

UTRGV DANCE DEPARTMENT

2026 - 2028 Student Handbook



[Email address]

Contents

Section 1: Introduction.....	3
Section 2: Official Entry into the UTRGV Dance Department	3
Section 3: Dance Department Degree Programs	4
Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Dance.....	5
Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) in Dance	5
Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) in Dance (Mexican Dance)	5
Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Dance (Teacher Certification).....	5
Section 4: Applying to Teacher Education Program:	6
Section 5: Criteria for Clinical Teaching	7
Section 6: Minor in Dance	8
Section 7: Rotation of DANC Course Offerings	8
Section 8: Advisement	9
Section 9: UTRGV Dance Department Policies and Procedures	9
Dance Department Attendance Policy	11
Section 10: Entry into the Dance Department	11
Section 11: BFA Audition Information	11
Audition Eligibility	12
Audition Process:	12
Movement Class.....	12
Solo Performance	13
Interview.....	13
BFA in Mexican Dance Audition.....	14
Audition Outcomes	14
BFA Acceptance.....	14
Probation (Pre-BFA Status).....	15
Not Accepted	15
Section 12: Senior Capstone Course: DANC 4302	15

Section 13: American College Dance Association:	16
Section 14: UTRGV Dance Department Performing Companies	17
Ballet Folklórico:.....	17
Ballet Folklórico (Student Company).....	17
Ballet Folklórico Juvenil Company (JV Freshman–Sophomore).....	17
Ballet Folklórico (Alumni Company).....	17
Folklórico Company PLACEMENT – AUDITION PROCESS	18
UTRGV DANCE COMPANY	20
Section 15: Dance Department Student Organization: Dance Student Association (DSA)	22
DSA Suggestion Box	22
Section 16: Dance Department Safety and Wellness Policies	23
Safety and Wellness Policies Specific to the UTRGV Dance Department.....	25
Section 17: Use of UTRGV Dance Studios and Studio Rules.....	26
Section 18: Department Procedures on Handling Student Complaints:	28
Section 19: Scholarship Information	29

UTRGV DANCE DEPARTMENT STUDENT HANDBOOK

Section 1: Introduction

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Dance Department welcomes all applicants who demonstrate potential as performers, choreographers, and educators, with interest in dance technique, choreography, dance education, and/or the historical, scientific, and philosophical studies of dance.

Mission

The UTRGV Dance Department's mission is to provide a broad coverage of dance training, including dance technique and performance skills, choreography, historical and cultural dimensions of dance, and principles of teaching. Students will be prepared to teach dance in a public/private school setting, or to continue dance study at the graduate level or in the professional dance context.

Vision

To be a leader in educating dancers through degree offerings, pedagogy, and practical experience while providing a foundation influenced by regional culture. As a center for dance in the Americas, the Dance program will promote bilingual, bicultural, and biliterate education in an environment committed to disciplined excellence unhampered by physical or cultural borders.

Section 2: Official Entry into the UTRGV Dance Department

All interested students enter the department as BA (Bachelor of Arts) Dance majors, which is considered "Pre-Dance" until the completion of requirements specific to one's chosen degree program are met. * General entry into the Dance Department includes successful completion of the DANC 1351 Introduction to Dance course with the grade of "C" or better and a formal interview conducted by the dance faculty in the student's first year. Additional criteria include an assessment of skills in a student's initial dance (DANC) technique courses that will determine if adequate progression has been achieved to continue as a dance major, and/or for the purposes of

placement and advancement into the appropriate technique level. Transfer students are advised to request an appointment prior to the semester of entry for the purpose of assessing technique level for the proper placement into technique courses. For more information on entry procedures, please contact the Dance Department office at (956) 665-2230.

*Please note the specific criteria required for acceptance into the different degree programs.

Section 3: Dance Department Degree Programs

Important Reminders and graduation requirements:

- Students must complete a total of 5 hours (both the designated 3 sch and 2 sch courses) at the foundational level with a grade of “C” or better before progressing to the intermediate level in each technique, or with permission of Dance faculty. Students must complete a total of 5 hours (both the designated 3 sch and 2 sch courses) at the intermediate level with a grade of “C” or better before progressing to the advanced level in each technique, or with the permission of Dance faculty.
- Dance majors and minors must achieve a grade of “C” or better in all DANC courses for credit.
- Both BFA in Dance and BFA in Dance (Mexican Dance) degrees require an overall minimum GPA of 2.5 for graduation. The BA in Dance (Teacher Certification) has a graduation requirement of an overall minimum GPA of 2.5, but students must achieve an overall minimum GPA of 2.75 when applying for acceptance into the Teacher Preparation Program. The BA in Dance has a minimum overall GPA requirement of 2.0 or higher
- The capstone course (DANC 4302) requires either the submission of a choreographic project for formal presentation, or a written research project. Dance majors must be university core complete before taking the DANC 4302 Senior Project capstone course.
- Students in all DANC technique classes are required to sign a liability/waiver release form before being allowed to participate in class activities.
- Dance majors must select another Fine Arts class besides Dance Appreciation for their Fine Arts credit to fulfill the university core requirements.

Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Dance

This degree gives students broad preparation in dance areas such as contemporary dance, ballet, jazz dance, and Mexican folklórico dance. Students will gain an understanding of dance and performance techniques with the flexibility for further studies in other areas of interest.

*Acceptance into this program includes the completion of DANC 1351 Introduction to Dance with the grade "C" or better and an interview with Dance faculty at the end of the course. Additional assessment of technical skills in initial DANC technique courses will also be considered in determining acceptance into the BA in Dance program.

Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) in Dance

The BFA degree emphasizes training in technique practice and performance. This degree is designed to provide students with a broad and thorough base of dance technique training and performance experience to prepare for continued study at the graduate level or to enter the dance field in a professional capacity. Students must select either contemporary dance or ballet as one of their two areas of technique.

*Interested students must first complete the required course DANC 1351 Introduction to Dance, which includes an interview with Dance faculty at the end of the semester. Secondly, students must submit a formal application and complete the audition process held during spring semesters to be officially accepted into the BFA program. Auditions for the BFA degree program will be held on Friday, April 2nd, 2027, at 4:30 PM in EHPE 2.133.

Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) in Dance (Mexican Dance)

This degree focuses on dance training with an emphasis on the rescue, preservation and proliferation of Mexican traditions and culture through the art of dance. It is designed to provide students with a broad and thorough base of dance technique training and performance experience to prepare for continued study at the graduate level or to enter the dance field in a professional capacity.

*Interested students must first complete the required course DANC 1351 Introduction to Dance, which includes an interview with Dance faculty at the end of the semester. Secondly, students must submit a formal application and complete the audition process held during spring semesters to be officially accepted into the BFA (Mexican Dance) program. Auditions for the BFA (Mexican Dance) degree program will be held on Friday, April 2nd, 2027, at 4:30 PM in EHPE 2.133.

Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Dance (Teacher Certification)

This degree program leads ultimately to Texas Teacher Certification, Secondary in

Dance, grades 6 – 12. In addition to the 42-hour university core and 36-hour dance major core, the teacher certification degree program requires the completion of 10 hours of contemporary dance of which 5 hours must be advanced, plus 5 hours each of two different technique areas, and 3 elective hours from any of the 4 technique areas for a total of 23 hours in dance technique. Dance education majors must also complete 24 hours of professional education courses. The courses required in this degree program are aligned with the state of Texas requirements for teacher certification. Formal admission into the College of Education's Teacher Preparation Program is required.

*Acceptance into this program requires the completion of the course DANC 1351 Introduction to Dance which includes an interview with Dance faculty at the end of the semester. Students must also meet all requirements for formal admission into UTRGV's College of Education's Teacher Preparation Program.

Section 4: Applying to Teacher Education Program:

It is recommended that as a student is close to completing their university core requirements, they should begin to prepare to apply for formal admission to the Teacher Preparation Program. Students must then apply for admission to the Teacher Preparation Program at the Office of Educator Preparation and Accountability. All admission requirements are in accordance with Texas Administrative Code rules §227.10 and the HEA (Higher Education Act) Title II accountability requirements.

All applicants must meet the current certification requirements in effect at the time of application, regardless of the catalog year of degree plan. Students are responsible for meeting the following criteria for admission into the Teacher Preparation Program:

- Student's transcript must indicate "TSI (Texas Success Initiative) Status - MET."
- Must be core complete at the time of admission - students may begin the application process in the semester while taking final core classes but will not be admitted until evidence of successfully completing the university's core curriculum.
- 60 hours toward degree plan with teacher certification must be completed and an overall GPA of 2.75 or higher. Electives and language proficiency courses are not included in the 60 hours.
- All candidates must have 12 semester credit hours completed in their major (Dance core).
- Must complete ENG 1301 & 1302 with the grade of "C" or better.
- Clearance of a Criminal Background Check is required. This is completed during the application process.

- All candidates will be interviewed as part of the application process. Candidates will be contacted by the respective major's department after submission of the application to schedule interviews.

Section 5: Criteria for Clinical Teaching

The Traditional Clinical Teaching semester is a full-time commitment. It is 15 weeks, full-day, full-time, approved school-based assignment in one's final semester before graduation.

Admission to the Traditional Clinical Teaching pathway must be requested by formal application during the semester before the teacher candidate plans to teach. Dance majors must complete all coursework before doing their student teaching.

Requirements:

- Minimum of 2.5 GPA in each area of degree plan (i.e., major, minor/specialization, professional education)
- Field Experiences - complete all field hours required by program
- Degree Plan Completion - within 12 hrs. of completing degree plan
- Complete all professional education courses
- Other Program Requirements - Must pass TExES content and PPR (Professional Responsibilities) exams by designated deadline, or complete edTPA program.
- Dance majors seeking Teacher Certification are expected to pass the content exam in Dance before completing the teacher certification process. This is usually done in the semester before student teaching while taking EDUC 3304 & 3306.
- Students are required to participate in the **Dance Content Exam Seminar** a semester prior to taking the exam. This seminar is designed to prepare students for success on the TExES Content Exam in Dance. Students must also pass the practice test to receive approval on an official eligibility form before being allowed to register for the content exam. Please consult with the Teacher Certification degree program Coordinator, Rebeca Gamborino rebeca.gamborino@utrgv.edu for more information.
- Dance majors must also pass the TExES PPR (Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities) exam or enroll in the edTPA program to complete the teacher certification process. This is usually done in the semester prior to student teaching while taking EDUC 3304 & 3306.

Please refer to the College of Education's website for Field Experience for more current and detailed information.

Section 6: Minor in Dance

The Minor in Dance requires a minimum of 22 DANC hours. This includes 9 hours of the dance core (6 hours of which must be advanced), 3-4 hours of electives, 10 hours of dance technique (5 of which must be in either contemporary dance or ballet, with the other 5 as technique electives selected from other technique offerings.) Advisement for dance minors is required each semester. Please contact Gina Laurenzi gina.laurenzi@utrgv.edu for more information.

Section 7: Rotation of DANC Course Offerings

Dance majors and minors should be aware that several required DANC courses are only offered in designated odd or even years, and some courses are offered in only one semester of an academic year.

FALL 2026	Spring 2027
DANC 1351 Introduction to Dance	DANC 1202 Dance Improvisation
DANC 2303 Music for Dancers	DANC 3311 Dance Production
DANC 3301 Choreography I	DANC 3302 Choreography II
DANC 3313 World Dance	DANC 3303 Mexican Dance History
DANC 3320 & 3121 Dance Science & Lab	DANC 3312 Dance Philosophy & Criticism
DANC 4302 Senior Project	DANC 4302 Senior Project (as needed)
DANC 4313 Dance in the Public Schools	DANC 4309 Dance Theory
DANC 2112 & 3112 Dance Performance	DANC 2112 & 3112 Dance Performance
DANC Technique Courses: Contemporary Dance: DANC 2246, 3246 & 4246 Ballet: DANC 2341, 3341 & 4341 Mexican Folklorico Dance: DANC 2349, 3349 & 4349 Jazz Dance: DANC 2330, 3330 & 4330	DANC Technique Courses: Contemporary Dance: DANC 2345, 3345 & 4345 Ballet: DANC 2242, 3242 & 4242 Mexican Folklorico Dance: DANC 2250, 3250 & 4250 Jazz Dance: DANC 2220, 3220 & 4220

Fall 2027	SPRING 2028
DANC 1351 Introduction to Dance	DANC 1202 Dance Improvisation
DANC 2303 Music for Dancers	DANC 3311 Dance Production
DANC 3301 Choreography I	DANC 3302 Choreography II
DANC 3308 Dance History	DANC 3304 Choreography II (Mex. Dance)
DANC 3313 World Dance	DANC 3312 Dance Philosophy & Criticism
DANC 4302 Senior Project	DANC 4302 Senior Project (as needed)
DANC 4313 Dance in the Public Schools	DANC 4309 Dance Theory
DANC 2112 & 3112 Dance Performance	DANC 2112 & 3112 Dance Performance
DANC Technique Courses: Contemporary Dance:	DANC Technique Courses: Contemporary Dance:

DANC 2246, 3246 & 4246 Ballet: DANC 2341, 3341 & 4341 Mexican Folklorico Dance: DANC 2349, 3349 & 4349 Jazz Dance Technique: DANC 2330, 3330 & 4330	DANC 2345, 3345 & 4345 Ballet: DANC 2242, 3242 & 4242 Mexican Folklorico Dance: DANC 2250, 3250 & 4250 Jazz Dance Technique: DANC 2220, 3220, & 4220
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Section 8: Advisement

All entering first-year students and transfer students are required to seek advisement at the Academic Advisement Center:

Edinburg: International Trade & Technology Building (ITT)

Brownsville Main 1.402

Email: academicadvising@utrgv.edu

Phone: (956) 665-7120

All dance majors should seek advisement each semester within the Dance Department with their assigned advisor to ensure that they remain on track to achieve their graduation goals. It is highly recommended that students also continue to seek advisement with the Academic Advisement Center if still working to complete university core classes.

Dance Department Advisors

BFA in Dance - Min Kim min.kim@utrgv.edu

BFA in Dance (Mexican Dance) - Miguel Peña miguel.pena@utrgv.edu

BA in Dance (Teacher Certification) - Rebeca Gamborino rebeca.gamborino@utrgv.edu

BA in Dance – Gina Laurenzi gina.laurenzi@utrgv.edu

Minor in Dance – Gina Laurenzi gina.laurenzi@utrgv.edu

Section 9: UTRGV Dance Department Policies and Procedures

UTRGV Attendance Policy

GENERAL INFORMATION

Responsibility for class attendance rests with the student. Regular and punctual attendance of all scheduled classes is expected. Instructors report non-attendance following the census day of each

term in accordance with federal regulations. Students reported as not attending classes may be responsible for returning financial aid disbursed to them for any class(es) the student is not attending. Reporting of non-attendance in all class sections is also a requirement of instructors throughout each term and when reporting final grades. Instructors awarding failing grades are required to report the last day a student attended class, whether or not the student completed the class fully, at the time final grades are entered into ASSIST. Instructors may also request a student be dropped for excessive absences from class, in which case the student will receive a grade of DR and may be required to return financial aid disbursed. A student may request reinstatement into the class(es) from which the student was dropped, and in such cases the student will be graded according to class requirements and grading policies. Reinstatement resulting from such student requests is final; a student may not be dropped again for non-attendance for that same class in the same term.

ABSENCE ON RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

UTRGV will excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of religious holy days, including travel for that purpose. Students should notify the applicable instructors of the anticipated absence for a religious holy day at the start of the semester to allow proper planning and to establish clear expectation of a reasonable timeline for the student to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for the day of absence. A religious holy day is a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under [11.20 of the Texas Tax Code](#). If the student and instructor disagree about the nature of the absence being for the observance of a religious holy day, or if there is similar disagreement about whether the student has been given a reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, the student may utilize the Non-Discrimination and [Complaint process, Handbook of Operating Procedures ADM 03-100](#).

Please see Religious Accommodations under the [Administrative Policies and Regulations](#) section of this Catalog for initiating a request for an accommodation, other than absences for religious holy days, due to religious belief or practice.

ABSENCES FOR UNIVERSITY-RECOGNIZED EVENTS

UTRGV will also excuse students from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for active [military service](#) or authorized participation in officially sponsored university functions such as athletic events or academic activities. The student must contact the instructor in advance of the excused absence and arrange with the instructor to make up missed work or examinations. Instructors will provide those students an opportunity to make up the work or otherwise adjust the grading to ensure that the student is not penalized for the absence. Failure to notify the instructor in advance or failure to comply with the arrangements to make up the work will void the excused absence.

Dance Department Attendance Policy

Students should contact the teacher before their absence to make up for the recovery of pending assignments or exams. In addition to the university's policy provided above, dance majors and minors should be aware of the department's specific attendance requirements for all dance (DANC) courses. Consistent attendance in all technique courses is of particular importance due to dance technique being both a mental and physical practice at the foundational core of being a dance major or minor. Students are expected to demonstrate the discipline of consistent attendance and participation in all dance (DANC) technique courses as it is crucial to gaining the full benefit of the physical development necessary to progress safely as the exercises and skills become more demanding throughout each semester. Therefore, **only 2 absences are allowed** in all DANC courses before a student's grade is lowered by a letter grade for each subsequent absence. Dance faculty will not drop students for excessive absences; the student is responsible for dropping a course. In the case of injury or illness, students must communicate with the teacher and provide appropriate documentation in a timely manner.

Section 10: Entry into the Dance Department

Intro to Dance Interview Information:

The interview process conducted at the end of the Introduction to Dance course (DANC 1351) during a dance major's first year is considered a formal interview session with the Dance faculty and will include:

- Articulating career aspirations.
- Providing information describing past experiences in dance prior to entering UTRGV.
- Expressing one's intentions as a dance major, which includes declaring the selection of a Dance degree program to pursue.
- Describing performance aspirations in completing DANC 2112 and/or 3112 requirements.
- Selection of dance technique areas.
- Preparing any questions to ask the faculty.

Section 11: BFA Audition Information

The Dance Department offers two BFA degrees designed for students wanting to gain valuable experience in dance technique practice and performance. Interested candidates should be aware of the rigors of both BFA degrees in that they require the completion of additional semester hours of dance technique courses and a significant increase in the time commitment, outside of formal class hours, necessary for rehearsals and performances. Students interested in pursuing a

BFA degree will be expected to complete a formal application and an audition process that includes a movement class, interview, and solo performance. The application and audition process will be held during the second half of each spring semester. Announcements and instructions will be provided in early spring and posted on the Dance Department website.

The 2027 BFA auditions will be held on April 2, 2027, at 4:30 pm in EHPE 2.133.

Audition Eligibility

Students may audition for admission into the BFA in Dance degree program only after completing the DANC 1351 Introduction to Dance course with the grade of “C” or better. Students may audition a maximum of two times during their enrollment in the Department of Dance. All audition attempts must be completed no later than before the student's Junior year or before enrolling in the Choreography I course (DANC 3301). Students who have attained senior standing within the department are not eligible to audition for admission into, or transfer into, the BFA program under any circumstances.

Audition Process:

- Successfully complete the course: DANC 1351 Introduction to Dance with the grade of “C” or better
- Complete a formal application to the BFA in Dance Degree Program. Applications will be made available approximately a month prior to the audition date and sent out through the Dance Department’s listserv via email. Interested applicants may also request application materials through the BFA in Dance Degree Program Coordinators:

Min Kim min.kim@utrgv.edu

Miguel Peña miguel.pena@utrgv.edu

- Complete the in-person portion of the audition process for the **BFA in Dance** and **BFA in Dance (Mexican Dance)** which is designed to provide a formal and comprehensive evaluation of each applicant’s technical preparation, adaptability, artistry, and potential for success within the program. All auditionees will participate in three components: **Movement Class, Solo Performance, and Interview.**

Movement Class

The movement class provides faculty with an opportunity to observe auditionees in real time and assess how they engage in a classroom environment, learn and retain movement material, respond to instruction, and apply corrections.

The movement class may include:

- Ballet barre
- Jazz dance technique section
- Contemporary dance technique section

This portion of the audition allows faculty to evaluate the applicant's technical proficiency, musicality, adaptability, movement retention, responsiveness to feedback, and overall presence in a classroom setting.

Solo Performance

Each auditionee will present a **2–3-minute solo performance**. The solo may be self-choreographed or choreographed by another individual. If the solo is choreographed by someone other than the auditionee, the student must clearly disclose the choreographer.

The solo should highlight the applicant's technical ability and performance skills. Self-choreographed works should highlight creativity, individuality, and artistic voice. Applicants may select any dance style and genre of music that best represents their artistic interests. If music contains lyrics, the lyrics must be clean and appropriate for an academic setting. Silence is also an acceptable option.

Faculty will look for a solo performance that demonstrates:

- A clear beginning, middle, and end
- Creative and purposeful movement choices
- Technical ability appropriate to the applicant's training and experience
- Individual artistic voice
- Engaged and expressive performance presence

Interview

The interview provides an opportunity for faculty to connect with each auditionee beyond movement. This portion is separate from the written BFA application. The goal is to better understand the student's motivation, commitment, and long-term goals.

Possible Interview questions

- Can you describe a moment in your training when you receive difficult feedback? How did you respond?
- How do you approach learning choreography when movement feels unfamiliar or challenging?
- What does discipline in your dance training look like on a daily basis?
- How do you contribute to a positive and productive rehearsal environment?
- What does it mean to you to be part of a dance community?
- How do you handle working with different teaching styles or choreographic approaches?
- What does "rigorous training" mean to you, and how are you prepared for it?
- What are you willing to sacrifice or prioritize to succeed in a BFA program?

- Can you share a performance or class experience that changed the way you view dance?
- What kind of artist do you hope to become in the next four years?

BFA in Mexican Dance Audition

Applicants auditioning for the **BFA in Mexican Dance** should incorporate movement elements that demonstrate their experience and preparation in Mexican dance traditions. These may include:

- Footwork (**zapateado**)
- Skirt work (**faldeo**)
- Pre-Hispanic movement, when applicable
- Other movement vocabulary relevant to Mexican dance traditions

The solo should provide applicants with an opportunity to demonstrate their technical preparation, artistry, cultural knowledge, and individual performance qualities within the context of Mexican Dance.

Audition Outcomes

Following the audition process, the dance faculty will review each student's audition materials and overall progress within the Dance Department. Admission decisions are based on a holistic evaluation and require faculty consensus.

BFA Acceptance

A decision of **Accepted** indicates that the faculty unanimously agrees the student is prepared for the artistic, technical, and academic rigor of the Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) in Dance program.

Admission decisions are based on multiple factors, including:

- Quality, artistry, and clarity of the solo performance
- Technical proficiency and movement quality demonstrated throughout the audition
- Work ethic, growth, and consistency demonstrated in DANC courses during the current semester and previous semesters.
- Faculty evaluations from technique and studio courses
- Academic performance, professionalism, and responsibility

Students who are accepted have demonstrated the readiness necessary to succeed in the pre-professional training environment of the BFA program.

Probation (Pre-BFA Status)

A decision of **Probation (Pre-BFA Status)** indicates that the faculty recognizes the student's potential but has determined that additional development is needed before full admission into the BFA program.

Students placed on probation will:

- Continue training within the Department of Dance
- Meet with the BFA advisor to establish goals for improvement
- Focus on strengthening technical proficiency, consistency, artistry, and application of foundational principles
- Re-audition at a future BFA audition cycle, typically the following academic year

Probation is not a denial of admission. Rather, it provides students with an opportunity to continue developing the skills and artistic maturity expected of BFA majors.

Not Accepted

A decision of **Not Accepted** indicates that the faculty has determined the student is not currently prepared for admission into the BFA program.

This decision is based on an overall assessment of the students:

- Readiness for rigorous pre-professional training
- Technical and performance abilities
- Alignment with the artistic and academic expectations of the BFA curriculum

Students who are not admitted are encouraged to continue their studies through the Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Dance program, which provides a meaningful and comprehensive dance education with greater flexibility in training and academic focus.

Section 12: Senior Capstone Course: DANC 4302

The capstone course for majors in the general BA and both BFA degree programs is DANC 4302: Senior Project and should be taken in the final fall or spring semester before graduation. This course is the culmination of one's study as a dance major and requires the formal presentation of a choreographic project or a pre-approved research project. Majors must be university core complete and have successfully completed the prerequisite courses of Dance Improvisation DANC 1202, Choreography I DANC 3301, and Choreography II DANC 3302.

The course also includes the requirement of completing and submitting a professional portfolio which is designed to reflect one's accomplishments as a dance major in preparation for future endeavors in the field. The final grade compilation for the Senior Project course is determined by the following:

50% Choreography or project work: This portion of the grade is determined by the assessment of the student's mentor and the Senior Project instructor and is based upon the rehearsal process and the final product presented in the Senior Project Concert.

40% Professional Portfolio: This portion of the grade is based on the completion of the professional portfolio as outlined in the DANC 4302 Senior Project syllabus and is determined by the course instructor.

10% Production Duties: This portion of the grade is based on the completion of important production duties that will be delegated throughout the semester and is determined by the Senior Project Coordinator.

DANC 2112: Beginning/Intermediate Performance Class

Students seeking a performance credit can earn this credit by getting involved in a Senior Project as a dancer and enrolling in DANC 2112: Dance Performance: Beginning/Intermediate course. Interested students should contact the Senior Project Coordinator, Rebeca Gamborino rebeca.gamborino@utrgv.edu

Section 13: American College Dance Association:

The UTRGV Dance Department is a member of the national organization known as American College Dance Association and strives to participate annually in the spring South-Central Regional Conference. Attending an ACDA conference offers valuable opportunities for students to network with dance professionals and dance majors from other universities, experience a variety of diverse dance works, participate in master classes, and present works in adjudicated and informal concerts. The Dance Faculty selects which student works will represent the UTRGV Dance Department in ACDA concerts and abides by all rules, regulations, and policies as set forth by the ACDA organization. **The 2027 South-Central Regional ACDA Conference is scheduled for March 11 – 14, 2027 at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, TX.**

Section 14: UTRGV Dance Department Performing Companies

Ballet Folklórico:

The UTRGV Ballet Folklórico Program consists of three companies, all of which require annual auditions.

Ballet Folklórico (Student Company)

This is an all-UTRGV student company that is the primary student company with the purpose of the training and education of UTRGV students toward professional goals and professional dance degrees. This ensemble is analogous to all standard college dance companies in that it serves the Bachelor of Fine Arts curriculum (performance, education). Substitutions with non-students can only be made when there are no UTRGV students available with proficiency in dance and when following the policy for non-students and part-time students as outlined in the College of Fine Arts Policy.

Ballet Folklórico Juvenil Company (JV Freshman–Sophomore)

The Ballet Folklórico Juvenil is a junior varsity-level company designed for freshman and sophomore students. The purpose of this company is to give early-year students additional opportunities to perform and to develop the necessary skills to reach the optimum level of performance required for the UTRGV Ballet Folklórico. All students in this company will rehearse on the same days and times as the main Ballet Folklórico company, allowing them to train alongside upper-level dancers. An annual performance, La Herencia, features all freshmen and select sophomores from the Juvenil company and serves as a key milestone in their artistic and technical growth.

Ballet Folklórico (Alumni Company)

This is a community dance company for UTRGV alumni and is directed by the Ballet Folklórico director. The function of the company is to maintain ongoing relationships with the community. Many of the participating alumni themselves teach Mexican Folklórico dance in the K–12 schools of the Rio Grande Valley, making it a successful tool for the recruitment of dancers with Ballet Folklórico experience into the UTRGV Dance Department.

Folklórico Company PLACEMENT – AUDITION PROCESS

An annual audition process will occur at a time determined by the Director of Ballet Folklórico, typically, late in the spring semester. All participants for all companies must audition into the company every year, regardless of having been accepted previous years. The audition committee must include the director of the Ballet Folklórico and at least two other dance program faculty members. If desired, an outside judge with a recognized background in Ballet Folklórico may also serve on the audition committee.

Criteria used in the assessment of dancers in the audition process:

- Stamina/Body conditioning (max 30 points) - the completion of rigorous exercises to test the
- physical capability to perform a 2-hour show
- Footwork Technique (30 points) - clarity, strength, agility while performing a footwork sequence
- Body Posture (20 points) - Good control of body while performing, evident and good connection of upper and lower body
- Showmanship (10 points) - stage presence, projection, positive group energy, leadership, grace
- Rhythm (10 points) - musicality, evident knowledge of different rhythms and proper footwork sequences.

Each student should be given a summary sheet of the combined rating of the audition committee as is the norm and be completely advised of the specific criteria for acceptance into the company and/or criteria that need to be met for future successful audition as part of the audition process.

ROSTER – COMPANY PARTICIPANTS

The final roster of participants for each company will be clear and specific and will be shared publicly. After dancers are selected and established for each company, an annotated copy of the roster indicating the type of participant (see performing group section above) will be distributed to the Chair of the Dance Department and to the Dean of the College of Fine Arts. All concert programs for all performances will list the participants in the company, carefully noting the status of each of the participants, with the assumption being that unless otherwise noted, all participants are currently enrolled UTRGV students.

In the case of competitions, the rules for the definition of participants will always apply but any representation of UTRGV Ballet Folklórico must meet the criteria of the competition and participants must be represented in the program as stated in the College of Fine Arts general policy.

ATTENDANCE AND TIME COMMITMENT

The UTRGV Ballet Folklórico requires all participants to attend all rehearsals. When an individual is absent, it leaves a gap in the performance that is difficult to fill and affects the ability of the other participants to understand their role in relationship to the other parts of the company. The Director of the Ballet Folklórico must be notified of an absence at least a day in advance. Absences due to the following will be considered excused:

- Family emergency
- Scheduled school programs or performances required for credit
- Medical emergency
- Religious Holiday

* Dancers with injuries are expected to attend and watch company classes and rehearsals.

Students with more than three absences per semester will be dismissed from the company.

During the week prior to performances and competitions, all company members must be present for all rehearsals. Failure to be present for these dress rehearsals will result in a dismissal from the performance or competition.

TRAVEL

All Ballet Folklórico students participating in a performance outside the region must submit a “Release and Indemnification Agreement Form” to the Dean of Students prior to University sponsored travel. Travel support will only be provided to individuals who are full-time students and part-time students as defined above. All Ballet Folklórico dancers must submit an official excuse letter to their course instructors prior to an absence due to performing or touring.

COURTESY AND RESPECT

All Ballet Folklórico members will be held to the highest standards of conduct. Members are expected to show courtesy and respect to all instructors and other students. Any student who exhibits repeated negative or disrespectful behavior will be dismissed from the company.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOGRAPHY

UTRGV Ballet Folklórico may take still photographs and video footage of members during

rehearsals and performances, and may be used for educational, public information, and promotional materials about the program. To use this material legally, all ensemble members are required to sign a waiver allowing the use of their photo/video for educational, public information, and promotion purposes with respect to the Ballet Folklórico program and the UTRGV Dance Department. Please note that two waivers (travel and photography/videography) must be submitted to participate in performances and rehearsals in the company. Interested dancers should contact Miguel Peña miguel.pena@utrgv.edu

UTRGV DANCE COMPANY

Auditions and casting for projects will be held September 4, 2026, 4:30 PM – 7:30 PM in EHPE 2.133.

The UTRGV Dance Company unifies the strengths of the department's former companies—Ballet Español, Ballet Company, and Dance Ensemble—into a single company. This structure is designed to foster collaboration, expand artistic opportunities, and strengthen the department's presence both on campus and within the broader community. Representing a wide range of dance genres, the company reflects the diversity of training within the program.

Building on this legacy, the UTRGV Dance Company provides students with opportunities to participate in high-quality performances across forms including modern, jazz, ballet, and contemporary practices. These performances are presented each fall and spring at UTRGV theaters, offering the Rio Grande Valley community continued access to live concert dance.

Committed to community engagement, the company participates in College Dance Day, an event that offers local schools' performances, master classes, and educational experiences. It also represents UTRGV at dance festivals across Texas, including the Bailando International Dance Festival, Aired Summer Dance Fest, Brazos Contemporary Dance Festival, and the American College Dance Association Conference (ACDA).

Members benefit from opportunities to collaborate with nationally and internationally recognized guest artists, as well as participate in professional development initiatives, including student travel to programs such as the Gibney Learning and Leadership Intensive in New York City.

The UTRGV Dance Company is co-directed by Professors Rebeca Gamborino, Daniel Garcia, Min Kim, and Gina Laurenzi. Auditions are held annually, with additional invitations extended by the co-directors based on student participation and demonstrated development in classes.

Rules and Regulations for the UTRGV Dance Company:

1. It is recommended that students be concurrently enrolled in a corresponding technique class

and the corresponding performance class (DANC 3112.02 Dance Performance Int/Adv).

2. Casting of all works is at the discretion of the choreographer. Members are guaranteed and required to perform at least one work per semester.
3. Casting for guest artist residencies is at the discretion of the guest artist. The guest artist has the right to make all decisions regarding their choreographic work. Guest artist residencies are a privilege that depends upon receipt of funding and are not guaranteed to occur each semester.
4. Dancers must be present and on time for all rehearsal calls, tech rehearsals, and performances. Tech rehearsal and performance calls shall be set by the directors.
5. Dancers are expected to fully participate in all company warm-ups and any necessary pre-show activities.
6. All dancers are required to assist with the necessary set up and strike duties in the theatre of every production. Failure to comply with this rule will affect a student's final performance grade and membership status.
7. Dancers are required to follow appropriate and professional backstage etiquette as determined by the director.
8. Dancers are expected to comply with the choreographer's requests regarding costumes, hair, make-up, and props for each dance work.
9. Bows, curtain calls, and post-show protocols will be determined by the directors of each show. Dancers are required to follow the designated protocol.
10. Dancers are expected to treat all tech crew members with courtesy and respect.
11. Dancers are required to attend company meetings following each show for notes. It is the responsibility of each individual dancer to take all corrections and apply them to their performance.
12. Dancers are required to assist with strike immediately following the final performance. Failure to attend the strike will affect one's grade and membership.
13. In the unfortunate event of a severe injury or illness which prevents a dancer from fulfilling their ability to perform, it is the dancer's responsibility to notify the choreographer (or choreographers) as soon as possible so that plans for replacement can be arranged.
14. UTRGV Dance Company may take still photographs and video footage of members during rehearsals and performances, which may be used for educational and promotional materials to promote the UTRGV Dance Department. To use this material legally, all members must sign a waiver allowing use of their image in photos and/or videos for educational, public advertising, and promotional purposes regarding the UTRGV Dance Department.

Section 15: Dance Department Student Organization: Dance Student Association (DSA)

The purpose of this organization is to support the student body within the dance department academically and creatively; provide guidance and motivation through peer mentorship; encourage students throughout the semester with socials and services; create a non-judgmental space for students to feel acknowledged, respected, and encouraged; and provide opportunities for dance students to emerge as leaders within the community. All dance majors and minor students within the UTRGV dance department are automatically part of our student organization. In the past, DSA has organized events such as the Thanksgiving potluck, White Elephant Exchange, and DeStress Event in collaboration with the Nursing Department. They have organized fundraisers such as Pie the Professor and Energy in U. DSA is run by five to six officers each year under the guidance of the organization's faculty sponsor, Rebeca Gamborino. If you are interested in becoming an officer or getting involved, please contact Rebeca at rebeca.gamborino@utrgv.edu.

DSA Suggestion Box

The Dance Student Association provides a means for students to have a voice in Dance Department faculty meetings through the DSA Suggestion Box. Students may communicate suggestions, questions, and/or comments through the online suggestion box to be shared with faculty members by the elected DSA representative at monthly faculty meetings. Students should participate in a respectful and professional manner when participating by following the guidelines listed below:

- Comments/suggestions should remain constructive and contextualized
- Not to be used for personal attacks, please see Section 18 for student complaints and the UTRGV Grievance Policy
- Not to be used for advisement issues! Advisement issues must follow proper channels:
 1. Discuss advisement issues first with assigned advisor
 2. If necessary, advisor will discuss possible solutions with Dance faculty and get back to the student
 3. If not resolved, student should discuss the issue with the department chair
 4. If still unresolved, students should reach out to the university academic advisement center. The center will work with the Dance Department to find the best possible solution to fulfill degree requirements and help students meet graduation goals.

Section 16: Dance Department Safety and Wellness Policies

Every effort is made to ensure that all Dance Department facilities are safe for faculty, staff, and students by the following policies explained in the UTRGV Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP Section: ADM 10-901).

<https://www.utrgv.edu/hop/policies/adm-10-901.pdf>

In cases of Accidents, Injury, or Emergency Incidents, UTRGV Students should be aware of the General Incident Report that must be completed and submitted to document all accidents, injuries, or emergency incidents that occur on any UTRGV campus site. Please complete the report found by following this link for any incident, accident, near miss or environmental release as soon as feasible.

<https://www.utrgv.edu/ehsrm/files/documents/wci/utrgv-accident-injury-general.pdf>

UTRGV Police Department

For police protection, or to report unlawful activities, please contact the campus police.

The UTRGV Police Department protects and serves the campus community of students, faculty, staff and visitors throughout the Rio Grande Valley Region by providing professional law enforcement services and actively promoting community involvement through progressive community policing partnership strategies and a commitment to education. The UTRGV Police Department is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Contact Phone Numbers:

UTRGV Police Directory: (956) 882-7777

UTRGV Campus Emergency: (956) 882-4911

Emergency: 911

Email: police@utrgv.edu

UT Health RGV Student Health

UT Health RGV Student Health offers confidential assessments, treatments, medical referrals, and peer education opportunities.

Eligibility/Payments: As a registered student, you pay a Medical Service Fee each semester, which entitles you to a wide variety of UT Health RGV Student Health. With a validated UTRGV ID, you are entitled to office visits to see a health care provider as many times per semester as you need, with no office visit charge. There are charges for many services and procedures to diagnose and treat illnesses and injuries, such as for laboratory and pharmacy services, but these charges are much lower than those for comparable services provided elsewhere. Services rendered may be paid by cash, check, and most credit cards. Payment arrangements are available.

General Medicine: Students with common medical problems are diagnosed and treated on a walk-in basis; however, appointments are necessary for students requesting elective procedures. Referrals to outside providers are made when necessary.

Physical Exams: UTRGV students requiring a physical exam prior to admittance to a school program can have a physical exam done at SHS for a nominal fee. Call HS to schedule an appointment.

Pharmacy: A fully licensed Class D Pharmacy is conveniently available. The pharmacy carries both prescriptions and over the counter medications. The costs of medications are greatly reduced compared to retail prices.

Laboratory: A full-service, economical lab is equipped to do routine procedures as well as specimen collections for more sophisticated procedures that must be sent to a reference lab for testing.

Immunization: MMR, TD, Hepatitis B, Varicella, Meningitis and flu vaccines are available. TB skin testing is also offered.

Women Wellness Clinics: These services include PAP smears, family planning education and counseling, treatment of sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy testing and other women's health issues.

Other Services: Health Education resources, nutritional counseling, vision screenings, weight and blood pressure screenings are also available.

Please follow the link below for more information:

<https://www.utrgv.edu/health-services/index.htm>

UTRGV Counseling Center Health Affairs

Our office provides free and confidential counseling services for UTRGV students to address mental health concerns and seeks to promote personal growth and well-being among our campus community through education and outreach activities. Follow the link below for more information.

<https://www.utrgv.edu/counseling/>

Facility Hours: M - F 8:00 am to 5:00 pm

Counseling Center

Edinburg - EUCTR (Edinburg University Center) 109 (956) 665-2574
Brownsville - BSTUN (Brownsville Student Union) 2.10 (956) 882-3897
Email: counseling@utrgv.edu

Safety and Wellness Policies Specific to the UTRGV Dance Department Injury and First Aid:

- Each dance studio is equipped with a First Aid Kit for emergency use.
- Automatic External Defibrillator devices are available in EHPE II and the PAC Auditorium.
- An ice machine is available in EHPE II in the wing of professor offices at the end of the hallway for the care and/or treatment of injuries. Bags for the ice are available in the Dance Office (EHPE II. Room 115).
- All injuries should be reported to the Dance Department office and to the University by completing and submitting an online General Incident Report.
- An acute or traumatic injury in class should be treated as a serious matter. If the injured student cannot move on their own, do not attempt to move them. Call 911. If it is necessary to move the student to prevent further harm, only do so with the student's consent.
- All students enrolled in DANC technique/activity classes will be required to read and sign a liability/release waiver before participating in class activities.
If a student is injured during class and must stop dancing, they will still be considered present for the class and will receive participation credit.

Technique Class Observations:

All Dance Department technique courses allow students to take Observation Days while recovering from an injury or illness. Depending on the severity of the injury or illness, students are still expected to attend their technique classes while they recover. This allows students to earn credit for their mental participation in class activities while sitting out. Students are expected to submit a brief written summary of their observations to the instructor to receive credit for each day of observation.

Personal Wellness Reminder

Students are reminded of their personal responsibility in maintaining health and wellness and should take necessary precautions to remain injury free. Getting adequate amounts of sleep and providing one's body with quality nutrition and adequate hydration (water) to meet the physical and mental demands expected of dancers is the responsibility of each individual dancer.

Consistent attendance to all enrolled technique classes is expected to maintain adequate conditioning, as well as achieving the elevated level of mental awareness and knowledge of safe technique practices necessary to stay injury free as skills become more challenging and physically demanding.

IADMS Safety and Wellness Posters

Posters with safety and wellness information for dancers are prominently displayed in both dance studios in EHPE II (117 & 133). The information on each poster is officially approved by the International Association of Dance Medicine and Science (IADMS) and provides dancers with valuable information and reminders regarding safe practices for dancer wellness, safety, and injury care and treatment. Students are encouraged to take some time to review this important information.

Section 17: Use of UTRGV Dance Studios and Studio Rules

The 3 UTRGV Dance Department studios (EHPE 2.117, EHPE 2.133 & PAC.135 Studio) are reserved for the following activities in order of priority listed below:

- Scheduled UTRGV Dance (DANC) courses.
- UTRGV Dance company rehearsals and/or Dance faculty research (Ballet Folklórico and UTRGV Dance Company)
- Senior Project rehearsals as scheduled by the instructor of DANC 4302
- Choreography Project rehearsals for DANC 3301 and/or DANC 3302 assignments (Must reserve space ahead of time)
- UTRGV Dance Department dance students (students enrolled in DANC classes) requesting studio space to complete assignments or practice technique for UTRGV dance (DANC) classes. (Must reserve space ahead of time)

PAC Studio for Rehearsals

All Senior Dance majors enrolled in the Senior Project course will be given swipe access to the PAC studio with a UTRGV issued Access Card for rehearsals. Seniors enrolled in the Senior Project course (DANC 4302) will develop a rehearsal schedule with the course instructor, and all choreographers must abide by the schedule to avoid conflicts with rehearsal space and time.

Please inform the Senior Project instructor ASAP if a rehearsal is canceled so that the space can

be used by someone else. If the Student ID card does not work, please notify the Dance Office (EHPE II, room 115) so we can fix the problem.

Students who provide access for unauthorized use of dance studios risk losing studio access. Dance students who reserve studio space or provide access for non-department use will be prohibited from reserving studio space in the future. Dance students must follow and enforce studio rules:

- No food or drink in the studios. Only water is permitted.
- Wipe up spilled water immediately.
- Please pick up after yourselves between each class and rehearsal and take all personal items with you when leaving the studio. The Dance Department is not responsible for items left unattended.
- The use of hard soled shoes is prohibited in studio 117. Folklórico and Flamenco rehearsals should be held in studio 133 and the PAC studio, both allowing for the use of hard soled shoes.
- Dancing in street shoes is prohibited in all 3 studios.

Report any unauthorized use of the studios and any suspicious persons to the UTRGV Police by calling (956) 882-7777.

Reserving Studio Rehearsal Time

Students enrolled in UTRGV DANC courses may reserve studio space when available (see the list of studio priorities) by making a request through the Dance Department Office in EHPE II, room 115, email Paola Cantu. Requests from outside UTRGV must go through facility rental procedures through the University's Conference & Event Services.

Locker Rooms and Studio 117 Lockers

Men's and Women's locker rooms are available in EHPE II. Showers, toilets, lavatories, changing spaces, and lockers are available for UTRGV faculty, staff, and students. Students may bring their own locks and claim a locker for the semester on a first come first served basis or find an unused locker and use and remove your own lock on the days needed. Lockers must be cleaned out, and locks are removed at the end of each semester. Locks will be cut off at the end of each semester, and any locker contents remaining will be discarded. Lockers are available in studio 117 for dancers to store their personal belongings while taking class or participating in rehearsal. Students can request a key from the Dance Department office to lock their chosen locker temporarily. These lockers are not available for more than a day; they are only available for storing items while participating in class or rehearsal.

Section 18: Department Procedures on Handling Student Complaints:

When a student has an issue or concern within the Dance Department, they are encouraged to first communicate with the faculty members involved to clear up any misunderstandings. If the issue is still a concern, the student should bring the issue to the attention of the Department Chair, Dana Shackelford. When these efforts do not result in a resolution, students should follow the UTRGV policy provided below to file a grievance.

Filing a Grievance - UTRGV POLICY

The following website provides links for more information:

<https://www.utrgv.edu/srr/students/filing-a-grievance/index.htm>

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) seeks to provide fair and objective procedures for hearing student complaints and endorses compliance with the spirit of non-discrimination regulations. The following will advise students of procedures to be followed in filing non-academic complaints. UTRGV declares and reaffirms a policy of administering all of its educational programs and related supporting services and benefits in a manner that does not discriminate because of a student's or prospective student's race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, veteran status, citizenship, disability, gender (including sexual harassment), sexual orientation, gender expression, and gender identity or other characteristics that lawfully cannot be the basis for provision of such services. Students are protected from coercion, intimidation, interference, harassment, retaliation, or discrimination for filing a complaint, or assisting in an investigation.

Students may pursue complaints through the Office of the Dean of Students.

Student Advisement for Concerns/Complaints: Student Rights and Responsibilities

helps students who have concerns or complaints other than those addressed above, or who have questions regarding existing policies and procedures. For information about how to file a grievance, refer to the Handbook of Operating Procedures, specifically:

- STU 02-200: Student Grievances and Complaints
- ADM 03-100: Non-Discrimination and Complaint Procedure
- ADM 03-200: Accommodations for Individuals with Disabilities
- ADM 03-300: Sexual Misconduct
- STU 02-100: Student Conduct and Discipline

Section 19: Scholarship Information

The College of Fine Arts Dean's Scholarship funds provide the Dance Department with the opportunity to offer scholarships to Dance majors. The amount awarded varies depending on the number of students recommended by the faculty. Students must apply for consideration to be awarded scholarships. Scholarship funds will be distributed for the summer terms and during the 9-month academic year. When recommending students to receive a Dance Scholarship, the Dance faculty will primarily consider the following criteria for selection:

- Overall academic record (overall GPA of 3.0 or higher)
- Academic record in Dance (DANC) courses
- Involvement with the Department's dance companies
- Consistent punctuality, attendance, and enthusiastic participation in all dance classes and rehearsals