



Dance

Dance and get inspired!

“You have to love dancing to stick to it. It gives you nothing back, no manuscripts to store away, no paintings to show on walls, no poems to be printed and sold, nothing but that single fleeting moment when you feel alive.”

Merce Cunningham

Dance at Otago is a dynamic programme with new and exciting papers that will introduce you to innovative ways of moving, and inspire you to form your distinct choreographic identity and performance style. All papers integrate practical skills and academic training in order to enhance your creativity, expand your knowledge and critical thinking and shape your identity as a well-rounded artist.

The exploration of a rich variety of dance styles, choreographic practices and performance opportunities will open up new possibilities of appreciating cultural and artistic diversity. It will enable you to experience dance as a unique embodied knowledge. You will also cultivate communication skills and confidence that will broaden your career opportunities in the dance and performing arts sectors.

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Why study dance?

The School of Performing Arts offers a unique opportunity to study dance as an art form. Feel the exhilaration of moving, choreographing and performing as you explore a diverse range of dance styles. Develop an understanding, and a critical appreciation, of dance as a performative medium and cultural expression in local and global contexts.

Studying dance will enable you to explore repertoire from New Zealand and international choreographers. You will engage with current academic research that will stimulate your critical thinking. You will be introduced to socio-cultural concepts and ideas that underpin dance, and discuss themes such as the interconnections between dance, transcultural identities and social media.

All courses integrate theory and practice with the aim to enhance your technical, performative and choreographic skills, and to expand your knowledge and appreciation of dance aesthetics. You will also develop your written and oral communication skills and your ability to work effectively both as a team leader and a team member.

Dance is available as an optional minor subject for a Bachelor of Arts (BA), Bachelor of Music (MusB), Bachelor of Theology (BTheol), Bachelor of Science (BSc), Bachelor of Applied Science (BAppSc), Bachelor of Commerce (BCom), Bachelor of Health Science (BHealSc), or Bachelor of Arts and Science (BASc) degree.

Career opportunities

The combination of academic skills and practical experience will prepare you for a

successful career as a dancer, performer, choreographer, researcher or dance educator in tertiary education or in the private sector.

Background required

While a basic understanding of the different dance genres would be useful, it is not essential. All papers are designed to introduce you to different dance styles, techniques and basic choreographic principles that will inspire you to shape your unique choreographic identity. All you need is energy and enthusiasm!

How will I study?

All courses have an interactive style lecture and a practical class. The lectures set the socio-cultural or political context that foregrounds each dance form while the practical sessions develop technical, artistic, performative and choreographic skills of specific dance repertoires.

DANC101 Dance and Popular Culture

This paper examines the role of dance in popular culture in local and global contexts through integrated theory and choreographic explorations. It introduces the latest dance fads and dance repertoire by New Zealand and international dance artists, and addresses the interconnections between dance, transcultural identities and social media.

DANC201/301 Contemporary Dance Fusions

This paper focuses on the choreographic process, aesthetic fusions, and artistic vision of key national and international contemporary choreographers of the 20th

and 21st centuries. It provides a critical analysis of the hybrid repertoire of the genre and will help you develop your unique choreographic identity.

DANC204/304 Dance for Musical Theatre

This paper explores the artistic qualities and techniques of dance in musical theatre through integrated theory and practice. It will expand your knowledge on the socio-cultural contexts that influence the dance styles of the genre and develop your technical, performative and choreographic skills.

PROFILE

Cadyne Geary BPhEd and Dance minor

Cadyne completed the Dance minor at Otago alongside her Bachelor of Physical Education degree. She currently teaches dance at St Hilda's Collegiate School in Dunedin.

"I was truly welcomed into University and was given the opportunity to shine within two completely different realms. The amount of dance, pedagogical training and performance experience that I received was fantastic. It enabled me to find my love for dance teaching and I began to follow my dream of becoming a dance educator."

A highlight of her study was a research paper in "Dance and Psychological Wellbeing" looking at the effect of dance on happiness. It allowed her to combine the knowledge that she acquired in physical education and dance.

"This research has influenced and informed the way that I teach today, as I encourage my students to see dance as a way of enhancing their happiness and physical and emotional wellbeing, moving away from the critical, negative impact that it can have on the body and mind."

While studying Cadyne put all the dance skills that she was learning to use by teaching a

range of dance classes and choreographing for Otago Dance Association shows. She was also employed as a fitness instructor at Air Fitness studio.

"My CV was full to the brim of dance and performance skills thanks to the University of Otago. So much so, that I was offered a job as a dance teacher at St Hilda's Collegiate School, and the opportunity to complete my Postgraduate Teaching Diploma there. I am utterly thrilled – I go to work every day feeling incredibly happy, as I am doing what I love. My students are amazing and so wonderfully talented. I wish to guide them through their life decision to dance and I hope that I can be as supportive as the University of Otago was to me."



For questions about
Dance
otago.ac.nz/dance

