

EFFECTIVE CURRICULUM DESIGN FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL STANDARD DANCE MAJOR IN GUANGXI UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF DRAMATIC ARTS

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the course design of international standard dance program in Chinese universities. This will be conducted through literature review and simple empirical analysis. A questionnaire survey as well as expert interview will be conducted on a sample consisting of five experts as well as 30 students from Guangxi University of the Arts. A components and test indexes of the course design of ballroom dance major were formulated and used. The current situation, expected conditions and necessity of ballroom dance professional course design are studied. Effective plans for the development of ballroom dance professional courses were studied and formulated. The study showed the following results. The course design of ballroom dance major consists of five categories of courses. The experts believe that the opening of courses such as blanket work, Pilates, Zen soft, jazz dance, Western dance history, sports training and psychology have little effect on effectively cultivating students' corresponding professional ability, and can be ignored. The expected conditions were that respondents saw movement training, physical flexibility, performance skills and dance perception as important aspects of ballet class. It was found that course content and teaching methods need to be improved. The design for an effective development plan of ballroom dance professional courses should be done from five aspects, namely principle, purpose, content, procedure and evaluation. It was also found that it is important to design interdisciplinary curriculum integration, and advocate the integration of cultural literacy and international vision in ballroom dance teaching. The conclusion of this study is an important reference value for the curriculum design and management of international standard dance in Chinese universities, and provides the theoretical basis and practical plan for the curriculum reform of Guangxi University of Arts and other art universities in China.

Key words: international standard dance, curriculum design, education management, Guangxi University of the Arts

Introduction

Ballroom dance was introduced into China in the 1980s. The development was very rapid after that in terms of competition as well as through education in the field of the arts (Liu Fang & Lai Yingying,2016). After developing from secondary dance education in 1958, it gradually evolved into the department of dance in 2003 at the Guangxi University of the Arts. The undergraduate education of the school of dance offers a variety of courses ranging from dance performance, dance choreography dance science and other related majors. Besides that, dance education was also offered at master's level, specializing in various aspects of dance.

To have a comprehensive and complete course there should be a good dance curriculum. This should be comprehensive and standardized and includes dance resources to teach students dance technique, creativity movement, composition and dance history. Dance fosters social encounters, interaction, and cooperation. Children learn to communicate ideas to others through the real and immediate mode of body movement. When they dance together, students learn to understand themselves in relation to others.

Engle et al (2011) gave the following as the problems which were detected among adolescence in America and the reasons why the problems occurred. The team also identified the benefits which will be reaped by the students were they to take up ballroom dancing at school.

Problems	Reasons
1.lack of respect 2. skipping school or classes 3. sex and pregnancy 4. violence 5. drugs/alcohol abuse	1. lack of motivation 2. lack of positive role models 3. loneliness 4. peer pressure 5. boredom 6. lack of self-esteem
Benefits	
1. Improved social skills- interacting with the opposite sex in a friendly, fun, low stress atmosphere. 2. Behaviour improves – students learn to treat their peers with respect and courtesy 3. Exercise/fitness – provides cardiovascular benefits and develops muscular endurance and flexibility 4. Fun and challenging – socially, mentally and physically 5. Self-awareness- grooming and posture improve 6. Coordination is enhanced 7. Self confidence 8. Raises awareness of improved skill level through practice that translates into academic performance as well. 9. Increased popularity and improved social comfort level- everyone is equal on the dance floor and it is a skill that will be useful for a lifetime 10. Develop teamwork and partnership skills	

11. Dance is inclusive and accessible to all regardless of initial fitness level

Table 1.1 : Problems, Reasons and Benefits of taking up Ballroom dancing as summarised from Engle et al (2011)

Doug Dressler, a physical education teacher, said that during dance sessions, there are fewer problems on campus and fewer referrals to the office. The kids behave better. Socialization takes place among them. They are being nice to one another.

Problem Statement

Liu Fang and Lai Yingying (2016) stated in their research that one of the problems connected to ballroom dancing was improper curriculum which is not systematic. Every institute was following different curriculum which suited the instructors' own interest, knowledge and skills.

Research Objective

Design effective plans for the development of ballroom dance professional courses

Research Question

What is the effective way for the development of ballroom dance professional courses?

Literature review

Dance is something basic to human spirit. It is more than entertainment. Societies throughout history have learned dance and used it in the cultural aspects of their lives. It was also part of formal education since the 1900s (Bonbright & Bradley, 2013). Dance is a combination of the arts and physical education. Art programs focus on visual and fine arts, while physical education programs cater to sports activities. Most of the time, dance is left out of both programs for reasons unknown. As a result, there is no funding for dance programs, opportunities get less, students lose interest and participate less and scientific research decrease. That said, dance is a form of exercise that people are willing to do in order to meet their cardiovascular needs. Most dances are enjoyed by participants and once they know how to dance, they will make it their life-long form of physical activity.

Ballroom dancing is a fun and engaging activity that offers a wide range of benefits for individuals of all ages and skill level. Beyond the pleasure of learning and performing various styles of dance, ballroom dancing can significantly impact one's physical, mental and social well-being.

According to Alpert and his friends (2009), dance aid in balance, flexibility, coordination and motor movements. Sevdalis & Keller (2012) added that dance provides musical sensitivity and emotional connection as well. Lee, et.al (2011) stated dance improves cardiovascular function, lowers the risk of diabetes and contributes to weight loss and decreased body mass index. Ballroom dance, which is also known as partnered dance, offers the same benefit but with a slight difference. The beauty and perfection of the dance relies on communication between the two people who are involved in the dance. These two are sometimes known as the leader and the follower. The role of the leader is to initiate movements by signaling a follower. The follower on the other hand,

perceive and respond to the leader's stimulus. This activity necessitates cognitive flexibility and social intelligence. Due to that, training in ballroom dance allows learners to strengthen their abilities in all of these areas while participating in a physically demanding activity.

Apart from the above, ballroom dancing provides a fun and enjoyable outlet for releasing stress, allowing participants to unwind and forget their daily worries. Ballroom dancing requires mental focus, concentration and memorization, which helps to sharpen cognitive abilities and may reduce the risk of age-related cognitive decline. As dancers progress and master new skills, they often experience increased self-confidence and a great sense of accomplishment. Ballroom dancing also offers a creative outlet for expressing emotions and interpreting music through movement, fostering emotional well-being and personal growth. The focus required in ballroom dancing can promote a state of mindfulness, allowing dancers to be present in the moment and full engaged in the activity. Ballroom dancing also need partners to communicate and collaborate with one another. This helps the dancers to develop better social skills and become more comfortable interacting with others. Participating in ballroom dance classes and events provides opportunities to meet new people, make new friends, and expand one's social network. The ballroom dance community is generally welcoming and supportive, fostering a sense of belonging among its members. Besides, dancing with a partner can create a unique bond and connection, strengthening relationships and fostering trust and understanding between learners. Learning and performing a ballroom dance routine with a partner or a group requires cooperation, coordination and mutual support. Promoting teamwork and collaboration skills.

In conclusion, ballroom dancing is a multifaceted activity that offers a wealth of physical, mental and social benefits. As a fun and enjoyable way to stay active, ballroom dancing can help individuals improve their overall health, well-being and quality of life.

Five strategies have been identified for teaching the Arts. Firstly, a strong artistic foundation has to be developed. This should be followed by the teaching of art history to develop a solid context. Next, the students have to be encouraged to learn through the carrying out of projects. Art should be integrated with complementary subjects to strengthen the knowledge and skills gained. Lastly, discussion and feedback should be incorporated into lessons.

A separate curriculum should be planned for each class that plan to offer dance classes. Curricula should be based on the style of dance being taught, the age of the students, the amount of time offered in each class, and the amount of classes offered in each semester.

Cultural Background

The course content is designed according to the multicultural background of ballroom dance by taking into account the multicultural elements, increasing the cultural heritage of teaching, guiding students to better understand and experience the culture and customs of different countries and regions, and enriching students' learning experience.

Diversified teaching content

Rich and colorful teaching contents are designed according to students' individual differences and learning characteristics. Courses with different difficulties are flexibly changed to cultivate students' interest in learning, while highlighting the improvement of learning skills and abilities. The Curriculum design is set to meet the needs of international standard dance majors, and whether they are in line with similar courses at home and abroad. An evaluation of teaching resources is done to evaluate the current teaching resources of international standard dance majors in Chinese universities, such as teachers, teaching facilities, practice venues, etc., and whether they meet the needs of professional teaching and the requirements of international standard dance field.

Preparing to conduct proper dance classes

Firstly, the researcher started by evaluating the infrastructure of the university. Is there an availability of an auditorium or gymnasium? There should be proper portable music system. The next requirement will be faculty members/teachers/lecturers/dance instructors with background in dance. After ascertaining these, select a local professional ballroom dance instructor to teach the dances to the students. Provide workshops and training videos or classes. Acquire the right music. Promote the classes to the students. Select the popular dance. Then set a schedule.

Methodology

The sample consists of lecturers as well as students. A total of five experts were chosen from Guangxi University of Arts. A second set of samples were 30 students from the same university. A set of questionnaires were developed and the results recorded by matching and narratives.

The Procedure**Ballroom dance course**

Ballroom dance course consists of two parts: basic course and advanced course. The basic course mainly teaches the basic steps and movements of ballroom dance, including four species, waltz, Charntes, trot and Foxtrot. The basic course requires students to master the basic steps and movement skills of each dance, including basic steps, turning, transposition, etc., so as to improve students' dance coordination and muscle memory, so as to facilitate learning during follow-up activities. Advanced courses are mainly based on the basis of basic courses. Teaching is changed to cater to combination, modification and introduction of other skills, so as to improve students' dance level and artistic expression. The content of the advanced course is more flexible to include body control, musical performance, dance combination, etc., so that students can better reflect the artistic charm of dance.

Generally speaking, the ballroom dance professional courses will include the following contents:

(1) Basic dance skills: blanket work, ballet training, modern dance training, representative dance, jazz dance.

(2) National standard dance skills: Latin dance basic training, modern dance basic training, Latin dance competitive training, modern dance competitive training, Latin dance performance training, modern dance performance training.

(3) Creation skills: choreography techniques, ballroom dance creation courses.

(4) Dance history and theory: history of Western dance, dance exploration, history of Chinese and foreign dance, appreciation of Chinese and foreign dance works, ballroom dance teaching method, music theory, and dance writing.

(5) Stage performance and social practice training: lift dance, performance planning and choreography, repertoire rehearsal, graduation performance, professional outside practice, graduation practice, and outdoor teaching practice.

The above are some common contents of the ballroom dance professional courses, and the specific curriculum setting and content will be different according to the different teaching institutions.

The development of these five classes of ballroom dance courses will help students develop the following professional competencies:

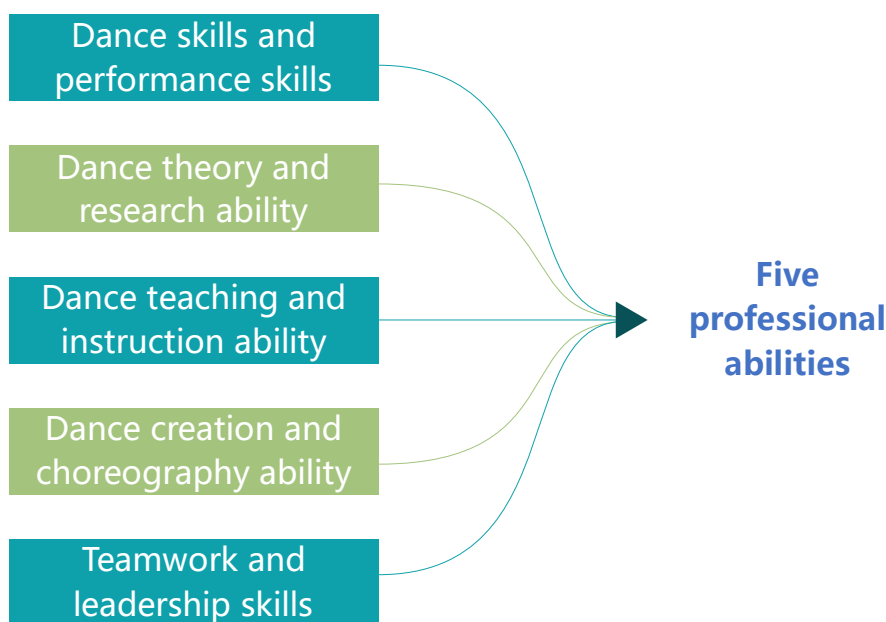


Figure 1-1 Five major abilities of students (Zhang Dingfang, 2023)

(1) Dance skills and performance ability. Through the basic dance skills course and dance performance course, students will improve their dance skills and stage performance skills, with excellent dance skills and dance expression skills.

(2) Dance theory and research ability. Through the study of the dance theory course, students will have a deep understanding of the history, theory and evolution of ballroom dance, and have a solid theoretical knowledge and research ability of dance.

(3) Dance teaching and guidance ability. Through the study of dance teaching courses, students will master the methods and skills of dance teaching, have good teaching ability and communication skills, and can effectively guide and teach dance skills.

(4) Dance creation and choreography ability. Through the study of dance creation and choreography courses, students will develop their own dance creation ability and choreography ability, and have a unique dance creativity and artistic expression ability.

(5) Team work and leadership skills. In dance performance and dance teaching, students will work with dance partners and interact with students to develop teamwork and leadership, and have the ability to work effectively with others and organize teams.

The professional abilities developed by these courses will help the students of the ballroom dance major to develop in an all-round way, with solid dance skills and professional quality, so as to achieve success in the field of dance.

Design the ideal curriculum structure

To design an effective ballroom dance professional course program, we need to follow a set of systematic steps to ensure that the course content is rich, the teaching methods are reasonable, and can effectively evaluate students' learning effectiveness. Here are the detailed scenarios based on these requirements:

Principles

The course design follows the following principles:

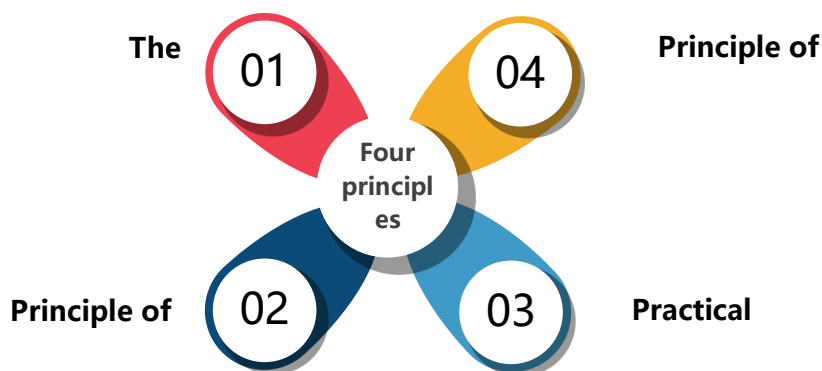


Figure 1-2 Principle of Course Design (Zhang Dingfang, 2023)

(1) Integrity principle: ensure that the course content covers all important aspects of ballroom dance, including technology, artistic performance, theoretical knowledge, etc.

(2) Principle of difference: The course design considers students of different levels and ages, and provides personalized learning paths.

(3) Practical principle: emphasize practical teaching, and ensure that students can apply theory to practice through practical dance practice.

(4) The principle of advancement: The course content should be orderly and gradually deepened with the improvement of students' ability.

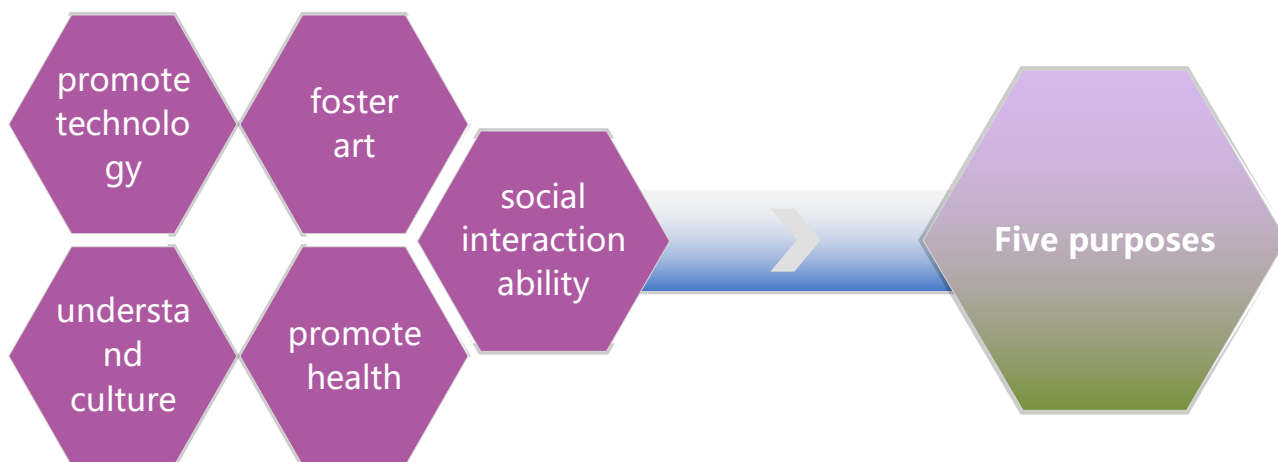


Figure 1-3 Purpose of designing the ideal course structure (Zhang Dingfang, 2023)

(1) Technical improvement: enable students to master the basic skills and advanced skills of ballroom dance.

(2) Art training: to cultivate students' sense of dance art and creative ability.

(3) Cultural understanding: to deepen students' understanding of the cultural background and history of ballroom dance.

(4) Health promotion: to enhance students' physical quality through dance training.

(5) Social skills: to improve students' social etiquette and cooperation ability.

From the above, the ballroom dance major course setting is changed to:

Table 1-2 Curriculum Content of Ballroom Dance Major (Zhang Dingfang, 2023)

Major classes	professional ability	Specific courses
1. Basic dance skills	1.1 Soft opening	Ballet class
	1.2 Body morphology	Ballet class
	1.3 Core strength	Ballet class
	1.4 Dance perception	Representative Dance (flamenco Irish tap Dance Argentine Tango)

2. National standard dance skills	2.1 Master the basic dance skills of Latin dance	Latin dance basic training
	2.2 Master the basic professional knowledge of modern dance steps	Modern dance basic training
	2.3 Master the professional knowledge of advanced Latin dance steps	Latin dance competitive training
	2.4 Master the professional knowledge of advanced dance steps of modern dance	Modern dance competitive training
	2.5 Emotional expression (emotional shaping)	performance training
3 Create and compile skills	3.1 Master the choreography theory	choreography theory
	3.2 Master the choreography skills	choreography techniques
4 Theory course	4.1 Understand the history and culture of dance	History of Chinese and foreign dance
		Appreciation of Chinese and foreign dance works
	4.2 Master the professional theoretical knowledge of ballroom dance	National standard dance teaching method
		Dance understanding
4.3 Knowledge of music theory	Dance writing	
5. Stage performance and social practice and training	5.1 Learn the relevant knowledge about stage performance	Music theory
		Holding up the dance
		Performance planning and arrangement
	5.2 Explore the career direction	Replay rehearsal
		Graduation performance
		Professional go out practice
	Go out teaching practice	
	graduation field work	

Summary

Based on the above survey and analysis, the curriculum developer can design the improved scheme. This plan should include specific changes, such as modifying the course content, introducing new teaching methods, increasing teaching resources, and changing the evaluation methods. Each change should specify its purpose and how it is achieved.

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