

# Criteria for Departmental Distinction in Dance

## [Distinction](#)

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#### [Application Timeline](#)

#### [Application Process](#)

#### [Pre-requisites:](#)

#### [Successful completion of one of the following projects:](#)

- [1. Written Thesis -](#)
- [2. Choreography -](#)
- [3. Performance -](#)
- [4. Project \(blended, education, etc\) -](#)

#### [Criteria for Assessing Work Presented](#)

- [1. Written Thesis -](#)
- [2. Choreography -](#)
- [3. Performance -](#)
- [4. Project \(blended, education, etc\) -](#)

## Distinction

Here is an excerpt from the College catalog about distinction.

<http://www.stolaf.edu/catalog/academicregs/academic-honors.html>

“Distinction is a recognition of the academic or artistic excellence of a student's work in the major or concentration. Distinction is a selective award: normally, no more than ten percent of a department's or program's majors or concentrators receive distinction. Distinction recognizes consistent excellence in the major field or concentration: normally, candidates for distinction maintain a GPA in the major or concentration of 3.50 or higher. Distinction recognizes excellence in a particular academic undertaking: normally, the recognition is based in part on student work beyond the minimum requirements for the major or concentration, usually in the form of a distinction project or thesis representing a considerable achievement. Distinction is not generally conferred on the basis of service to departments or programs. Faculty members of the department or program determine specific criteria for distinction. Interested students should contact the appropriate department or program for more information. Not every candidate receives distinction.

## Criteria for Departmental Distinction in Dance

*\*\* Please note that meeting these criteria does not guarantee awarding of distinction; that honor is awarded to students based on careful evaluation by the dance faculty.*

The college guideline of a GPA in the major of 3.50 or higher will be considered.

## Application Timeline

### [Junior Year](#)

- It is advisable that conversations with faculty concerning nascent distinction ideas occur before a letter of proposal is submitted.
- A letter of proposal to apply for distinction must be shared with the dance faculty by Reading Day of the

Spring term of the junior year.

### Senior Year

- The final application for departmental distinction must be shared by the first Friday after Fall Break of the Senior Year.
- Distinction candidates must register for IR 398 and complete their projects during the spring term of their senior year.
- Distinction candidates will be notified of distinction decisions by the 3rd week of May, and the names of all students who have been awarded distinction will be submitted to the registrar. Indication of distinction appears in the commencement program and on the academic transcript.

**No exceptions on these deadlines.**

## **Application Process**

Project Title

Project Type

Project Summary

- 1) A letter of proposal to apply for distinction must be shared with the dance faculty by Reading Day of the Spring term of the junior year. **No exceptions on this deadline.**

This letter will include an initial description of the project and a considered rationale for the project, including the student's interest in and capability to execute the project.

- a) What is your preliminary overarching plan for your distinction project? - content, presentation mode, rationale, preparation, etc.
  - b) Which faculty member would you like work with on your Independent Research (IR 398) during the spring term and why? (The department may suggest and encourage alternative faculty selections for your distinction project, depending upon faculty availability, resources, and areas of interest/expertise.)
  - c) List any collaborators you plan on working with, including dancers, choreographers, etc.
  - d) If you have a tentative outline, include this.
  - e) Include anything else you deem relevant, realizing this is a proposal, and your idea may and can evolve as the project evolves.
- 2) The final application for departmental distinction must be shared by the first Friday after Fall Break of the Senior Year. This application will include a more detailed description of the student's distinction project with specifics in place concerning content idea, presentation mode, collaborators, project schedule, and presentation/dissemination venue.
  - 3) Distinction candidates must register for IR 398 and complete their projects during the spring term of their senior year.
  - 4) Distinction projects will be presented in sufficient time for the faculty to examine the candidate and make its decision by the second week of May of the student's graduation year.
  - 5) Distinction candidates will be notified of distinction decisions by the 3rd week of May, and the names of all students who have been awarded distinction will be submitted to the registrar. Indication of distinction appears in the commencement program and on the academic transcript.

## **Pre-requisites:**

- Graduation major in dance

- Normally, candidates for distinction maintain a GPA in the major or concentration of 3.50 or higher.

## **Successful completion of one of the following projects:**

All projects are to be created during the Spring term of the senior year under Independent Research 398.

### **1. Written Thesis -**

A substantive research paper will be submitted to and an oral defense of the research paper must be completed before the department faculty. The dance faculty advisor will be selected by the student and the Dance faculty based on his/her expertise in the subject matter of the thesis.

OR

The written thesis is a 20-25 page paper that is very well researched and written, synthesizing the material in a well crafted paper that provides new insight into the chosen topic. The process includes an oral defense to the dance faculty. The dance faculty advisor will be selected by the student and the Dance faculty based on his/her expertise in the subject matter of the thesis.

### **2. Choreography -**

The choreography may be a solo or a group work, and it must be performed in an appropriate venue. The distinction candidate may not be a performer in the composition. The dance faculty advisor will be selected by the student and the Dance faculty based on his/her expertise in the subject matter. Prior to the distinction project performance, the dance distinction candidate will submit a brief, one page maximum, paper summarizing their project process, including analysis of the resources that were most influential to their process and why.

### **3. Performance -**

The distinction candidate will select a choreographer to create a dance to be performed by the candidate. The dance faculty advisor will be selected by the student and the Dance faculty based on his/her expertise in the subject matter. Prior to the distinction project performance, the dance distinction candidate will submit a brief, one page maximum, paper summarizing their project process, including analysis of the resources that were most influential to their process and why.

### **4. Project (blended, education, etc) -**

A project exploring dance/movement beyond a performance setting, linking it into other fields, disciplines, or community bases. Dance/movement must be the propelling component of the project. The dance faculty advisor will be selected by the student and the Dance faculty based on his/her expertise in the subject matter. Prior to the distinction project performance, the dance distinction candidate will submit a brief, one page maximum, paper summarizing their project process, including analysis of the resources that were most influential to their process and why.

## **Criteria for Assessing Work Presented**

### **1. Written Thesis -**

The paper will be evaluated upon the clarity, development, and support of its thesis statement; introduction and summary; body of the paper including sufficient subsections addressing issues from the thesis statement; relevance and effectiveness of analysis performed; summary and conclusion; and bibliography. The paper will be evaluated on its grammar mechanics, organization, content, and quality of research.

## **2. Choreography -**

The choreography will be evaluated upon its innovative use of the elements of choreographic craft (attention to spatial design, time, effort/energy), movement invention and vocabulary, coherence of artistic statement, and the quality of the paper summarizing the project process, including analysis of the resources utilized.

## **3. Performance -**

The performance project will be evaluated upon the performer's capacity for intentional expression of the physical, emotional, and intellectual parameters and demands of the performance piece, and the quality of the paper summarizing the project process, including analysis of the resources utilized.

## **4. Project (blended, education, etc) -**

This project will be evaluated upon the evidence of relevant supporting research with bibliography, a meaningful experiential component, and the successful integration of the research and experiential components.