

# DANCE, MFA

*for the degree of Master of Fine Arts in Dance*

The MFA Curriculum is designed to promote a candidate's progress through our stated objectives: Choreography, Communication, Moving, Teaching, and Career Planning.

Included in these are courses in dance studies, somatics, pedagogy, and two semesters devoted to an innovative lab team taught by our faculty and designed in collaboration with students. The final year of study is devoted to synthesizing the above objectives evidenced by the production of the candidate's choreography, their written thesis document, oral presentation, and plans for propelling students' career into the professional sphere.

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 ideology must establish 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 convincing 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.
- **Career Planning-** Candidates are assessed on their ability to develop 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 and significant experience in dance is required.

2. Demonstrated choreographic achievement and potential to make innovative contributions to the field.
3. Demonstrated potential to engage in critical thinking and writing.
4. 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.

International students must be eligible for full status admission. International students who receive a TOEFL 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.

## Faculty Research Interests

An extraordinary faculty of artists, researchers and scholars has gathered at Illinois, who are creating new paradigms for interactions between the professional arena and the academic training ground. Our group of professional artists includes Jan Erkert, Sara Hook, Philip Johnston, Linda Lehovec, Jennifer Monson, Kemal Nance, Rebecca Netti-Fiol, Tere O'Connor, Cynthia Oliver, Kirstie Simson, Endalyn Taylor, John Toenjes, and Abby Zbikowski, all of whom share a commitment to teaching and preparing students for leadership roles in the field of dance.

## Financial Aid

Two forms of financial aid are offered to graduate students by the Department of Dance:

- Teaching and administration assistantships are available to graduate students. Assistantships of 25% or greater qualify the student for a tuition waiver. All students are required to apply for Federal Work Study.
- A variety of Fellowships are available through The Graduate College each year, including: (A full listing of Fellowships can be found at: [www.grad.illinois.edu/fellowships](http://www.grad.illinois.edu/fellowships) (<http://www.grad.illinois.edu/fellowships/>))
  - The Creative and Performing Arts Fellowship, which may include stipends up to a maximum of \$6,000 for a student demonstrating outstanding choreographic and performance talent.
  - The Graduate College Fellowship for Underrepresented Students provides fellowships in the amount of \$8,000 and are available to outstanding minority students.

Prospective MFA candidates are encouraged to apply for financial assistance through the Office of Student Financial Aid, 420 Student Services Bldg., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Champaign, IL 61820. (217) 333-0100.

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## Degree Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
	Physical Practice, at least 2 hours through DANC 560	6
	Historical and Theoretical Studies	8
DANC 510	Graduate Seminar	
DANC 541	Contemporary Directions I	

DANC 542	Contemporary Directions II	
Composition		4
DANC 462	Composition Workshop	
DANC 562	Graduate Composition II	
Performance		2
DANC 420	Graduate Performance Practice	
DANC 424	Collaborative Performance	
Research/Project		8
DANC 598	Creative Thesis Project	
Graduate Synthesis Laboratory		8
DANC 520	Synthesis Laboratory	
Somatics in Dance Training		3
DANC 530	Somatics in Dance Training	
400/500 level elective 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

### Requirement

Other requirements may overlap

Course work taken to completed undergraduate deficiencies will not receive graduate credit.

Residency requirement of three years (six semesters)

Minimum GPA: 2.75

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2. **Communicating:** Candidates will develop the ability to express their choreographic vision and process in verbal and written language that is clear, cogent, and convincing and demonstrates analytical skill, critical thinking, awareness of historical context, and knowledge of contemporary culture.
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Graduate Minor in Dance (<http://catalog.illinois.edu/graduate/faa/minor/dance/>)

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### Department of Dance

Department Head: Sara Hook

Director of the MFA program: Jennifer Monson

Dance Department website (<https://dance.illinois.edu/>)

907 1/2 West Nevada Street, Urbana, IL 61801

(217) 333-1010

Dance email ([dance@illinois.edu](mailto:dance@illinois.edu))

### College of Fine & Applied Arts

College of Fine & Applied Arts website (<https://faa.illinois.edu/>)

### Admissions

Graduate College Admissions & Requirements (<https://grad.illinois.edu/admissions/apply/>)

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## Graduate Degree Programs in Dance