

# **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 may 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 as per Appendix 2.
- Club TA shirt and name tag.
- One free class per session worked.
- Remaining classes in session worked at TA 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 assigned training session, as 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 Vice President if they are unavailable on a scheduled night.
- Admin Assistants must notify the Vice President 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.

### **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.

### **Definitions of Terms**

**Alignment** - This refers to the direction the feet are aimed in relationship to the room and to the line of dance.

**Amount of Turn** - Described in fractions, this indicates how much turn is made on one foot or between two or more consecutive steps. Therefore the feet, not the body, determine the amount of turn.

**CBM** - Contra Body Movement is the action of turning the opposite side of the body towards the moving foot, either forward or back, usually to initiate turn. Note that CBM is different from CBMP, which is a foot position meaning the feet are in the same track.

**Count** - Also called timing, the count allows dancers to keep their dancing in time to the music

**Footwork** - This describes the part of the foot that is in contact with the floor as a step is taken.

#### **Ball**

Full, partial or no weight is taken onto the ball of the foot with the heel raised off the floor.

#### **Ball Heel**

Initiated by the ball of the foot with the heel raised off, then lowering to the floor. Mostly used on back steps in Tango.

### **Foot Flat**

The entire foot stays in contact with the floor as it moves into position.

### **Heel**

Initiated with the foot flexed and the heel in contact with the floor, then rolling down to a flat foot.

### **Heel Ball**

Initiated with the foot flexed and the heel in contact with the floor, rolling down onto the ball of the foot and then swiveling, keeping the foot flat.

### **Heel Toe**

Initiated with the foot flexed and the heel in contact with the floor, then rolling through the foot to the toe.

### **Inside Edge of Ball**

Initiated with the inside edge of the ball of the foot in contact with the floor.

### **Inside Edge of Ball Heel**

Initiated with the inside edge of the ball of the foot in contact with the floor, followed by the heel, then completely transferring weight to the whole foot.

### **Inside edge of Toe**

This inside edge of the toe is in contact with the floor.

### **Toe**

Weight is placed on the toe with the heel raised.

### **Toe Heel**

Toe heel is used in two ways:

1. Generally from a rise, weight is taken fully onto the toes, and then the heel lowers to the floor.
2. On a back step, the toes are first extended backward, and then weight rolls through the foot from the toes to the heel.

### **Whole Foot**

Weight is placed onto the whole foot. Whole foot is different from foot flat in that the foot will be lifted, and then placed into position.

**Rise and Fall** - The continuous elevation and lowering of the body through the feet, ankles and legs. Rise and fall is used in all the Smooth dances except Tango.

**Sway** - Sway is the inclination of the body away from the moving foot and, if there is turn involved, towards the inside of the turn.

## **Dance Position Definitions**

**Back to Back** - A dance position where the partner's are nearly back to back, making the shape of a "V."

**Chair Position** - A check (stop) in Promenade Position on the inside legs.

**Closed Position** - The standard dance position in the Smooth dances. Bodies are held in close or closed body contact with arms held up. Man's left hand extended with ladies right hand held in his. Man's right hand is on ladies back/shoulder blade and ladies hand is on top of man's arm. Tango uses Tango closed position.

**Counter Promenade Position** - The opposite of Promenade Position, Leader's left side and Follower's right side are in contact or almost in contact, and the opposite sides of their bodies are open in a V-shape. Leader looks right and Follower looks left.

**Facing Position** - Leader and Follower face each other slightly more apart than in Closed Position and no longer in a standard frame.

**Facing Position offset to Right** - Same as Facing Position except the partner's are not directly opposite one another, each being slightly rightward.

**Fallaway Position** - Leader and Follower both move backward, on either foot, in Promenade Position.

**Left Shadow Position** - Leader and Follower face the same direction, with Follower slightly ahead or behind the Leader on the Leader's left side.

**Left Side Position** - Leader and Follower face the same direction with Follower on Leader's left side.

**Open Counter Promenade Position** - Similar to Counter Promenade Position in that the Leader's left side and Follower's right side are toward each other, and the opposite sides of their bodies are open in a V-shape. However, Leader and Follower are more apart and the hold will change.

**Open Facing Position** - Exactly the same as Facing Position, except further apart.

**Open Promenade Position** - Similar to Promenade Position in that the Leader's right side and the Follower's left side are towards each other and the opposite sides of their bodies are open in a V-shape. However, Leader and Follower are more apart and the hold will change.

**Outside Position** - Also called Outside Partner, this is created by departing from the normal placement of the feet in four separate tracks.

**Oversway Position** - A picture line created by starting in a strong promenade position on the outside leg, and then by the Leader stretching the left side of the body, maintaining a strong flex in the left leg while moving the right knee down and leftward. The Follower stretches the right side of the body, maintaining the flex in the right leg, while moving the left knee down and leftward, with slight body turn to the left.

**Overtured Promenade Position** - Similar to Promenade Position except that the Leader and Follower are more open, usually as a result of lowering the Leader's Left and Follower's Right arms.

**Promenade Position** - Leader's right side and the Follower's left side are in contact (or almost contact) with Follower slightly behind Leader's right hip: the opposite sides of their bodies are open in a V-shape, Leader looking left and Follower looking right.

**Right Shadow Position** - Leader and Follower face the same direction, with the Follower slightly ahead or behind the Leader on the Leader's right side.

**Right Side Position** - Leader and Follower face the same direction with Follower on Leader's right side.

**Tango Closed Position** - Similar to Closed Position in the other Smooth dances, Tango Closed Position is more compact and has slightly different arm positions.

**Leader:** The Follower is slightly more offset to the Leader's right side. The right arm is further around and lower on the Follower's back.

**Follower:** The Follower's left hand is placed behind and below the Leader's upper right arm with the left thumb hooked under the Leader's arm.

## Abbreviations

A/Ag – Against	L – Left
B – Backing/Ball of foot	LF – Left Foot
BCT – Body completes turn	LOD – Line of Dance
BF – Ball flat	LOP – Left Outside Position
BH – Ball Heel	LSP – Left Side Position
BTL – Body Turns Less	mpm – Measures per minute
btw – between	NFR – No foot rise
C – Center/Counter	OCPP – Open Counter Promenade Position
CBM – Contra Body Movement	OE – Outside Edge
CBMP – Contra Body Movement Position	OP – Outside Position
CCW – Counter Clockwise	OFP – Open Facing Position
Com – Commence	OPP – Open Promenade Position
Con – Continue	OTPP – Overturned Promenade Position
CP – Closed Position	P – Pointing
CPP – Counter Promenade Position	Prep – Preparation
ct – Count	PP – Promenade Position
CW – Clockwise	Q – Quick
DC – Diagonal Center	R – Right
DHH – Double Handhold	RF- Right Foot
DW – Diagonal Wall	ROP – Right Outside Position
e/o – end of	RSP – Right Side Position
F – Facing	SHH – Single Hand Hold
FacP – Facing Position	ShP – Shadow Position
FallP – Fallaway Position	S – Slow
FF – Foot Flat	T – Toe of Foot
H – Heel of foot	TH – Toe Heel
HB – Heel Ball	UA – Underarm
HT – Heel Toe	UAT – Underarm Turn
IE – Inside Edge	W – Wall
IEB – Inside Edge of Ball of foot	WH – Whole Foot
IEBH – Inside Edge of Ball Heel	wt – weight
IET – Inside Edge of Toe of foot	w/o – without
	XHH – Cross Hand Hold

## Dance Alignments

Dance alignment refers to the direction the feet are aimed in relationship to the room and to the line of dance.

