curriculum that serves students within the DPA, across campus, and throughout our community via the General Education program, Concurrent Enrollment, and a variety of creative performance and choreographic opportunities; Orchesis Dance Theatre, Moving Company and annual participation with the American College Dance Association (ACDA) festival, the National Dance Education Organization (NDEO) and the Utah Dance Education Organization (UDEO), among others.

The dance faculty focus upon our art form's traditions to enhance creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, and communication. These skills are embedded in the language and practice of dance and prepare students for the evolving job market, to live as engaged individuals, embrace lifelong learning, and enrich society. In addition, faculty mentoring and advising of undergraduate dance majors helps to prepare students for professional careers in dance education (private sector, public school, and non-profit educational environments), dance makers, performers, digital dance artists, as well as additional career applications such as Dance Movement Therapy (DMT), physical therapy, arts administration, and preparation for graduate study.

Mission Statement

The Weber State University Dance area is part of the Department of Performing Arts in the Lindquist College of Arts & Humanities. Its mission aligns with the University Mission Statement emphasizing *Access, Learning, and Community*.

Learning – Students work closely with faculty, staff, community, and peers in the study of dance techniques, creative process, and history and theory. Students are supported to take risks and develop their point of view. They also develop research skills, attitudes, and understandings that are key to our art form and investigate dance's relationship to other subjects and disciplines.

Community – Students connect academic coursework and the tight-knit culture of public performance with community engagement. They explore diverse and inclusive perspectives and collaborate on high-impact projects that harness the power of Dance to impact our lives and our communities in order to foster greater equity.

Access – Through regular advisement and scholarship opportunities, students are supported in their efforts to complete their degree in an environment that supports student expression. The degree provides education for enthusiastic and energetic students to use their passion for the art form to guide their career interests or advanced study choices.

Curriculum

The dance area meets annually with Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) dance programs during the Majors Meetings to find consensus on transfer articulations, course numbering, and credit hours. In addition, our program meets with the USHE, BYU, and Westminster College dance programs annually during the Utah Dance Education Organization's High School Dance Day. At this meeting, our programs discuss how our common curriculum supports recruitment and retention efforts, private and

public sector dance education issues within the state, and balancing administrative duties, production logistics, and festival participation within our region.

Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment

Measurable Program Learning Outcomes (LO)

Bachelor of Arts in Dance

The Bachelor of Arts degree assists students in developing essential skills in academic dance performance and choreography. This degree is intended for students who plan to pursue a career in the field through performance, choreography, private-sector education, and advanced degrees in dance performance, education, choreography, or dance therapy.

Bachelor of Art/Bachelor of Science in Dance Education K-12

Bachelor of Arts in Dance Education degree provides students with competencies in professional dance education. In addition, the degree leads to secondary teacher certification with an elementary dance endorsement.

Associate of Arts in Dance

An Associate of Arts in Dance will indicate that a student has completed all WSU AA degree requirements and the foundation courses required for the Bachelor of Arts in Dance. Students who have completed the AA degree may continue with intermediate and advanced coursework for the BA.

Dance Minor

A dance minor is available for students not wishing to specialize but interested in dance and want a concentration of study in the area to complement an affiliated program of study.

Dance Teaching Minor

A dance teaching minor is available for students seeking a dance teaching concentration to complement an affiliated program.

At the end of their study at WSU, students in the dance area will become proficient in:

LO 1. Technique and Performance: Students will apply dance technique and kinesiological principles to improve as dancers and performers.

LO 2. Theory/Criticism: Students will apply and communicate the principles of dance theory and criticism.

LO 3. Creative Process: Engage in the evolving nature of the creative process.

LO 4 Meaning/Self Discovery: Students will discover, express, and gain ownership of their own point of view about dance.

The dance area curriculum provides for the following professionalizing skill acquisition:

- Oral communication – creative series, dance education courses, outreach & technique courses.
- Written communication – culture, history and theory courses, creative series, & technique courses.
- Research/Collaboration/Facilitation – creative series, dance education courses, outreach, and exposure of professionals in the field.
- Kinesthetic Understanding/Performance Studies – all courses.
- Digital Literacy & Production – Adobe Creative Suite, iMovie, Final Cut Pro, e-portfolios, lighting/sound/costume foundations basics, and performance production.

Faculty

Programmatic/Departmental Teaching Standards

The dance area has three full-time faculty members –one assistant professor and two full professors. Faculty members being considered for promotion or tenure are reviewed regularly as per the University Policies and Procedures 8-11; second-year chair review, third-year, sixth-year, and a post-tenure review every five years after that. For each review, beginning with the third year, the faculty member is assigned a Peer Review Committee to assess teaching effectiveness combined with student course evaluations and the faculty members' accompanying narrative response. Guidelines for tenure and promotion for the Department of Performing Arts are addressed in the department's Tenure and Promotion Document.

Dance Area faculty work together to assess the effectiveness of course offerings and make modifications to the curriculum as needed. Although not accredited, the dance area follows the National Association of Schools of Dance Standards and Guidelines for curriculum for the Bachelor of Art in Dance and the Bachelor of Art and Bachelor of Science in Dance Education.

Relationships with External Communities

Description of Role in External Communities

The dance area prides itself on the very consistent and engaging activities we maintain in the community. This has been a hallmark of our program for decades. As emerging dance makers, performers, and educators, our students thrive in a multitude of settings; public and private educational environments, non-profit organizations including residential and community centers, and health care facilities. Dance area faculty and staff have choreographed, directed, performed in, and provided technical design or support for productions for dance companies, universities, and high schools nationwide.

Dance area faculty and staff are members of and have participated in the governing boards of a variety of national and state dance organizations, including the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts Partners in Education Program, International Association of Blacks in Dance, National Dance Education Organization, International Association of Dance Medicine and Science, Dance Science and Somatics Educators, World Dance Alliance, and the Utah Dance Education Organization. Professor Erik Stern has widely published in well-regarded peer-reviewed journals.

The dance area is affiliated with Tamara Goldbogen, WSU Endowed Chair of the Beverley Taylor Sorenson for Arts Learning. Tamara and her team lead the WSU Arts Learning Collaborative, providing year-round professional learning opportunities in arts integration for K-12 teachers, instructional coaches, arts specialists, and WSU students. In addition, full-time dance faculty engage Utah K-12 public schools with masterclasses, guest lectures, supervising pre-service teachers, and Concurrent Enrollment instructors.

Across campus, dance area faculty have served with many offices, organizations, and University committees, including The Center for Community Engaged Learning, Faculty Senate, University Planning Committee, University Scholarship Committee, Sustainability Committee, and the General Education Revitalization Committee.

Results of Previous Program Reviews

Problem Identified	Action Taken	Progress
<p>Issue 1: <i>In the interest of increasing retention and boosting their numbers we think perhaps the program, with the help of the administration, could benefit by looking into the possibility of creating a two-year certificate and Associate Degree.</i></p>	Previous 5 Year Program Review:	Charge- create a 2-yr degree
	Year 1 Action Taken:	Investigate other AAs in Dance
	Year 2 Action Taken:	Discussions regarding transfer articulations.
	Year 3 Action Taken:	Exploring transfer articulation agreements with other 2-yr programs in dance.
	Year 4 Action taken:	The creation of an Associate of Art in Dance was completed in 2019.
<p>Issue 2 <i>We think assessment of student progress will be the next challenging task because dance is not an inherently quantifiable field. We recommend that they look for more ways to translate student progress into quantifiable measures without compromising the qualitative nature of dance.</i></p>	Previous 5 Year Program Review:	Charge- improve dance assessment measures and reporting.
	Year 1 Action Taken:	Improvements are made to clarify expectations for the senior capstone course DANC 4800 Creative Synthesis.
	Year 2 Action Taken:	Dance area integrating the use of rubrics more widely throughout the curriculum.
	Year 3 Action Taken:	Dance area clarifying proficiency standards for technique courses.
	Year 4 Action taken:	Annual assessments and NASD self-study facilitate the dance area's increase in articulating and documenting formative and summative evaluation in coursework.

<p>Issue 3 <i>We think it would be wise for the dance program faculty to articulate a long-term strategic plan. This would help them to outline their needs and be more persuasive in their arguments for additional support and faculty lines, by enabling them to tie the additional support to their curricular goals and plans for growth.</i></p>	Current 5 Year Program Review:	Charge- create a strategic plan.
	Year 1 Action to Be Taken:	Created S.W.O.T. analysis.
	Year 2 Action to Be Taken:	Began preparations for NASD review.
	Year 3 Action to Be Taken:	NASD Review/Site Visit
	Year 4 Action to Be Taken:	Future planning outcomes from the NASD review focus upon recruitment and retention efforts, engagement with area high school dance programs, and making time to graduation more efficient.
<p>Issue 4 From NASD Review Team <i>The Bachelor's degrees in Dance and Dance Education are credit-heavy.</i></p>	Current 5 Year Program Review: Charge- adjust credit load in BA/BS degrees.	Charge- streamline bachelor's degrees to make time to graduation more efficient.
	Year 1 Action to Be Taken:	Discussions and evaluation of curricular changes.
	Year 2 Action to Be Taken:	Modified technique course requirements (lessened credit requirements)
	Year 3 Action to Be Taken:	Modified Dance Education requirements (removed capstone).
	Year 4 Action to Be Taken:	Modified Dance Education requirements (lessened performance requirements.).

Appendix F: Site Visit Team (both internal and external members)

Name	Position	Affiliation
Dr. John Cavitt jcavitt@weber.edu	Professor of Zoology	Weber State University
Dr. Azenett Garza Caballero agarza@weber.edu	Professor of Psychology	Weber State University
Dmitri Peskov dmitri.peskov@snow.edu	Associate Professor, Dance	Snow College