

Assessment Cycle: 2019 Reporting

Overall Review: Report Approved

COMPLIANT

## Mission Statement

The University of South Florida School of Theatre and Dance is committed to developing creative and academic artists and scholars through rigorous training in the studio, creative and critical thinking in the classroom, and their synthesis in performance.

### Goal 1: Discipline-Specific Knowledge

Students earning an undergraduate degree in dance will be able to forge and investigate connections between dance and other spheres of knowledge.

#### 1a. Student Learning Outcome Statement

Audit Review: AC

Students will be able to creatively explore the intersections of dance with other disciplines and spheres of knowledge in ways that indicate originality, depth of inquiry and rigorous development of ideas.

#### 1b. Method of Assessment

Audit Review: AC

In the student's senior year, students demonstrate originality, depth of inquiry and rigorous development of ideas through their culminating capstone project: the independent research project. The independent research project is a senior capstone experience requiring the student to rigorously research and explore dance in connection with a secondary area of interest/study (i.e. education, business, psychology, anthropology, etc.). The independent research project presentation involves assessment by two faculty members. Achievement is assessed through a departmental rubric which encompasses the following qualifiers: unacceptable (0), acceptable (1), advanced (2), superior (3). The final Senior Independent Research Project is evaluated based upon the following rubric areas: • Student's level of engagement in investigation • Student's level of accomplishment of research objectives • Student's level of success exploring connections between dance and secondary area • Relevance and credibility of sources/resources • Level of organization • Development of ideas • Completion in timely manner • Overall Performance. Where discrepancies exist in faculty ratings, scores will be averaged or resolved via faculty discussion.

#### 1c. Performance Targets

Audit Review: AC

The program will be meeting its target if 95% of students receive advanced or superior scores on all areas of the rubric.

#### 1d. Assessment Results

Audit Review: AC

The program did not meet its target.

1/5 or 20% received advanced or superior scores on all areas of the rubric.

3/5 or 60% received acceptable scores on two or more areas of the rubric.

1/5 or 20% received unacceptable ratings on multiple areas of the rubric.

#### 1e. Use of Assessment Results

Audit Review: AC

It should be noted that the program has met this target in the past, and has increased the benchmark due to meeting these expectations. We have also looked more closely at where students made higher markings on the rubric (superior) versus slightly less high markings (advanced), in order to identify areas of improvement. When looking more closely at the assessment outcomes this time, areas of weakness include: organization of the paper, depth of critical inquiry and development of ideas, but there was noticeable variability amongst students (no obvious pattern to discern and a very small pool from which to assess results effectively). As was mentioned in last year's "use of assessment results," there are several adjustments we have made in the curriculum which we believe will improve this program outcome and address areas of weakness. First, we split the Research in Dance course into a 2 course sequence to give the BA students more time to learn research methods and tools, explore their topic of interest, formulate a well-developed research purpose, complete a literature review on their topic and ultimately develop a full research proposal. We will be able to see the effects of that curricular change potentially in the BA student projects of spring 2020. Other assessments have also generally indicated that we need to find ways to increase the students' critical thinking skills in the program, so we also added a new course for dance majors at the sophomore level titled,

"Understanding the Dance Experience." This course combines creative and critical inquiry skills (dance analysis in relation to cultural, historical, political and social contexts). The effects of both of these curricular changes combined will be assessed in the senior cohort of fall 2021 and spring 2022.

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#### Plan Review Comments

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#### Report Review Comments

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### Goal 2: Critical Thinking Skills

Students earning an undergraduate degree in dance will demonstrate critical and creative thinking skills to equip them for making valuable contributions to the dance profession and navigating challenges.

#### 1a. Student Learning Outcome Statement

*Audit Review: AC*

Students will be able to proficiently observe, describe, and analyze dance qualitatively and in context.

#### 1b. Method of Assessment

*Audit Review: AC*

In the Choreography IV course, which is the final choreography course in the students' sequence, students are given a written assignment which demonstrates their ability to proficiently observe, describe and analyze dance qualitatively and in context. The rubric for this assessment method is still being refined by faculty as it is a new assessment piece. Assessment is performed by at least two faculty members using a departmental rubric which addresses the students' written dance observation and analysis skills on a scale of unacceptable (0), acceptable (1), advanced (2), and superior (3). The rubric (revised for 2019 assessment) currently asks these 6 questions:

1. Descriptions of movement and choreographic choices are detailed, relevant, and evocative.
2. Descriptions of additional design elements that inform the work are detailed, relevant, and evocative.
3. Analysis indicates a more comprehensive understanding of the dance's function in relation to social, political, and/or aesthetic aspects
4. Analysis demonstrates the logical development of ideas and insights.
5. Analysis indicates a creative and critical examination of the relationship between the movement and its interpretation, leading to meaning-making.
6. Student demonstrates a linkage of disparate ideas by developing an interpretation grounded in observable movement qualities, choreographic choices, and design elements.

Where discrepancies in ratings exist, scores will be averaged or resolved via faculty discussion.

#### 1c. Performance Targets

*Audit Review: AC*

Success of the program goal will be indicated if at least 80% of students achieve superior or advanced in all rubric areas on the written assignment.

#### 1d. Assessment Results

*Audit Review: AC*

There was only 1 BA student and this student received advanced/superior scores in all areas of the rubric (100%). The performance target was met in relation to the BA Program, but it should be recognized that there was only one BA student to assess in this pool.

If looking at the cohort as a whole, BFA and BA students, the following are the results and the performance target was not met.

4/14 or 29% received advanced or superior scores on all areas of the rubric.

10/14 or 71% received acceptable scores on one or more areas of the rubric.

### 1e. Use of Assessment Results

Audit Review: AC

If looking at only the one BA student, the target was met which is an improvement over last year. If looking at both BFA and BA students as a cohort, the program did not meet its performance target for this measure (80% target), and the results are very similar to last year's. The rubric for this measure has been refined over time and so has the assignment itself. Still, this measure with its associated rubric is relatively new.

If looking at the cohort as a whole and not breaking down BFA versus BA students, the following can be noted:

Often the first two questions of the rubric regarding describing design elements, including movement and choreography, receive higher scores; however, linking those descriptive observations to a more depthful analysis and *selectively* determining what is important to discuss in the analysis and why seems to be the area which needs to be improved. Based on these results, this assignment will be re-crafted a bit more and broken down into smaller mini-assignments which target the skill of analysis more explicitly. Thus, when the students are asked to perform this culminating analysis assignment, they will have had additional preparatory tools.

Also, as was noted in last year's 2018 "use of assessment results," in which a similar observation was made, we believe that the recent curricular changes we have made may strengthen this area of weakness. These curricular changes include adding a course for dance majors which emphasizes creative and critical thinking - dance analysis contextualized in cultural, social, and political frameworks. This course will be taken in the sophomore year, and we will not see the results of this change in terms of assessment until spring 2021, because the curricular change began in 2018, meaning that the freshmen cohort will take it in fall 2019 as sophomores and then will be assessed for this learning outcome in the spring of their junior year 2021.

We will also consider adjusting the performance target.

### Plan Review Comments

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### Report Review Comments

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### Goal 3: Communication Skills

Students earning an undergraduate degree in dance will be able to communicate effectively and in ways that engage and attend to important societal issues.

#### 1a. Student Learning Outcome Statement

Audit Review: AC

Students will be able to create and deliver effective verbal presentations through a direct action research project in the capstone Senior Seminar course.

#### 1b. Method of Assessment

Audit Review: AC

In the capstone Senior Seminar course, students present an action research project, advocating for a particular issue of concern within the local, regional, national, or global community. The students demonstrate their communication skills in the final oral presentation which is evaluated within a rubric of expectations rated as: superior/advanced/acceptable/unacceptable for each area. Rubric areas include: validity and development of speech content, speech delivery effectiveness, critical thinking, professionalism, and overall effort. At least 2 faculty score the final oral presentations. Where discrepancies in ratings exist amongst faculty, scores will be averaged or resolved via faculty discussion.

**1c. Performance Targets**

*Audit Review: AC*

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Dance students are expected to present a well-organized, well-articulated, convincing argument for the position advocated as well as

demonstrate adequate research and meaningful engagement with the topic. Success of the program goal will be demonstrated if at least 80% of students receive advanced or superior ratings on all areas of the rubrics.

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**1d. Assessment Results**

*Audit Review: AC*

1/3 or 33% of BA's received adv/superior scores on all areas of the rubric.  
2/3 or 66% of BA's received one or more acceptable scores on the rubric.  
No BA students received an unacceptable on any area of the rubric.

The performance target was not met.

If not broken down between BFA and BA students, the performance as a whole is:  
8/18 or 44% received advanced or superior scores on all areas of the rubric.  
9/18 or 50% of students received one or more acceptable scores on the rubric.  
1/18 or 5% received one or more unacceptable scores on the rubric.

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**1e. Use of Assessment Results**

*Audit Review: AC*

This is an area in which the program usually meets or exceeds the performance target; however, we speculate that as the assignment and its expectations has become more fine-tuned, with refining of the rubric as well, faculty are gaining clarity and consensus around performance expectations as well. Another consideration is that this result is an outlier and does not reflect the consistently high performance on this measure for the program as a whole.

Question #9 appears to have the lower scores when compared to other areas of the rubric, for most students.

“The student clearly articulates their parameters for assessing the success and impact of the project.”

The instructor will provide additional examples/models to the students to help them understand what the expectation for self-assessment/evaluation of the project is and how to better determine realistic impact and success markers and communicate this aspect effectively to the audience. Faculty will consider adjustment of the performance target as well.

It was noted that there were more discrepancies in ratings between faculty this time. These were resolved via discussion. To help refine the scoring process, aiming for clarity and consistency in the program expectations, the assessments with the highest scores and lowest scores will be reviewed with the full faculty as a point of reference for future scoring consistency and a discussion of program expectations.

We also believe that the curricular changes we have made will help support outcomes on this measure, but the effects of those curricular changes will not be seen in the senior cohort until fall 2021 and spring 2022 assessments occur.

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**Plan Review Comments**

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**Report Review Comments**

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**Goal 4: Other (non-ALC)**

Students earning an undergraduate degree in dance will be able to demonstrate leadership and civic engagement skills.

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**1a. Student Learning Outcome Statement**

*Audit Review: AC*

Students will be able to explore a topic in their community through a research-related direct action project in which they identify a problem or issue of local, regional, national or global significance and devise a creative advocacy action plan

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**1b. Method of Assessment**

*Audit Review: AC*

In the final oral presentation of the capstone Senior Seminar class, Dance Majors demonstrate their leadership and civic engagement skills by exploring a problem or issue of local, regional, national or global significance and devising a creative advocacy action plan. Achievement is scored using a departmental rubric with the following qualifiers: unacceptable (0), acceptable (1), advanced (2), superior (3). The evaluation includes the following areas: effective organization of ideas and information, evidence of meaningful engagement with the topic or issue, adequate research to support the action plan design, ethical awareness, defined parameters to assess success of the project, presentation clarity, level of critical thinking, level of professionalism, and level of effort applied. Multiple faculty attend the final oral presentations. Assessment is performed by at least two faculty members. Where discrepancies exist in ratings, averages will be compiled or agreement via discussion will occur.

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**1c. Performance Targets**

*Audit Review: AC*

Success of the program will be considered met if at least 80% of students achieve advanced or superior scores in all applicable areas of the rubric.

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**1d. Assessment Results**

*Audit Review: AC*

The program did not meet its target. (note: first year assessing this new goal, new SLO and refined rubric)

1/3 or 33% of BA's received adv/superior scores on all areas of the rubric.

2/3 or 66% of BA's received one or more acceptable scores on the rubric.

No BA students received an unacceptable on any area of the rubric.

When looking at the cohort as a whole BA's and BFA's:

8/18 or 44% received advanced or superior scores on all areas of the rubric.

9/18 or 50% of students received one or more acceptable scores on the rubric.

1/18 or 5% received one or more unacceptable scores on the rubric.

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**1e. Use of Assessment Results**

*Audit Review: AC*

Note: This is the first year assessing this new goal and SLO with refined rubric.

Question #9 appears to have the lower scores when compared to other areas of the rubric, for most students.

“The student clearly articulates their parameters for assessing the success and impact of the project.”

The instructor will provide additional examples/models to the students to help them understand what the expectation for self-assessment/evaluation of the project is and how to better determine realistic impact and success markers and communicate this aspect effectively to the audience. Faculty will consider adjustment of the performance target as well.

It was noted that there were more discrepancies in ratings between faculty this time. These were resolved via discussion. To help refine the scoring process, aiming for clarity and consistency in the program expectations, the assessments with the highest scores and lowest scores will be reviewed with the full faculty as a point of reference for future scoring consistency and a discussion of program expectations.

We also believe that the curricular changes we have made will help support outcomes on this measure, but the effects of those curricular changes will not be seen in the senior cohort until fall 2021 and spring 2022 assessments occur.

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**Plan Review Comments**

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**Report Review Comments**

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**Assessment Methods**

**Course Related Assessments**

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- Oral Presentation
- Written Report or Essay
- Course Embedded Assignment
- Project Evaluation

**Cumulative Assessments**

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- Faculty Designed Comprehensive or Capstone Examination and Assignment

**Performance Related Assessments**

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**External-course Assessments**

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**Standard Assessments**

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