

The Department of Dance COVID Taskforce has designed a unique system, which considers each of our over 200 student's individual registration plans and needs as well as their degree progression, to ensure that the department is able to offer Face2Face classes while practicing COVID Safety Protocols, as mandated by Utah Valley University.

All of the dance artists at UVU (from Freshman to Seniors) have been divided into 2 cohorts who alternate Face2Face attendance weekly in order to ensure that COVID room capacities are adhered to as well as to reduce the necessity for students to commute between home and campus throughout the day, which can be disruptive to their education and dangerous. It was particularly challenging to take into account not only all of our degree specific major's classes, but also our Core curriculum classes, which include majors from all four of our degree programs. The original design took about 80-100 hours of work by Dance COVID Taskforce member, Assistant Professor Brian Gerke, and an additional 60 hours for Gerke and his assistant to redo the design as adjustments needed to be made. Gerke says, "I think the most interesting part of the work was that we had never done anything like this before and there was no system in place for us to use. So, we really built it from the ground up not knowing if it would work, constantly testing and planning along the way. Failing and fixing and succeeding".

The entire process was overseen by Dance COVID Taskforce Chair, Assistant Professor Sarah Donohue. She began the process by organizing and administering a student and faculty survey for Spring 2020 that covered preferred learning modalities, best teaching practices, and challenges we face teaching dance specifically. She then compiled the results into report in order to create a plan for Fall, as well as to share with faculty and Upper Administration. Along with the School of the Arts Production staff, she communicated specific cleaning protocols to 45 faculty members, which among other things, requires the faculty to end class early in order to clean and mop with a specific cleaning solution that had to be specially ordered to protect our studio barres and floors. Maps of all studios were created in order to tape out social distanced spaces for students to take class.

Over the summer our faculty tirelessly researched and tested the best practices of live streaming dance technique classes, which includes the difficult task of balancing audio between our live musicians and instructors (who may be livestreaming from different locations). In order to share all of this information with all fulltime and adjunct faculty, Ms. Donohue created a Dance Resource Canvas shell that includes 7 full modules which all faculty can import into their courses. The shell includes information on all UVU and Department of Dance Covid protocols, specific Canvas tutorials helpful for teaching dance and dance/lecture courses, technology tutorials, resources for student success, and other valuable information.

Dance artists are resilient, adaptive, innovative, and have the capacity to create art during this pandemic. Dance will continue to flourish within the limitations that are presented.

Department of Dance Covid Taskforce: Sarah Donohue, Brian Gerke, Jamie Johnson, Doris Trujillo, Monica Campbell