

Program Overview: Bachelor of Fine Arts, Dance

About This Major . . .

The Department of Theatre Arts offers one of the most successful Theatre and Dance training programs in Colorado. Students majoring in Dance acquire a sound understanding of the performing arts in newly-built, state-of-the-art facilities.

Focusing on commercial dance, the BFA in Dance is constructed to help students meet the rigorous demands of a professional dance career and provide a strong foundation and practical experience for future choreographers and studio teachers. Beginning with the first semester, students enroll in technique courses taught by academically and professionally experienced faculty. Unlike larger institutions, performance opportunities in all productions at Colorado Mesa University are open to motivated and talented freshmen. In technique courses, students are exposed to techniques and approaches that are industry standards today. The department offers beginning through professional-level technique classes in ballet, jazz, modern, and tap and also offers two levels of study in Hip Hop. This breadth, unequalled in Colorado, in addition to courses in Dance History, Pedagogy, Choreography, Music Analysis, and Dancer Wellness creates students ready for the rigors of the professional world.

Colorado Mesa's BFA in Dance is designed to create young professionals ready to work from the moment they graduate. As part of the program, the Dance capstone course will require dancers to perform in a short public recital with their fellow classmates and also present a performance or choreography reel for a faculty jury. In addition, CMU brings professional choreographers, artistic directors and casting agents to campus to interview and audition our students BEFORE they graduate to create a professional network for the student they can immediately access upon graduating. At Colorado Mesa, we are committed to the philosophy of training performing entrepreneurs. We offer low faculty-student ratios so that personal attention and mentoring are hallmarks of the program.

All CMU baccalaureate graduates are expected to demonstrate proficiency in critical thinking, communication fluency, quantitative fluency, and specialized knowledge/applied learning.

When you have finished the CMU Dance BFA, you will be able to:

1. function as a working artist who can effectively communicate to various audiences the great depth and breadth of the performing arts.
2. create your own performance opportunities that continue to challenge your artistry and technique.
3. collaborate with other performers and solve problems to create fully-fledged productions.
4. contribute meaningfully to theatrical productions from their very conceptualization through the final performance.

Program Highlights:

Be on Stage

The Department of Theatre Arts produces 2 faculty dance concerts, 2 student dance concerts, 4 mainstage shows (2 musicals, 2 plays), 1-3 student-directed shows in the Mesa Experimental Theatre, and 15-20 one-acts per school year.

Be a Professional

Every summer CMU's Mesa Repertory Theatre produces a musical, a play, and a children's show in a 6-week timeframe. Students cast are afforded a small stipend and their first professional credits.

Be Seen

Freshman can be cast their very first semester.

Be Known

Every semester, professionals such as David Taylor, Donald Laney, Mike Esperanza, Rachele Rak, and Jerome Alexander have worked closely with our students in short residencies that allow students to form professional networks before they graduate.

Be Working

Recent graduates have worked in dance at the Utah Musical Theatre and Opera festival, Cleo Parker Robinson and Avatar Movement Dance Company, both in Denver, and The Damsels Dance Company in Los Angeles.



Program Requirements

A student must follow CMU graduation requirements by completing 120 semester credit hours, including 40 credits of coursework at the 300+ level. See the “Undergraduate Graduation Requirements” in the catalog for additional graduation information. Detailed program requirements can be found online at www.coloradomesa.edu/theatre/currentstudents.html. Students should work closely with a faculty advisor when selecting and scheduling courses prior to registration. In general, CMU’s programs of study are based on two curriculum groups:

1. Essential Learning

CMU’s Essential Learning program provides the foundation of skills and information that cuts across all fields of study and the support for advanced concepts that students will later encounter in their majors. Before moving into work at the 300+ level, students complete the Maverick Milestone and its co-requirement, Essential Speech. This pair of courses is a capstone experience where students integrate what they have learned from their foundation courses by making connections among diverse areas of knowledge. The capstone is also an opportunity for students to work with disparate ideas, a critical skill expected of all CMU graduates that will aid them in solving the complex and unscripted problems they will encounter in their personal, professional, and civic lives.

2. What You Will Study in This Major. . .

Foundational Courses

This series of courses is designed to prepare you for advanced study and give you a strong working knowledge of the basics of performance.

- Acting I
- The Healthy Dancer
- Foreign Language (1 yr)

Core Courses

These courses develop the complete skillset necessary for a life in the theatre.

- Improvisation
- Pedagogy
- History and Philosophy of Dance (2 sem)
- Choreography
- Music Analysis

Technique Study

These courses allow you to obtain beginning to advanced professional training in specific areas.

- Ballet I-IV
- Modern I-IV
- Hip Hop I-II
- Jazz I-IV
- Tap I-IV
- Ballroom

Professional Courses

These courses prepare you for transitioning into a career in the dance world.

- Career Preparation
- Senior Capstone: Performance Seminar
- Dance Performance
- Choreography Practicum

Electives

- Playwriting
- Stage Management
- Costuming
- Stage Lighting
- Scenic Design
- Costume History
- Lighting Design
- Sound Design
- Musical Theatre Techniques
- Musical Theatre Workshop
- Directing
- Dramatic Literature

Note: Admission to the BFA program in Dance is by audition only. To schedule an audition and/or view the audition requirements, please visit www.coloradomesa.edu/theatre/prospectivestudents.html.

For more information about this major, go to: <http://www.coloradomesa.edu/theatre/> or contact the Academic Department Head for the Department of Theatre Arts, 141 Moss Performing Arts Center, 970.248.1795.