



Parent-Student Handbook

2023-2024

The Rankin
1004 Broadway, 2nd floor
Columbus, GA 31901

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~Welcome:

The **CSU Youth Dance Conservatory (YDC)** is one of many programs offered under Continuing & Professional Education at The Rankin. The YDC partners with The Columbus Ballet to offer the best classical ballet training and performance opportunities to aspiring dancers in our community. An air of tradition and discipline fills an atmosphere of intense, yet fun learning from our youngest dancers to advanced levels. In addition, YDC offers training in modern and contemporary. Our advanced students have been accepted to many well-recognized summer intensive programs such as: Atlanta Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, Boston Ballet, Ballet Magnificat, Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet, Kansas City Ballet, Joffrey Ballet, Next Generation Ballet, Philadelphia Ballet, South Carolina Ballet, and others.

~Mission:

Columbus State University's Youth Dance Conservatory exists to provide a space for classical ballet education in the Columbus, GA area. Using fundamental ballet technique as the core of our training, we strive to create a fun, challenging, and encouraging environment for our students that strengthens the body, sharpens the mind, and creates a lifelong passion for the art of ballet.

~Staff:

Sam Gurski (Executive Director: CSU, Continuing & Professional Education)

Bridget Adams (YDC Artistic Director)

Laura Johnson (YDC Administrative Director)

~Directors:

Bridget Adams (Artistic Director): Bridget began her dance training with Jackie O'Neal School of Dance in Birmingham, AL with a concentration in ballet, jazz, and acrobatics. After 10 years of training and assistant teaching, she began teaching at Nix Dance Studio in Auburn, AL. It was here that she realized her passion for teaching dance, especially the beautiful, classical art of ballet. After completing her degree in Fine Arts from Auburn University in 2004, she moved with her husband Steve to Columbus, GA and began teaching and furthering her classical ballet knowledge at CSU YDC. Bridget has enjoyed performing many classical roles with The Columbus Ballet, YDC's partner for classical performances. She has also been privileged to co-direct and direct many classical, modern, and original works with YDC and The Columbus Ballet since 2004. Bridget is currently the Artistic Director of YDC as well as a seasonal artistic director for The Columbus Ballet. Above all this, the ability to share her passion for dance with young students of the Youth Dance Conservatory gives Bridget a joy beyond words.

Laura Johnson (Administrative Director): Laura received her early training at The Dance Factory in Athens, AL. She continued her training at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa and received her B.A. in Dance and International Relations in 2001. Upon graduation, Laura attended the American Dance Festival in Durham, NC on a Young Artist Scholarship. She continued her training while earning her M.A. in Performing Arts Management at American University in Washington, D.C. Since moving to Phenix City, Laura has served as a choreographer, administrator, and Associate Director for The Columbus Ballet on performances of *The Nutcracker* as well as on Spring recitals. She has been teaching dance for 20 years and teaching at YDC since 2009. She attended the Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet (CPYB) teacher training intensive in 2019 to further her education in teaching the art of classical ballet.

~Dance Year & Holidays:

- First semester classes begin August 14, 2023 and run through December 11, 2023.
- Classes will not meet on Labor Day (Sept. 4) or during the week of Thanksgiving (Nov. 20-25).
- Second semester classes begin January 8, 2024 and run through May 6, 2024.
- Classes will not meet on MLK Day (Jan. 15) or during MCSD Spring Break (April 1-5).

~Summer Intensives and Summer Classes:

YDC's Summer Intensives provide the opportunity for technical, artistic, and personal growth. Working with different instructors in a variety of dance disciplines helps all students maintain muscle memory as well as strengthen and develop more matured muscles. Summer intensive classes for all ages are designed to address technique, artistry, specific skills, and increase strength. Students gain deeper understanding of ballet as an art form. Evaluation of new students is required prior to registration for the summer intensive program. Regular classes are also offered throughout the summer to maintain ballet form and technique.

~Performance Opportunities:

YDC students Level 1 and above have the opportunity to perform in The Columbus Ballet's annual production of *The Nutcracker*. Upper level dancers are encouraged to audition for lead roles. Students selected for leading roles may be asked to attend a few extra rehearsals, on occasion, after class. This extra work will enable a dancer to give his/her best performance onstage and enhance the pedagogical and developmental benefit to the dancer. Such rehearsals will be scheduled in collaboration with the director, dancer, and parents, and will never be "assigned" without the consultation of all concerned. YDC dancers Level 1 and above can also participate in The Columbus Ballet's spring production.

YDC will also hold an End of the Year Performance for all levels. All students will have the opportunity to perform with their classmates in pieces choreographed by instructors that demonstrate the classical technique they have learned throughout the year.

~Student Placement:

Students as young as age 3 may participate in YDC classes. Students age 6 and under will be placed in appropriate classes based on age. New students ages 7 and older, with or without experience, will be evaluated and placed in their appropriate levels. Call 706-507-8070 to schedule a placement appointment.

~Promotions:

Promotions can be decided at any time during the year. Students who are in Creative Movement through Pre-Level 1 move on to the next level on a yearly basis. From Levels 1 through 6, the progression and mastery of skills slows down. Not every dancer progresses at the same rate. When the teacher selects a student for promotion, she will bring suggestions to the artistic director. Students will then be re-evaluated by the artistic director and a decision will be made based on maturity and technical ability.

~Pointe Training:

Students will be evaluated for pointe work training on an individual basis. We look to see if the student has had at least 3-4 consecutive years of classical ballet technique training. We also consider the student's age, physical strength, and capabilities. Once a student is promoted to pointe, the artistic director will guide the student in the right direction with pointe shoe decisions. Students are expected to take more technique classes than pointe classes.

~Student End of Year Evaluations:

At the end of the dance year, an End-of-Year Evaluation is created for each dancer Level 1 and above. These evaluations let dancers know how they are progressing with their training as well as placement for the next dance year. Evaluation are usually given out in April close to the end of the dance year.

~Parent Observation:

YDC opens its classrooms for parent observation twice a year, once in the Fall and once in the Spring. Usually, our Fall observation week occurs in October and our Spring Observation week occurs in April. Observation week dates will be announced closer to both times of year.

~Conservatory Etiquette:

- Students are expected to be **ON TIME** for every class. This means the student should be in the classroom before the class start time.
- Students should stay in class until the end and should not leave the classroom without permission.
- Use the restroom, get a drink of water, and secure hair, etc., before entering the classroom.
- No talking during class, aside from questions to the instructor or as part of a class activity.
- No chewing gum, eating, or bringing water/sodas/juice or any open bottles into a classroom or rehearsal without permission. Water in a reusable bottle should be consumed discreetly in class at permitted times.
- Food is prohibited in the studio and in the 2nd floor lobby area. Only water bottles are allowed in the studios. To eat, please go downstairs to the first floor lobby area.
- Ballet bags are allowed only in designated areas of YDC during class.
- Students are expected to keep the noise level to a minimum in the hallway and in dressing rooms.
- The school cannot assume responsibility for the loss of students' valuables.
- Arrival and departure from classes and rehearsals are expected to be punctual.
- Students and parents are responsible for reading all emailed and posted notices. If you are not receiving email communications, please notify the front desk.
- It is highly recommended that parent(s) attend all meetings and/or check emails to keep informed of information regarding the school and performances.
- Proper understanding of the rules will lead to a more positive experience for all.

~ VDC Dress Code:

- Creative Movement through Level 6 ballet classes: black leotard with no colorful accents and no skirts attached; pink, seamless tights (feet must be covered, no ankle length tights); pink ballet shoes. Students training in more than one discipline are advised to wear convertible tights for ease of changing. No underwear should be worn underneath tights and leotard. Level 5-6 dancers may wear colored leotards for Friday and Saturday classes ONLY.
- Black leotards may be in any traditional style (tank, 3/4 sleeve, spaghetti strap, cap sleeve, long sleeve). Hair should be in a neat bun. For the safety of you and other dancers, no jewelry may be worn, with the exception of stud earrings.
- Ballet slippers should be pink for ladies and black for gentlemen. Pointe shoes must be worn with tights over the feet unless the dancer is rehearsing for a role in which tights will not be worn.
- **Jazz:** pink/black footed tights or black jazz pants, any color leotard, jazz shoes.
- **Modern:** pink/black convertible/footless tights or black dance pants, any color leotard, bare feet.
- **Contemporary:** pink or black footless tights, any color leotard, bare feet.
- **Adult Ballet:** comfortable attire with proper undergarments, ballet shoes.
- **Men:** white, fitted short sleeve t-shirt or leotard, black tights/dance pants with proper dance undergarments, black ballet shoes.
- **Hair:** ballet bun pulled away from face.
- No watches, necklaces, bracelets, big rings, elastic bands, etc. Small stud earrings are acceptable.
- Dancers must wear cover-ups over dance attire when arriving and departing from dance classes.

~Ballet Bun:

With one hand gather hair into a “bunch” at the back of the head. With one hand, lightly spray hair around the head with water.

- Brush hair into a ponytail and secure with covered elastic. Ponytail should not be lower than middle from back of the head. Ensure ponytail is centered between ears.
- Brush and smooth hair towards ponytail.
- Spray hairspray evenly around the head.
- Twist ponytail and begin to spiral around the elastic.
- Coil hair into a bun a bit at a time, insert hairpins at every inch.
- Repeat until all hair is spiraled and ensure it is as flat against the head.
- **IMPORTANT: WRAP HAIR NET AROUND BUN!**
- Add a few extra pins. An additional spritz of hairspray may be used if needed.



~What to Have in a Ballet Bag:

- Hand Sanitizer
- Small Towel
- Hairbrush
- Bobby Pins
- Hair Spray
- Elastic Bands
- Deodorant
- Extra Leotard and Tights
- Ballet Shoes and/or Pointe Shoes
- Reusable Water Bottle
- Theraband

~Conservatory Policies:

- YDC is an alcohol, tobacco, and drug free environment. Use of such substances will not be tolerated at our facility or at any event venue.
- No foul language. Bad language and terminology will not be tolerated at YDC or any event/venue where you are involved with the school.
- No dancer or parent is allowed to dictate placement at the barre, order of class exercises, choice of music, level placement, beginning of pointe, or attire under any circumstances. The teacher of the class may place students where he/she feels is appropriate for that class.
- Your time and tuition are valuable, so students need to arrive promptly for class.
- Disruptive and disrespectful behavior in class not only interrupts the learning process, but does not reflect the character of our school. Examples of inappropriate behavior such as, but not limited to, the following may result in dismissal from YDC:
 - Talking excessively in class.
 - Talking while the teacher is giving instructions.
 - Entering “Faculty Only” areas without proper permission.
 - Leaving the dance room and/or studio without permission.
 - “Talking back” to the teacher or otherwise conversing with the teacher or others in an impolite or ill-mannered way. In the event this occurs, the teacher may remove the student from class and no make-up will be offered.
 - Refusal to do as the teacher has instructed.
 - Bothering another student by touching them in an impolite or annoying way, including public displays of affection of a romantic nature.
 - Taunting others including any sort of bullying or intentionally intimidating behavior.
 - Participating in classes you are not registered for without prior permission.
- Phones are not to be used in the studio. No texting or social media is allowed in the classroom.

~Absence/Tardiness:

Because of the systematic progression of the class, a student will be considered late 10 minutes after the class begins. If the student is late, he/she may sit and watch the class. If a student will be absent from class, please contact YDC at ballet@columbusstate.edu to schedule a make-up. All make-ups must be scheduled prior to attendance. Classes must be made up by the end of the dance year.

~Video Recording/Social Media Policy:

Video can be a useful tool for learning choreography and reviewing one's own work. For this reason, students are allowed, with permission of the teacher, to video a portion of their rehearsal or class. This video is to be used for personal purposes only, but may be shared with close family and friends. If you need a video for professional purposes (such as a summer intensive or college audition) please consult a teacher for help and arrange a private lesson to create the video so it can be sure to show off your strengths and give you the best chance for success. When sharing images/video, please be sure to never post/share anything that may tarnish your image, the image of a peer or teacher, or the image of YDC.

~Studio and Office Hours:

The YDC is open 30 minutes before the first class starts and closes 30 minutes after the last class. Should you wish to speak to a director or teacher please do so by appointment only. It is imperative that teachers are not disturbed before, during, or after class. Please ask your teacher about his/her preferences for how to contact them (leaving a message at the studio, email, phone) to schedule an appointment and abide by those preferences. For general questions, please leave a message at the Conservatory front desk or send an email to ballet@columbusstate.edu.

~2023-2024 Payment & Registration Information:

All YDC classes are held at the historic The Rankin, 1004 Broadway in Uptown Columbus. All classes are priced by the year (August – May), but may be paid in monthly installments. Save 10% when you pay for the year in full by **Saturday, August 19, 2023**.

You can register/make payments:

In Person:

Registration and payments are accepted both at the Rankin during studio hours and at CSU Continuing & Professional Education’s business office, located on the CSU campus at the corner of College Drive and East Lindsay Drive. The office is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. If paying in person, after 4:30 pm you must have the exact change or plan to pay by check or credit/debit card. Make checks payable to Columbus State University. Only credit/debit card payments are accepted at the YDC studios at the Rankin.

By Mail:

Send your check or money order to:

CSU Continuing & Professional Education
Columbus State University
4225 University Avenue
Columbus, GA 31907

Checks must be post-marked or received by the 15th of the month the payment is due.

By Phone:

To register or make payment by phone, please call CSU Continuing & Professional Education at 706.507.8070 during the hours of 8:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday through Friday. Credit and debit cards accepted for phone payments are /MasterCard/American Express/Discover card.

On-Line:

Payments can also be made on-line through your Augusoft user account. For directions to pay on-line, please visit our website at www.columbusstate.edu/ydc and click on the “Pay Online” button on our main page.

~Payment Plans

If tuition is being paid in monthly installments, a written agreement must be signed at The Rankin or the CSU Continuing & Professional Education business office agreeing to the terms of the payment plan. All payments are due on the 1st of each month. A **\$25 late fee** per household will be assessed for payments received in our offices after the 15th of the month. Failure to pay will result in the dancer being dropped from classes. Payments can be made at The Rankin during class hours and by calling the Elizabeth Bradley Turner Center at 706-507-8070. Only credit/debit card payments can be accepted at The Rankin.

~Withdrawals:

Students register for the entire year.

Paid in full:

CPE requires that a cancellation request be submitted before the next installment due date in order to not be responsible for future payments. A **\$20 cancellation fee** will be charged per child. A prorated refund will be issued based on the number of months remaining in the dance year.

Payment Plan:

CPE requires that a cancellation request be submitted before the next installment due date in order to not be responsible for future payments. The student will then be dropped from the roster and the payment plan will be cancelled. If a student chooses to drop a class, a **\$20 drop fee** will be assessed.

Visit us online at: www.columbusstate.edu/ydc

“Like” our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/CSUDanceConservatory>