

# **University of Calgary Ballroom Dance Club**



## **Schedule III Teaching Assistant's and Instructor's Manual**

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## **I WELCOME TO THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY BALLROOM DANCE CLUB TEACHING ASSISTANT AND INSTRUCTOR TRY-OUTS**

The Club Executive Committee and the Club Professionals would like to thank you for participating in this year's tryouts. We would like to thank each and every candidate for applying, and although not everyone will be selected, we appreciate your time and hope that you enjoy the training. We will be using a predetermined selection process that has been designed to aid us in determining those individuals best suited for the available positions.

To serve as a guide to their actions, conduct, and activities, all volunteers are encouraged to keep in mind that the Club was formed and is maintained as a vehicle for recreation for Club Members. To quote our Constitution, its purpose is **"To encourage and promote ballroom dancing through instruction and practice in a social atmosphere."**

It is clear, then, that the Club was formed solely to provide dancing for the members and to bring ballroom dancing to the public through classes and other functions. Our Club can and will thrive and grow if we nurture it through service to its Members. The more our Members learn, the more they will want to support Club activities and continue learning, the more they will enjoy and use their dancing, and encourage others to try. The more fun our Members have in every and any way while at any Club function or because of attending Club activities, the more our Club will grow. And all of this depends not on them, but on you - for you collectively and individually have the ability, the power, and the responsibility to make it happen.

### **Prerequisite For Try Outs**

- TAs must have a minimum of one year's dance experience.
- International TAs must have a minimum of one year's dance experience, plus should have successfully acquired a minimum of Bronze I.S.T.D Certificate prior to the start of August TA training.
- Instructors must have a minimum of two year's dance experience, and must dance at least at a level two level.
- Admin Assistants must have a minimum of one year's dance experience.

### **Registration**

- Applicants must complete a registration form, and pay the applicable costs.
- Applicants must purchase a current year membership, if they do not have one.
- Applicants must complete the questionnaire provided to assist in placing successful applicants in a class. Appendix 3, attached provides the current year's classes and dances to be taught, to assist you in your planning.
- Applicants must indicate one night, preferably two nights, that they are available, in addition to Thursday training nights.

### **Note To Applicants**

Applicants who are not selected should not feel that they are inferior in any way to those who are selected. The Club wishes to select those individuals with the strongest combination of desirable qualities and skills, and not necessarily those with the most advanced dancing skills, nor with the most experience, nor the quickest learners, nor any other single outstanding quality. The club appreciates each and every applicant who takes the time to join in the tryouts, and hopes that those not selected will continue as Club Members or Admin Assistants; try out again next year, or both.

## **II SELECTION PROCESS**

It is absolutely essential that all applicants be present at the whole of each of the selection sessions. In order to be fair, everyone must go through the same selection process. It is the Club's intent to judge every applicant fairly and equally, and to select the required number of applicants as impartially as possible through a procedure based on established criteria.

### **Getting To Know You**

- Applicants must attend all training sessions.
- Let Professionals/Executive know if you cannot attend.
- If you resign from TA training, no refunds will be issued.

### **Instructor Training**

- Instructor applicants will receive training in August, as per Appendix 1.
- Instructor applicants will have an opportunity to teach the TAs for a short segment.
- Instructor applicants will then be evaluated and assigned to classes.

### **TA Training**

- TA applicants will receive training in August, as per Appendix 1.
- TA applicants will be trained in teaching procedures and instructional techniques.
- TA applicants will be taught to lead and follow.
- Class participation will be expected.

### **Dance Evaluations**

- Club Professionals will assess the applicant's dancing.
- Switching of lead will be requested
- Each applicant's current dance level will be taken into consideration.
- Applicant's availability will be taken into consideration.

## **III SELECTION CRITERIA**

### **Communication and Teaching Skills 35%**

- Communication Skills - vocabulary, form, simplicity, flexibility, clarity
- Diagnosis and assessment of student need
- Use of methods for prescription and correction
- Structure of explanations and presentations

### **Personal Qualities 35%**

- Class participation, open-mindedness, enthusiasm and overall attitude
- Attendance and punctuality
- Cooperation, attentiveness and teamwork

### **Dance Performance 30%**

- Final Evaluation
- Rate of assimilation and degree of retention

#### **IV. TA, INSTRUCTOR OR ADMIN ASSISTANT DUTIES AND BENEFITS**

##### **Benefits**

- Weekly training for class assisting in, plus training at 1 level higher.
- Club TA shirt and name tag.
- A gift at the end of each session worked.
- One free class per session worked.
- Remaining classes in session worked at student prices.
- Special prices for Winter and Summer Workshops.
- Free one day workshops.
- One free ticket to Club theme dances, purchase one additional ticket at member prices.
- One free ticket to special dances, ability to purchase one additional ticket at member prices (contingent on working two theme dance duties for each ticket and maintaining other responsibilities adequately).
- Subsidized prices for two volunteer parties.
- Alumni status per the policy posted on the website.

##### **Responsibilities**

Any volunteers (TAs, Instructors, or Administrative Assistants) who consistently do not follow the guidelines below will be subject to review of their position by the Executive, and to disciplinary measures or dismissal, as indicated below under Consequences.

- Volunteers must wear the current Club shirt and black bottoms in class.
- Volunteers must arrive at least 15 minutes early for all training or class commitments.
- TAs and Instructors must participate in assigned opening, closing, music or desk activities.
- TAs and Instructors must attend their training session and one session higher, as per the sessions indicated in Appendix 2.
- TAs and Instructors are expected to know class material prior to the applicable class.
- Volunteers must attend Annual General Meetings and Special Meetings.
- Volunteers must assist with overall Club administrative functions such as registration.
- Volunteers are expected to attend Club functions to promote the Club.
- Volunteer for duties at dances or workshops
- Volunteers must keep up to date on all Club activities, policies and announcements and be prepared to answer Members' questions.
- Volunteers must read and become familiar with this schedule.

##### **Attendance and Substitution**

- TA attendance will be taken on TA training nights and on class nights.
- TAs and Instructors are responsible for finding a substitute, of the same or a higher level, if they cannot attend class. If they cannot find a substitute, they must let the Instructor and the Vice President know.
- If TAs or Instructors cannot attend TA training, they must not TA or Instruct the following week's class. They may work as a desk or music assistant.
- TAs must notify the Vice President and the applicable Professional or Instructor if they are unavailable on a scheduled night.
- Club Instructors must notify the President if they are unavailable on a scheduled night.
- Admin Assistants must notify an Executive if they are unavailable on a scheduled night.

## **Expected Conduct**

- TAs must only dance with students when the student is having problems. They are not to become substitute partners due to class imbalances.
- Volunteers must:
  - be friendly, cheerful, and helpful
  - greet students warmly and speak in pleasant tones
  - be ready to help and offer assistance without prompting
  - not be negative or derogatory about anyone's dancing, appearance, manners or behavior
- TAs, Instructors and Admin Assistants must not complain about assigned duties or anything else to a Member or within hearing of a Member.
- TAs must be patient and understanding of Members' difficulties, but should also balance their time throughout the entire class, avoiding spending too much or too little time with any particular Member.
- TAs must acknowledge and address Members' questions and requests for assistance, and notify the Instructors if they are unable to help immediately, or if at all uncertain of the correct answer or response.
- TAs must listen closely to the Instructor and be aware of the Instructor's activities.
- TAs must direct class attention to the Instructor's comments while she or he is speaking.
- TAs must acknowledge and encourage Members.
- Volunteers must treat all Professionals, TAs, Club Instructors and members respectfully.
- Club Instructors must advise the Professional of TA and member progress, to enable to Pro to adjust training as required.
- TAs and Instructors are expected to bring to a Club Professional's attention anything that they think has a bearing on the teaching of the classes.

## **Consequences**

- Attendance review will be ongoing. If volunteers have unexplained absences and fail to obtain a substitute, the Vice President will discuss the issue with the applicable volunteer, to warn them that the absences are unacceptable. Should the issue arise again with the same volunteer, the Vice President may withhold the volunteer's free ticket to the special dances.
- Volunteers not complying with other responsibilities will receive a warning from the Vice President, and if they do not comply, tickets to theme dances may be withheld.
- Volunteers consistently not fulfilling their responsibilities may be asked to resign.
- Volunteers who quit or are dismissed may complete their own free class in the current session, but if they have pre-registered for subsequent sessions, they will be asked to pay member prices for those classes.

## **V. PROFESSIONAL ONGOING TRAINING RESPONSIBILITIES**

In cooperation with The Club's mandate, the Professionals are solely responsible for the class syllabi for the classes and dances as selected by the Executive. The Professional responsible for training has been requested to use the following guidelines as additional instructional material for TAs and Club Instructors. Professionals are also requested to follow the same guidelines for maximizing the TAs assigned to their classes.

### **Instructor Training Guidelines**

- Partner switching
- Syllabus knowledge & course plan use

- Prioritizing material & presentation
- Brevity and clarity of examples
- Clear, concise, and effective presentation
- Diagnosing difficulties & formulating or prescribing teaching approaches
- Decorum and appropriate humor
- Descriptive language forms
- Dealing with problem students
- Maximizing use of TAs
- Control and disciplining of TAs
- Using class time effectively - instruction vs. practice vs. review

### **TA Training Guidelines**

- Dance skills
- Decorum and behavior
- Dance fundamentals
- Instructional skills
- Syllabus knowledge
- Demonstrating
- Responsibilities
- Co-worker cooperation

### **Use of TA Guidelines**

- Learn the class material in TA training
- Rehearse the material prior to class
- Demonstrate the material to the class, as directed by the Instructor
- Assist students during the class, dancing only if demonstrating a particular point.

## **VI. TEACHING ASSISTANT – STUDENT INTERACTION GUIDE**

### **How to Approach Students**

- Try to resist the urge to help in the first 60 seconds. Students need a chance to try the pattern to music and apply what they have just been taught.
- Ask if they would like some help. Don't assume they want your assistance. Make sure you introduce yourself.
- Only approach if you know how to help. If you are not sure what is wrong, ask the instructor or another TA if they are available.
- Use analogies whenever possible. E.g. Foxtrot is like a stroll in the park.
- Avoid giving continuous negative criticism. Intersperse corrections with positive observation of the couple's dancing. Always leave with a compliment regarding the part of the pattern they are doing correctly.
- Keep it simple...they don't need to do everything perfectly by the time you leave them.

### **What to Look For**

**Pattern** - Make sure the pattern is correct, for both the male and the female student.

**Tempo/Timing** - Help them out individually first, if working on this. Then put them together.

**Footwork** - Make sure the proper part of the foot is being used.

**Posture/Frame** - Must have these before Lead and Follow can ever take place.

**Lead/Follow** - Make sure you address both parties when helping with this. This is the hardest part to deal with emotionally, however, the most important part of dance.

**Continuity of Patterns** - Once they have a few patterns in their repertoire, encourage them to do a sequence.

**Amalgamation of the pattern and technique** - This is only to be addressed when all of the above aspects have been accomplished.

**Styling** - Remember, styling is very individual, don't force your opinion and do allow for their individual creativity.

### **With the Student:**

- Greet each with a smile.
- Detection and correction:
  - Watch them dance the pattern,
  - Correct the problem,
  - Have them dance the pattern again and provide encouragement, and
  - Move on to the next couple.
- Try to help out new people each class.

## **VII. DANCE INFORMATION**

### **Dance Basics**

Elements of dancing are the smallest individual units, or parts, of dancing. These are the building blocks, or the “alphabet” of dancing. They include all parts of dancing, and any dance movement can be completely described in terms of its constituent elements.

**Dance Components** - are common groupings of elements. These are the “words” of the dance language. They are usually segments of familiar patterns, and may even be complete patterns unto themselves.

**Dance Patterns** - are combinations of dance elements and/or components. These are the “sentences” of dancing. Patterns incorporate all of the dance fundamentals.

**Dance Fundamentals** - are broad categories or divisions of the various aspects of dancing. Without the presence of some form of all the fundamentals dancing is not complete.

### **Dance Fundamentals**

**Music, Rhythm and Timing** - This fundamental includes all aspects of coordinating and synchronizing the dancers' movement with the music.

**Character, Form and Movement** - This fundamental dictates the correct personality of each dance, including its characteristic movement and action, posture, poise, and mood, as well as ranges or limits of movement.

**Patterns, Positions and Alignments** - This fundamental dictates the accepted standard combinations of actions in certain directions, and includes footwork, directions, alignments, body positions and dance positions.

**Communication and Partnering** - This fundamental entails the coordination and communication of the partners. It includes balance, lead, follow and matching.

**Styling and Interpretation** - This fundamental includes those elements that serve to enhance the standard form and character of the dance. It encompasses variations in movements and inflections in timing or personalization of patterns. These interpretations may be standard or common to particular movements and patterns, or may be original variations that suit the individual dancer.

### **Dance Positions**

**Close Position** - Facing partner, slightly offset, normal hold, or man holding lady's R hand in his L hand, double hold.

**Closed Position** - Normal hold, facing partner, with light body contact.

**Open Position** - Facing away from partner, man holding lady's R hand in his L hand (or her R hand in his R, double hold or w/out hold)

**Promenade Position** - A V-shaped position with lady on man's right side.

**Counter Promenade Position**- A V-shaped position with lady on man's left side.

**Fallaway Position** - As Promenade Position, but with man and lady moving back.

**Right Side By Side Position** - Lady on man's R side, both facing the same way or facing opposite directions

**Left Side By Side Position** - Lady on man's L side, both facing the same way or facing opposite directions

**Right Shadow Position** - Lady on man's R side, slightly in advance of the man, both facing the same direction (includes: Sweetheart, Wrap/Cuddle and Skaters).

**Hammerlock** - As Right or Left Side by Side, both facing opposite directions. Hand descriptions vary.

### **Dance Holds**

**Normal Hold (Smooth) - Man** - Stand facing lady with the lady slightly on the right side. Extend and raise both arms sideways until they are just below the shoulders. Bend the right elbow and place the right hand just below the lady's left shoulder blade. Bend the left elbow and take the lady's right hand, holding the joined hands at eye level. The left forearm should be inclined slightly forward showing an unbroken line from elbow to hand.

**Normal Hold (Smooth) - Lady** - Place hand on man's right arm just below the shoulder. Raise the right arm and place right hand in man's left hand.

**Normal Hold (Latin)** - Stand facing partner about 10-12 inches apart with the head erect and the body upright. The man should place his right hand on the lady's left shoulder blade. The lady should rest her right hand lightly on his, following the curve of his arm to the shoulder. Lady may place her left hand on or behind the man's shoulder. The man's left hand should be raised to eye level, and the lady should place the fingers of her right hand between his thumb and first finger, and both hands should be lightly clasped.

**Normal Hold (Two Step)** - May use either Smooth or Latin hold.

### **Foot Positions**

**1<sup>st</sup> Position** - Feet together in parallel position.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Position** - Feet to the side and parallel. Distance between feet varies according to the dance and /or the patterns being performed.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Position** - Place the heel of one foot at the instep of the other foot.

**4<sup>th</sup> Position** - Place one foot directly in front or behind the other foot (each foot on its individual track). Distance between feet varies according to the dance and/or patterns being performed. Fourth position is sometimes referred to as a forward and back step.

**5<sup>th</sup> Position** - Place the inside edge of the big toe at the heel of the other foot. Distance between feet varies according to the dance and/or patterns being performed.

### **Dance Elements**

Dance elements are the building blocks of dancing. They include all parts of dancing and any dance pattern can be described or taught by merely using the elements within the pattern, e.g. Rock Step, Chassé to the right, Rock Step, Chassé to the left, (Cha Cha Basic).

**Apart Turn (Free Spin)** - A term used to describe that part of a pattern where both partners turn individually.

**Break** - A term used to describe the movement of the feet whereby the working foot moves from initial position, into either 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, or 2<sup>nd</sup> position, then returning to the starting position once again. **OR** A term used to describe the change from closed position into an open or apart position.

**Chainé** - A left or right full turn, on the ball of the feet, sometimes referred to as "chassé turn".

**Change of Weight** - The action of transferring weight from one foot to another.

**Chassé** - A figure of three steps, in which the feet are closed on the second step (side together side).

**Check** - A position where the centre of the body is held between the supporting and the moving legs. Usually done to change directions.

**Continuity Style** - An advanced form in the Foxtrot and Waltz where the feet never close, but follow through and pass each other.

**Contra Body Movement** - The action of turning the opposite side of the body towards the moving leg. Used to begin turning figures. Sometimes referred to as “CBM”.

**Contra Body Movement Position** - A foot position where the foot is placed on or across the line of the supporting foot either in front or behind to maintain bodyline. Sometimes referred to as “CBMP”.

**Cross Body Lead** - A term used to describe the leading of the lady from either closed position or right side position to left side position.

**Developé** - A slow unfolding and extending of the leg either forward or sideward.

**Fan** - A rotation on one leg, usually in plié position, with the other leg extended behind the supporting leg with no weight.

**Figure (School Figure)** - A combination of steps which together, form a complete pattern.

**Follow Through (Brush)** - The passing of the ankles and knees when going from open position of the feet to another open position of the feet (from a forward step to a side step). The word “brush” is used to indicate that the moving foot must first close to the supporting foot without changing weight.

**Footwork** - When describing pattern steps, an explanation of which part of the foot is in contact with the floor on each step.

**Heel Turn** - A turn that is first commenced on the ball of the supporting foot (back) and then continued on the heel, the closing foot kept parallel throughout. The weight is transferred onto the foot that has closed, as the turn is completed.

**Hesitation** - A part of a pattern in which progression is temporarily suspended and the weight retained on one foot for more than one count.

**Line of Dance** - The direction of progress around the dance floor (counter clockwise).

**Lock** - A term given to the movement of the feet where one leg crosses either in front of, or behind, the other leg. The lock is taken from a forward or back step.

**Lunge** - A pose assumed in plié position performed forward, back or sideward. The body weight is over the leg performing the lunge. Feet remain in an open position with the ball or the inside edge of the other foot gripping the floor to maintain proper balance and control.

**Natural Turn** - A turn to the right.

**Outside Partner** - A step outside partner on the right or left.

**Oversway** - A figure that begins from a side lunge, the man leading his partner to sway the left side of her body over her right leg.

**Pivot** - A rotation on the ball of the supporting foot, with the knees flexed while the other foot is held in front or behind.

**Plié** - A bending of both knees, or one knee, without heels lifting off the floor.

**Point** - To extend the free leg in any direction with only the tip of the toes touching or in close contact with the floor. No weight is applied.

**Push Turn/Walk Around** - See Spot Turn.

**Quick Count** - A step that is held for one beat of music.

**Relevé** - A rise to the ball of one foot or both.

**Reverse Turn** - A turn to the left.

**Rhondé** - A movement where the supporting leg is stationary, while the other sweeps around in a semi-circle. (floor or aerial rhondé).

**Rise and Fall** - The elevation and lowering that is developed through the feet, legs and body.

**Rock Step** - Two or more changes of weight with the feet apart. May be in any direction.

**Slow Count** - A step that is held for two beats of music.

**Spin** - A rotation of the ball of the supporting foot, with knees relaxed while the other foot is held in 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> position.

**Spot Turn** - A series of forward and backward steps turning to the left or right.

**Step in Place** - A raise of the foot off the floor and replacement it in the same spot.

**Sway** - The natural inclination of the body to the inside of a turn.

**Switch Turn** - Same as spot turn except the turn is completed quicker.

**Swivel** - A rotation on the ball of one foot prior to taking an actual step, may be performed forward, backward and to the left or right sides.

**Syncopated** - To shorten the beat of the music by adding an extra step.

**Visual Lead** - A term given to the manner in which the person follows in apart, challenge or shine position.

## Dance Alignments

Dance alignment refers to the position of the feet in relation to the room. Facing and Backing refer to the direction of the step.

