

Statement on Service

Service to the Students

As a faculty member I constantly strive to be a figure of authority, a source of inspiration, and a resource for my students. My open-door policy allows for much personal attention and impromptu meetings that serve the student in their pursuits. Whether a student is looking for a summer dance intensive, advice on time management, or a personal tutorial on their progress in class, I am always available and willing to discuss matters that will assist in furthering the student towards achieving their goals. I am also an academic adviser to many students, and I approach this assignment with great care. Mentoring and guidance in addition to encouraging the student to assume responsibility for their educational path are the grounding forces behind my role as adviser, all proving to prepare the student for their transition into a professional life.

I am also very concerned with the student experience and creating opportunities for them that are valid in life post graduation. With this in mind, I recently created a new leadership structure for Studio Dance Theatre. New positions added include social media director, communications director, rehearsal assistants, fundraising co-chairs, and social co-chairs. The social media director is a faculty appointed position and is charged with actively posting on the “Dance at Agnes” Instagram and Facebook pages. These posts serve to highlight the work that is happening daily in the program in a robust series of posts to attract attention to the program. The communications director, also faculty appointed, is in charge of all announcements, meeting notes and items of circulation to ensure all company members are informed and information is transparent. Rehearsal assistants serve to run rehearsals when a faculty member can’t be present. These positions are chosen by the faculty after an application and interview process. After each rehearsal run by an assistant, the students fill out an evaluation form which provides ongoing feedback for the faculty member to present to the student director in their journey towards being an effective leader. Fundraising and social chairs are self nominated and chosen by a company vote. These individuals serve the company by organizing efforts to raise money for small items needed for performances and arrange social outings that encourage company bonding.

Service to the Department of Theatre and Dance

For many years, I have been focused on building the dance program and establishing a level of recognition regionally and nationally that warrants positive attention and interest. The dance major and minor continue to provoke interest in our current and prospective students, even with minimal resources, meager facilities and a small faculty base. Through our productions and my dedication to reaching out and collaborating with local dance programs and institutions, I am constantly recruiting and bringing visibility to the program. In addition, I have been an active participant in Scholars weekend and Achievement weekend, offering mock classes to prospective students and engaging with them as they prepare to make their decisions about where to attend college.

In addition to my teaching load I am also the Artistic Director of Studio Dance Theatre, the student-performing ensemble. Through performances, the work of Studio Dance

Theatre is serving to enrich the experience of the student and increase the visibility of the Dance Program by presenting two concerts open to the public each year - *Danceworks* in the fall and *Spring Forward* in the spring. In my role as director, I focus on maintaining an environment that is supportive to the students, encouraging creativity that will help the young dancers develop into artists. While this approach certainly has a positive effect on retention, I also find that the dancers are maturing at a rate faster than they would in an environment that they feel insecure. Although confined to a very limited budget and only myself as a faculty choreographer/stager from Labanotation score, I never compromise the quality of the work I choose for inclusion in these concerts. Each year I begin to structure the concerts by choosing a staging from Labanotation score to rent from the Dance Notation Bureau that I will stage and direct. This addition to the concerts is important for the students as it allows them to learn and perform repertory from our predecessors that helps them to gain a respect for the history of the discipline and gain an informed understanding of how recent repertory has been affected by our pioneers. Additionally, this staging is also incorporated into the technique curriculum as the choreographer will be introduced and discussed in technique classes. Next, I begin to formulate ideas about new choreography I would like to create. As mentioned in my scholarship statement, I am very interested in the landscape of the space and dance used as a form of social protest. I strive to work in an opposing direction than that of the staging from Labanotation score to add variety to the concert for the viewer, but to also challenge the students to be versatile in their approaches to technique and performance. Once this idea is formulated I continue to explore further ideas to create choreography to give as many students a chance to perform and grow as artists. Because I am dedicated to allowing all of our company members a chance to grow in performance I can sometimes find myself creating as many as 4 new pieces of choreography per academic year, which can prove artistically demanding and exhausting.

In my role as Artistic Director of Studio Dance Theatre I also contract guest artist/choreographers each academic year to come in and work with our students for an intense period of time that culminates in a piece of choreography to be performed in our main stage concerts. Because I understand the value of these residencies I strive to bring in the most renowned artists with our limited budget. Over the last several years I have been fortunate enough to contract artists from the Atlanta Ballet, Core Dance, and prominent Atlanta artist Lonnie Davis. I am working on a collaborative project this coming spring with local dance company, Several Dancers Core and I will continue to recruit artists who will bring a diverse perspective to the program.

Producing these concerts also includes the tasks of creating the promotional poster and program, contracting and working with a local professional lighting designer, coordinating and executing the rehearsal schedule for the duration of the semester, designing, purchasing and creating the costumes, and all of the work associated with promotion of the concert. Once the concert dates arrive I am in charge of assigning and leading a volunteer group that includes a house manager and ushers and box office staff all the while acting as stage manager for the performances. In a program with more financial and personnel support these tasks would be carried out by many individuals but

because my goal is to continue to aid in the growth and professionalism of the program I am determined to make it all run smoothly with the resources we are allotted.

I have recently begun my service as department chair for the Department of Theatre and Dance. We are a small department with robust ideas about collaboration. I feel it is my responsibility as chair to seek out as many collaborative ventures to increase the excitement amongst the department. With the loss of one professor to retirement we find ourselves operating with one less perspective. As a result of this and no immediate search for a replacement, I have lobbied for more part-time faculty to influence the department as a whole. In the fall we will welcome an artist who will also teach a course in stage management to both theatre and dance students as well as another artist who will influence the department with his design skills, both in the classroom and as a designer for theatre and dance productions.

Throughout this process of hiring, I have received mentorship from my colleague, David Thompson, who has chaired the department successfully for many years. I have gained much experience in interviewing and an understanding the college's procedures for hiring adjuncts. I plan to continue to explore new modes of collaborative learning and experiences for the department and the extension of this idea with other disciplines. This is a time of change for the department which we will continue to use as an opportunity for growth and progression of the disciplines.

I have also recently led the department through our first external review since 2005. In fall 2018, we had a team of three esteemed colleagues in theatre and dance visit the campus to meet with faculty and students to provide feedback on the department with a focus on collaboration. Notably, the theatre and dance facilities drew much attention and I continue to seek out opportunities to meet with donors to help fund renovations of our spaces. As mentioned earlier, we are also working on ways to operate more cohesively as a department, seeking out collaborative ventures to produce excitement and creativity amongst students and faculty. Through the creation of new part-time positions, we will infuse excitement into the department which we hope to continue to inspire future joint ventures.

Service to the College

Serving on committees has allowed me to further connect with colleagues in other disciplines, strengthening my beliefs about the importance of liberal learning. As a faculty member I have served on several committees and lent my movement and choreographic experience to our college's ceremonies. These include Commencement and Baccalaureate Ceremonies and The Inauguration of President Zak. Most recently, I was appointed as the faculty representative responsible for planning and implementing student performances during the Inauguration of President Zak. Her desire was to showcase our talented students throughout the ceremony while we had many visitors in attendance. Working with my colleagues in many different departments, I was able to create a program of artists that included performances of dance, music, and spoken word. I organized the program and implemented all of the rehearsals that led to a beautiful installation ceremony.

Working in a small program with limited personnel, separate from any other department on campus can be isolating and although committee work may demand extra time in an already packed schedule, I find it a necessity in maintaining a well-rounded approach to my work. Without the conversations with other faculty and staff, my approach to teaching and choreography would suffer from a lack of interdisciplinary interaction. It is this liberal learning setting that fuels my work which is why I value committee service. I was fortunate to serve on the Professional Development Committee for 2 terms (6 years total) which proved so inspiring as I was able to learn about the research of so many of my esteemed colleagues. The committee is charged with both recommending faculty sabbaticals and awarding money through internal grants. Through the reading of the proposals and the discussions amongst the committee members, I achieved a great deal of admiration for the scholarship my colleagues are engaging in.

In the 2018-2019 academic year, I began my service as a representative on the Judicial Review Committee (JRC). I was appointed through my service on the Campus Life Committee of which I will serve one more year. I really find the work of the JRC to be very inspiring as we serve to find justice while engaging in an atmosphere that provides the student with the opportunity to rise from significant challenge. The procedures in place align with my stance on teaching and mentorship, allowing me to engage fully in the hearings. I am eager to continue to serve on this committee again as it has really strengthened my appreciation of my colleagues and students, engaging in a community of respect and support while upholding the standard of the institution.

I was also able to lend my service to the Vice President for Student Life search committee. This was a great experience as I got to work amongst colleagues from the beginning of the process, once the job ad was listed. Working with the recruiting firm was eye-opening, as we dissected the applications and cover letters, coming to conclusions about whose personal mission statements and experiences aligned with that of the college. From there we moved into the phone and airport interviews allowing for personal interactions that provided further clarity moving towards selecting our final candidates. An interesting challenge presented itself as one of the candidates was working in the position, but was not selected as a finalist. This was a challenge to navigate, but with deep discussions among the committee we felt it was the right decision for the college and the student body. This service provided quite a learning curve for me, both in interviewing and in the understanding of the needs of the college.

Moving forward, I have another year to serve on the Campus Life Committee. I have been selected as the co-chair of SpARC for next year of which planning will begin in the fall semester. I have also volunteered to serve on the President's Task Force for Campus Safety, in which we will make recommendations to the president about improving communication and general protocol that will lead to a safer campus. I will continue to partner with Demetrice Williams, coordinating, rehearsing and implementing campus ceremonies. I look forward for future opportunities to serve the college and broaden my scope of involvement.

Service to the Profession

Serving the profession is vital in the growth and support of the discipline. As a tenured professor, I was asked to serve as an external reviewer of scholarship for a faculty member at Loyola Marymount University in her candidacy for promotion and tenure. I have also recently served as an external reviewer for the dance program at Berry College, a review organized by Thomas Kennedy, Dean of the Evans School of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences. I spent a day meeting with faculty, students, members of the administration, and the theatre department, while also observing classes and rehearsals. I returned a month later to attend the dance production as I was also asked to comment on the professionalism and maturity of the repertory. Because of my own experiences working in a small program with limited resources, I felt my report offered suggestions that were attainable and would breathe a bit of positive change to this established program.

In recent years I have served terms for two very prestigious organizations, the American College Dance Association and the Dance Notation Bureau. Serving on the Board of Directors representing the southeast region for the American College Dance Association was a way for me to give back to an organization that enriches many students' college training. As a Board Member I took an active role in ensuring the standard of the work and programming was on par with the mission of the organization. In addition to serving on the board of ACDA, I continue to serve the mission by attending conferences each year and offering classes in my areas of expertise. For the Dance Notation Bureau, I served on the Professional Advisory Committee, assisting in generating ideas that promoted communication to assist in the functionality of the organization. I look forward to the opportunity to serve again in the development and growth of these organizations that I so strongly believe in. There are many in which my teaching, scholarship and service intersect and one example is related to my skills in staging and Labanotation. I have used my scholarship to serve the notation community by participating in the Dance Literacy Symposium and in my work testing Labanotation scores for the Dance Notation Bureau, as I discussed in my scholarship statement.

Service to the Broader Community

As a professional artist and teacher in the Atlanta community, I find it very important to stay connected with other dancers and institutions in the area to assist in strengthening the discipline and relationships with Agnes Scott College. Whenever possible I lend my expertise to evaluating, serving on juries, teaching master classes and summer intensives, and promoting dance performances. Atlanta is home to many promising and inspiring organizations like Moving in the Spirit, Decatur School of Ballet, Young Audiences, and many companies that are producing and performing work throughout the city. I will continue to be an active member of the Atlanta dance community and also attempt to facilitate connections through the college by way of our students becoming involved. Our students have participated in internships with Core Performance Company, the Atlanta Ballet and other dance institutions and I would like to pave the way for more of these types of interactions that will serve to support our local dance community while also lending opportunities to our students. As mentioned above, I can use my scholarship to serve the community which is why I plan to continue working with prospective

students at Decatur City Dance and DeKalb School of the Arts, both to promote dance at Agnes Scott and to offer my knowledge to young dancers looking to pursue the art form. In that vain, I also felt strongly about participating in the Dancing with the DeKalb stars event to promote awareness about Domestic Violence that was focused to serve the Women's Resources center and The International Women's House; institutions that are vital in providing care and support for those in need. I will continue to seek out opportunities to use my strengths and experiences to serve the community.