

ACADEMIC FACULTY INFORMATION FORM
For the Period September 1, 2018 thru August 31, 2019

Name: Cynthia DuFault Title: Assistant Professor Department: Theatre & Dance

I. TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS

A. Courses Taught

FALL 2018

DANC 421 Modern Dance III (12 enrolled)
DANC 441 Modern Dance IV (8 enrolled)
DANC 385 Special Problems: Technique (7 enrolled)
DANC 344 Stage Management Practicum (2 enrolled)
DANC 311 Composition I (8 enrolled)
DANC 309 Performance & Production (2 enrolled)
DANC 234 Intermediate Ballet (14 enrolled)
DANC 110 Beginning Ballet (19 enrolled)

SPRING 2019

DANC 385 Special Problems: Technique (6 enrolled)
DANC 325 New Repertory (11 enrolled)
DANC 322 Modern Dance II (8 enrolled)
DANC 310 Performance & Production (1 enrolled)
DANC 235 Intermediate Ballet (14 enrolled)
DANC 222 Modern Dance I (18 enrolled)
DANC 115 Musical Theatre Dance Forms (21 enrolled)
*Course release to stage/choreography the main stage production of *Wiley and the Hairy Man*

B. Procedures Used to Evaluate Teaching

I discovered that it was important to use three evaluation formats to distinguish greater pedagogical outcome: teacher evaluations, class discussions, and student self-assessments. The following is the summary of the three formats used:

- **Teacher Evaluations:** I used the Provost format in the fall semester, but in the spring, I chose to use a derived format. Even though I go back and further each year between using the Provost format and my own dance-specific format, I feel stronger toward having feedback that greater specifies course implementation and instruction within the discipline of dance. I refined my evaluation questions from the year prior, finding it necessary to extend toward equity and transparency in teaching. I used the following categories: motivates students, communicates lesson, demonstrates knowledge of the curriculum, sets high expectations for student achievement in accordance with needs and abilities, and interacts with students. The evaluation allowed students to select three categories for each question: (1) accurate or consistent, (2) somewhat accurate or consistent, and (3) not accurate or consistent. Based on feedback from 128 students: 94/128 (73%) students marked all questions with (1); 32/128 (25%) students marked both (1) and (2); 2/128 (0.05%) students marked (1), (2), and (3). Although, there was not a tremendous consistency in one area, common questions marked (2) were: makes an effort to know each student as an individual - 13/128 (10%) students; praises, elicits, and responds to student progress - 13/128 (10%) students; gives criticism and praise which are constructive - 11/128 (8%) students. One student marked (3) for provides opportunities for each student to meet success regularly, and one student marked (3) for demonstrates enthusiasm, vigor, improvement, and interest in lesson presentation. Regarding the (2) and (3) ratings, I feel that the odds are fairly low and keeping the lines of communication open to students have and will help them understand my interest and willingness to work with them. The evaluation also asked questions about reasons for taking the class, expected grade, and anything positive and/or anything that

needed improvement that they wished to share. Overall, students appreciated my enthusiasm and energy, the positive working environment, the challenging material and clear explanation of it, the helpful and affective feedback, and my knowledge about the subject. Some students thought improvement was needed resulting from the mixed levels of the classes, particularly tap. Throughout the semester, however, I explained that tap was a fairly new class to the campus, and until we have more interest and ultimately, more faculty, the class will have to remain for all levels. Teaching multiple levels in one class can be tricky, but I feel that students generally understood and accommodated.

Additionally, on the day of evaluations, I ask students if they understand the significance of filling out evaluations, and I continually recognize that many do not. I feel that it is important to explain that evaluations are not only effective toward improving development in academic quality and outcomes, but they assist in future students, support growth within the Department, and contribute to the better of our College as a whole. I explain that as future alumni, it is a great opportunity to take the necessary time and be thorough when evaluating and expressing opinions. When students were empowered this way, useful information and noteworthy comments have resulted.

- **Class Discussions:** While taking advantage of the typical beginning of the semester enthusiasm, I asked students what their expectations were for the class and for their own personal growth, and resulting, this helped me better monitor their intention and progress throughout the semester. At midterm, I revisited the discussion by asking students how they felt they were doing thus far. I asked if the class objectives being met in their opinion and how they felt about the overall structure and effectiveness of the class. By gathering these responses, it assisted with refining criteria, organization, preparation, workload, and any possible class rapport issues. During the last week of the semester, I conducted a final discussion for students to comment on the overall strengths and weaknesses of the course and a key “take away” that either challenged them, helped them better understand the subject, and/or was useful for possible future work. Aside from the typical class discussion benefits that it: engaged students; encouraged dialogue among and between them; developed important speaking skills; gave students the opportunity to practice using the vocabulary of the discipline; and provided me and the students with feedback, I feel that these discussions also helped students recognize and investigate their own assumptions in conjunction with others in the class. It also helped students develop skills of synthesis and integration, and it seemed to have initiated new appreciation for likenesses and differences among students. Furthermore, I believe that not only was this format useful for course refinement, it also demonstrated a transparent regard for the experience of the students. I have learned that it is important to demonstrate this type of civility regularly, as many students do not always recognize a teacher’s attentiveness toward student success.
- **Student Self-Assessments:** Part of the midterm process was implemented through self-assessment papers and journal writing. These two forms of assessment were effective ways for students to reflect on how well they achieved their goals and what they learned about themselves through the process. I believe that it even strengthened their own principles for learning skills and work habits, assisting them in identifying personal areas for improvement,

developing plans of action, and setting goals for improvement. It assisted me in defining the strengths of both organized thoughts through their papers as well as streams of consciousness in the journal writing. It was also an integral part in determining whether or not the goals of the class were being met, and it affected decisions about grades, instructional needs, and curriculum. Most importantly, it inspired me to ask these hard questions: "Am I teaching what I think I am teaching?" "What is working for the students?" "Are students learning what they are supposed to be learning?" "Is there a way to teach the subject better, thereby promoting better learning?" "In what direction should I go next?" Additionally, I believe it motivated students to think about their own questions like: "Now that I'm in charge of my learning, how am I doing?" "Now that I know how I'm doing, how can I do better?" "What else would I like to learn?" I believe that this type of assessment worked because it provides diagnostic feedback of the student's knowledge base, their performance base, their needs, and what has to be taught. Overall, this format was paramount at setting standards and revealing such conclusions as how the student's performance demonstrated understanding, knowledge, and mastery. Yay!

C. Other Observations Regarding Teaching

(Please See Below: Narrative/Teaching Reflection on Course Instruction)

D. Academic Advising

This was the second year that I advised students at SUNY Potsdam. First semester, I was assigned eighteen advisees and by second semester, I had thirty-three. As many of my advisees were freshmen, I asked when they meet with me for the first time, come prepared with a list of the classes they would like to take, with back-up choices in case their first choices were not available, any questions regarding classes and/or the dance major or minor, and ideas about their long-term academic plan. This helped with getting to know the students and their school objectives, and they were better prepared to talk about the following subjects when we met:

- **The Future:** I explained that they did not have to be certain about their career path as a first-year students, but they should start thinking about it. I also asked them to start identifying their interests and try to envision where they will be in the next four years and beyond.
- **The Core:** I let students know that core courses may help them decide on a second major or a minor and a long-term interest, but that their deeper purpose was to broaden their perspective. I asked students to acquaint themselves with the Core requirements and feel free to ask questions how they might fulfill them. Some questions by students included: "Do I understand the Core requirements?" "Which parts of the Core should I pursue first?" "Which Core classes have I fulfilled through my high school AP classes?"
- **Advising/Registration:** I told students to find out, each semester, when advising begins and when registration begins and ends for each class group. Then, do not forget to schedule a pre-registration advising meeting each semester when they hear from me via email.
- **Majors:** I explained to be prepared to talk about the requirements of the major or minor. Questions mainly asked by students were: "What are the requirements for the

major/minor?" "In what order should I take the required courses?" "How do I add, drop, or get instructor permission for classes?"

II. MASTERY OF SUBJECT MATTERS & SCHOLARLY ABILITY

A. Research & Other Scholarly/Artistic Activities

- Journal of Dance Education: Book Reviewer for *Dance Right Eat Right* by Marie Scioscia, Spring 2019
- Perry-Mansfield Performing Arts School, Steamboat Springs, CO: Summer Faculty/Choreographer, July 2019
- TEDx: Technology and Creativity, Presenter: *Technology on Stage and as the Creative Process*, SUNY Potsdam, April 2019
- Crane Latin Ensemble (Film Project), Choreographer, SUNY Potsdam, April 2019
- Wiley and the Hairy Man, Choreographer, SUNY Potsdam, March 2019
- Creative Research Abroad: The Netherlands and Germany: Visiting guest - Netherlands Dance Theatre, Dec 2018
- *Winterreise* - Fall Dance Concert: Guest Choreographer, College of Southern Nevada, Las Vegas, Dec. 2018
- *Much Ado About Nothing*: Choreographer, SUNY Potsdam, Nov. 2018
- *Spring Awakening*: Choreographer, St. Lawrence University, Nov. 2018
- *The Soldier's Tale*: Choreographer/Performer, SUNY Potsdam, Oct. 2018

B.) Awards & Honors

June 2019: Campaigned and received a \$2,000 grant from the Office of the Dean of Arts and Science, a \$1,000 grant from the Department of Theatre and Dance, and a \$2,600 grant from the donors of Perry-Mansfield Performing Arts School and Camp for two SUNY Potsdam dance students, Brooklyn Collier and Julia Schwartz, to attend Perry-Mansfield Performing Arts School and Camp, Professional Dance Intensive in Steamboat Springs, Colorado. The students studied with Artist in Residence Alex Ketley, a choreographer and the director of The Foundry, a contemporary dance company based in San Francisco and formally a classical dancer with the San Francisco Ballet. They also studied with former Twyla Tharp dancers Tamara Dyke and Christopher Compton. Many thanks to Steve Marqusee, Dean of Arts and Science, Jay Pecora, Chair of Theatre and Dance, and the Perry-Mansfield donors to make it all possible for Brooklyn and Julia.

C.) Professional Meetings Attended

- Attended meetings at Middlesex University in London, working with Lesley Main, Head of Department of Performing Arts and Peter Fribbins, President of the Board for Dance/Director of Music to discuss collaborative student exchange opportunities and possible summer intensive programs for SUNY Potsdam and Middlesex University dance students, June 2019.
- Attended a meeting in London with Kenneth O. Tharp CBE, Director of the Africa Center, London (former Chief Executive of The Place and former dancer with the London Contemporary Dance Theatre) to discuss future collaborative and guest teaching opportunities with the Department of Theatre and Dance.

III. UNIVERSITY SERVICE

A.) Administrative/Committee Assignments

- Admissions Committee: Review candidates for college acceptance into BRIDGE, SUNY Potsdam, since May 2018
- Handbook Committee: Co-editor of the Department's handbook, SUNY Potsdam, Department of Theatre and Dance, since Fall 2017
- Website/Publicity/Newsletter Committee: SUNY Potsdam, Department of Theatre and Dance, since Fall 2017
- Curriculum Committee: Dance Representative, SUNY Potsdam, Department of Theatre and Dance, since Fall 2017

B.) College-Related Public Service

- Adjudicator for SUNY Potsdam's First Annual Musical Theatre Minor Auditions, February 2019
- Perry-Mansfield: audition/fundraiser, April-July 2019 (*See: Awards & Honors*)
- Dance Faculty Mentor for SUNY Potsdam, Department of Theatre and Dance, *Senior Choreographic Concert*, April 2018

C.) Community Service

- Board member/Adviser for New Dance Foundation for the Arts, Inc., since 2014

IV. CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

A.) Professional Membership

B.) Professional Meetings Attended

(Please see above: *Mastery of Subject Matters & Scholarly Ability, C.) Professional Meetings Attended*)

C.) Courses, Seminars, Workshops, or Degrees Completed

- Creative Research Abroad: Traveled to Paris, France to attend a dance/composition workshop and performance as well as researched various museums for upcoming 2020 choreographic work in the SUNY Potsdam, Department of Theatre and Dance *Faculty Dance Concert*, Aug 2019
- Creative Research Abroad: Attended the intensive, *Dance on Screen* with writer/director Georgia Parris, producer Emma Duffy, and choreographer Maxine Doyle of the featured film *MARI* ([view trailer](#)) at The Place in London, UK, June 2019
- Creative Research Abroad: Attended a dance improvisation intensive with Ricardo Buscarini (ricardobuscarini.com) at The Place in London, UK, June 2019

D.) Describe Future Goals & Plans

- Collaborate with SUNY Potsdam Crane School of Music Latin Jazz Ensemble as choreographer, Fall 2019
- Choreographer for SUNY Potsdam, Department of Theatre and Dance *Faculty Dance Concert*, Feb 2020
- Co-hosting the American College Dance Association (ACDA) for SUNY Potsdam, Department of Theatre and Dance as well as conducting conference master classes, March 2020
- Book Reviewer for the Journal of Dance Education, Spring 2020
- Summer Faculty/Choreographer for Perry-Mansfield Performing Arts School, Steamboat Springs, CO, July-August 2020
- Become a member of National Dance Education Organization.



Signature Faculty Member

August 31, 2019
Date