

## **MUSICAL THEATRE DEPARTMENT**

**Jefferson Turner**, *Department Chair, Music Director and Instruction*

**Catherine Caldwell**, *Dance: Jazz and Ballet*

**Stephani Kammer**, *Dance: Jazz*

**Heidi Malnar**, *Dance: Tap*

**Kevin Murphy**, *Music: Voice Instruction*

**Daniel Pruksarnukul**, *Acting*

### **Philosophy**

NOCCA's Musical Theatre Department provides well-rounded training in dance, acting, and music; the fundamental skills required for admission to the top Musical Theatre programs in colleges and universities around the country.

### **Curriculum**

All high school students receive three honors-weighted credits for their arts classes at NOCCA.

#### **DANCE:**

##### **Ballet 1**

Students will be introduced to basic ballet concepts and terminology. This class will focus on mastering the ballet barre (warm up), proper placement and alignment. The students will learn to dance center floor, and begin the basics for movement across the floor.

##### **Ballet 2**

Students will dig deeper into the history of ballet pedagogy, learning and researching about different schools of ballet. This level of ballet will introduce small elements of partnering in ballet, as far as walking and jumping together. There will also be more of an emphasis on quizzes and one on one demonstration exams at this level.

##### **Ballet 3**

Students will do more critique at this level. Meaning, students will participate in discussions about dance, live performances as well as videos shown in class. We will progress with partnering and more advanced combinations.

##### **Ballet 4**

Students will advance in this class, and are expected to quickly pick up choreography and directions, as this class will serve as a preparation for college auditions and future dance calls.

#### **Jazz**

The jazz program will cover specific techniques of classical jazz with additional exposure to elements and styles of commercial jazz, jazz funk, and hip hop.

**Tap I** will introduce the student to the basic fundamentals of Tap dancing. The class will emphasize proper terminology, the use of counting, clarity of footwork, and weight shift. The student will also begin to develop

a sense of musicality, and how to comprehend and perform various subdivisions and rhythms. Students will also be introduced to some of the key figures and major contributors who shaped the art of tap dancing.

**Tap II** will broaden tap vocabulary, aesthetic range, and musicality as dancers begin to realize the dual role of the Tap artist as both *dancer* and *musician*. The class will emphasize proper terminology, use of counting and scattng, comprehending and performing accurate rhythms, clarity of footwork and sound, correct placement of the joints and weight shifts during preparation and execution, and efficient use of force and energy. The class will also study the social-historical roots of Tap, and students will become familiar with key figures that have influenced and contributed to the art form. By putting our knowledge of musicality and tap vocabulary to the test, we will begin to explore the art of improvisation, which is equally as important as learning technique.

**Tap III** is a bridge from intermediate to advanced level tap dancing, and seeks to broaden the technical, musical, improvisational, and aesthetic range of the student. Through weekly technique classes that include rudiments, technical exercises, applied music theory, combinations, historic routines, and improvisation students will develop their technique, and explore the expressive potential of tap dancing. Students will further realize the duality of the tap artist as both *dancer* and *musician*. Through readings, viewings, and discussions this course aims to promote consciousness, acceptance, and appreciation of tap as America's indigenous dance form, and upon equal footing with other disciplines. Students will participate in additional classroom activities, quizzes, video viewings, jams, and choreographic assignments.

**Tap IV** seeks to broaden the technical, musical, improvisational, and aesthetic range of the student. Through weekly technique classes that include rudiments, technical exercises, applied music theory, combinations, historic routines, and improvisation students will develop their technique, and embody and explore the expressive potential of tap dancing. Students will further realize the duality of the tap artist as both *dancer* and *musician*. Through readings, viewings, and discussions this course aims to promote consciousness, acceptance, and appreciation of tap as America's indigenous dance form, and upon equal footing with other disciplines. Students will participate in additional classroom activities, quizzes, video viewings, jams, and choreographic assignments.

#### **ACTING:**

Fundamentals of Ensemble: an overview and training in the Viewpoints Technique that will help build spatial awareness, presence on stage, and the creation of an ensemble

Scene Work: in addition to in-studio presentations, there will be a focus on textual analysis in order to develop critical & analytical thinking while approaching text & material.

Monologue Preparation: a major focus on the fundamentals of audition technique with an emphasis on reading plays, finding monologues within them, and learning how to find material appropriate to age, style, and content.

#### **MUSIC:**

Vocal Technique: a foundation in classical singing to allow healthy performance in all Musical Theatre styles (legit, classic Broadway, belting, rock/pop, etc.).

Music Theory: reading sheet music, sight-signing, and ear training, as necessary for professional work and admittance to college music programs.

History and Repertoire: The shows and trends in American Songbook, Golden Age of Musical Theatre, and Contemporary Musical Theatre. Students also focus on the appropriate vocal styles for each time period.

### **Dress Code for Musical Theatre**

Students are expected to dress in all black for their Musical Theatre classes. Black t-shirts, shorts, sweatpants, sweatshirts, etc. are appropriate for music and acting classes.

For dance classes: Leotards and tights are appropriate for girls. Black, tight-fitting dance clothes (jazz pants, athletic shirts and tank tops) are appropriate for the boys. Baggy clothes are not allowed in dance class.

### **Participation in community productions**

It is the philosophy of the Musical Theatre department that the training that takes place in the classroom is the most important tool for the young performer.

Community or outside work and sending school performances is encouraged for Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors as long as they do not interfere with NOCCA class time or rehearsal time.

Freshmen need to spend their first year of high school concentrating on their arts training and academic studies. For this reason, Freshmen may not audition for or participate in outside productions.

All Musical Theatre students must get permission from the Musical Theatre Department Chair in writing before auditioning or accepting any outside theatre work.

Participation in an unapproved production will result in the student being asked to withdraw from the outside activity.

### **Seniors (College Preparation)**

It is the goal of the Musical Theatre faculty and curriculum to provide as much assistance as possible for the student who wishes to continue their training in college Musical Theatre programs.

In the fall semester, Seniors focus on college preparation, including how to apply, audition preparation, and career counseling. All Seniors, regardless of whether they are continuing into a college Musical Theatre program or not, must prepare an audition binder of songs and monologues and participate in Senior Juries.

Seniors are encouraged to seek individual coaching from the faculty to prepare for their auditions.

Seniors are offered the opportunity to attend the Unified College Auditions in Chicago. The auditions always take place the first weekend of February and the department plans and travels together. To participate, students must meet the financial obligation (varies from year to year) and apply and schedule auditions for no less than three (3) colleges.

### **Workshop (students in grades 7-8)**

The Musical Theatre workshop is a non-credit course that meets twice a week, on Monday and Wednesday. Eighth grade students meet in the fall semester and 7<sup>th</sup> grade students meet in the spring semester. The Workshop is an access program, designed to provide an introduction to the high school curriculum and prepare students for the high school audition.

All 7<sup>th</sup> grade students are eligible to return for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade workshop without audition at the discretion of the NOCCA MT Faculty. All 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who wish to continue at NOCCA must audition for the 9<sup>th</sup> grade program.

***Participation in the Middle School program does not automatically guarantee acceptance to the 9<sup>th</sup> grade program.***

### **Musical Theatre Division Certificate**

Certificates in Musical Theatre are presented to Seniors upon their matriculation from NOCCA with a "B" grade or better, and participation in NOCCA productions and showcases.

*Certificate of Artistry:* Students who complete the curriculum for Level 3 or 4.

*Certificate of Performance:* Students who complete the curriculum for Level 2.

*Certificate of Recognition:* Students who complete the curriculum for Level 1.