



---

## Proposal to the Senate Educational Policy Committee

### PROPOSAL TITLE: Revisions to the MFA in Dance

**SPONSOR:** Sara Hook, Professor, MFA committee member and former Director of the MFA Program.  
[sarahook@illinois.edu](mailto:sarahook@illinois.edu), 217-898-8660

**COLLEGE CONTACT:** Michael Andrejasich, Associate Dean, College of Fine and Applied Arts,  
[andrejas@illinois.edu](mailto:andrejas@illinois.edu), 333-6061

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION:

Remove requirement for DANC 531 – MFA Prof Practice Seminar (1 hour), DANC 532 – Digital Media for Dancers (2 hours), and reducing Historical and Theoretical Studies category from 9 to 8 hours. Reduce Physical Practice requirement from 12 hours to 6 hours and Composition requirement from 6 hours to 4 hours. Proposed new requirements include DANC 530 – Somatics in Dance Training (3 hours), DANC 562 – Graduate Composition II (2 hours), DANC 520 - Synthesis Laboratory (twice for a total of 8 hours) and a Non-Dance Elective category (4 hours). Increase elective category from 12 hours to 17 hours. Total credits required for the degree **remains** 60 hours.

### JUSTIFICATION:

#### Requirements Proposed for Elimination:

We propose making DANC 531 – MFA Professional Practice Seminar an elective because the content in that course is now being partly delivered in the DANC 520 - Synthesis Laboratory and because we have developed holistic advising processes that address career issues throughout the students' tenure as MFA candidates. The course will remain as an elective that we offer periodically on special career related topics.

We propose to make DANC 532 - Digital Media for Dancers, an elective because MFA students are entering the program with competent skills in digital media already. This course will remain as an elective and offered to students who desire to explore digital media at a more advanced level.

We propose reducing the 9 hours of Historical and Theoretical Studies to 8 hours and specifying that those are met through the following courses: DANC 510 – Grad Seminar/Special Topics, DANC 541 – Contemporary Directions I, and DANC 542 – Contemporary Directions II.

**Requirements Proposed for Reduction in Number of Hours of Physical Practice:** We propose reducing the number of required physical practice hours because the defined focus of our degree is in choreography (not performance). In addition, increasing numbers of our graduate students are dance professionals returning to school to study the scholarship of dance and choreography, not traditional technique. We propose that at least two of those hours be met through DANC 560 – Advanced Physical Practice, which is a course offered exclusively for graduate level students.

We propose reducing the number of required hours in Composition from 6 to 4. The four hours will be met through DANC 462 – Composition Workshop and DANC 562 – Graduate Composition II. Choreographic composition is a major focus of DANC 520 - Synthesis Laboratory, which we propose requiring (see below).

**Proposed New Requirements:** We propose requiring DANC 530 - Somatics in Dance Training. Our department is partly defined by its long association with somatic expertise and many students come here precisely because of that reputation and because somatic practices are increasingly relevant in contemporary dance education. Additionally, this course ensures our graduate students receive pedagogic theoretic underpinnings, practice in articulating their teaching philosophy, and peer and faculty observations in a teaching environment within a formal structure.

We propose requiring DANC 520 – Synthesis Laboratory (taken twice for total of 8 hours). The addition of the Graduate Synthesis Laboratory is in response to two major recent shifts in our field: increased inter-disciplinarity and the questioning of “sole authorship”. This course, which synthesizes experiences in choreography, physical practice, teaching, written and oral communication, and creative career planning, also creates community among our graduate population as they solve and contemplate problems collaboratively and defend and define their choreographic research trajectory. Critical theory and inquiry are intertwined with rigorous examination of performance and construction of dance-making. Issues of sustaining practice, testing and conveying one’s mission and vision and elaborating on one’s individual choreographic research in relationship to contemporary peers in the field will be emphasized.

We also propose the addition of the requirement that students take four hours of coursework at the 400- or 500-level, OUTSIDE the Department of Dance in order to foster interdisciplinary approaches and to bolster students’ individual research with theoretical information from other disciplines.

**Requirement Proposed for an Increase in Number of Elective Hours:** We want to create a flexible program because of intensifying interdisciplinary expectations within the field of contemporary dance in both the professional and academic arenas and because we want flexibility to be a distinctive feature of our program. In addition, we believe that helping students design a curriculum specifically related to their research agenda is philosophically critical.

#### **BUDGETARY AND STAFF IMPLICATIONS:**

- a. Additional staff and dollars needed  
None
- b. Internal reallocations (e.g., change in class size, teaching loads, student-faculty ratio, etc.)  
Class size for some courses will increase from 4-6 students to 8-12 students.
- c. Effect on course enrollment in other units and explanations of discussions with representatives of those departments-minimal

We anticipate that there will be very minimal impact on other units. We propose requiring only 4 hours of study outside of Dance.

- d. Impact on the University Library  
No Impact – letter of acknowledgement is attached.
- e. Impact on computer use, laboratory use, equipment, etc.  
No Impact

**DESIRED EFFECTIVE DATE:** Fall 2015

**STATEMENT FOR PROGRAMS OF STUDY CATALOG:** *(All proposals must include either a new or revised version of the entry in the Programs of Study Catalog, if applicable. Entries will be published as approved by the Senate. Future changes in the statement for Programs of Study Catalog which reflect changes in the curriculum, must go through the normal review process at the appropriate levels.)*

## Dance

**Major:** Dance

**Degrees Offered:** M.F.A.

### Graduate Degree Program

The Department of Dance offers a graduate program leading to the Master of Fine Arts degree. The mission of the MFA Program is to foster substantive choreographic research that posits dance as a force in contemporary culture. The program embraces a wide spectrum of individual movement research and embodied practice to create a dynamic learning atmosphere for critical engagement with choreographic process.

The Dance Department expects MFA candidates to conduct a creative inquiry that leads to the development of a sophisticated sense of self-definition. Individual research and analysis should culminate in the development of a personal artistic process and mission and should be evident in the following contexts:

**Choreographing-** Candidates will develop a distinctive choreographic research methodology and demonstrate its skillful application in a performative context. This artistic process/vision/field of interest must establish a solid foundation for ongoing research and engagement that contributes to the global dialogue about dance and contemporary culture.

**Communicating-** Candidates will develop the ability to express their choreographic vision and process in verbal and written language that is clear, cogent, and demonstrates clear analytic skill, critical thinking, awareness of historical context, and knowledge of contemporary culture.

**Moving-** Candidates will demonstrate a commitment to movement investigation and practice that defines, advances, and sustains their choreographic vision.

**Teaching-**Candidates will apply their research vision in clear pedagogic principles while fostering a stimulating teaching/ learning environment.

**Developing a Career Plan-** Candidates will devise bold and innovative career strategies in order to advance their

artistic mission in the field and demonstrate the capacity to implement these plans with professionalism in all the above contexts.

## Admission Requirements

Prerequisites for admission to the MFA program are: 1) An undergraduate degree in dance is preferred, but we do accept students with undergraduate degrees in other subjects. Depending on background and skills, students may be expected to complete other dance requirements. 2) A minimum grade point average of 3.0 on a 4 point scale, computed from the last 60 hours of undergraduate work and any graduate work completed. 3) Demonstrated potential to engage in critical thinking and writing as evidenced by application materials and live interview with the MFA committee. 4) Demonstrated choreographic skill and the potential to make an innovative contribution to the field of choreography as evidenced by submission of choreographic video portfolio and a live audition.

International students must have a minimum TOEFL score of 79 on the internet-based test, 213 on the computer-based tests, or 550 on the paper test for limited status admission. Students with these minimum scores must take the English as a Second Language Placement Test (EPT) upon entry to the University. International students who receive a score greater than 103 on the internet-based test, 257 on the computer-based test, or 613 on the paper test are eligible for full status admission. Students with these scores are exempt from the English as a Second Language Placement Test. The GRE is not required.

## Degree Requirements

### Master of Fine Arts

Physical Practice (at least 2 hours through DANC 560)	6
Historical and Theoretical Studies (DANC 510, 541, 542)	8
Composition (DANC 462 and 562)	4
Performance (DANC 420-424)	2
Research/Project (thesis) (DANC 598)	8
Graduate Synthesis Laboratory (DANC 520)	8
Somatics in Dance Training (DANC 530)	3
400/500 level course outside the department. of dance in related area of research	4
Electives, which may be taken in dance or related areas of interest	17
<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>60</b>

### Other Requirements:\*

Course work taken to complete undergraduate deficiencies will not receive graduate credit  
Residency requirement of three years (six semesters)

**Minimum GPA:** 2.75

Some degree of curricular flexibility is permitted depending on previous experience and current interests and goals. Cross-disciplinary work and independent study in areas of interest are encouraged. The ability of the candidates to pursue graduate study is assessed at the midterm of the second semester in the first and second year in residence, at which time a decision is made regarding continuation in the program. A third year review

in the Fall semester will determine if thesis production and writing are progressing sufficiently.

**CLEARANCES:** (Clearances should include signatures and dates of approval. **These signatures must appear on a separate sheet.** If multiple departments or colleges are sponsoring the proposal, please add the appropriate signature lines below.)

Signatures:



July 24, 2014

Unit Representative:

Date:

College Representative:

Date:

Graduate College Representative:

Date:

Council on Teacher Education Representative:

Date:

**Appendix A:**  
**(Budgetary and Staff Implications)**  
*(Replace the following material with your appendix, if any.)*

---

**Revised Programs – Notes on Budgetary and Staff Implications**

Although this proposal will result in a small increase of class size for some courses, we feel this enhances our program and brings our practices more in line with university policies on class size (8 minimum). A slightly larger critical mass of students in these lecture/ seminar classes increases the debate, sharpens discussion, and contributes to the creation of a “community” of MFA in Dance students.

The revised programs of study plan enables us to offer some courses on an every other year basis instead of yearly, thus having an overall affect of decreasing faculty load. We feel that this will give faculty more time for one on one mentoring and advising which is of vital importance on the graduate level.

We are proposing to require 4 hours of credit earned from a unit outside the department of dance. These credits must be on a 400- or 500-level. We will encourage students to choose courses that enhance their individual choreographic research. Most of our current students already take at least 4 hours of credit outside the department of dance in areas such as Gender and Women’s Studies, Anthropology, Philosophy, Art and Design, Latina/Latino Studies, Religion etc. Because this practice has been in effect for many years and because we have so few students and because their areas of interest are so varied, we feel confident in our statement that MINIMAL IMPACT will be felt.

The only impact on university resources we foresee is increased use and competition for studio space for individual choreographic research. This need has been anticipated and fully met by the recent renovation of the Graduate Dance Center (formally Art Annex).

**Appendix B:**  
**(Proposed Curriculum Revisions)**  
*(Replace the following material with your appendix, if any.)*

---

<b>Current Requirements:</b>	<b>Current Hours</b>	<b>Revised Requirements:</b>	<b>Revised Hours</b>
Physical Practice	12-18	Physical Practice	6
DANC 531 - MFA Prof Practice Seminar	1		
DANC 532 - Digital Media for Dancers	2		
Electives	12 min	Elective Requirement	17
Historical and Theoretical Studies	9	This is met by DANC 510, DANC 541, and DANC 542, which are currently already required	8
Composition	6	DANC 462 and DANC 562	4
Performance	2	Performance	2
DANC 598 Creative Thesis Project	8	DANC 598 Thesis	8
		DANC 530	3
		DANC 520 (new course)	8
		Non-Dance electives (400- or 500-level)	4
<b>Total Required Hours</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>Total Required Hours</b>	<b>60</b>



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

EP.15.28

Office of the Provost and Vice Chancellor  
for Academic Affairs

Swanlund Administration Building  
601 East John Street  
Champaign, IL 61820



November 7, 2014

Gay Miller, Chair  
Senate Committee on Educational Policy  
Office of the Senate  
228 English Building, MC-461

Dear Professor Miller:

Enclosed is a copy of a proposal from the College of Fine and Applied Arts and the Graduate College to revise the M.F.A. in Dance.

The proposal has been approved by the College of Fine and Applied Arts and the Graduate College Executive Committee. It now requires Senate review.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Kristi A. Kuntz'.

Kristi A. Kuntz  
Associate Provost

Enclosures

c: J. Hart  
N. Hodge  
S. Hook

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Graduate College

204 Coble Hall  
801 South Wright Street  
Champaign, IL 61820-6210



Executive Committee

October 23, 2014

2014-2015 Members

Sarah Lubienski, Interim  
Dean & Chair  
Graduate College

Kathryn Martensen  
Office of the Provost  
207 Swanlund MC-304

Members

Abbas Aminmansour  
Architecture

Dear Kathy,

Dilip Chhajed  
Business Administration

Enclosed please find the proposal for revisions to the MFA in Dance. The Graduate College Executive Committee has approved this proposal.

Wojciech Chodzko-Zajko  
Kinesiology & Community  
Health

The proposal was first received at the Graduate College on July 28, 2014, and was reviewed by the Graduate College Program Subcommittee at their August 26, 2014 meeting. The Subcommittee noted that the total hours required for the degree remains 60 and no impact on enrollments is anticipated. The proposal was approved pending some minor revision to Appendix A. The revised Appendix A was received. The proposal was then reviewed by the Executive Committee at their October 17, 2014 meeting.

Susan Cole  
Social Work

John D'Angelo  
Mathematics

Nicki Engeseth  
Food Science & Human  
Nutrition

Susan Fowler  
Special Education

Marie Heffernan  
Psychology

Paul Hergenrother  
Chemistry

Jack Juvik  
Crop Sciences

Samantha Knoll  
Mechanical Science &  
Engineering

John Lambros  
Aerospace Engineering

Glaucio Paulino  
Civil & Environmental  
Engineering

Dana Rabin  
History

Carla Santos  
Recreation, Sport and  
Tourism

Renée Trilling  
English

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John C. Hart'.

John C. Hart  
Associate Dean, Graduate College

c: M. Andrejasich  
A. Edwards  
S. Hook  
A. Kopera  
A. McKinney

RECEIVED  
OCT 27 2014  
Office of the Provost

**Senate Educational Policy Committee  
Proposal Check Sheet**

**RECEIVED**  
**OCT 27 2014**  
Office of the Provost

**PROPOSAL TITLE** (Same as on proposal): Revisions to the MFA in Dance

**PROPOSAL TYPE** (select all that apply below):

A.  Proposal for a **NEW** or **REVISED** degree program. Please consult the Programs of Study Catalog for official titles of existing degree programs.

1. Degree program level:

Graduate                       Professional                       Undergraduate

2.  Proposal for a new **degree** (e.g. B.S., M.A. or Ph.D.):

    Degree name, "e.g., *Bachelor of Arts or Master of Science*": \_\_\_\_\_

3.  Proposal for a new or revised **major, concentration, or minor**:

New or  Revised **Major** in (name of existing or proposed major): MFA in Dance

New or  Revised **Concentration** in (name of existing or proposed concentration): \_\_\_\_\_

New or  Revised **Minor** in (name of existing or proposed minor): \_\_\_\_\_

4.  Proposal to rename an existing major, concentration, or minor:

Major                       Concentration                       Minor

    Current name: \_\_\_\_\_

    Proposed new name: \_\_\_\_\_

5.  Proposal to terminate an existing degree, major, concentration, or minor:

Degree                       Major                       Concentration                       Minor

    Name of existing degree, major, or concentration: \_\_\_\_\_

6.  Proposal involving a multi-institutional degree:

New                       Revision                       Termination

    Name of existing Illinois (UIUC) degree: \_\_\_\_\_

    Name of non-Illinois partnering institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of non-Illinois partnering institution:

State of Illinois       US State: \_\_\_\_\_       Foreign country: \_\_\_\_\_

- B.  Proposal to create a new academic unit (college, school, department, program or other academic unit):

Name of proposed new unit: \_\_\_\_\_

- C.  Proposal to rename an existing academic unit (college, school, department, or other academic unit):

Current name of unit: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed new name of unit: \_\_\_\_\_

- D.  Proposal to reorganize existing units (colleges, schools, departments, or program):

1.  Proposal to change the status of an existing and approved unit (e.g. change from a program to department)

Name of current unit including status: \_\_\_\_\_

2.  Proposal to transfer an existing unit:

Current unit's name and home: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed new home for the unit: \_\_\_\_\_

3.  Proposal to merge two or more existing units (e.g., merge department A with department B):

Name and college of unit one to be merged: \_\_\_\_\_

Name and college of unit two to be merged: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed name and college of new (merged) unit: \_\_\_\_\_

4.  Proposal to terminate an existing unit:

Current unit's name and status: \_\_\_\_\_

- E.  **Other educational policy proposals** (e.g., academic calendar, grading policies, etc.)

Nature of the proposal: \_\_\_\_\_

Revised 10/2012