

**ACADEMIC FACULTY INFORMATION FORM**  
**For the period September 1, 2020 thru August 31, 2021**

**Please note:**

- For specific information regarding the Trustees' requirements for evaluation and promotion, please refer to the Faculty Handbook.
- Faculty members should consult with their chair, personnel committee, mentor, and/or dean regarding specific expectations for reappointment and promotion.
- Each item on this form does not necessarily apply to every member, discipline, or department; therefore, some items may be left blank.
- Faculty are encouraged to include in their response information on interdisciplinary and cross-departmental work related to their teaching, scholarship/creative activities, and service.
- This form is in effect for faculty members whose initial appointment date is after July 1, 2019.

**General Information**

**Name:** Cynthia DuFault

**Title:** Assistant Professor

**Department:** Theatre and Dance

<b>Fall 2020</b>			
<b>Courses Taught</b> <i>(Including Independent Studies, Internships, etc.)</i>	<b>Course Designator or Attribute</b>	<b>Enrollment 2020</b>	<b>Additional Contextual Information</b>
Beginning Ballet	DANC 110	13	non-majors/majors/minors
Intermediate Ballet	DANCE 234	10	non-majors/majors/minors
Performance and Production	DANC 309	24	majors/minors (Student Choreography Concert/Media Dance Works: Performers and Technical Production Crew)
Special Problems: Technique	DANC 385	3	majors (combined w/ DANC 441 or 234)
Special Projects: Composition	DANC 390	9	majors/minors (Student Choreography Concert/Media Dance Works)
Modern Technique III	DANC 421	15	majors/minors (combined w/ 421)
Modern Technique IV	DANC 441	7	majors/minors (combined w/ 421)
<b>Spring 2021</b>			
<b>Courses Taught</b> <i>(including Independent Studies, Internships, etc.)</i>	<b>Course Designator or Attribute</b>	<b>Enrollment 2021</b>	<b>Additional Contextual Information</b>
Beginning Ballet	DANC 110	11	non-majors/majors/minors
Modern Technique I	DANC 222	6	majors/minors (combined w/ 321)
Intermediate Ballet	DANCE 235	8	non-majors/majors/minors
Modern Technique II	DANC 322	5	majors/minors (combined w/ 221)
New Repertory	DANC325	3	majors/minors (Faculty Dance Concert Performers)
Performance and Production	DANC 310	11	majors/minors (Student Choreography Concert/Media Dance Works: Performers and Technical Production Crew)
Special Problems: Technique	DANC 385	1	majors (combined w/ DANC 235)
Senior Choreography Project	DANC 494	4	majors/minors (Senior Choreography Concert/Media Dance Works: Performers and Technical Production Crew)

**Course Releases (e.g., academic/service leaves and sabbaticals) – credit hours/units received:** N/A.

**Advising** - number of advisees 20 Describe your availability, mentoring provided, and methods used to assess advising effectiveness:

### **Availability**

With the rapid shift to remote learning, academic advising had to be adapted, as well. I communicated with them via email, Zoom, or in chat sessions to make sure they were doing well, both personally and academically, and I tried to detect any challenges they might have been facing. In cases where students had questions, concerns, or class issues, for example, I had an online appointment book that displayed my schedule availability, and students could schedule appointments quick and stress-free. In experiencing virtual advising through an impersonal means like Zoom, the benefit for students was, to a degree, 24/7 availability. However, the main challenge with virtual advising included issues of connectivity, and both students and I determined that virtual advising would not successfully replicate the 'encouragement factor' found in the face-to-face advising. I will continue to use the tools for setting up appointments as well as occasional virtual settings, when necessary, but students and I both look forward to returning to face-to-face advising.

### **Mentoring Provided**

My goal has been to offer guidance to students toward success in their academic careers. I was finding myself being there for students not only to explore options and opportunities to achieve their academic and personal goals but, also, being there through difficult times. For example, advisees not only expressed interest in internships, campus jobs, study-abroad programs, or to select a major or minor in dance or other fields, they also asked for real human-needs help.

Throughout the academic year, I researched on-campus resources for students, which was an eye-opener for me. I felt I understood many campus policies and resources, but I learned that the college has more resources than I was originally aware of, most of which were fairly new resources. For example, connecting students with the variety of campus resources such as the many facets within Student Affairs, the Student Success Center, Bear Care, Care Enough to Call, the Bridges program, the college library services, and Career Services have all been helpful resources in helping students transition and thrive during this very difficult academic year.

It was my hope that students and I could also see the whole picture of advising, so we could be successful in each of our roles in the advisement process. I feel confident in my part to provide guidance and direction so students could be successful during these times of the pandemic and beyond. Equally, I am pleased with all the work of the students including:

- keeping all scheduled appointments,
- informing me of any issues they had in their classes or personal lives that impacted their academic progress,
- keeping track of their program outline and following their degree requirements,
- being responsible and accountable for making their own final decisions based on the advice received,
- contacting me with questions about majors, minors, and the registration process,
- and most importantly, attending classes, studying hard, and doing regular check-ins with me.

### **Methods Used to Assess Advising Effectiveness**

I used the academic advising *Values and Vision* of the College as a reference while guiding students through the academic policies and procedures and in making informed academic choices to reach their

goals. I also used this as a guide to assess my advising effectiveness. Two additional strategies that I kept in mind were that advising should be a continual process, not just limited to approval of courses, and that advising is a 50/50 partnership.

In focusing on creating an inclusive view of student advising, I sought to build an understanding and trusting relationship with my advisees. As students make lots of choices that directly affect their academic career path, many challenges of the year made those choices difficult to navigate. During these times, students particularly needed guidance with decision-making skills, and I paid close attention to the development and identification of student goals and objectives related to their career path as well as their end of semester detectable outcomes. In so doing, I made it a point to support their needs for planning out a clear academic outline, for reaching those goals, and for seniors successfully graduating on time, – in two cases, close to it.

I also created opportunities to improve my own understanding and practice in the advisement process. In past years, I advised students by providing as much information as possible, including prescribing course schedules and activities to students based on their individual interests or declared major. Upon doing so, I felt that I needed to be more than just assisting students with their course scheduling. As well, after gaining more advisees and many of them needing supplementary guidance as they shifted into online learning, this style became less practical.

I researched appreciative and developmental advising and recognized that these styles better coincided to how I address students in my pedagogical approach. I learned that appreciative advising is a style that gave students the ability to reflect on their strengths, goals, and dreams, and developmental advising allowed students and me to collaborate toward those goals and shared responsibilities for getting tasks done.

When deciding to develop stronger relationships with my advisees, I wanted to take a more intentional and collaborative approach by asking positive, open-ended questions. I wanted to help students improve their educational experience and achieve their dreams, goals, and potentials. This allowed both the student and I to discuss academic and career goals, while I encouraged them to commit to a route of achieving those goals all the way through the year, and for some, through to graduation. This also assisted students with setting realistic goals and developing an academic plan to meet those goals, especially during this time of the pandemic. With a goal to teach some students to become more independent thinkers, this route also taught them to problem-solve on their own and transition into taking more responsibility for their own course scheduling and goal setting rather than me solving their problems for them. It also provided opportunities to learn how to better navigate through the college course selection and registration process. Overall, I saw that these advising styles allowed students to gain more initiative, control, responsibility, as well as learn more about productivity, evaluation, and a sense of relationship. As students gained more motivation and maturity, I also noticed more success and even a stronger sense of community among the dance majors and minors.

## I. Teaching Effectiveness

### A. Methods used to assess teaching effectiveness and reflections on information gathered.

In my last reappointment portfolio, I was advised to “get in the muck of both the good and the bad of my teaching —for true reflection and self-evaluation.” In response, I took a course over the summer

from the Open University, UK entitled, '*Learning to Teach: Becoming a Reflective Practitioner*' based on the seminal 1983 book by Donald Schon, where he formulated the theory about reflective activity, knowing in action, and reflection in action. The course also addressed Kathy Murphy and Sue Atkins' theory and model of reflective practice called the *Murphy and Atkins' Model*. This model can be seen to support the kind of deeper level reflection, breaking it down into critical thinking, critical analysis, and reflection and has helped me to take into consideration assumptions that I may hold about an experience, the need to look objectively at different perspectives, and that the learning has resulted in a change of assumptions, perspectives, or practice. It also helped me to respond to the question, '*What would I do next time?*' From this, I learned that the active, persistent, and careful consideration of ideas and the grounds that support them is the basis of reflective practices. Seeing why things are as they are and how they 'might be' enables me to further direct my pedagogical practices with foresight. I have also realized that when reflection supports development and leads to learning, it builds a stronger foundation for success as an educator.

In the past, it was difficult to unpack what lies behind my decision-making processes because there have been years of experimenting with different approaches and incorporating different ideas from research, theory, practice, and reflection. I am working to be more conscious of my actions, asking myself the questions, "What is my intuitive response to this, and why am I feeling or acting this way?" By doing so, I am investing more in how to solve problems, remaining open to learning, recognizing that there are no simple answers, and understanding that the conclusions I reach are likely to be tentative. By learning what components create a strong model for reflective practice and the role it plays toward successful education, this has given me tools to better navigate my teaching toward more thorough reflective, analysis, and descriptive writing, as well.

Within my research, I learned that critical analysis combines *analysis* and *critical thinking*, breaking a complex topic into smaller parts to understand the idea better. An example of this would be exploring the reasons behind a pupil not understanding a concept. By thinking critically, I will question assumptions and think about issues from a variety of perspectives.

This might involve asking:

- Why did I teach it that way?
- What theoretical principles promote or challenge the way I taught it?
- Are there alternative views or methods?

It might also involve having a *handy to-do list*, like this one below:

- Analyze the different elements of what I have done (teaching-wise) and look at a range of evidence that gives me some idea of the effectiveness of what I have done.
- Look for evidence and link that to what I have done.
- Determine if material and methods need to be modified in one particular class, a class group, or in general, or even if it was effective, in what situation could it not be effective.
- Determine specific aspects of classes that went well or not and try to understand 'why' in detail.
- Figure out the impact of the practice and how this affected students' learning.
- Critically analyze my practice and look at it in detail, take it apart, and look at different aspects of what I have said, how I have phrased something, how I put the material together, and how I have scaffolded the steps for my students to perform.
- Look at what did or didn't work, and did it not work because I left out steps in the process?
- Engage all types of students, be well-organized, willing to receive feedback, and be active in personal reflections.

- Critically reflect, allowing myself to synthesize different perspectives (whether from other people or literature) to help explain, justify, or challenge what I have encountered in my own or other peoples' practices.
  - It may be that theory or literature gives me an alternative perspective that I should consider.
  - It may provide evidence to support my views or practices, or it may explicitly challenge them.
- Strive to be approachable as a teacher, which means being flexible and experimental with different ways of teaching.
  - An example of this is to give tasks, give time limits, give opportunity for questions, give students opportunity to discuss together in groups, present the task, give opportunity for feedback, and ask how it could be done differently, and project alternative perspectives.

B. Work related to fostering a welcoming and inclusive classroom environment (e.g. syllabus, lesson plans, student evaluations, projects, etc.)

I would like to first say that facilitating a welcoming and inclusive classroom environment means cultural inclusion and is, to a large degree, about increasing our understanding of what is causing the opposite. Much conflict can be mediated, and collaboration can be unleashed if we individually and collectively work toward understanding fundamental dimensions of culture and belief systems.

One of the first things encountered when going to a different country, for example, is many times something that can't really be seen. If one doesn't understand what it is or how things work, it can seriously affect how a person adjusts to and enjoys their time. That "thing" is CULTURE.

When culture is looked at from an essential perspective, I believe that it stems from the learned knowledge that humans use to fulfill their needs and wants. Ideas, values, manners, history, societal arrangements, and ways of living are the layers in how people have defined their culture. Things that we learned growing up, including language, religion, beliefs about economic, social, and political order, and the thousands of "do's and don'ts" our societies deem as important is what we do to become a functioning member of that culture.

When it comes to teaching and facilitating a welcoming and inclusive classroom environment, conversations about culture and sharing cultural traditions have typically been proactive first steps in building relationships with students. As these conversations unfold as well as throughout the semester, I support equal opportunity for all, irrespective of cultural background, race, gender, sexual orientation, or disability. I am committed to students feeling a sense of belonging and can realize their full potential; otherwise, the potential for community is lost and the class fails. Success happens through effective and productive communication, where in a safe environment, students have had opportunities to train in dance, express themselves, and grow.

In planning syllabi and projects, I believe diversity of thought, skills, experiences, and backgrounds create better student responses, and embracing equity, diversity, and inclusion enables students to creatively innovate and generate stronger results in class and for their future. I make efforts to empower each person to bring their authentic self to the dance studio and within a performance

setting. Celebrating what makes each of us unique lie at the heart of the arts and a welcoming and inclusive classroom of dance (or any subject) is key to all our success.

SUNY Potsdam Dance is one of the most diverse programs on campus, and we celebrate this. It is ever important to recognize and understand this, effectively foster inclusion and equity within it, and work with a culturally sensitive approach and within a culturally responsive environment, encouraging values and beliefs of all students.

## II. Scholarly Ability<sup>1</sup>, Creative Endeavors, and Continuing Professional Growth<sup>1</sup>

A. Mastery of Subject Matter<sup>1</sup> - as demonstrated by such things as advanced degrees, licenses, honors, awards, and reputation in the subject matter field

- **June 10-11, 2021 – REMOTE: Connected Faculty Summit:** Facilitated by Arizona State University, I earned a professional development credential badge for attending eight sessions that explored the best of what we learned this past year about hybrid courses, blended environments, best practices for student engagement, inclusion and equity in the classroom, driving innovation, and outcomes with technology.
- **August 9-18, 2021 – Becoming a Reflective Practitioner:** Taught at Open University, UK, and achieved a Statement of Participation about what is meant by reflective practice and how to ensure that reflection leads to learning. It also explored the different models of critical reflection, knowledge of which will help structure practice and evaluate whether one is reflecting and therefore, learning effectively.

B. Research and other scholarly/artistic activities (indicate juried/refereed activities) including grants proposed/awarded, articles and books submitted/accepted, workshops conducted, presentations at professional meetings, performances, shows or productions directed

- **May 5, 2021 – Informal Dance Concert Through Media Dance:**  
To View: <https://www.cyndance.org/copy-of-performances-1>
- **Spring Semester 2021 (March, April, May) – Media Dance Works Series:** The 'Virtual' Student Choreographers' Concert at SUNY Potsdam, Department of Theatre and Dance. Students successfully transposing dance online in the age of COVID. These student choreographers presented three short films in a virtual dance concert setting each *First Friday* of the month in the spring semester, this event has been web-hosted here at [cyndance.org](http://cyndance.org) and on display at SUNY Potsdam's Department of Theatre and Dance Facebook.  
To View: <https://www.cyndance.org/copy-of-performances-1>
- **February 5, 2020 – Black History Month Celebrated Through Media Dance, Knowing the Past Can Shape the Future:** the theme of celebrating Black History Month for the students of media dance at SUNY Potsdam. These students feel that they are working toward preserving a people's culture while not forgetting the history. Their goal was to inspire individuals through dance and build a community with awareness of diversity and inclusivity.  
To View: <https://www.cyndance.org/copy-of-performances-2>
- **Fall Semester 2020 (October, November, December)– Media Dance Works Series: The 'Virtual' Student Choreographers' Concert** at SUNY Potsdam, Department of Theatre and

Dance. Students successfully transposing dance online in the age of COVID. These student choreographers presented three short films in a virtual dance concert setting each *First Friday* of the month in the fall semester, this event has been web-hosted here at [cyndance.org](http://cyndance.org) and on display at SUNY Potsdam's Department of Theatre and Dance Facebook. To View: <https://www.cyndance.org/copy-of-performances>

### C. Future goals and plans

- **September 18, 2021 – Rumba on the River:** a collaborative project with the Latin Jazz Ensemble and Dr. Peter McCoy, where I will be choreographing a rumba group dance with the dance students. It will take place at Ive's Park, 6:30pm.
- **October 6, 2021 – Peace and Love, Mother of a Revolution:** a collaborative project combining dance and Crane Concert Band with Dr. William Lake. The title of the concert, "Peace and Love," a closing salutation that our most recent lost faculty member, Dr. Lonel Woods would use in his emails. The concert will feature unique aspects of his intersections fluidly with a myriad of genres and styles. Dr. Woods was passionate about collaboration and all of us would like to continue our collaborative work between the bands and the Department of Theater and Dance. The opening piece on the concert will be "Mother of a Revolution" by Omar Thomas. This piece pays homage to Marsha "Pay It No Mind" Johnson, a pioneering voice of the Stonewall Uprising that started our country's journey toward LGBTQIA+ equality. This piece takes its musical inspiration from the cherished "Ballroom Scene," a cornerstone of identity and community. From this setting the dance genre, voguing was born. This style has an old way (made popular from Madonna's music video, "Vogue") – and a "new way" that features more trained dance intersections.
- **October 2021 – Dancewave Through College & Beyond (DTCB):** A virtual nationwide college fair where I will be a recruiter for SUNY Potsdam Dance Program.
- **Fall & Spring 2021-2022 – Faculty Dance Concert (rehearsals & performance):** Creating a dance work entitled "*CorresponDance*" set on students using an original score and video projection.
- **Spring 2022 – Launching SUNY Potsdam Dance Repertory Company** comprised of dance majors and minors, offering a pre-professional dance company experience for students. It will perform a diverse choreographic repertoire that includes works from reconstructions to contemporary modern dance and fusion-based dance repertory to new works created especially for the company. The company will also use dance as a way to bring more art into education through lecture demonstrations, workshops, classes, and mentoring opportunities, helping young people become more connected, compassionate, aware, inspired, original, focused, courageous, passionate, and human.

### OPTIONAL

Professional meetings attended (not as a presenter)

- **June 10-11, 2021 – REMOTE: Connected Faculty Summit** Facilitated by Arizona State University
- **June 14, 2021 – American College Dance Association National Annual Meeting**

#### Professional membership

- **National Dance Education Organization**, membership renewal for 2021-2022
- **American College Dance Association**, membership renewal for 2021-2022

### III. University Service<sup>1</sup>

- A. Service to the department, school, college, SUNY system, and/or your profession as it relates to your disciplinary expertise and/or departmental assignment
- **September 2021 – SUNY Potsdam Department of Theatre and Dance**, Hiring Committee for Technical Director
  - **March 2021 – SUNY Potsdam Musical Theatre Minor Auditions**: Selection Panelist
  - **October 2020 – Dancewave Through College & Beyond (DTCB)**: A virtual nationwide college fair where I was a recruiter for SUNY Potsdam Dance Program.
  - **September 2019 – SUNY Potsdam Department of Theatre and Dance**, Chair of Hiring Committee for Dance Lecturer
  - **Since 2018 – SUNY Potsdam Faculty Senate Admissions Committee**: committee member (including a participant for summer 2020 and 2021).
  - **Since 2017 – SUNY Potsdam Department of Theatre and Dance, Publicity/Media Committee**: committee member.
  - **Since 2017 – SUNY Potsdam Department of Theatre and Dance, Handbook Committee**: committee member.
  - **Since 2017 – SUNY Potsdam Department of Theatre and Dance, Curriculum Committee**: Dance Representative committee member.
- B. Work related to fostering and welcoming an inclusive campus and/or community climate (e.g. committees, workshops, seminars, community check-ins, community outreach, outreach and collaborations with other colleges, etc.)
- **June 26, 2021 – Steppin’ in Cultural Competency –Building Racial Equity in the Arts Through Dance**: Facilitated by B.R.E.A.D./Black Arts District at the Maryland State Arts Council and presenter Ryan K. Johnson of Clancy Works Dance Company, who guided a discussion and led the group in dance through a 90-minute immersive professional development workshop focusing on transforming teaching practices to advance and unpack anti-racist beliefs and biases by enhancing cultural competency. I explored Black vernacular and engaged in intensive movement with percussive dance styles while connecting it to action and activism.

#### OPTIONAL

- Service beyond the university setting (e.g., service to the community, state, nation, and/or world)

- Work related to mission-critical college programming and Strategic Plan goals, such as student recruitment and retention

1.) Please see Section III.B: *"Dancewave Through College & Beyond (DTCB): 2020"*

2.) Please see Section III.B: *"Dancewave Through College & Beyond (DTCB): 2019"*

**IV. Other Information** - Activities not covered above but which you wish to note



Cynthia DuFault

August 30, 2021

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Signature/Faculty Member

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Date

<sup>1</sup>Components defined by the SUNY Board of Trustees that are required for reappointment and promotion