

# Application for Seal of Excellence – Dance

Student name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## CRITERIA FOR SEAL OF EXCELLENCE

Subject area goal: Each student should acquire an understanding and appreciation of dance as an art form. Each student will be aware through the various forms of Dance performance not only as a form of communication but a source of reward and enjoyment for life. The student will be able to communicate these forms through such skills as dance technique, choreography, improvisation and stage presence.

Students must acquire at least **45** points from the following criteria as a prerequisite for a Seal of Excellence:

<b>Essential Skills</b>		<b>Points</b>	
A	Demonstrate creativity through choreography using proper choreographic skills and technique	5	
B	Demonstrate a historical understanding of dance	5	
C	Demonstrate technical skill in ballet, jazz and modern dance forms	5	
		Total	

<b>Standards of Excellence</b>		<b>Points</b>	
A	Earn a cumulative grade point of 3.5 for all dance classes	5	
B	Demonstrate ability to choreograph using all choreographic techniques in at least two different styles of dance.	10	
C	Participate in at least 3 Dance workshops, conferences or similar events in dance	5	
D	Participate in at least 4 semester Dance Concerts in the Performing Arts Center	5	
E	Write 2 critiques of Professional Dance performances. Critiques must be a minimum of 1 page typed and submitted within two weeks of the performance. Follow instructions for critical analysis provided by teacher. All critiques must be submitted by April 10 <sup>th</sup> , senior year.	5	
		Total	

**List all classes you have taken to meet requirements on the criteria for Seal of Excellence  
Transcripts must be provided for verification**

**Courses Taken**

Course Title	Location	Year(s)	Grade

**Original Choreography**

Date	Dance Title	Dance Theme	Style

**Workshops & Conferences**

Date	Title	Location

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Verified by \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Dance Instructor

## Guidelines for Viewing a Dance Performance:

- When writing a dance critique, there are many things to consider prior to the performance. Who is performing? Are they professionals or amateurs? Is it a new work or classic choreography reset? Who are the choreographers? Are they known for other works? It is important to meditate carefully on the performance prior to seeing it so you can take as much from it as you can.
- When viewing a performance be an active participant, don't be a passive consumer. Work as hard at viewing the piece as the choreographer did making the work. Consult your program notes when writing critiques.
- During the performance, there are also many things to consider that should be incorporated into your writing process. What style of dance is it? Is the performance experimental or conventional? What are the cultural implications of the performance? How do elements of the performance, such as lighting, scenery, and costume, enhance the choreography?
- If a performance is very abstract, take as much from it as you can and strive to deliver your opinion of it as clearly as possible in your writing. Remember that there is no right answer since art is abstract and everyone responds to art differently.
- There is a lot to take in when viewing dance, and it can be easy to forget aspects of the performance. It is helpful to bring a notebook and pen to jot down notes and initial reactions to the performance that you may forget later on. Also, write the paper as soon as possible after the performance to prevent a foggy recollection.
- If there is a talk-back at the end of the performance, at which the choreographers and/or dancers answer questions and explain the performance more thoroughly, it is highly advisable to stay. It can offer you some insight into the choreographer's motivation as well as uncover some of the meaning of the performance.

## Guidelines for Writing About a Dance Performance:

- **The opening statement of your critique should draw the reader in. Be creative.** Tell the reader where and when the concert took place.
- When writing about choreographers, always identify them by name. Try to get inside the head of the choreographer. What were the choreographer's intentions and were they successfully communicated? What do you think the choreographer was trying to say with the dance, or what did the dance say? Try to have a thematic focus when writing your critique. Were the themes of the individual piece clear? What was the dance about? Analyze the symbolism. Does it relate to current events?
- Discuss the choreography. Did the choreography flow, what were the dynamics, how did it move in space and what were the motivations for the movements? Make general comments but also include detailed descriptions. Try to give at least one specific movement image. Example: "In another vignette, a woman seated properly, perpendicularly, on a bench, begins to tilt at an angle. As her legs leave the floor and her torso leans to the side, both she and the bench seem to levitate a little above the floor." Vienna-Lusthaus (revisited); Reviewed by George Jackson: Dance Magazine, May 2003: 79.
- What thoughts or feelings did the concert or piece evoke? In constructing your critique, reflect on why you may have had certain reactions. Always back up your assertions, positive or negative with concrete examples. Don't just be a negative critic; offer your thoughts in a constructive way.
- Comment on the music and identify the composer(s) and musician(s) when possible. What was the relationship of the dance to the music? Did the music play an important role in the performance? Was the music live, pre-recorded or some combination of both? What difference did it make? Did the form of the music influence the form of the dance or vice versa?
- Were the dances well rehearsed and/or well performed? Support your comments with specific examples. Did the dancers work together well in the ensemble pieces?
- Were the makeup, props (if used), and costumes appropriate? Discuss the scenic design, lighting design, and overall use of the theatre space. **When speaking about any element of design, you must include the designers' names.**
- Comment on the overall production; give the reader a sense of what it looked like. What was your reaction to the concert as a whole? How did the piece or pieces connect?
- Each critique should reach a conclusion regarding the performance.

- **Dance Critique Checklist:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ **Title page** including: student's name, due date of paper, class, concert critiqued, teachers name.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The ticket stub and/or verification from the performance must be attached to each critique.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Student's last name and page number should be included in upper right corner of each page.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Be sure to use one-inch margins on all sides in the text of your paper. Check your computer for margin settings.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do not write in the first person. Write in the third person.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The first sentence of your critique sets the tone for the paper and should draw the reader in.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Critique has a centralized theme.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Critique has a conclusion.