Year 2012 - 2013

A. **Actions Based On Assessment Findings**

Demonstrate knowledge of dance and contemporary styles/technical efficiency – Brought in outside professionals that observed the juries and gave vital feedback to the dance majors. 2012-2013 the Dance Program commissioned two guest choreographers that set major choreographic works on the dance majors. Feedback from these professionals was vital to our positive findings.

Knowledge of contemporary dance styles - WSU Dance Program initiated a successful teacher exchange with Dayton Contemporary Dance Company in which WSU Faculty travel to DCDC studios and teach the main dance company and second company, DCDC2. Concurrently, members of Dayton Contemporary Dance Company travel to WSU Dance Program and taught classes to all levels of dance majors. We intend to make this an annual exchange to benefit both the DCDC organization and our WSU students.

Communicate effectively – Utilized assessment findings to implement new curricular changes including comprehensive Dance History courses and the addition of Integrated Writing to the Senior Project as the university moved into semesters. Our dance majors now have two courses that assess communication in a verbal and written method, Dance History II and Senior Project. Our program of study is primarily geared to choreographic output rather than verbal and written communication and practical application.

Understanding of the business side of dance/employment - Current dance faculty are continually tracking and advising former dance majors in order that we may better assess the outcomes of our objectives. The dance faculty will continue to reassess the objectives and measures and update the assessment plans to be more specific and applicable to the current program, curriculum and faculty priorities.

B. **Student Learning Outcomes**

Demonstrate knowledge and technical efficiency of dance and contemporary styles:
Graduates will be educated and trained in multiple styles and techniques of dance including Classical Ballet, Modern, Horton, Jazz, Musical Theatre Dance, Tap and Pointe.

Competence in the creation and production of choreography:
Graduates will successfully create a senior choreographic work to be performed in the Emerging Choreographers Concert in the Festival Playhouse that meets the traditional standards of successful, innovative choreography.

Communicate effectively:
Graduates will learn effective communication and writing through the Integrated Writing Course in the Dance Major, Dance History II and Senior Dance Project II. These courses were revised during the transition to semesters to make the subjects more comprehensive. In addition, graduates produce their own concert.

Understanding of the business side of dance/employment:
Graduates will learn the trade tools to marketing in their profession and creating a professional portfolio and understanding the various employment markets in dance.
C. **Methods of Collecting Information**

The semester juries assess all dance majors for technical efficiency. Feedback is received from guest adjudicators and informally from our guest teachers and guest choreographers from the national field of dance throughout the year.

DAN 3410 Choreography I, DAN 3420 Choreography II, rehearsals and subsequent performance in the Festival Playhouse of the Emerging Choreographers Concert assess Junior and Senior Dance majors for competence in choreography. An outside guest adjudicator collaborates with the three WSU Dance Faculty to give feedback and choose one piece to be presented on the Faculty Spring Dance Concert. Seniors are additionally assessed in courses DAN 4910 and DAN 4920, Senior Dance Project II and II.

Effective communication/writing is assessed through DAN History II and Senior Dance Project II, both Integrated Writing courses.

D. **Assessment Measures Employed**

**Measure One:** All dance majors auditioned in November 2012 for the Wright State University Dance Ensemble. Those dancers who were cast in the six dance works from the audition appeared in the Spring Dance Concert 2013. These students registered for the Performance Course, DAN 399, of which 6 hours are required to graduate. The faculty choreographers evaluated their performances. Two guest choreographers held a dance audition for two separate works to be created.

**Measure Two:** All dance majors underwent a juried final at the end of each semester. Freshmen and sophomores had a jury panel that consisted of the three dance faculty. Juniors and Seniors had a jury panel that consisted of the three dance faculty plus two outside panelists from the dance community. These dance juries assessed ballet, modern and jazz dance styles and were numerically evaluated. Conferences were held each semester with the dancers to provide them with feedback specific to their dance work at the juries and their classroom work and progress.

**Measure Three:** Senior dance majors participated in a yearlong senior choreographic dance project that required students to create an original choreographed work and stage the work on a cast of three or more dancers. Senior dance majors were responsible for all facets of the work including music selection, casting, scheduling of rehearsals and producing the Emerging Choreographers Concert in February 2013 in which all pieces were presented in the Festival Playhouse. This senior project was adjudicated and evaluated by the dance faculty and one outside adjudicator from the professional dance region. Evaluation was received for the Senior Dance Project Course Dan 4910/4920.

**Measure Four:** Senior dance majors were required to write a support paper of their senior dance project which included their stimuli, creative process, casting, rehearsal process, production elements and recommendations to upcoming seniors. The entire choreographic process was evaluated further through their written description and insight.

**Measure Five:** Exit interviews of senior dance majors by the chair of the Department of Theatre, Dance, and Motion Pictures.

E. **Significant Assessment Findings**

The findings of the objectives and learning outcomes were significant and positive. No further action is necessary.
a. **Technical proficiency in dance** (ballet, modern, and/or jazz) was measured by the success of the senior dance students being cast in the six choreographic works by faculty and two guest choreographers’ works performed in the Spring Dance Concert 2013. These two guest works were Classical Ballet and Modern, showing the versatility of the same dancers. An initial projection was that 80% of the senior dance majors should have danced in a major dance program concert. In spring 2013, 100% of seniors had danced in a major dance program concert and 100% of senior dance majors were cast in the Spring Dance Concert 2013. Degree of proficiency was also determined by the grades of the spring performance course Dan 3990. 95% of all senior dancers performing or understudying in works received A’s and 5% received a B; therefore, 100% received acceptably high scores in performance. Our assessment focuses on the seniors as they are pre-professional and have studied for four years of technical training. The initial projection was that 80% of the dancers should receive acceptably high scores in performance.

Technical proficiency in dance was also measured by a direct measure two, the dance jury. The results of the dance juries evaluated by three dance faculty and two outside adjudicators were that 100% of the senior dance majors received acceptably high scores on all three of their juries throughout the senior year receiving either an A or B.

Technical proficiency in dance was also measured by an indirect measure three, the comments of our guest choreographers, in particular Kiesha Lalama, one of Dance Magazines “25 to Watch” and a nationally recognized choreographer and teacher for concert dance, theatre and television. Her evaluation of the dance majors and WSU Dance Program was overwhelmingly positive, commenting on their strength, technical prowess, versatility and risk-taking. This evaluation is an impartial validation of the strength of the training and proficiency.

b. Competence in the creation and production of choreography was projected as 80% of senior dance majors would receive acceptably high scores on their senior choreographic projects. The result for 2013-2013 was that 100% of the senior dance majors received acceptably high scores on their senior choreographic projects performed in the Festival Playhouse’s main stage. These scores were determined both by the three dance faculty and one outside adjudicator, Jeanne Mam-Luft, artistic director of her own company in Cincinnati, MamLuft & Co.

c. Knowledge of contemporary dance styles can be determined by tracking the grades of the seniors in ballet, modern and jazz styles. 100% of the seniors obtained the grade of A or B in all three of these contemporary dance styles during the three quarters of their senior year in dance.

d. Programmatic understanding of the business side of the dance profession was unable to be quantitatively supported. However, from exit interviews conducted after graduation, 80% of the senior dance majors are currently working in their area of expertise either by employment as a professional apprentice/dancer, teaching dance, choreographing dance, and/or attending a graduate program in dance.

F. **Discussion of Results**

Results were discussed among the three dance faculty and with the Chair.

G. **Responsive Action to Assessment Findings to Improve Learning**

The findings were overwhelmingly positive. In the field of dance, assessment is variable as it is a performing art. Continued awareness to the quality and high level of both technical and artistic training will be reinforced in all studio classes of modern, jazz and ballet.

- In response to the technical proficiency in dance and knowledge of contemporary dance styles, national and regional guest teachers and choreographers will continue to add challenges to the dance majors which enhance their dance skills with variety, new concepts and exposure to
working professionals in dance. The level and quality of their daily studio dance classes should continue to advance and challenge the students with new methods of approach to working and learning. The professional guest artists also expose our majors to advanced methods of choreography and construction. Faculty discussed having a set number of guest teachers each year to make sure we are achieving the versatility. With only three WSU Dance Faculty, the need for a variety of styles is obvious. We hope to expose them to an even greater amount of guest teachers. The teacher exchange will help this goal. Finances and the overload of current faculty and students limit commissioning outside artists. Faculty discussed bringing in national choreographers to heighten the quality of choreographic and artistic influence on the dancers.

• A new commitment to aiding the graduating seniors in creating and producing audition video reels and websites to enhance networking and job opportunities. Currently many dance companies ask to see auditionee’s work through online videos. Having a professional, edited dance reel is necessary.

• WSU Dance Program will attend the Regional American College Dance Festival Spring 2014 to offer students exposure to other faculty and student performances from other colleges around the region to increase their versatility and marketability. A guest choreographic work will be adjudicated on the concert. Daily classes and workshops will increase exposure to diversity and variety in dance. Our students need more opportunities to perform their craft and faculty are planning ways of taking our students out into the region to perform.

• Continue to update the integrated writing courses by making sure they are comprehensive and current in the dance field.

• We are planning to expand the course work of Kinesiology to include physical therapy and injury prevention due to the addition of the Pilates Room.

University Learning Outcomes:

As part of the HLC Academy project, the program of study will eventually assess two University Learning Outcomes in the required courses in the major. One outcome will be assessed in 2014-2015, and the second will be added in 2015-2016. Identify the two ULOs that will be assessed, and if possible, the likely course(s) to be used.

1. Communicate effectively - Dan 4920 IW Senior Project; Dan 2520 IW Dance History II
2. Apply the methods of inquiry of the natural sciences, social sciences, and the arts and humanities - Dan 3420 Choreography II

H. Supporting Documents

Not applicable. Dance Program has 3 faculty with connected offices so we converse daily about the program, students, initiatives, etc.