



DANCE

CURRICULUM AND GUIDELINES 2024/2025

*This handbook serves as an overview of courses, standards, and guidelines set by Idyllwild Arts Academy's Dance Department.
Course offerings subject to enrollment and availability.*

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STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

The Idyllwild Arts Dance program provides students with the technical and artistic versatility required to advance in the professional and collegiate dance world. To achieve this, all Dance majors study multiple styles of dance.

Ballet plays a crucial role in a Dance major's education and enhances their likelihood of being accepted into a prestigious collegiate dance program, training program, or dance company upon graduation from IAA. Idyllwild Arts students study the American Ballet Theater (ABT) National Training Curriculum in Ballet and work toward achieving both technical expertise and artistic expression, developing an understanding of and a feeling for efficient movement. By applying the laws of physics to the principles of classical ballet, each student acquires healthy movement habits that minimize the risk of injury while learning how to apply these laws to dance styles other than ballet.

Modern dance classes give the Dance major the versatility required to succeed in their field. Students become aware of how weight, gravity, space, and energy provide the basis for technical ability and for choreographic creativity. Modern dance training, with its emphasis on the articulation of the torso and pelvis, helps the young dancer develop the strong and supple body necessary for a long career. Meanwhile, jazz dance classes give the Dance major training in rhythm, dynamic movement, and phrasing as they work on long combinations.

The Idyllwild Arts Dance Department strives to develop resilient dance artists who can be productive members of the professional dance community. Under the direction of Ellen Rosa-Taylor, the Idyllwild Arts Dance faculty nurtures students to refine their dance techniques as well as develop their own unique voice in the dance community.

DEPARTMENT REQUIREMENTS

All Dance majors must enroll in Ballet, Modern, and Jazz Dance classes each year that they are in the program; they will also take Dance History and Dance Conditioning during their time at Idyllwild Arts. Tap Dance is required in the first semester of the 9th and 10th grade years and is offered as an elective during the second semester. Meanwhile, all 11th and 12th grade students are required to take Dance Composition. All Dance majors must complete the ABT National Training Curriculum Exam for each year they are eligible. For an outline of these requirements by grade level, please refer to "Required Courses by Year."

Because the Dance program focuses on developing performing abilities, all Dance majors must take part in all Dance performances. 11th and 12th grade students present their own choreography in a Spring showcase held in May of each year. Faculty and students work together to develop senior solos in preparation for the auditions (i.e. for college or university programs and/or professional companies) appropriate to each 12th grade student's individual goals.

Placement into all technique classes is determined via a dance placement audition held at the beginning of the school year (see more below). Enrollment and placement in all classes are at the discretion of the Dance faculty.

DANCE PLACEMENT AUDITION

All Dance majors should plan to attend the dance placement audition at the beginning of each school year. During the audition, dancers take a ballet class and learn a modern and jazz combination. Members of the dance faculty observe students to make decisions regarding placement and ensure that each student is placed in the appropriate training level for the upcoming school year.

Please note that extreme thought and care goes into arranging the dance levels so that students are placed in a level where they can thrive and grow as dance artists without feeling overwhelmed. Please note that these levels are fluid and subject to change throughout the school year.

REQUIRED COURSES BY YEAR

9th GRADE

- Tap Dance (during first semester)
- Ballet*
 - Pointe Class required for all female dancers each year of enrollment
 - Pas de Deux required for all male dancers each year of enrollment
- Modern Dance*
- Jazz Dance*
- Dance History
- Dance Conditioning**
- ABT National Curriculum Exam (if eligible)

10th Grade

- Tap Dance (during first semester)
- Ballet*
 - Pointe Class required for all female dancers each year of enrollment
 - Pas de Deux required for all male dancers each year of enrollment
- Modern Dance*
- Jazz Dance*
- Dance History
- Dance Conditioning**
- ABT National Curriculum Exam (if eligible)

11th GRADE

- Dance Composition
- Ballet*
 - Pointe Class required for all female dancers each year of enrollment
 - Pas de Deux required for all male dancers each year of enrollment
- Modern Dance*
- Jazz Dance*
- Dance History
- Dance Conditioning**
- ABT National Curriculum Exam (if eligible)

12th GRADE

- Dance Composition
- Ballet*
 - Pointe Class required for all female dancers each year of enrollment
 - Pas de Deux required for all male dancers each year of enrollment
- Modern Dance*
- Jazz Dance*
- Dance Conditioning**
- ABT National Curriculum Exam (if eligible)

**At levels determined by dance placement audition*

***Enrollment in Dance Conditioning depends on the student's schedule and level; all students will take this course at some point during their time in the Dance Department*

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Course availability may vary from year to year.

DANCE CONDITIONING - One or two semester course

Prerequisites: None

Dance Conditioning is a requirement for all Dance majors and is devoted to cross training exercises to help with injury prevention. Students learn and acquire healthy movement habits applicable to any dance-related activity. This class teaches exercises that correct body alignment and optimize muscle usage in order to prevent injuries. Strength-building routines are combined with stretching exercises to improve movement efficiency, increase range of motion, and enhance career longevity.

DANCE HISTORY - One or two semester course

Prerequisites: None

Dance History explores the history of dance from the ancient world to the present, enabling students to develop an appreciation of their heritage in this art form through readings, lectures, and the viewing of films and videotapes. Appreciation of dance history develops the students' artistic taste, informs them of current trends in the professional dance world, and motivates their daily studio work through exposure to remarkable dancing and choreographic works. In addition to recorded performances, students have opportunities to attend live performances by world-famous dance companies. Dance History is required for all 9th, 10th, and 11th grade Dance majors each year of enrollment.

BALLET I-V - Full-year course

Prerequisites: Placement by audition

Ballet is offered at all levels and is based on the American Ballet Theater National Training Curriculum syllabus. Students are placed in levels at the discretion of the faculty. Ballet stresses the simultaneous development of strength, limberness, neuromuscular coordination, spatial orientation, musicality, and stylistic clarity. Ballet is required for all Dance majors each year of enrollment and all Dance Majors must complete the ABT National Training Curriculum Exam for each year they are eligible in order to receive their Arts Certificate. The curriculum takes students from a basic understanding of the principles of ballet to the technical mastery needed for full artistic expression. Students receive instruction in pointe, pas de deux, variations, and dance fundamentals. Their advancement in technical expertise and artistic expression allows them to develop an understanding of and feeling for complex movement, timing, and line in their work.

- **POINTE CLASS - Full-year course (credit included with Ballet technique classes)**

Prerequisites: Placement by audition for female dancers; no prerequisite for male dancers

Pointe class provides the technical understanding of muscular strength needed for efficient pointe work. The advanced section deals with more complex technical skills, emphasizing the articulation, speed, and endurance required by the classical ballet repertoire. Pointe class is required for all female dancers each year of enrollment.

- **MEN'S CLASS - Full-year course (credit included with Ballet technique classes)**

Prerequisites: Male dancers only

Men's Class is designed to provide male students with the strength, stamina, and specific technical training required for the classical male repertoire.

- **PAS DE DEUX - Full-year course (credit included with Ballet technique classes)**

Prerequisites: Placement by audition for female dancers

In Pas de Deux, students use their technical expertise and awareness of timing to become familiar with the sense of mutual trust and support essential to the art of partnering. Pas de Deux is required of all male dancers each year of enrollment.

MODERN DANCE I-V - Full-year course

Prerequisites: Placement by audition

Modern Dance focuses on developing technical abilities along with artistic versatility. By concentrating on the articulation of the spine, the technique classes explore the full range of possibilities for movement in the torso. Different rhythmic structures and emphasis on musical phrasing help create a musical dancer. Students receive instruction in partnering, repertory, and dance fundamentals. Modern Dance is required for all Dance majors each year of enrollment.

JAZZ DANCE I-V - Full-year course

Prerequisites: Placement by audition

Jazz Dance presents various jazz techniques and styles at all levels. Entry-level classes introduce students to jazz dance basics. Upper-level classes allow dancers to explore and refine their craft. Emphasis is placed on technique and challenges. Jazz Dance is required for all Dance majors each year of enrollment. Jazz Dance classes are open to all students with the consent of the instructor.

TAP DANCE I-V – One semester course

Prerequisites: Placement by audition

Tap Dance teaches basic tap steps and rhythm carried through to advanced techniques. Entry-level classes introduce students to the basics of tap. Upper-level classes enable dancers to explore and refine their craft. Tap Dance is required for all 9th and 10th grade Dance majors during the first semester of each of those years of enrollment; they can then take it as an elective during the second semester, if so desired. 11th and 12th grade students may opt to enroll in this class as well. No experience is needed and the class is open to all students with the consent of the instructor.

DANCE COMPOSITION - Full-year course

Prerequisites: Must be in 11th grade or higher

Dance Composition teaches students how to create and structure their own dance works. Students learn that dance is a language with a specific vocabulary and have opportunities to develop their own dance pieces. Student-choreographed dances are presented as part of the Student Choreography Concert, which is held in the Spring of each year. Dance Composition is required of all 11th and 12th grade Dance majors.

HIP HOP

Prerequisites: None

This course is an introduction to elements of hip hop, including movement, musical rhythm, tempo, and phrasing, as well as the historical context surrounding this popular dance style. Students will engage in community-centered practices through the cypher and its many forms, investigating improvisation, composition, and play within hip hop culture.

SPOTLIGHT CLASSES

All Dance majors participate in Spotlight Classes throughout the year. Idyllwild's proximity to Los Angeles and San Diego provides easy access to the many performances that take place in these cities. Workshop topics include ballet, modern, jazz, various ethnic styles of dance, acting for dancers, anatomy, basic nutrition, and career counseling.

DEPARTMENT GUIDELINES

ATTENDANCE

Participation in all classes and rehearsals is mandatory. If a student has to be absent for any reason, they must contact the Chair of the Department via email at erosa@idyllwildarts.org and state the nature of the absence. If the student is in the Health Center, please have the nurse email the Chair of the Dance Department as soon as possible.

PUNCTUALITY

Please be on time for each class. Ask questions if you do not understand the schedule. "On time" means that you are dressed properly with hair done and ready to participate in class. It is recommended that you **arrive 10 minutes prior** to any rehearsal and use that time to go over the choreography and warm-up. **If you are late to a class or rehearsal without an official excuse, the teacher has the option to have you observe the class that day.**

PREPARATION

Being prepared means arriving to class or rehearsal with the correct dance clothes, the correct dance shoes, properly groomed hair, and with dance journals easily accessible. Being prepared also means being ready to participate fully from the start of the class or rehearsal (i.e. reviewing choreography and previous corrections or notes in your dance journal before class or rehearsal starts). The way you present yourself in class will be looked at as representative of your effort and participation in class, and will be graded accordingly.

COMMUNICATION

Develop a daily habit of checking your student email account, especially on Sunday evenings when the weekly rehearsal schedule and any other important information for the week will be sent to all Dance majors. Check the bulletin board outside the Dance Studio as you arrive for your daily classes, as it will contain any last-minute changes in the rehearsal or class schedule. The Dance Chair is always open to

discussing any matter related to a student's dance training such as level placement, casting, progress, collegiate or professional goals, etc. You can schedule a meeting with the Dance Chair by emailing erosa@idyllwildarts.org. *(Please note that the Dance Chair will not discuss another dancer's progress with another student or another parent.)*

PARTICIPATION

While in class or rehearsal, you must be attentive 100% of the time and not distracted or a distraction to others. Additionally, it is important that students be respectful when addressing the instructor.

Non-Participation (NPs) - No more than three consecutive NPs will be accepted without a written note from a Medical Doctor stating the reason for your inability to actively participate in a dance class or rehearsal. If you are unable to participate due to an injury or illness, you will take notes about the class you are observing in your dance journal and present it to the teacher at the end of the class to receive full participation for the class that day. You may not work on other assignments for other classes while sitting out and observing your dance classes.

DANCE JOURNALS

Please bring your dance journal to all classes, student conferences, and department meetings. You will be required to present it to the Department Chair for review as requested. Additionally, if you need to sit out of class due to injury or illness, you will take notes about the class you are observing in your dance journal. Using your phone for note-taking while observing a class (or otherwise) will not be permitted as a substitute for your dance journal.

STUDIO USAGE

No one but students of the Dance Department are permitted in the dance studios unless given permission by the Chair of the Dance Department. Please help to ensure that this guideline is strictly enforced.

SHOES

No street shoes in the studios or on the stage floor during tech rehearsals and performances. Please help us to keep the dance floors clean and safe for dancing on.

HAIR STYLING

Hair is to be kept neat and styled according to the dress code for the class. If you have long hair, please use a means to secure it away from the face so it does not distract you while dancing. Long bangs should be pinned back to allow you to see and not be distracted in class.

- *Ballet:* Hair should be secured and off of the neck and face. Historically in ballet, dancers wore a bun, but any appropriate hairstyle that allows the neck to move freely when turning is permitted. Bangs should be pinned back to allow you to see and not be distracted in class.
- *Modern/Jazz:* Hair should be styled so as not to distract the dancer when moving and should be kept off the face.

CELL PHONES

Cell phones should be on silent and kept in the student's dance bag or locker during all dance classes or rehearsals. Students should not be checking their cell phones until after the class is completed or when there is a 15-minute break. If there is a family emergency and a student needs to be contacted while class or

rehearsal is in session, a parent or guardian should contact the main office, which will then notify the student and instruct them to contact their parent or guardian.

COVID-19 REGULATIONS - The Dance Department will follow campus-wide Covid-19 Guidelines and students are expected to do the same.

CONDUCT

It is assumed that you are enrolled at IAA for a dance education that will enable you to achieve your goals in the collegiate and/or professional dance world. Therefore, it is expected that you conduct yourself daily with a sense of purpose, discipline, and respect for others—both students and faculty—that will enable you to develop your technical and artistic ability. Such conduct includes but is not limited to:

- Being prepared and on time for all scheduled dance activities.
- Being ready to learn and demonstrate your level of comprehension of dance technique and artistry.
- Being a positive member of the entire IAA Community at all times.

Developing dance technique, and the ability to use it with physical strength, is a cumulative process. Therefore, consistent attendance to all classes and rehearsals—coupled with 100% focus, positive participation, and a willingness to learn and accept concepts from all faculty members and guest teachers—will enable students to reach their personal dance goals.

DANCE ATTIRE NEEDS AND DRESS CODE

Instructors (including all faculty members and guest teachers) may alter the dress code for their specific classes in order to achieve maximum results. This dress code (especially regarding clothing, shoes, and hair) is based on historical practices and industry standards in ballet and other dance styles; all guidelines here have long-standing historical precedent and exist to ensure student success both in the classroom and beyond.

FOR FEMALE DANCERS

- Footed pink or flesh-tone tights
- Pink or flesh-tone ballet shoes
- Pink or flesh-tone pointe shoes in good condition (supportive, not broken) for pointe, variations, and pas de deux classes
- Chiffon wrap skirt for in-studio presentations, variations class, and pointe classes
 - Optional for ballet class

FOR MALE DANCERS

- Black, white, or flesh-tone tights or shorts
 - Please be sure to have one pair of each (i.e. tights and shorts)
 - Please be sure to have an elastic belt to roll tights on
- Black or white fitted shirts
- Black, white, or flesh-tone shoes for ballet class (no holes)
- Male dancers will need three flesh-tone dance belts

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- Solid (not two-toned) black leotard for ballet technique, pointe, pas de deux, variations, modern dance classes, and jazz classes
 - Friday is “free” day for Ballet—students must wear tights and a leotard or unitard, but may choose the color and style of their choice.
- For jazz classes: black footless tights, jazz pants, or black shorts with Oxford-style or slip-on black jazz shoes
 - Black, heeled character shoes may be required for choreography, especially for female dancers
- For modern dance classes: black footless tights (and bare feet!)
- Plenty of hairpins, bobby pins, hair elastics, hair nets, headbands, and hairspray as needed to neatly secure hair daily and for all dance classes and rehearsals
- Water bottle to be taken into classes and rehearsals
- Dance Journal
- Flesh-tone camisole and briefs (one of each) to wear underneath costumes if required in performance

FOR COLD DAYS

- Tight-fitting leg warmers or knitted tights
 - No sweatpants, pajama bottoms, or baggy shorts will be allowed in any class or rehearsal
- A wrap style or form-fitting sweater or T-shirt
 - Please no baggy sweaters, pullovers, hoodies, or sweatshirts
- Idyllwild can be cold in the winters—please have plenty of warm-up clothes to wear during these times (leg warmers may be worn at the discretion of the instructor)

PERFORMANCE ATTIRE

All dance attire worn during performances is considered “costumes,” including tights and shoes. Students may be required to wear various alternative colors for performances than those required for daily dance classes, based on the choreographer’s vision.

Instructors (including all faculty members, guest teachers, directors, and choreographers) reserve the right to require students to change their dress or style of hair in order to better adhere to the dress code and/or to achieve maximum results.

GUIDELINES FOR EVALUATION AND GRADING

Otherwise known as the Principles of the Four “Ps”

PROGRESS

- Usage of facility—physical engagement of muscles with a sense of elongation and attack
- Development of flexibility
- Development of musicality—use of music in each exercise and in movement study/choreography

- Development of technical execution—acumen and exactitude developed over time
- Development of presentation—the way in which the student “performs” each movement
- Consistent use of corrections (both general and specific)

PARTICIPATION

- Consistent attendance (with consideration of illness, testing, need for absence due to family emergencies and crisis, etc.)
- Strong and consistent positive work ethic—demonstrating a “hunger” for knowledge and experience, including taking useful notes while sitting out
- Completion of all assignments—finishing combinations or executing choreographed movement to the very best ability at every opportunity

PRESENCE

- Being in the moment during all dance activities—not being distracted or distracting fellow students, not being preoccupied
- Awareness of expression (as in a performance)
- Projection—positive and pleasant (i.e. attitude and general demeanor)

PREPAREDNESS

- Being prepared mentally and physically for every class, rehearsal, and performance with appropriate attire and supplies
- Punctuality
- Readiness—being focused on the tasks to come and prepared through forethought

Please note that not every student will receive individual feedback during each class, but all students will receive consistent individual feedback throughout the course of each semester.

Please note that portions of this document are subject to changes and/or additions deemed necessary; the Dance Department reserves the right to adjust its curriculum and expectations as deemed appropriate. It is expected that every student will do their best to use good judgment and will conduct themselves with a positive attitude, be polite, and develop a strong sense of professionalism through their time at Idyllwild Arts Academy.