

Pre-Professional Program & Student Ensemble

Ballet 5:8 School of the Arts – 2017.2018 Term

1 – ABOUT

Pre-Professional and Student Ensemble Program – 2017.2018 Term

Introduction

Welcome! Congratulations on being accepted into the Ballet 5:8 Pre-Professional Program and participating in our Ensemble Program. We, the staff at Ballet 5:8 School of the Arts, are excited to have you as part of this unique and valuable division of our training program. Pre-Professional level students have the opportunity to gain experience as a dancer, artist and performer in a setting similar to that of a professional company, and moreover, to worship Jesus Christ through dance. Our hope and prayer is that you, students, will have a great time growing, serving others and worshipping the Lord through your time as part of this program.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

The purpose of this document is to explain important details pertaining to study in the Pre-Professional Program, and to participation in the Student Ensemble Program. *Returning dancers: Please read through this document carefully to familiarize yourself with any policies that may have changed or been added since last year.*

About the Pre-Professional Program

Ballet 5:8 School of the Arts is proud to offer comprehensive intermediate and advanced classical ballet training to students at a pre-professional level. There are many places around the U.S. where similar pre-professional training is available, but our school approaches the training with a unique mindset. It is our goal to maintain a positive, nurturing environment in our school based in the overarching joy that comes from our basis in faith. This allows students to not only gain skills in dance, but the opportunity to thrive physically, emotionally and spiritually in conjunction with their training.

If you are not already familiar with the term “pre-professional,” it signifies that the training offered is with the mindset not merely of enjoyment or recreation but with the intent of preparing students for the future. The goal of Pre-Professional Program is to provide students with a solid technical basis that can equip them to pursue careers in professional dance performance, be accepted to college dance programs, and pursue a variety of careers in dance and fields. Training in the Pre-Professional Program can prepare students for college level dance programs or can be used as a stepping stone to more advanced training programs including the Conservatory and the Ballet 5:8 Trainee Program. Pre-Professional Program graduates will have developed skills like physical fitness, poise, posture, a deep sense of self-discipline, drive, and a wholehearted work ethic that will serve them well in any career field they choose to pursue.

About the Student Ensemble Program

Not all dancers who attend the Pre-Professional Program participate in Ensemble, but participation is highly encouraged! Dancers must be fully enrolled and active in their Pre-Professional Program participation in order to audition for Ensemble. Dancers in the Pre-Professional Program *must* participate in Ensemble in order to participate in Ballet 5:8 School of the Arts major productions and outreach performances.

The goal of the Ensemble Program is to facilitate performing opportunities for dancers in our pre-professional training program. That is, many pre-professional training programs offer training opportunities for student dancers in a technical sense but provide few opportunities to perform and develop artistry in addition to technique. The Ensemble Program is a very unique aspect of Ballet 5:8 School of the Arts in that it allows dancers to perform throughout the school year. This includes in many different roles in two full-length original productions each year, and in outreach settings such as local festivals, nursing homes, and more. We believe that performing in both theater and outreach settings are crucial aspects of a dancer’s training toward being a well-rounded dancer as well as an ambassador for Christ in any situation. Students considering Ensemble should consider whether they are willing to make the time commitment necessary to fully participate in the theater and outreach performance opportunities provided for members of the Ensemble companies.

STRUCTURE

The Ballet 5:8 Ensemble Program is divided into two divisions: Ensemble I and Ensemble II. After being accepted into the Ensemble Program, dancers are placed into one of these two Ensemble levels by Ballet 5:8 School of the Arts staff. Student placement in each level is intended to foster the best possible experience, and the most possible growth for each individual dancer. Casting in performances is based on level but also upon the discretion and final decision of Ballet 5:8 School of the Arts staff.

Dancers in Ensemble I and II are required to be available for Tuesday and Friday evening rehearsals at any time throughout the year. Rehearsal schedules are given at the beginning of each semester, and dancers are expected to attend all scheduled rehearsals.

About our Focus

At Ballet 5:8, our inspiration comes from our faith - *“but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”* The incredible love that has been shown to us is the motivation for our pursuit of excellence in our craft and informs the outward focus of all our programming and performances. We see dance not as a means of self-glorification, but as a way to share the joy of our faith with the communities around us and to invite others into meaningful discussion of faith-topics. Our overarching goal for the Pre-Professional Program is to introduce and immerse dancers in this mindset, challenging dancers to grow in their own faith and to see their craft as a way to share that faith with others.

About Ballet 5:8

Ballet 5:8 is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization dedicated to creating and performing honest, relevant, breathtaking dance that can engage audiences in meaningful discussion. The Ballet 5:8 professional performing company is made up of a group of adult, professional dancers who have fully completed their student training and work with the company full-time. The company performs around 40 times each year in the Chicago area and around the U.S. Ballet 5:8 School of the Arts, our dance education arm, is dedicated to training up new generations of artists. The School's several distinct divisions and training programs provide space for young people of all ages to pursue dance training in a positive, nurturing environment made possible by our basis in faith.

A NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION

Ballet 5:8 School of the Arts is a part of Ballet 5:8, a 501-(c)-3 nonprofit organization! As a nonprofit, we do not exist to make a profit, like a traditional for-profit business. We are legally required to (and do) invest all funds that come into the organization back into the organization. This means that 100% of every dollar that you invest in Ballet 5:8 School of the Arts - whether through tuition, performance tickets, or a donation - will go to meet the needs of the organization, its current work, and its future development.

Donor Funding

As you may know, most donations to 501-(c)-3 nonprofit organizations are tax-deductible. As a 501-(c)-3 nonprofit, Ballet 5:8 School of the Arts is able to use donor support to make our high-quality dance programs available at tuition rates that are far below the average rates for the same caliber of training.

Ownership

Did you know that Ballet 5:8 is publically-owned, similar to a public corporation? With the public, our community, and YOU as our “shareholders,” we exist to serve the public. We are governed by our Board of Directors and are managed by the Artistic Director, Executive Director, and other staff.

A Great Place to Dance

We feel strongly that being a nonprofit organization is one of the best ways for us to ensure that Ballet 5:8 School of the Arts is a great place to dance. Since making a profit is not the goal of the organization, we have full freedom to invest our energy and passion into our mission!

2 – POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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Attendance

Ballet 5:8 School of the Arts Pre-Professional Program students are required to maintain consistent class attendance throughout their study in dance. Consistent attendance ensures that students don't miss out on important syllabus concepts introduced throughout the semester, and is also crucial for development of strength, coordination, and flexibility. Students who are inconsistent in their class attendance will take longer to develop key proficiencies and will be at an increased risk of developing acute and chronic injuries.

REGULAR CLASSES

Dancers should be especially careful of their attendance of all their regular program classes! This applies to all classes: ballet technique, pointe, and any supplementary classes in other disciplines - each one matters in its unique way. Regular classes provide the framework for the discipline, stamina, and technical ability for students' progression in their training, and for participation in Ensemble activities. Regular class attendance also reflects the reality of any professional dancer's need for daily class, paired with additional stretching, strengthening, cross-training and review outside of company rehearsal and performances.

ENSEMBLE ACTIVITIES, REHEARSALS AND EVENTS

Ensemble Program participation requires an added commitment in addition to that of regular classes. Before joining Ensemble, all dancers and families should consider the details of commitment carefully. We do not allow dancers to participate partially in the program, so participants need to be prepared to maintain excellent class attendance (see above) in addition to participating in all Ensemble activities, rehearsals and events for the entire school year (no half-year attendance is permitted). **Exceptions are only made in extraordinary circumstances.** Ensemble attendance is absolutely important for each dancer involved, as we need ALL dancers present in order to rehearse. Ballet is a team sport.

ABSENCE POLICIES

Class Attendance

1. In order to participate in the Ballet 5:8 Ensemble Program, students may not miss more than THREE of their regular classes each semester. Students who miss more than THREE classes must make-up their classes in a lower level.
2. More than SIX total missed classes in any one semester, made up or not, can result in the participant's dismissal from the Ensemble Program. Dismissals or demotions are made at the discretion of the Artistic Director and Ballet Mistress.
3. Students must request an absence for approval at least 2 weeks before the actual date of requested absence. All requests must go through the Ballet Mistress in-person or by email. For illnesses or unavoidable circumstances, please call the front desk. See contact form on last page of this Handbook.

Dancers enrolled in the Pre-Professional Division who do not wish to participate in the Student Ensemble Program may only hold their placement through regular class attendance. Missing more than one class per week on a regular basis may result in level demotion or dismissal from program at the discretion of the Artistic Director.

Absences - Illness

In the event of an injury or a mild illness such as a cold, dancers should continue to attend regular classes, rehearsals and other events, sitting down if necessary. In the event of serious illness including a fever or vomiting, students should stay home and should have a parent or adult report their absence. Illness-related absences may count toward dancers' total absences throughout the year.

Absences - Excused (Ensemble)

Ensemble dancers may not under any circumstances miss rehearsals without being excused. In order to take an excused absence for a reason other than illness, a parent must obtain permission from the appropriate Ballet 5:8 staff person (see appendix for details) to miss rehearsal. Ballet 5:8 directors and staff reserve the right to deny requests for excused absences. If special circumstances (such as a wedding, funeral, etc.) require that an Ensemble member to have more than one absence in a semester, this should be discussed with Ballet 5:8 staff *prior to the beginning of the semester.*

No-Absence Periods (Ensemble)

No excused absences will be granted during the three-week period prior to any announced performance dates.

Dismissal (Ensemble)

Any unexcused absence at any point will result in dismissal from one or more pieces. Continued absence may result in dismissal from the Ensemble Program.

Communication and Updates

ALL schedule changes in weekly classes and rehearsals will be updated on the online Current Students Calendar (Please see appendix for instructions on how to view calendar).

Fundraising

After reading this, you may be asking – why fundraising!? Ballet 5:8 School of the Arts engages in fundraising activities as an alternative to charging high tuition and performance ticket prices that could prevent many families from being able to access our education programs and performances. In other words, we have made a commitment to prefer the legwork of fundraising, rather than running an exclusive program that only a few students and families can access.

How Expensive Would the Program Be Without Fundraising?

Dance training facilities are expensive to buy and maintain due to the large, open spaces needed for dancing and costly equipment including special marley floors, mirrors and sound equipment. On top of that, administrative staff must maintain student records and a plethora of communications functions, while artistic and teaching staff must also be paid a fair hourly wage for their specialized services in and out of the classroom.

Without the assistance of fundraising, tuition prices would need to be significantly higher to cover all our costs. You can see this by comparing our tuition and the tuition for similar training programs that have comparably qualified instructors, comparable training syllabi, and comparable training hours for each level of classes. Tuition for comparable programs is sometimes double that of our tuition rates (this comparison does not include recreational dance programs, which offer students a more lighthearted training experience and typically only include a fraction of the class hours associated with each of our ballet levels).

How Can I Get Involved in Fundraising?

During the Fall Semester, we host a door-to-door fundraiser where we ask students and families to sell cookie dough or Fair Trade items in support of the school. Make sure to check lobby signage and the email newsletter for up-to-date information on fundraiser product catalogues, selling procedures, and deadlines. In the Spring Semester, we host a variety of smaller fundraising events, including Family Nights at local restaurants that promote community building among students and families in addition to raising funds for the school. Since Ballet 5:8 is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, all donations to the organization are tax-deductible - if you don't want to participate in the fundraisers, consider making a direct donation as you are able!

Ensemble Fundraising Requirements

Because of the extremely low cost associated with the Ensemble Program, dancers participating in the Ensemble Program are responsible to raise \$150 in donations to Ballet 5:8 School of the Arts each year, through direct contributions OR \$300 worth of sales during the Fall Fundraiser. This offsets the costs associated with the program and allows us to create the beautiful sets, costumes and choreography for each of the performances. All Fundraising requirements are due by November 1st.

Auditions & Casting (Ensemble)

All casting decisions within the Ensemble will be made by Ballet 5:8 School of the Arts staff. Casting decisions are made thoughtfully, carefully and prayerfully. Please keep in mind that the directors have the best interest of each of the Ensemble company members in mind, even as they must consider how to incorporate each of the dancers' strengths, development needs, heights, etc., into each performance.

- All casting decisions are final.
- Please do not ask to be placed in a different role or Ensemble level other than the one you are placed in.
- Ballet 5:8 School of the Arts staff reserves the right to adjust casting decisions in lieu of special or unusual circumstances.

Winter Production-Beyond The Nutcracker

Ballet 5:8's Winter production of *Beyond The Nutcracker* is the only performance where we ask students in the Ensemble Program to audition for roles. This audition is held at the beginning of the Fall Semester and it gives artistic staff the opportunity to observe new and returning students' skills in the format of a traditional audition. These skills observed include performance quality, ability to pick-up choreography quickly, and composure under stress. Dancers are notified of casting via email, usually within 1-2 weeks after auditioning.

Spring Production

At this point in the season, artistic staff will have observed each Ensemble member's progress in classes and rehearsals. Casting for the Spring production does not require an audition. Casting for the Spring production is usually announced within the first three weeks of the Spring semester.

Dress Code

CLASSES AND REHEARSALS

Dancers should observe standard dress code during their regular classes. In Ensemble rehearsals, dress code includes any leotard, pink tights, and hair in a tight, clean bun. Dancers may also choose to wear a short ballet skirt in a coordinating color in pointe class and rehearsals. *Please no baggy pants, t-shirts or leg warmers, except in the case of injury.* Dress code is as follows:

Level IIIA & IIIB

Simple Navy Blue Leotard, Prima Soft Seamed Convertible European Pink Tights, pink canvas or leather ballet slippers (*please ask artistic staff for preferences*)

Level IVA & IVB

Simple Burgundy Leotard, Prima Soft Seamed Convertible European Pink Tights, pink canvas or leather ballet slippers (*please ask artistic staff for preferences*)

Men's Ballet

Form fitting White t-shirt, Black "M. Stevens" brand tights w/belt, White socks, White ballet slippers (*please ask artistic staff for preferences*)

Pointe Class

Coordinating colored skirt, approved pointe shoes (*all pointe shoes must be approved by artistic staff*)

Friday "Dress-up" Day

Female Students: plain colored leotard. *No halters, bright colors, or sequins (Please keep colors and styles simple)*
Male Students: black, gray or colored t-shirt. *No graphics. No bright, neon colors.*

Supplementary Classes

Dancers may choose to wear plain colored, fitted shorts, capris or leggings (approved by artistic staff) to extra classes such as Jazz or Modern

Progressing Ballet Technique/Pilates/Yoga

Students attending strengthening and conditioning classes should bring their own exercise mat. Mats may be purchased at any department store with an exercise section.

THEATER/EVENTS (ENSEMBLE)

Warm-Ups

Ensemble members should bring a set of warm-ups to all performances and events. These warm-ups, both top and bottom, should be worn before and after performances. One reason is modesty and respect towards the non-dancers we may be interacting with in spaces outside of our dance studio. Another reason is that these buildings are often “freezing” from the perspective of a dancer in a leotard and tights! Warm-ups are an important tool for keeping your bodies and muscles warm, enabling you to perform well and avoid undue risk of injury.

Street Clothes

Ensemble members should be careful to abide by rules of modesty when wearing normal or “street” clothes to and from a theater or other event (and really, all the time!). Being a member of the Ensemble Company includes having an overarching expectation of abiding by the spirit of modesty in dress. For specific advice, Ensemble members should ask their mom, a Ballet 5:8 staff member or an older, trusted female friend.

ONSTAGE

Unless otherwise instructed, Ensemble members should arrive at all performances and events with the following:

- Hair in a slicked-back, high bun without a part
- Required Ensemble Make-up (*see below*)
- A nude or white leotard for under costumes
- Prima Soft Seamed Convertible European Pink tights
- Clean ballet slipper, pointe shoes or other appropriate dance shoes when applicable

Makeup Requirements

All School of the Arts performances require specific makeup, which can vary each year based on production and individual roles. Below is the general requirement for all Ensemble members.

- Foundation
 - Liquid base: CoverGirl Clean Oil Control Anti-Luisance Makeup (1oz) in appropriate skin tone
 - Powder finish: CoverGirl Ultimate Finish Liquid/Powder Makeup (.4oz) in appropriate skin tone
- Blush: CoverGirl Cheekers Blush “Soft Sable” #120
- Eyeshadow
 - For light skin: CoverGirl Eyeshadow Quads “Notice Me Nudes” #700
 - For dark skin: CoverGirl Eyeshadow Quads “Stunning Smokeys” #715
- White Eye Contour: NYX Eye Shadow Base, White
- Eyeliner: Maybelline New York “Line Works” Waterproof Liquid Liner, (Black 451 - 0.08 fl oz.)
- Mascara: Black (any brand/preferred CoverGirl or Maybelline)
- False Eyelashes: e.l.f. Dramatic Lash Kit (or similar dramatic/full lash)
- False Lash Adhesive: DUO Strip Lash Adhesive (.25oz)
- Lipstick: CoverGirl Queen Collection Lip Color “Paint the Town” (Q515)
- Earrings: Depending on the role or production, some dancers may be asked to wear small, rhinestone stud earrings
- Makeup remover wipes: any brand

Dancer Health

MAINTAINING A HEALTHY BODY

Participating in a pre-professional training program is an extremely athletic pursuit, in addition to being an artistic pursuit! You may or may not know that students who study ballet for more than 10 hours a week are at a high risk for failing to eat enough to cover the caloric cost of engaging in that level of physical activity. Students often fail to eat enough due to negligence, and sometimes fail to eat enough on purpose in pursuit of a false image of an ideal body weight. In reality, God created each body a little different, and each dancer will have their own individual healthy weight.

What Should I Do?

We exhort students and their parents to take great care to continually assess students' eating to make sure that they are getting enough calories (and enough of the right types of calories) to sustain their level of physical activity. And truly, you may need to revamp your current diet in order to have enough energy to maintain a healthy body and mind! Students will also need to drink LOTS of water to maintain proper hydration during long stretches of dance class.

How Should I Eat?

The ideal answer to "how much" and "what kind" of foods to eat varies from student to student depending on body type and many other factors. If you're having trouble managing your eating, please take time to do a little research, and then do a little self-experimentation. Meter your eating and keep a food journal, detailing what produces good results and what doesn't. Continue to make changes in your meals and the snacks that you bring to the studio to facilitate positive change. Dancers who are eating well will maintain a trim but healthy appearance and will have plenty of energy. Looking gaunt in your cheeks, paleness, chronic fatigue, mood swings, grumpiness and feelings of listlessness are all signs that you're falling below a healthy weight, or that you are not eating the right kinds of foods for your body. Pre-Professional Program staff members will be able to share helpful tips and insights if you ask; helpful information can also be found in books on sports nutrition. If you do your own research and still have questions, please consider consulting a professional nutritionist or wellness coach. Your health this year will affect your health long term, so the investment in staying healthy now is well worth the effort.

Addressing Problems

Because our staff cares about you, they will be keeping an eye on your physical condition and body weight throughout the year. If you seem to be falling below what would be a healthy body weight for you, our staff will address this with you and your parents. Students who, after receiving a warning, fail to maintain a healthy body weight may be asked to take a leave of absence from the program.

Injuries and Sitting Out of Class

AM I INJURED?

One of the most challenging parts of the study of classical ballet is learning to discern the difference between normal feelings of muscle fatigue, soreness and stretching, and abnormal feelings of pain that can signify an injury. As they are learning, students should not hesitate to ask their instructors for help in figuring out the difference between these feelings.

INJURY PREVENTION AND SELF-CARE

During their study in the Pre-Professional Program, students will make their way from 6.5 to a full 15-25 hours of weekly class study in the Conservatory levels of the program. These kinds of intensive schedules can facilitate incredible progress for students, but training this hard also requires that students take the individual responsibility to engage in needed injury prevention and self-care measures outside of their class hours. Since the measures needed will vary widely from student to student, each individual must work with instructors to formulate a specific routine of stretching, strengthening, and even icing certain muscle groups at night after classes! Students who fail to develop these crucial self-care habits outside of class place themselves at an unnecessary level of risk for developing acute and chronic injuries and limit their own ability to progress technically in regular classes. Don't create extra risk – stretch at home!

INJURIES AND INJURY SCREENINGS

If you develop a minor injury that doesn't get better with basic care, or if you sustain a potentially serious injury, it can be a good idea to get professional help. Not all health care providers are familiar with the specific needs of dancers and athletes, however! If you aren't sure, ask if your provider has experience working with athletes. Many physical therapists and chiropractors provide free injury screenings that can help you assess the severity of an injury and what to do to get better. You can ask a member of Ballet 5:8 staff for specific recommendations on providers suited to the specifics of your injury and who specialize in working with dancers.

SITTING OUT OF CLASS

In cases when a dancer does begin to experience pain that could signify an injury, the first thing to do is always to talk with an instructor. For a potential chronic injury (developed over time), your instructor or program director can help you assess the injury and develop a self-care plan, including guidelines on when to keep dancing in spite of the injury and when it is best to sit out of class.

Dancers who are injured and do sit out of class with their instructor's permission **MUST** continue attending classes - absences due to merely sitting out of class are not considered excused. It is scientifically proven that dancers can positively impact their technique and training by observing their classes and visualizing their participation in the movement, even if they are sitting out. Injured dancers should bring a notebook to class and may also do approved cross-training exercises while observing class.

Placement

We care deeply about each and every one of our dancers and their development as young artists. Because of that, our staff works diligently to place each student in the class level that best suits their individual needs. Student placement is determined based on a variety of factors, including strength, flexibility, coordination ability to name syllabus-level vocabulary and perform corresponding steps, punctuality, consistent class attendance, adherence to dress code, observance of classroom etiquette and respectfulness of instructors and peers, and successful completion of exams at the end of the Spring Semester. Placement is not determined by age, or necessarily, previous experience.

MOVING THROUGH THE LEVELS

Our comprehensive ballet training syllabus (beginning in Ballet IA) includes six graduated levels of study that take students through the steps, vocabulary and training exercises necessary to develop an overall proficiency in classical ballet. Believe it or not, students should plan to spend a full twelve years making their way through these six levels of study! This averages out to spending two years in each of the levels, though each individual student will progress differently, spending shorter or longer periods in different levels depending on a variety of factors.

EXAMS

At the end of each school year, students are formally evaluated against the syllabus requirements for their level. Exams are a big part of the placement process for all Pre-Professional Program students! Instructors provide each student with detailed feedback with their exam grades, as well as level placement for the following year. Exam grades provide both families and instructors with a measured indicator of a student's progress. A student may spend 2 or even 3 years training in the same level before being promoted, but this ensures that she/he has a chance to fully develop the skills taught in each level and overcome any physical barriers before moving on to the more difficult and physically demanding syllabus material in the next level.

Exams are scheduled for one week each year, usually in May (please see the School Calendar for details). Exams are mandatory for all students wishing to maintain their placement or progress through the Pre-Professional Program. *Exams CANNOT be made up when missed. Students will receive a "0" grade on any exam sections not completed, regardless of the reason for missing the exam.*

Pointe Shoes

Dancing on pointe is one of the most challenging aspects of classical ballet. In order to safely dance on their toes in pointe shoes, dancers must have the proper strength, placement and flexibility in their ankles, feet and toes. In most cases, it takes years to prepare for dancing on pointe!

BEGINNING POINTE

To ensure a safe, positive experience for each of our dancers en pointe, we have a strict process that governs when we permit students to begin training on pointe. In level IIIA, students go through at least a year of “pre-pointe” training designed to help girls achieve the proper strength, placement and flexibility needed for dancing en pointe. After a year or two of pre-pointe training, most dancers will be able to pass their pre-pointe test.* With a passing grade from the pre-pointe test and instructor approval, dancers are then allowed to begin attending beginning pointe classes with level Ballet IIIB.

While most dancers will be able to pass the pre-pointe test and begin training on pointe, there may be a few exceptions. Not all bodies are designed the same, and in some cases, the natural design of a student’s feet may not permit the student to safely dance en pointe. Because we are committed to promoting the overall well-being of each of our students, we will always recommend that a student not begin pointe training if there is a significant risk of the student developing serious and long-term injuries from pointe training. If you have questions about this, please talk to your program director!

DANCING EN POINTE

If you are already approved to dance en pointe or have already been dancing on pointe for a few years, please read over the following rules that all pointe students in the Pre-Professional Program must abide by:

All New Shoes Must Be Approved by an Instructor

If you purchase a pair of pointe shoes for the first time, or if you purchase a new pair of pointe shoes that is a different size, style or brand from the shoes you were most recently wearing, DON'T SEW THE RIBBONS AND ELASTIC ON YOUR SHOES QUITE YET. Bring your shoes in their original packaging to class, and after class, ask your instructor to approve the fit of the shoes. In some cases, your instructor may request that you return the shoes and try a different size, style or brand.

Finding the Right Shoe

Sometimes, even approved pointe shoes turn out to be not quite what works for a dancer’s feet. The ongoing search for a good point shoe is a normal part of ballet training, so don’t get discouraged! Students will likely end up trying out and wearing a variety of different shoes as they progress through their training.

Pointe Shoe Policies

- All pointe shoes worn in classes and rehearsals must have ribbons and elastics attached, no exceptions. Shoes with only elastics attached are not acceptable under any circumstances.
- If your instructor recommends that you get new shoes, make sure to do so promptly so you can get the most out of each and every pointe class and rehearsal on pointe.

Pointe Shoe Care

If you find that your shoes are “dying” very quickly, it may mean that the shoe is not right for you or that you are not taking proper care of the shoes in between classes. If this is the case, ask your instructor for advice on how to rotate shoes, dry shoes out between uses and use tools like “Jet Glue” to extend the life of your shoes.

Private Lessons

We firmly believe that private lessons should be the exception, not the norm for a ballet student’s development and training! Students in our programs who maintain consistent class attendance will have the opportunity to achieve the majority of their training and formation through their regularly scheduled classes. However, a student may be recommended for a private lesson or request one from time to time if a particularly tricky technical challenge a student is facing becomes apparent to that student and his or her instructors. If this is the case, the instructor may recommend a series of 2-4 private lessons.

Summer Study & Intensives

While it is always good to take a few weeks off during the summer months for much needed rest of mind and body, Pre-Professional Program students should also continue their study of dance throughout the summer months by attending a minimum number of summer classes and/or summer intensive programs. Since ballet at the level taught in the Pre-Professional Program requires a significant level of physical skill, summer classes help students to maintain the strength, coordination, flexibility, and other skills needed to safely continue their study when regular semester classes resume in August of the following year. Summer study can also help students maintain their technique or even improve over the summer months! If students take too much time off over the summer, they can lose, in some cases, an entire semester's worth of progress gained during the regular school year. An average calculation is that it takes, physically, two days worth of class to regain the lost physical strength and coordination that occurs when you miss just *one day* of regular class.

How Much Summer Study?

The answer to this question varies by student and depends largely on factors like class level. The best way to navigate summer plans is usually to talk to your program director: most students and parents will be able to do this over email, but it can also be productive to schedule an in-person meeting in some cases. Either way, your program director can help you determine how many weeks you can safely take off from dancing, as well as what kind of summer intensive program will be beneficial for you that particular year. Each Pre-Professional Program level *does* have a minimum summer study requirement - your program director can get you an up-to-date requirement list per request.

"Outside" Summer Intensives

Some students can also benefit from planning to attend a summer intensive program at another ballet training school in addition to fulfilling their summer intensive requirement at Ballet 5:8. To determine whether it would be beneficial for you to attend another intensive, please contact your program director! If an outside summer intensive is recommended, your program director will be able to provide you with a specific list of programs to look into. Not every summer intensive is the same, so make sure to get a recommendation from your program director before you sign up for any intensives besides Ballet 5:8's.

3 – STUDIO RULES

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Cancellations

While we hate to cancel class, inclement weather and other unavoidable circumstances do sometimes lead to class cancellations. If we cancel class, we will:

- Post class cancellations on the Ballet 5:8 website (school.ballet58.org)
- Send an email to you with information regarding the class cancellation
- Be available via phone or have a recording on the answering machine with information regarding the class cancellation (708-329-8773).

We do not, however, make individual phone calls to warn of class cancellations.

We typically do not schedule make-up classes for snow days and other cancellations. If your class is cancelled, please make up the class according to our standard make-up policy. We will occasionally schedule a makeup class in the case of repeated cancellations, usually if the same class is cancelled more than twice in one semester. In such a case, please make sure to read email communications for further information about the date and time of scheduled make up classes. Cancelled classes do not constitute grounds for an exception to our standard tuition policies.

Communication

Ballet 5:8 School of the Arts' primary method of communication with students and families is email.

Please ensure that the email address we have on file for you is current, and check your email regularly! All important announcements and updates will be sent via email! Most announcements will also be posted on the bulletin board in the Ballet 5:8 School of the Arts lobby and/or on our website, school.ballet58.org.

Food & Drink at the Studio

- Food and drink is permitted in the lobby and dressing room areas.
- Only water in an enclosed container is allowed in the studios.
- Dancers should plan to bring plenty of water to each of their classes.
- Dancers who dance for longer than 90 minutes at a time should pack snacks. The best kinds of snacks can provide a boost of fresh energy in just 1-3 bites, as students rarely have a lengthy break between classes to eat heartier food. Fresh fruit, yogurt, cheese, granola bars and healthy trail mix are all favorites.
- Plastic water bottles are available at the front desk for \$0.50 each.
- Keurig coffee is available behind the front desk for \$1.00.

Hygiene

- Be prepared: dance classes can get hot and sweaty!
- Plan to wash dance attire after each use.
- Make sure that students wear deodorant – your dancer may need this sooner than you think ☺
- Avoid putting on lotion before class – the oils can cause hazardous slippery spots on the floor.

Lobby & Office Hours

If there are classes in session, there will also typically be a member of the Front Desk Team on duty at the front desk. Lobby hours typically begin 30 minutes prior to the first class of the day and end 15 minutes after the last class of the day ends. *Ballet 5:8 School of the Arts reserves the right to charge a late pickup fee of \$25 per 15 minutes for any students left at the school without a ride after the conclusion of office hours.*

Parking Lot

We've never had any problems in the parking lot, but we do share the lot with several neighboring businesses. Please use common sense. Dancers should plan to abide by the "buddy system" when walking in the parking lot. Ballet 5:8 School of the Arts is not responsible for dancers in the parking lot.

4 – TUITION, FEES & POLICIES

Pre-Professional and Student Ensemble Program – 2017.2018 Term

Tuition & Fees

Registration Fee - \$35/student or \$45/family for the 2017/2018 Term beginning in August.

Tuition - Fees for the 36-week term, calculated based on the Payment Plan B:

- Ballet IIIA - \$178.75 per payment
- Ballet IIIB - \$212.50 per payment
- Ballet IVA - \$278.75 per payment
- Ballet IVB - \$278.75 per payment

Performance Fees - Ensemble and Studio Company performance fees are due in October and March.

- Ensemble I & II - \$120 per semester

Family Discount - Families with more than one student enrolled pay full price for the student with the highest tuition. Additional students' tuition is discounted by 15%.

Late Payment Fee - \$15 per invoice more than 10 days overdue.

Withdrawal Fee - \$25 plus ½ of remaining tuition.

Registration Commitment

All students who participate in the Pre-Professional Program must register for the entire school year, or two semesters, August-May (a total of 36 weeks of classes). **Due to the highly athletic nature of the advanced study of ballet, a minimum commitment is needed before students are able to see progress in their technique and other learning outcomes.**

Payment Policies

- Tuition payments are due by the 15th of the month. Payments may be made by check or credit card.
- Tuition and fees are non-refundable and non-transferable once paid.
- Tuition is charged for the full 36-week term of registration regardless of student attendance.
- Tuition is not adjusted for inclement weather or student absences; there are no credits given or carried over to the next payment for unattended classes or performances.
- Students with accounts more than a month overdue may be asked to take a leave of absence from participation in programs until the account balance is cleared. Please notify the Front Desk if circumstances arise, and a payment plan will be discussed.

Withdrawals

General Withdrawal Policy - Registration in the Pre-Professional Program is a commitment for the entire 36-week school year. If a student withdraws from the program mid-year and provides written notification, a withdrawal fee equivalent to ½ of the student's remaining tuition commitment will be charged in addition to a \$25 withdrawal fee. If no notification is provided, you will be responsible for all remaining tuition whether the student attends classes or not.

Withdrawal Due to Injury or Illness - Many injuries sustained in the context of ballet training are minor and can be managed with appropriate care. In the case of a significant, prolonged injury or illness, students may apply for withdrawal with an exception to the registration commitment policy. Exceptions are only considered in the case of significant injury or illness that prevents a student from dancing for an extended part of the year; a doctor's note and other supporting documentation may be requested as part of an application for exception. Requests for exceptions are evaluated on a case-by-case basis and are not guaranteed.

Payment Methods

PAYMENT PLANS

Tuition is not “monthly” but instead is billed per-term and is payable using one of the following payment plans:

- **In Full at the time of registration;**
- **Per-Semester:** two payments, due with registration and on January 15th.
- **Payment Plan A:** Tuition for the term is divided into four payments, due on 15th of the month in August, October, January and March.
- **Payment Plan B:** Tuition for the term is divided into eight payments, due on the 15th of the month in August, September, October, November, January, February, March April (no payments in the months of December and May!).

PAYMENT METHODS

- **Self-pay** families are responsible to pay tuition according to their selected payment plan with a credit card, check or cash submitted at the Front Desk or by phone.
- **Auto-bill** students use a credit card to pay for their first tuition payment; subsequent payments are automatically billed to the credit card submitted for the first payment. Students must re-select automatic billing at the beginning of each term and confirm with Front Desk Team staff. Please also notify a member of the Front Desk staff if your credit card information changes in any way throughout the semester.

Information Privacy

HOW WE USE YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION

During registration, you will be asked to share personal information including your email address, physical address, phone numbers, and the birth month and year of student(s) enrolled.

We value your privacy, and we keep your personal information exclusively for internal purposes related to the dance education activities and events at Ballet 5:8 School of the Arts. We may use your contact information to contact you regarding your student(s) enrolled in our programs, and regarding various events and activities at Ballet 5:8 and Ballet 5:8 School of the Arts. We may contact you via email, phone, and/or physical mail.

We do not share your personal information with anyone outside Ballet 5:8 staff for any reason, unless you provide prior permission based on a specific instance. We also do not share students' personal information with other students, unless prior permission is provided based on a specific instance.

5 – CODE OF CONDUCT

Pre-Professional and Student Ensemble Program – 2017.2018 Term

In order to participate in the Pre-Professional Program, students must agree to abide by the Ballet 5:8 School of the Arts Code of Conduct. To abide by the code, students (and their families) must work together to ensure that:

1. Dancers relate to their instructors respectfully, addressing them as “Ms.,” “Mrs.” or “Mr.,” speaking politely, and complying with instructor requests without questioning.
2. Dancers arrive to class(es) on time and in the proper dress code. Arriving on time ensures that students don’t miss any class material in the first few minutes of class. Taking class in dress code gives the class a sense of order and boosts students’ confidence. Dress code also allows the teacher to see body placement without obstruction or distracting colors.
3. Dancers diligently practice being quiet during class. This is one of the most difficult aspects of dance class, but also the most rewarding!
4. Dancers curtsy and thank their instructor at the end of each class. This reinforces respectfulness toward instructors and helps students develop confidence about their participation in the class.
5. Dancers and parents avoid participating in gossip of any kind inside or outside of the studio. This includes:
 - a. Purposefully speaking only words of encouragement and esteem about other students and parents at the school.
 - b. Communicating clearly and directly with Ballet 5:8 School of the Arts staff if there is a problem or concern of any kind – talking to staff directly about a problem, rather than talking with other students and families, allows us to promptly address and resolve any problems or concerns! It also helps us to maintain a strong and unified student body, and a pleasant, positive atmosphere for everyone at the school.
 - c. Maintaining a positive work ethic in class and avoid complaining or grumbling in class. Ballet may look easy, but it’s actually quite difficult! Students who succeed in their training must persevere in hard work, day in and day out. A healthy work ethic, in which students can enjoy getting a little sweaty, focusing, and working hard, is crucial for success in dance – and life!

ENSEMBLE CODE OF CONDUCT

Members of the Pre-Professional and/or the Student Ensemble Program may or may not choose to share in the Christian views and beliefs held by Ballet 5:8 and its staff. We do not discriminate against dancers based on their views, beliefs, race, gender or otherwise. Even so, the Ballet 5:8 Student Ensemble Program and its members are intended to represent Jesus Christ inside and outside of the studios and to proclaim the name of Jesus through the tool of performance and dance. Accordingly, all members of the Student Ensemble are asked to understand the heart of Ballet 5:8 and to adhere to the Ensemble Program Code of Conduct while participating in functions of Ensemble.

Specific Points

1. Students representing Ballet 5:8 should be respectful and to all others at all times, including peers, teachers and audience members.
2. Any form of gossip, slander, foul language, or other related speech or actions leading to disunity will not be tolerated.
3. Ongoing, untreated personal abuse or addiction issues of ANY KIND will not be tolerated.
4. Ongoing, untreated nutrition/eating issues due to wrongful intent will not be tolerated.
5. Any issues of any kind within the Pre-Professional Program or Student Ensemble should be directly brought to the attention of the School of the Arts Ballet Mistress.
6. Failure to comply with the code of conduct in any way can result in probation or dismissal from the Pre-Professional Program and/or Student Ensemble

6 – AGREEMENT

Pre-Professional and Student Ensemble Program – 2017.2018 Term

In order to participate in the 2017-2018 Pre-Professional Program and the Ensemble Program please return this agreement to the Front Desk no later than August 25, 2017; please additionally keep a copy for your own records.

I, _____ (parent name), and _____ (student name) certify that we have read and understood the information in this handbook, pertaining to classes and activities in the Ballet 5:8 School of the Arts Pre-Professional Program. We have read and understood all the information provided, including the sections on:

1. Ballet 5:8 and the nature of the Pre-Professional Program ____ *(please initial)*
2. Policies and Procedures ____ *(please initial)*
3. Studio Rules ____ *(please initial)*
4. Registration Policies ____ *(please initial)*
5. Code of Conduct ____ *(please initial)*
6. Ensemble Program Code of Conduct ____ *(please initial, Ensemble Members only)*

By signing and returning this form, we agree to abide by these policies as described in this handbook.

Student signature: _____ Date _____

Parent/guardian signature: _____ Date _____

ENSEMBLE PROGRAM AGREEMENT

(To be completed by Ensemble members only): My parent/guardian and I agree that I will participate in all Ensemble rehearsals and all events for the 2017-2018 school year in accordance with the policies outlined in this handbook. We agree that we will pay Ensemble fees and that we will fulfill our fundraising requirement as conditions of participation. We additionally agree that I will abide by all specific rules, policies, and the Code of Conduct specific to the Ensemble Program.

Student signature: _____ Date _____

Parent/guardian signature: _____ Date _____

Student Email (for School of the Arts email list): _____

Parent Email (for School of the Arts email list): _____

If you DO NOT wish to participate in the Student Ensemble Program, please check box below.

I DO NOT WISH TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDENT ENSEMBLE PROGRAM

7 – Ensemble Program Appendix

Student Ensemble Program – 2017.2018 Term

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What is the difference between Ensemble I and Ensemble II?

A. The levels of Ensemble slowly increase in difficulty and time commitment.

Ensemble I is the introductory level to the Ensemble Program. Ensemble I dancers are typically enrolled in level IIIA or IIIB. They learn how to pick-up choreography quickly, how to apply corrections, and how to use artistry with their dancing. This part of the training is crucial for learning and growth as an artist. Ensemble I dancers perform in the Winter and Spring productions. This level is focused on *discipleship, learning, growth and preparation for using the arts as ministry.*

Ensemble II dancers have completed Ensemble I and are ready for more volume and intricacy in the repertoire that they learn and perform. Ensemble II dancers are typically enrolled in level IV. These dancers work on fine-tuning, adding to their artistry and storytelling abilities. This means more casting opportunities and sometimes more rehearsals. Ensemble I dancers perform in the Winter and Spring productions, with one or two local outreach performances scattered throughout the year. This level is *focused on deepening and honing the skills learned in Ensemble I. The dancers will get their first taste of performing in an outreach setting, and will continue to refine their stage-performance skills.*

Q. Why all of the rehearsals?

A. The art of ballet is made up of these crucial components: technique, artistry and uniformity. Because dancing is not about individual skill, but about the success and uniformity of the group, practicing together or “rehearsal” is a huge part of this art form. Dancers will be coached on how to move their heads, arms, legs...and yes, even fingers and eyes! The refinement of a piece over many weeks is called the “rehearsal process” and is similar to the practice of a Varsity, or Jr. Varsity sports team. As you can imagine, it is vital to have every dancer at rehearsal. Otherwise, the corrections given in one rehearsal are not carried to the next, forming a frustrating “loop” of miscommunication. *Rehearsals are most pleasant and productive when every dancer attends, ready to work hard and enjoy dancing together!*

Q. Why do dancers have “class” and “rehearsal”?

A. Ballet technique class is where dancers learn *how to dance*. Rehearsal is where dancers learn *how to do a specific piece of repertoire*. Classical ballet is complex, much like classical music or classic literature. Dancers in Level 3A and higher have so much to learn in technique class, that there is not adequate time to learn new steps, perfect the steps, strengthen and stretch the muscles *and* learn a piece of repertoire. If we were to do that, we would compromise their ballet training, which of course would be counterproductive. That is why these dancers often participate in Ensemble which has *rehearsals*. These rehearsals are when they learn the repertoire, in addition to their valuable time spent in technique class.

Q. How much should I practice at home?

A. When dancers go into rehearsals they do two things: review old choreography and learn new choreography. If dancers *forget* choreography in between rehearsals, valuable time is lost as the teacher has to *redo* things that have already been done. Even the most talented dancers cannot rehearse a piece only once a week. However, if we were to review as much as is necessary, *dancers would have rehearsal every day!* In order to keep the schedule reasonable and sustainable for the dancers at a student level, it is of the utmost importance for them to practice at home. A Dropbox folder of music and videos is available during the rehearsal process. *Make sure that dancers review at least 5 times each week, outside of rehearsal.* This shouldn't take more than 10-20 minutes each day, and is a great brain exercise! Dancers that don't remember their choreography slow down the team, and unfortunately they progress much slower than those that review. It is a good idea to have a daily practice time, much like someone that plays music or creates visual art.

Q. Why does the Ensemble program have a different level structure than the regular classes?

A. Dancers focus on two different components as they train: technique and artistry.

Technique = strength, flexibility, coordination and vocabulary.

Artistry = musicality, memorization, phrasing and emotion.

While these categories are related, they also have distinct differences. It is possible for a dancer to have great technique, with less artistry, which would result in being in a higher Class level, but a lower Ensemble level. On the flip side, a dancer could be an excellent and engaging artist, but lack technical proficiency. This could result in a higher Ensemble level, and a lower Class level. Overall, these decisions are made with the student's best interests in mind, as different combinations of level placement help to produce different results in the dancer's training. The Artistic Director and SOA Ballet Mistress take these things into account when placing students in a level.

Q. What if I am unhappy with my casting?

We understand that sometimes casting just isn't what you thought it would be! As professional dancers, each of the staff members has been through this exact problem. Sometimes you get a great part, and your friend doesn't, which creates friction. Sometimes your friend gets a great part, and you don't, which can be really disheartening. Casting is not a permanent measure of who you are as a dancer. Casting relates to the needs of that particular performance. Dancers who work hard in class often get prominent roles in the production. *However, if you are not in a prominent role, that **doesn't mean** that you aren't working hard.* It may mean that the Directors are looking at the big picture needs of the production, and where you will fit *best* in that big picture. The group roles are **just** as important as the solos. We need good dancers in **every piece if we are going to present a strong, beautiful show**. On the flip side, if you are not working hard, have a bad attitude, and have not had good attendance in the past semester; you will not be considered for a prominent role in the production, no matter how talented you are. In the end hard work in class, good attitudes and a team spirit will take you where you want to go!

Quick Guide to Communication

Calendar and Ensemble Rehearsal Updates

All updates to the Pre-Professional and Ensemble schedule will be made on our online *Current Students Calendar*. This calendar includes changes to the current class schedule, updated rehearsal times, cancellations, and added rehearsals on days outside of regular classes. Ensemble Members will also be able to view rehearsal videos on this page. To access the Current Students Calendar, please follow these simple steps:

1. Go to <http://school.ballet58.org/>
2. Click on the 'Ensemble Calendar' tab in the "Current Students" dropdown menu
3. Use password **b58ensemble** to login

Communication Quick Guide

This Quick Guide is a summary of the instructions found in the main portion of the Handbook. Please refer to the appropriate portions of the handbook for details.

Pre-Professional Program Dancers (levels III and IV)		
If I need to....	...I should contact	Contact Info
Report an absence from a class	The Front Desk	schooloffice@ballet58.org 708.329.8773
Request an excused absence from a rehearsal or Ensemble event	Ms. Laura	lschlatter@ballet58.org
Report an unplanned absence from a rehearsal or Ensemble event due to extreme illness	Ms. Laura	lschlatter@ballet58.org schooloffice@ballet58.org 708.329.8773
Ask a question about my Ensemble fees and payment	The Front Desk	schooloffice@ballet58.org 708.329.8773
Discuss a problem related to the Ensemble program	Ms. Laura	lschlatter@ballet58.org
Check my current number of absences on record	Ms. Laura	lschlatter@ballet58.org