



# College of Charleston

66 George Street  
Charleston, South Carolina 29424-0001

P. George Benson  
President

April 30, 2009

Dr. Gail M. Morrison, Deputy Director  
Academic Affairs and Licensing Division  
South Carolina Commission on Higher Education  
1333 Main Street, Suite 200  
Columbia, SC 29201

Dear Dr. Morrison,

Enclosed you will find a program planning summary for a Bachelor of Arts degree in Dance at the College of Charleston. Currently there are no colleges or universities in the Lowcountry area of South Carolina that offer such a degree. The State of South Carolina requires dance teachers in K-12 to hold certification. The combination of need for a dance major in the area coupled with a viable marketplace to dance graduates also makes for potential collaborations between the College of Charleston, charter/magnet schools, the private dance studio sector, and the community at large.

Looking forward to a favorable review from the Commission staff. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

PGB/ch



Program Planning Summary

Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Dance  
Department of Theatre  
School of the Arts

April 30, 2009

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "P. George Benson". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

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President

Program Contact:  
Gretchen McLaine, Assistant Professor  
Theatre Department  
(843) 953-5944  
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Program Title:	Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Dance	
Academic Unit:	Theatre Department (School of the Arts)	
Designation, Type, Level of degree:	Baccalaureate degree (46 credit hours), 4 yr. program	
Date of Implementation:	Fall 2011	
CIP Code:	500301	
Identification of Program:	New program	
Site:	Main campus, 66 George Street, Charleston, SC 29424	
Program qualifies for Supplemental Palmetto Fellows Scholarship and LIFE Scholarship awards:	No	
Delivery Mode:	Traditional	

**Justification:** There are currently no colleges or universities in the Lowcountry area of South Carolina that offer a degree in Dance. The cultural landscape of Charleston allows it to be a prime location for such a program, offering potential internships and employment to dance majors and graduates. In addition, South Carolina is one of the states that require dance teachers in K-12 to hold certification, and dance is still considered a "critical needs" area for highly qualified teachers. Although the College would not offer dance teacher certification in the K-12 sector until the MAT is earned, the potential for our students to work in the schools would be mutually beneficial. The combination of need for a dance major in the area coupled with a viable marketplace to dance graduates also makes for potential collaborations between the College of Charleston, charter/magnet schools, the private dance studio sector, and the community at large. None of these potential partnerships require K-12 certification, and all are areas that can be greatly served with a local dance major.

Anecdotally, the College has maintained a minor in Dance for many years, which has grown in both quality of program and number of students served. The dance minor first appeared in the fall 1993 College catalog, and in the spring of 1996 there was one declared minor. By the fall of 2008 there were 64 declared dance minors at the College. Twenty years ago the Department of Theatre offered two courses per semester in dance; today there are twelve dance courses offered each semester, and many of these consistently reach capacity enrollment. There are also continual inquiries into the development of a dance major at the college, and it is believed that such a program would bring in additional students to the college while raising the profile of the arts on campus.

Finally, the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) for Performing Arts has been implemented at the College of Charleston. While the first phase focuses on Music, other approved and planned phases include concentrations in Theatre and Dance. When this eventually comes to fruition, having an undergraduate dance program that can feed into the graduate program is mutually beneficial. In fact, having a graduate degree in Dance without an undergraduate program would be short-sighted. Students who graduate with a BA in Dance from the College of Charleston will have met the pre-requisites for their MAT coursework

As previously stated, there has been much interest in the possibility of a dance major at the college. A desire for such a program has been expressed from both prospective and current students, from parents, the arts community (specifically K-12 dance educators), and other dance organizations within Charleston. Based on the growing number of inquiries coupled with the current 65 dance minors, it is

believed that within the first year of its implementation, the dance major could have approximately 30 majors. Growth and enrollment will be managed to reflect roster faculty resources and lines, but the demand for such a program in this geographical area is quite high.

In terms of productivity, the dance program would graduate students with a Bachelor of Arts degree founded on the strong liberal education base that has been established by the college. This degree will prepare them for the demands of the dance field by creating artists, scholars, dancers, choreographers, teachers, and articulate human beings. Not only will graduates be able to undertake a variety of positions within the dance field, it will also prepare for careers in related areas as well as graduate studies. There are an ever-increasing number of dance studios that serve diverse populations in the greater Charleston area, and being the only dance major in the Lowcountry, College of Charleston dance graduates would particularly satisfy the need of local dance studios to hire qualified and college-educated instructors of dance. Dance instructors with a bachelor's degree who teach in the private sector should expect to earn \$20 per hour upon graduation. In addition, graduates are often given opportunities to enhance their income through freelance choreography and performing jobs.

Currently there are four other colleges or universities in South Carolina that offer a dance degree. Two programs are offered at private colleges (Coker and Columbia), leaving only two current dance programs at the college/university level. One of these (Winthrop) is more than three hours away is located in a more rural area, and does not serve the needs of the greater Charleston area. The other state-supported program is located in the state's capital (University of South Carolina), but is still more than one and a half hours away and therefore undesirable for someone that wants to be on the eastern seaboard of South Carolina. With opportunities such a Spoleto and Piccolo Spoleto Festival USA, students will have a significant number of opportunities to network, collaborate, and intern in the Charleston area.

The largest differentiation between the other schools and the proposed major at the College of Charleston is program focus. Columbia College is a larger dance program. In addition to the BA, they offer a BFA in Dance, which requires 65 credit hours and is more performance-oriented. USC's program is a BA in Dance, but is heavily focused on classical ballet performance and pedagogy. Winthrop and Columbia also offer a BA in Dance with K-12 certification, but completion of that program requires an extra year of study. With the approval of the MAT in Performing Arts, it is the position of the Theatre Department (in which Dance is currently housed) that we would not seek a K-12 certification option for the BA in Dance. This allows students interested in K-12 certification the option of entering into the MAT program and completing both an undergraduate and a graduate degree within six years. Otherwise, completion of a K-12 certification at the undergraduate level would require an additional year of study and perhaps discourage students from seeking their master's degree. The undergraduate dance major at the College of Charleston would require approximately 46 hours in the major area of study and could be completed within the 122 credit hours required by the college and within four years. This allows for intense study of the various liberal arts discipline, ensuring the creation of an artist that is well-versed in the world around him/her, and able to articulate his/her self.

The dance minor is currently housed within the Department of Theatre in the School of the Arts. This relationship benefits the dance program by allowing it use of the theatres and faculty/staff resources

as appropriate. There is a natural proclivity for dance and theatre to bond together, and the department encourages the two areas to find ways in which to collaborate. The support of the Theatre Department in establishing a dance major has been very strong. The new addition of the Cato Arts Center provides the department with two spacious and long-awaited dance studios. Approximately one-third of the total space allocated to Theatre in the building of the Cato Center has been allotted for dance use. It is a goal of the Theatre Department to eventually seek NASD (National Association of Schools of Dance) accreditation to complement our current NAST (Theatre) status.

In addition to the support for a major demonstrated by the Theatre Department, the location of dance within the School of the Arts has great potential for collaboration amongst various faculty and students. Finally, programs within the School of the Arts work to serve the needs of the artistic and civic community. The dance major would continue in this tradition.

The dance major at the College of Charleston would be open to possible inter-institutional cooperation as appropriate and feasible. Examples of this may include hosting regional/state dance conferences, sponsoring master classes or guest artist events in which other institutions may attend, or even a creative exchange (serving as guest choreographer, etc.) between dance faculty of two or more institutions.

The largest cost (and longest delay) in proposing the dance major was the issue of adequate space. With the anticipated completion of the Cato Arts Center in Fall 2009, the cost of the space will have been already incurred. In fact, the amount of money that the state and college has provided for dance studios and related space would not reach its full potential if there is not a BA in Dance. The commitment that the administration and the state have shown thus far to support dance at the College is promising; not having a dance major will not only be a loss of potential, but also of premium space and money.

Upon occupancy of the Cato Center, we will have two large dance studios designated exclusively for dance program use; two additional movement studios may be used as available for student projects. Library resources are currently adequate for implementation of a major; additional library resources are secured through the Department of Theatre allocation. There is one full-time faculty, which is adequate to meet the demands of the curriculum for the short-term (two years after implementation of the major) as long as there are adjuncts available to enhance course offerings. Select dance courses will be offered on a rotating basis (every other year), which will allow for the delay in hiring additional faculty. Dance production needs, while relatively minimal, should be met with a small budget to offset production costs. As the program grows, at least one additional roster faculty line would be needed to satisfy the educational needs of the majors. In addition, a stipend for the Director of Dance would also be requested to compensate for his/her additional responsibilities.