



Class Descriptions and Philosophies:

YOUNG CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENTAL DANCE: Young children's developmental dance consists of **Music and Movement** and **Pre-Ballet and Creative Movement**. Every class will have its routine and will be consistent. Children learn best this way, feel comfortable within the environment, and develop trust. While we do introduce students to correct and careful technique, the enjoyment of dance always comes first! The instructor wants the student to enjoy and feel at ease when coming to class each week. We want each student to be willing to participate each week. Presenting the dance material through movement games and stories encourages this positive behavior and stays consistent with their attention span and developmental capabilities. Repetitions of these levels are encouraged!!!

BEGINNING THROUGH ADVANCED LEVEL CLASSES AND ADULTS: Within these classes the faculty strives to promote the art of dance by teaching correct and careful technique as well as body awareness. Our goal is to enhance self-esteem, encourage self-discipline, and promote a sense of individuality within a nurturing, loving, and supportive environment. The most advanced classes are by permission of instructor.

Blue Crew Dance: Blue Crew Dance is a collective program that is open to the advanced level student. As a prerequisite, students must be enrolled in two Advanced classes per week at Parks and Recreation. For safety, one of the two advanced classes must be an upper-level advanced ballet or jazz class and must meet advanced skill requirements. Taking three or more classes is highly encouraged! Students interested in Blue Crew Dance must be enrolled in both the fall and winter/ spring semesters as we create group choreography to be performed. Opportunities to perform at different venues may come about. Blue Crew Dance has a goal to serve as an educational establishment for the community and young dancers who want to excel in their technical ability, performance skill, and their enjoyment of dance. Blue Crew Dance is a great way to explore the creative process within a non-competitive environment. Blue Crew Dance has participated in several dance workshops and collaborative performances. These opportunities have included, the global educational organization *Up with People*, VCU alumni Emily Todd, Liz Lerman Dance Exchange, Harrisonburg Dance Cooperative, Rockingham Ballet Theatre, local PT specialist Sarah Gosselin, JMU theatre alumni Tyler Edwards, Texas Christian University and New York artist Jerusha (Ellie) de Waal, JMU dance professor Shane O'Hara, Shenandoah University's Cheryl Donald, and JMU dance alumni Zilda Baker. Several members of Blue Crew performed in The New Dance Festival at the Forbes center, collaborating with the JMU School of Theatre and Dance (2010) and collaborated with the Harrisonburg Dance Cooperative in a First Friday event. Blue Crew has had the opportunity to perform at several venues including Burg's Got Talent, Dayton Church of the Brethren, Bridgewater College, Children's Museum, First Night, First Friday, Waterman, Spotswood, and Smithland Elementary, and Elon Rhodes Early Learning Center.

Where to buy dance shoes and clothing: Dance attire can be purchased at Wal-Mart, Target, The Hip-Joint in Charlottesville, online through Discount Dance Supply (discountdance.com), or any other online dance catalog.



DESCRIPTIONS OF EACH LEVEL:

YOUNG CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENTAL DANCE

Music and Movement (ages 3 ½ -4 ½): This class is for students **ages 3 ½ -4 ½**. Although ballet is used as the foundation, at this level the class is taught as a creative movement class. Each class starts with a sharing circle, which encourages students to speak in front of others. Within the sharing circle each student is asked to take a turn sharing something **verbally** with the group. This assists social skills, performance quality, and self-esteem. Then we usually stretch our muscles on the floor and work on body alignment and pointing our toes. Through stories and games, students will then learn 1st, 2nd, and 3rd ballet positions of the feet. They will then learn plies, relevés, and jumps. Students also learn choreographed dances that reinforce basic gross and fine motor skills (*Tuty Ta, Shake Your Sillies Out, Knees Up Mother Brown, Animal Action* and much more). Jumping, hopping, walking, running, skipping, clapping, stomping, galloping, balance, and circling are enforced in these activities. The last section of class is geared toward creativity. We play creative games like *Secret Garden* and *Dance Freeze*. Following directions, Level changes, recognition of different movement qualities, and identifying shapes with our bodies are explored through this. Dress up time is usually given to express their creativity further. This class is a fun exploration into movement, rhythm, and music all done in a fun and positive environment.

Pre-Ballet and Creative Movement (ages 4 ½ -6): This class is a transition class between the Music and Movement classes and the beginning level classes. Pre-Ballet and creative movement will prepare students for the fundamentals of ballet and combines creative movement and other dance forms. It is geared towards children **4 ½ -6 years** old. This class will have more of an emphasis on the correct and careful ballet technique. The creative process is a little more structured due to the students having a longer attention span. There is a great emphasis on musicality, rhythm, and counting. There is more time spent at the barre working on plies, relevés, port de bras, proper body alignment, and reviewing the positions. In the center, turnout, pointing toes, and straightening the knees are reinforced through the introduction of tendu, pique, and passé. The across the floor exercises of chasse and leaping are introduced and enhance these skills. Skipping and swaying are emphasized more thoroughly in the creative movement section of class. With 5-year-olds with no dance experience Music and Movement might be suitable for that student, but lots of beginning 5-year-olds do fine in Pre-Ballet and creative movement. This all depends on the child's individual developmental rate. Parents should base their decision on their knowledge of their child's personality and capacity. This class is a great opportunity for children to be introduced to the different dance forms and styles in an encouraging and supportive environment.

BALLET/TAP

Ballet/Tap: (ages 6-7) A combination of ballet and tap basics. This class is an exciting introduction to rhythm, tempo, and musicality in Tap while building on skills and foundations of Ballet. Balance and grace are the focus. Proper technique, terminology and correct alignment are emphasized at every level.

BALLET

Int. Ballet (ages 8-9) A strong technical foundation, consisting of technique in the center floor and at the barre, forms the base of these classes, and is geared towards students who are ready to enhance their current skills. Students become familiar with retaining more difficult combinations and coordination challenges. Proper technique, terminology and correct alignment are emphasized at every level. Body conditioning and complex choreography are enhanced all within a positive and encouraging environment.

Adv. Youth Ballet: (ages 9-up or level based) This class is for the advanced ballet preteen and teen are ready to and is geared towards students who are ready to enhance their current skills. A greater range of musicality and physical precision is developed in this class. Students become familiar with retaining more difficult combinations and coordination challenges. Proper technique, terminology and correct alignment are emphasized at every level. Class structure includes barre work and adagios and allegros in the center. Students are challenged in reversing steps and combinations of steps. We help dancers strengthen their feet and ankles for preparation of pointe to ensure safety. Flexibility and choreography are also enhanced. Pointe basics will be taught in this level. This is a fun and spirited continuation of ballet!

Adv. Ballet & Pointe (advanced skill requirements): For the highly skilled advanced ballet dancers, a specialized form of dance requiring pointe shoes. We help dancers strengthen their feet and ankles for preparation and purchasing and fitting of shoes to ensure safety. Pointe dancers progress at the barre and later move to center floor for technical work. Dancers focus on a strong technical foundation, consisting of advanced technique in the center floor and at the barre. Each week, students move across the floor and put steps together in complex combinations. Body conditioning, flexibility, and choreography are enhanced. Students are held to a high standard of work ethic and concentration.

JAZZ

Jazz: (ages 6-7) This is a fun and great introduction to stylized jazz dance forms and choreography to upbeat popular music and jazz greats of the past. Increased flexibility, endurance, and basic rhythmic phrasing are explored. This upbeat class incorporates isolation movements and progressions across the floor and involves some hip-hop!

Int. Jazz: (ages 8-9) A fun, upbeat class that incorporate isolation movements, progressions across the floor, and choreography. Strength and flexibility also are important components of each class. Dancers develop confidence as they express themselves while creating own, personal movement and style. This is a great continuation to jazz dance. Involves some hip-hop!

Adv. Youth Jazz: (ages 9-up or level based) A strong technical foundation, consisting of technique in the center floor and at the barre, forms the base of these classes. Each week, students move across the floor and put steps together in combinations as they explore this unique American dance style. Body conditioning and complex choreography are enhanced. Jazz reflects pop culture while helping to build adaptable dancers who can leap, turn, balance, and have a great time while doing it!

Adv. Jazz (skill requirement): For the highly skilled advanced jazz dancers A highly strong technical foundation, consisting of advanced technique in the center floor and at the barre, forms the base of these classes. Each week, students move across the floor and put steps together in complex and fast-moving combinations. Body conditioning, flexibility, and complex choreography are enhanced. Jazz reflects pop culture while helping to build adaptable dancers who can leap, turn, balance, and have a great time while doing it! Students are held to a high standard of work ethic and concentration.

TAP AND MUSICAL STAGE:

Teen/Preteen Tap and Musical Stage (ballet, jazz, or modern encouraged) (ages 10-up): This class is a great way to develop rhythm, coordination and muscle control. Classes involve detailed footwork and articulation of sound focusing on the basics of tap as well as musical theatre dancing. This class has high energy and a great tool for self-expression. It's great for exercise and fun! Instruction in drama and dance will be enforced in the movement. Students are taught the basics of acting and characterization while dancing. Dances are set to fun upbeat music with choreography designed for the stage or film. This class is a fun and enthusiastic class! Ballet, jazz, or modern is recommended in order to obtain strength and enhance coordination.

MODERN/LYRICAL:

Modern/Lyrical:(ages 9-up) Instruction in the basic techniques from various Modern schools- no one style is emphasized. Students learn combinations, rhythmic patterns, dynamics, space, and form. Instruction in lyrical follows a ballet/jazz-based class with the emphasis on stylized movement to music with lyrics with the fundamentals of ballet technique concentrating on the development of correct alignment and placement. The class follows the traditional form of center work, barre and stretching, across the floor, and modern/lyrical combinations. A high energy movement class!

Adv. Modern/Lyrical (skill requirements): For the highly skilled advanced modern dancers. Instruction in the advanced techniques from various Modern schools- no one style is emphasized. Students learn combinations, rhythmic patterns, dynamics, space, and form. There is a strong emphasis on creating choreography and improvisation through appreciating artistry! The class follows the traditional form of center work, across the floor, and modern combinations. Body conditioning, flexibility, and complex choreography are enhanced. Students are held to a high standard of work ethic and concentration.

ADULT

Adult Ballet (for fun and exercise): (ages 18-up) This class teaches classical and contemporary ballet technique. Barre work incorporates learning and mastering ballet alignment, core strength, muscle strength and stamina, and flexibility. Exercises are built upon in center floor work, incorporating coordination and musicality. As students' progress, moving combinations include turns and jumps across the floor as well as increasing coordination between arms and legs and eventually head positions. This class builds upon concepts and techniques studied in the beginning class and allows for a range of abilities to develop. This is a great class for dancers wishing to experience the joy of dance.

Adult Tap (for fun and exercise): (ages 18 up) This class is a great way to develop rhythm, coordination and muscle control. Classes involve detailed footwork and articulation of sound focusing on the basics of tap. This class has high energy and a great tool for self-expression. It's great for exercise and fun!

BLUE CREW DANCE

Blue Crew Dance (skill requirements): Blue Crew Dance is a collective program that is open to the most advanced level student. As a prerequisite, students must be enrolled in two Advanced classes per week at Parks and Recreation. For safety, one of the two advanced classes must be an upper-level advanced ballet or jazz class and must meet advanced skill requirements. Taking three or more classes is highly encouraged! Students interested in Blue Crew Dance must be enrolled in both the fall and winter/ spring semesters as we create group choreography to be performed. Opportunities to perform at different venues may come about. Blue Crew Dance has a goal to serve as an educational establishment for the community and young dancers who want to excel in their technical ability, performance skill, and their enjoyment of dance. Blue Crew Dance is a great way to explore the creative process within a non-competitive environment.

