



### Class Descriptions and Philosophies:

(Young Children's Developmental Dance consists of three levels: **Discovering Dance I**, **Discovering Dance II**, and **Introduction to Dance**. 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!!!)

**\*\*DISCOVERING DANCE I:** This class is for first year 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.

**\*\*DISCOVER DANCE II:** This is usually the students second year of dance and is geared toward **ages 4 ½ -5 ½**. This class is similar to Discover Dance I except students are now exposed to more steps and technical training. 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. This class is an exciting continuation to the art of dance and allows children to obtain confidence, coordination, and to understand movement basics.

**\*\*INTRODUCTION TO DANCE:** This class is a transition class between the pre-school classes and the beginning level classes. Introduction is usually a combination of ballet, tap, and jazz for children **5 ½ -6 ½ years** old. This class is similar to Discover Dance II but there is more of an emphasis on the correct and careful ballet technique and body alignment. The last 15 minutes of class is geared toward basic tap and jazz technique. With 5 year olds with no dance experience, Discover Dance II might be suitable for that student, but lots of beginning 5 year olds do fine in Intro. to Dance. 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. **TAP ALWAYS BEGINS THE THIRD WEEK OF CLASS!**

**\*\*BEGINNING THROUGH ADVANCED LEVEL CLASSES AND ADULTS (AGES 6-UP):** 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 Company:** Blue Crew Dance Company is the recreation center's youth dance company. It is by invitation only. The company is reserved for those who take classes in the fall and spring semesters. Students must be enrolled in two dance class per-week at the recreation center, one of which must be in jazz or ballet (musical stage, tap, lyrical, modern, and Irish will not fulfill this requirement), must meet advanced skill requirements and other requirements set forth by the directors, and must have **the permission of the directors**. 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 Company and Parks and Recreation hosted and participated in a dance workshop with the global educational organization *Up with People*. Blue Crew has had the opportunity to participate in a workshop with VCU alumni and professional Emily Todd, artists of the Liz Lerman Dance Exchange, JMU dance alumni, Rockingham Ballet Theatre, local PT specialist and Harrisonburg Dance Cooperative artist, Sarah Gosselin, and JMU theatre alumni Tyler Edwards. Blue Crew participated in a choreographic intensive with Harrisonburg Dance Cooperative's co-founder and Texas Christian University alumni, Jerusha (Ellie) de Waal, JMU dance professor Shane O'Hara, and JMU alumni, Harrisonburg Dance Cooperative's, and Bridgewater College Dance team director 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, Ballet Extension in Bridgewater, online through Discount Dance Supply ([discountdance.com](http://discountdance.com)), or any other online dance catalog.



## DESCRIPTIONS OF EACH LEVEL:

### BALLET/TAP

**Beg. Ballet/Tap I:** 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/Tap II/III:** A combination of ballet and tap basics. This class is a great continuation to rhythm, tempo, and musicality in Tap while building on skills and foundations of Ballet. Flexibility, balance and grace are the focus. Proper technique, terminology and correct alignment are emphasized at every level. More complex across the floor and center combinations are introduced.

### BALLET

**Int. Ballet:** Musicality and physical precision is developed in this class. Students become familiar with retaining combinations and work on both basic and more difficult 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 introduced to reversing steps and combinations of steps. Flexibility and choreography are also introduced. This is a fun and spirited continuation of ballet!

**Adv. Children's Ballet:** This class is for the advanced ballet child and is geared towards children 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. This is a fun and spirited continuation of ballet!

**Youth Adv. Ballet I/II Pre-Pointe & Beg. Pointe (permission of instructor):** This class begins to challenge the students further in coordination, strength, alignment, understanding of new concepts, musicality, length of exercises, and retaining corrections from one lesson to the next. Students work on flow between movements, and focus on holding their basic alignment and technical skills as combinations of steps increase in difficulty. We help dancers strengthen their feet and ankles for preparation and purchasing and fitting of pointe shoes to ensure safety. Pointe dancers progress at the barre and later move to center floor for technical work. Flexibility and choreography are also enhanced. This is an enjoyable extension into ballet!

**Adv. Ballet IV & Pointe (permission of instructor):** 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

**Beg. Jazz I/II:** 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 III:** A fun, upbeat class that incorporates 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:** A fun, upbeat class that incorporates 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. Body conditioning and complex choreography are introduced

**Adv. Jazz III (permission of instructor):** 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 IV (permission of instructor):** 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

**Teen/Preteen Tap (ballet or jazz required):** 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! Ballet or jazz is required in order to obtain strength and enhance coordination.

## BALLET/JAZZ

**Teen/Preteen Ballet/Jazz:** This class teaches classical and contemporary ballet and jazz technique basics. 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 is a great class for dancers wishing to experience the joy of dance. Balance and grace are the focus. Proper technique, terminology and correct alignment are emphasized at every level.

## MODERN/LYRICAL:

**Youth Modern/Lyrical:** 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 (permission of instructor):** 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.

### MUSICAL STAGE:

**Musical Stage:** Instruction in drama and dance. 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. Students will also be introduced to basic jazz dancing. This class is a fun and enthusiastic class!

### IRISH

**Beg. Irish: (ballet or jazz class is recommended)** Students learn a wide variety of traditional but basic soft-shoe dances and combinations. A basic technical foundation develops in this level where the students will focus on mastering their coordination skills and motor skills (hopping, jumping, skipping, galloping, and balance). Once mastering these skills, students will be better equipped to handle the Irish combinations as they get more difficult. Taking ballet or jazz will increase these basic motor and coordination skills and increase strength which will make the Irish Step dances easier to retain.

**Adv. Irish: (permission of instructor)** Students learn a wide variety and complex soft-shoe dances as well as hard-shoe technique and combinations. A strong technical foundation is involved. Students are held to a high standard of work ethic and concentration.

### YOUNG CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENTAL DANCE

**Discovering Dance I:** This class is for first year students **ages 3 ½ -4 ½**. This class is a fun exploration into movement, rhythm, and music all done in a fun and positive environment. Children are playfully engaged to move through the space while enhancing brain development. Music, stories, and fun dance props are used to introduce ballet and creative movement principles. Students also learn choreographed dances that reinforce basic gross and fine motor skills. Jumping, hopping, walking, running, skipping, clapping, stomping, galloping, balance, and circling are enforced in these activities. Following directions, level changes, recognition of different movement qualities, and identifying shapes with our bodies are explored throughout class. Social skills and self-esteem are developed as children make new friends and enjoy each other through partner and group dancing.

**Discovering Dance II:** This is usually the students second year of dance and is geared toward **ages 4 ½ -5 ½**. This class is similar to Discover Dance I except students are now exposed to more steps and technical training. 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. This class is an exciting continuation to the art of dance and allows children to obtain confidence, coordination, and to understand movement basics.

**Introduction To Dance:** This class is a transition class between the pre-school classes and the beginning level classes. Introduction is usually a combination of ballet, tap, and jazz for children **5 ½ -6 ½ years** old. This class is similar to Discover Dance II but there is more of an emphasis on the correct and careful ballet technique and body alignment. The last

15 minutes of class is geared toward basic tap and jazz technique. With 5 year olds with no dance experience, Discover Dance II might be suitable for that student, but lots of beginning 5 year olds do fine in Intro. To Dance. 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. Tap always begins the fourth week of class!

## ADULT

**Adult Ballet (for fun and exercise):** 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):** 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!

**Adult Irish: (for fun and exercise)** Students learn a wide variety of traditional but basic soft-shoe dances and combinations. A basic technical foundation develops in this level where the students will focus on mastering their coordination skills and motor skills (hopping, jumping, skipping, galloping, and balance). Once mastering these skills, students will be better equipped to handle the Irish combinations as they get more difficult. This class has high energy. It's great for exercise and fun!

## PERFORMANCE COMPANY

**Blue Crew Dance Company (permission of directors):** Blue Crew Dance Company is the recreation center's youth dance company. It is reserved for those who take classes in the fall and spring semesters. Students must be enrolled in two dance class per-week at the recreation center, one of which must be in jazz or ballet, must meet advanced skill requirement and other requirements set forth by the directors, and **must have permission of the directors**. Opportunities to perform at different venues may come about.

