

University of Washington
College of Arts & Sciences
Bylaws of the Department of Dance

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History & Mission

The UW Department of Dance offers a dance minor, a dance major that culminates in a Bachelor of Arts degree, and a Master of Fine Arts degree. The department serves hundreds of non-major students who enroll in dance courses each quarter. The facilities include three large dance studios, an intimate 238 seat studio theatre, and the 1,200 seat Meany Theater.

Dance has long been an area of study at the University of Washington, but it took many years before it found its own identity and established a permanent home. Before 1965, modern dance courses were offered through Physical & Health Education and ballet was offered through drama. Students wanting to major in dance had to design their own curriculum through General Studies. In 1965 a Dance division was created within the School of Drama. From 1965-75, as a division of the School of Drama, dance was housed in the Armory Building (on the waterfront). In 1975 the Dance Division was moved to the School of Music, where it resided until 1988 when it grew large enough to become the Dance Program: an autonomous unit with its own budget. In 1990, the graduate program was added. This program brought professional dancers to the UW to perform as part of the Chamber Dance Company and to teach and learn about the intricacies of teaching dance in a college or university setting. The Dance Program became a Department of Dance in 2017.

Over the years, Dance has worked to make its curriculum increasingly inclusive. Most recently, after a two-year revision process starting in 2020, the Department of Dance launched its revised BA in 2022 with a major in Dance. The revised degree program:

- Expands access to the dance major for students from a wider variety of dance backgrounds, including those with little formal dance training prior to entering the university
- Advances the work of bringing African Diasporic, social, popular, and other dance forms historically underrepresented in academic dance institutions into a more equal representation with Western concert dance forms

- Offers students greater choice and flexibility in how they fulfill major requirements so that a wider variety of student interests can be supported

Mission Statement

The University of Washington Department of Dance believes dance is for everybody. We expand the meanings and experiences of dance as a field of study and a living art form. We employ pedagogical perspectives, research approaches, dance-making methods, and performance philosophies that are historically and culturally informed to elevate the value of play, creativity, critical thinking, and embodied knowledge for our students and global communities.

Community

We, the students, staff, and faculty of the UW Department of Dance, aspire to create a community built on respect, equity, collaboration, and belonging. We recognize that diversity is essential to the existence and prolificacy of dance, and critical to the creation of a more just and inclusive dance field. By striving to promote an environment welcoming to people of all cultures, races, sexes, abilities, sexual orientations, gender identities and/or expressions, ages, religions, and economic statuses, we believe creativity, critical thinking, and self-expression can thrive. We humbly acknowledge our fallibility as we work together and strive to make essential changes to our department, university, and larger field of dance.

Guiding Principles

In addition to the guiding principles of the College of Arts and Sciences to:

- Engage from a place of trust
- Recognize and celebrate our differences
- Promote the common good
- Pursue social justice
- Foster community
- Support risk, learn from failure, applaud success
- Seek joy in our work
- Remember why we are here

The top three strategic goals of the Department of Dance are to:

1. Evolve our department's culture, community, and curriculum to promote and sustain practices of equity, access, and inclusion.

2. Create a sustainable plan for balancing the demands of teaching, service, and research for full-time faculty.
3. Articulate and communicate our department's evolving mission, vision, and values to ourselves, the university, and the wider public.

Governance

I. Regulations

- A. Department members are governed by five interdependent sets of regulations:
 1. Federal and State laws and regulations
 2. UW policies and rules
 3. The Faculty Code
 4. College policies and rules
 5. Departmental bylaws

II. Voting

- A. The voting members of the Department of Dance are full-time tenure stream faculty members at the ranks of assistant, associate and full professor with faculty appointments in the Department of Dance, including faculty members with joint appointments in other departments; retired tenure stream professors during the quarter(s) that person is serving on a part-time basis; and full-time artists in residence and senior artists in residences.
- B. The department shall decide all matters of department policy and practice delegated to it by the faculty code. Voting will happen during faculty meetings or by electronic ballot. The department will use majority voting, that is, the matter only passes or is selected if it has more than 50% of the votes.
- C. While the department chair will make every effort to have faculty decide on matters of departmental policy and practice during a faculty meeting, or, if needed a separately scheduled Special Meeting, if there is an unusual circumstance and a Special Meeting cannot be scheduled, the matter will be summarized and circulated through email by the department chair and an electronic vote will be taken. If the matter contains sensitive content, any sensitive information will be put into a Google file or folder that only the faculty and any necessary staff can access. If a vote is inconclusive, the chair will schedule a Special Meeting for further

discussion, and then take another vote. If the vote continues to be inconclusive, the matter will not pass.

- D. Electronic voting will be allowed
- E. Since the Department of Dance is a small department and it is important for eligible voting members to cast their own votes, an executive committee or other group will not represent the eligible voting members and act on the department's half.

III. Standing Department Committees

Department of Dance Curriculum Committee

The Department of Dance Curriculum Committee plays a number of roles in curricular matters. The committee reviews curricular changes proposed by Dance faculty members and brings these ideas or proposals to the attention of the chair. In some cases, such as making substantive changes to an existing course or creating a new course, discussion at a faculty meeting may be necessary. The committee submits or determines an appropriate faculty member to submit course change or new course proposals through the University system, which are reviewed by the Department of Dance Chair before proceeding to the College. The committee may also be consulted in the matter of student petitions requesting course substitutions.

Department of Dance Diversity Committee

The Department of Dance Diversity Committee advises the Chair of the Department of Dance on issues related to diversity, equity, inclusion and access within the department. While the voicing of specific individual student concerns or complaints should follow the process outlined on our "Voicing Concerns" webpage, the DoD Diversity Committee can bring more general issues to the attention of the Chair of the Department of Dance. The Chair of the Department of Dance may also bring issues to the Diversity Committee for the committee and the chair to consider together. More information about the role of the members on the committee is available on the Department of Dance [Department of Dance Diversity Committee](#) webpage.

While the committee may meet as often as desired, the recommendation of the current Chair of the Department of Dance is that the committee plan to meet between 1-3 times per quarter, including trainings or other events the committee organizes, to keep the time commitment of service on the committee feasible. During the Autumn Quarter, the Chair of the Department of Dance will schedule a meeting with the Diversity Committee to work with the committee to develop a set of goals and priorities for the upcoming academic year as well as a plan for meetings for the upcoming academic year.

Department of Dance Scholarship Committee

The Department of Dance Scholarship committee works with the Student Services Manager to organize information about scholarships and solicits nominations for particular awards. After gathering the information, the scholarship committee presents the information and list of nominees to the rest of the faculty, who collectively decide upon awardees, in the case of departmental scholarships, or nominees, in the case of College and University scholarships.

Department of Dance Graduate Committee

All graduate faculty in Dance are members of the Department of Dance Graduate Committee, which is chaired by the Graduate Program Coordinator. This committee reviews graduate applications, determines which applicants are offered admission, determines graduate student teaching assignments, fellowship/scholarship assignments, and discusses other matters related to the Department of Dance graduate program and Department of Dance graduate students.

Search committees, tenure and promotion committees, and ad hoc committees shall be formed by the department chair as needed.

IV. Meetings of the Department

- A. The chair of the department may call a meeting of the department (e.g., faculty meeting, Special Meeting). The chair of the department or the graduate program coordinator may call a meeting of the graduate faculty.
- B. If the department chair needs to be absent for a departmental meeting, the chair may assign another faculty member in Dance to run the faculty meeting. If the current department chair is unable to identify a colleague to preside over the meeting prior to the meeting, as in an emergency situation, the current graduate program coordinator will run the meeting.
- C. The department chair shall distribute an agenda for the meeting to the department instructors and staff by email at least three days prior to the meeting. The chair shall have the agenda posted to the Department of Dance website at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.
- D. While it is not a requirement for voting members to be present at a departmental meeting for the meeting to occur, a minimum of a quorum of currently eligible voting faculty must be present in order to take a vote at the meeting. A quorum is a majority (at least 51%) of the currently eligible voting faculty. If a quorum of currently eligible voting faculty are not present at the meeting an electronic ballot may be considered.
- E. Absentee voting, including electronic voting, is allowed.
- F. Personnel matters, including discussing and voting on job candidates and tenure and promotion cases, will be discussed during Executive Sessions of faculty meetings. For full-time faculty searches and for tenure and promotion cases, the Department Chair shall form a committee. The committee will present their report with their recommendations at an Executive Session faculty meeting. Votes will be taken either by hand, paper ballot, or electronic ballot. The department chair will use their discretion to determine which option is most appropriate for the particular personnel matter. For personnel matters that are sensitive, or where there may be a difference of opinion, paper ballots or electronic ballots will be preferred so that those who may have a dissenting vote will not be pressured to identify themselves. If not all eligible voting members can be present at an Executive Session meeting to vote on a personnel matter, an electronic ballot may be created, although the Department Chair does have the authority to create an electronic ballot in advance and plan to hold the vote in that manner. If an eligible voting faculty member lets the chair know that they choose to not attend an

Executive Session meeting and a quorum is present, a vote at the meeting may be taken.

- G. Proxy voting is not allowed
- H. For continuing appointments and reappointments, the chair of the department will make the candidates' continuing appointment/reappointment materials available to the eligible voting faculty for review at least one week prior to the Executive Session Faculty meeting during which the continuing appointment/reappointment will be discussed. Following the discussion, a vote will be taken. Votes will be taken either by hand, paper ballot, or electronic ballot. The department chair will use their discretion to determine which is most appropriate for the particular personnel matter. For personnel matters that are sensitive, or where there may be a difference of opinion, paper ballots or electronic ballots will be preferred so that those who may have a dissenting vote will not be pressured to identify themselves. If not all eligible voting members can be present at an Executive Session meeting to vote on a personnel matter, an electronic ballot will be created, although the Department Chair does have the authority to create an electronic ballot in advance and plan to hold the vote in that manner.
- I. Decision-making cannot be delegated to an executive committee in the absence of a departmental meeting because the Department of Dance does not have an executive committee.

V. Amendments and Additions to the Bylaws

- A. The Department of Dance bylaws will be reviewed at least every five years.
- B. Any department of Dance faculty member may petition to propose amendments to the bylaws. Petitions should be submitted to the chair of the department.
- C. A minimum of one week (7 days) notice is required for a meeting or vote to change the bylaws
- D. Proposals to amend the bylaws will be decided by majority (at least 51%) vote.
- E. Amendments to the bylaws will be recorded at the top of the document.

VI. Institutional Record

- A. All policies and procedures adopted by the faculty will be considered in effect absent a faculty vote to revise or eliminate a specific policy or procedure. In other words, unless there is a vote to revise or eliminate a specific policy or procedure that the faculty has adopted, the policy or procedure remains in effect until the faculty votes otherwise.

- B. Policies and procedures, including these bylaws, should be included in the department handbook.