



SANTA ANA COLLEGE

SAC Dance Career Advisory Board Meeting

Spring 2024

Monday, April 22, 2024

Santa Ana College, Zoom Meeting <https://rscdd-edu.zoom.us/j/82526671307>

SAC Dance Department - Committee Advisory Board Members

- Heather Gillette
- Carrie Woodson
- Cyrian Reed

I. Call to order:

- The first meeting of the Career Advisory Board for the Dance Program: Heather Gillette called the meeting to order.

II. Welcome and Introductions of name, work title, background of dance education and dance industry:

- Heather Gillette - Department Chair and Committee Chair
- Carrie Woodson - Full-Time Temporary Dance Department Faculty, SAC; experience in CTE programs within the high school system; have teaching experience in dance in both college and the industry.
- Cyrian Reed - Professor of Dance, UCI; currently teaching jazz and hip-hop dance; much experience in the industry; have some experience with CTE and curriculum development with Riverside school district; new experience to be a part of a CTE advisory board.

III. Purpose of Advisory Meeting:

Heather Gillette explains the reasons for application to become a CTE program

Reason #1: Rebuilding the program

- Coming out of the pandemic, the SAC Dance Department was in need of rebuilding the program.
- Returning students did not have the technical skill sets to audition and transfer to large university dance programs.
- If students are not prepared, how else can the dance program create new career pathways for student success.
- Preparing students to work in the dance field: after-school programs; parks & recreation programs; dance studio instructors for children; audition preparation for amusement parks such as Disney; choreographic projects for high school programs.
- Jobs in the dance industry are available; how can the SAC Dance program create the necessary pathways to prepare students to meet the demands of the dance industry.

Reason #2: Hiring qualified dance experts in the commercial dance field and reinforcing the workforce industry

- Being a CTE approved program allows the opportunity to hire more instructors, experts in dance, who have work-related experience and/or a bachelor's degree in dance. Currently, college dance instructors must have a master's degree in dance. There are many qualified dance instructors who have a bachelor's degree, but not a master's degree.
- By hiring dance experts with an extensive dance background and/or have a bachelor's degree from a university dance program, we are reinforcing the workforce industry and providing more accessibility to varied dance opportunities to students.

Reason #3: Building support for underprivileged students to meet inclusivity and equity standards

- The SAC Dance program is currently undergoing the application process for non-credit courses to support underprivileged students to continue taking dance technique classes to improve their skill sets.
- Offering non-credit classes bypasses the limitations of non-repeatability of classes; a current policy that prevents students to continue on-going training. The non-repeatability policy presents a disadvantage for dance students who cannot afford to train in a private dance studio sector.

- Offering non-credit dance classes allows for students to take a dance class a couple of times at a lower level before moving forward to the next level.
- The dance program cannot offer non-credit classes until we are CTE approved.

Reason #4: Offering internship programs is a viable pathway to increase student success

- The dance program has a vision of creating partnerships with local studios, parks and recreation programs, SAC community classes, and the Disney Foundation Internship program.
- If the dance program is CTE approved, grant applications to support these internship programs are possible.
- Viability is the goal in serving students.

Reason #5: Creating dual-enrollment partnerships

- Creating opportunities for dual-enrollment partnerships with feeder high school dance programs will increase SAC enrollments, support college credit, and future interest to become a dance major at SAC.

Reason #6: Creating a foundation for future certificates, degrees, and jobs

- Current partnerships with dance programs at OCHSA are with the Ballet Folklorico and Ballroom instructors, Marlene Pena-Marin and Robert Porch.
- The OCHSA instructors consistently receive requests for dance instructors and/or performers in these specific dance genres. There is a need for more dance instructors to teach Ballet Folklorico and Latin Ballroom in the local community.
- The SAC dance program is in the beginning stages of developing new courses and certificates in these specific areas of dance to train students to be prepared to work in the local job market.
- It is a vision that these new certificates may lay the foundation for building a bachelor's degree in dance, International Dance and/or a bachelor's degree in dance, Mexican Folk Dance.
- The Santa Ana community is rich in its cultural arts and we're not moving forward in these areas of dance. We could be the first dance program to offer a bachelor's degree in international dance.

IV. Curriculum Review/Overview

- The current AA degree and Certificate in Dance are high in units and course requirements. It has been brought to Professor Gillette's attention to review the units and decrease the units. The FPA Dean has suggested leaving the degree and certificate alone, and instead, building new certificates with less units and course requirements.
- Currently, Professor Gillette is working on a Commercial Dance Certificate with two different levels in the Curricunet Meta system.

Reviewed the courses in the proposed commercial dance certificates and discussed ideas: A conversation and feedback from Heather Gillette, Cyrian Reed, Carrie Woodson

Cyrian Reed:

- The problem or challenge with students completing a degree is that sometimes "life happens". They get half-way through a certificate and then they can't finish. This new proposal will put students in a better position to excel and have completion.
- Having the base layer with the level one, like hip-hop, is good before you move on to the next level. If students want to explore more, they can move on to the next credential.
- The courses offered are a great balanced mixture.

Heather Gillette:

- If a student is more advanced, it might be possible to list "By audition only or by approval of instructor" as a pre-requisite. The challenge might be that there may need to be a "proof" of "audition only" for a pre-requisite for a certificate. This is the case for a course, but I'm not sure about a certificate. Research into this detail will need to be considered.

Cyrian Reed:

- If students start coming to SAC from OCHSA, then an audition into the certificate program would be more prestigious. Students need to come into the program with some kind of evidence that this is what they can do and with a level of commitment. That is the key.
- Also, what needs to be considered regarding pre-requisites is that what the system was then, is not what the system is now. Meaning, we need to be mindful of the evolution of dance entertainment and commercialized entrepreneurship.
- There is no longer a need to have a degree to be doing what you're doing. People in Tiktok are famous now and they can't dance. They're making thousands of dollars with scratching their ears. Unfortunately, dance is being saturated by social media and even more by TV and is blindsided the artistry of movement and how we are making a living.
- This is bastardizing and mocking the very thing that we've been working so hard to achieve.

- There needs to be a happy medium between the students and the dance programs, putting them in the best position to work, but also not dumbing down the process; how to get them to know what they're supposed to know.

Heather Gillette:

- We don't want to water-down dance. We need to keep the integrity and have students understand how to work hard with strong ethics compared to what is happening at the social media level.
- I'm thinking about the commercial dance courses and realizing that students need to know how to create videos of their work for social media.

Cyrian Reed:

- Like a resume, students need to put together a reel before they finish their certificate.

Heather Gillette:

- This makes me think of our Screendance Certificate, but I haven't fully launched it because I haven't found someone who can teach the course.

Cyrian Reed:

- That's what the CTE is for!

Carrie Woodson:

- You'll bring in an industry person for that.

Heather Gillette:

- The Screendance Certificate is a collaboration with the Digital Media program. Once students take these courses, they have a final portfolio to complete, but we don't have the instructor to teach our part of the course and also fit it into the schedule.

Carrie Woodson:

- Can you clarify? Do you mean that it would be their senior project, or that's a separate certificate? They need to do it as part of the CTE program; to include a digital project in their portfolio.

Heather Gillette:

- This could be included in the Commercial Dance certificate and also the Screendance Certificate.

Heather Gillette asks Cyrian about DTE, Tap, and Studio Practices:

- Do you think that the Dance Touring Ensemble should be a part of the certificate? I'm debating about it because of the units, but the opportunity to perform at different high schools also exposes our students to the directors of the programs. This could lead to working opportunities such as choreographing for the after-school programs.
- Tap is part of the Musical Certificate.
- I'm not sure where to put Studio Practices; this is the class where they learn how to teach.

Cyrian Reed:

- DTE - I think it's important that they dance in different spaces. I don't know if I would necessarily take that out.
- Tap can be an elective.
- No response about studio practices.

V. More discussions about the certificate programs, classes, and other ideas:

- The certificates are one year each and students do not need to focus on GE requirements. These certificates would be a hyperfocus approach.
- Will they be ready to work and/or teach after one year? NO! Maybe the higher leveled certificate with the pre-requisite audition might have stronger dancers.
- Those students who need to take courses over again before moving on to the next level would need to be part of the non-credit class, but that's why we need to be CTE approved.
- Will they be career ready? No, not in a year.
- Other struggles come from the push that students need to be in and out of the college system in two years.
- Also, most of our students are bilingual and struggle with verbalizing their ideas, writing about their ideas, and choreographing their ideas. How do we address and cultivate this? Dancers need to talk about their dances intelligently. We don't want to set them up to fail. Can we offer a class that helps culminate their reading and writing? Is there a criticism course, like in the university programs?
- Every dance course should include reading and writing activities. Maybe offering a criticism course as part of the final project would be a possibility.
- Giving feedback to students can no longer be called "critiques"!

VI. Announcements and Adjournment:

What wasn't discussed was the following:

- New courses created in Mexican folk-dance, Latin and ballroom dance for future international dance certificate. The courses would support dual enrollment, which may possibly become the foundation for creating a bachelor's degree.
- Next meeting will be in early fall, 2024. Meetings will be held 2-3 times per year.

VII. Highlights from Discussion

Ideas rephrased by Heather Gillette

- Having a prerequisite for the certificate, "By audition only or by approval of instructor" may be more prestigious.
- Offering the different levels with the new proposal will put students in a better position to excel and have completion.
- The Dance Touring Ensemble should be a part of the certificate program.
- We need to be mindful of the evolution of dance entertainment and commercialized entrepreneurship. There is no longer a need to have a degree to be doing what you're doing.
- The program needs to include video resume/reel. This can connect to the Screendance certificate.
- The tap class can remain as an elective.
- Refer back to section V for more highlights and thoughts.