

# Welcome to SHSU Dance: Let's Get This Started!

Thank you for choosing Sam Houston State University for your education in dance! We are glad you are here. It's going to be an exciting year, and also a busy one.

## Sources of Information: What's Going On and How Do I Find Out?

**My Sam:** From the homepage of SHSU, find the "Campus Tools" link in the horizontal blue bar near the top of the page. When you are logged in with your student credentials, My Sam will give you access to everything from your SHSU email, to Registration, parking passes, the academic calendar, Scholarships4Kats, access to your degree plan, and much more.

**Your SHSU email account: Yes, you have one!** Add it to your accounts on your phone, ipad, computer, etc. Check this email daily for all correspondence from the university: financial aid, the registrar, residence life, your professors, etc. We will not continue to contact you through your Yahoo, Gmail, or other account once an SHSU email account has been established for you.

**The Dance Office:** The Dance Offices are located on the first floor of the James & Nancy Gaertner Performing Arts Center, Suite 150. If you need help, or have questions, you can come to the Dance Office, send us an email, [shsudance@shsu.edu](mailto:shsudance@shsu.edu), or call 936-294-1875. We can either serve you directly, or refer you to the appropriate office on campus.

**Social Media:**  
*Facebook – SHSU Dance*  
*Twitter - @SHSU\_Dance*  
*Instagram - @SHSU\_Dance*

*Special Note: On Facebook, search for Can't Hang and request to become a member. This is our private, current student and alumni dance major Facebook Group where students can connect with one another and make announcements!*

**The Callboard:** There are bulletin boards for various purposes both upstairs and downstairs. The callboard is the big bulletin board in the hallway near the dance theater. We post announcements, casting for productions, advisor assignments, technical production schedules, etc.

## Who Ya' Gonna Call: Ghost Busters? No, that won't help at all, but the following folks can!

**Colette Cotten:** our department's administrative queen. She is enthroned in the dance office suite. Her email shows her given name, Marie Cotten, so don't let that throw you. Colette is an excellent resource for many of your questions. She can help you with all sorts of things or refer you to the person with the expertise you need.

**Jennifer Pontius:** Chair of the department, and the dance faculty member most likely to be in the offices between 8:00-5:00 daily because her job is split between teaching and doing administrative work. Like Colette, she can help you with many practical matters as well as serving as an advisor. If she is not in, you can check with Colette or leave a note on her door, email her at [pontius@shsu.edu](mailto:pontius@shsu.edu) or call 936-294-1300 (but she prefers emails).

**Your Dance Advisor:** Dance majors are advised every semester by assigned dance faculty. If you don't get advised, you won't be able to enroll in dance classes, as we unblock the appropriate classes when we advise you. All dance faculty have offices in Suite 150. This faculty member will keep track of your progress, make sure you have a degree declaration on file with the university, and will be your first contact should you have difficulties or questions regarding your schedule. We will post the list of dance majors and their assigned advisors before registration opens for the upcoming semester.

#### **Dance Faculty**

**Andy Noble**

**Dionne Noble**

**Joshua Manculich**

**Donald Shorter**

**Adele Nickel**

**Rasika Borse**

**Evelyn Toh**

**Colette Kerwick**

#### **Dance Staff**

**Colette Cotton, Assistant to the Chair**

**Barry Doss, Costume Designer, Costume Shop Dragon, and Instructor for costume crew**

#### **XTE, Chi Tau Epsilon – A great student-based resource**

XTE is the dance honor society available to undergraduate dance majors at Sam Houston State University. XTE focuses on promoting excellence in the performing arts through community service and academic achievement of its members. They organize many fun events and an outstanding bi-annual undergraduate performance series called Dances @ 8. Information about how you can get involved will be presented in the first few weeks of the semester!

#### **Be the Professional you Aspire to Become**

*Because professional behavior and communication skills are extremely important in every field.* These are skills to be practiced and perfected so that you will become a functional adult. Remember, we will be thinking of you as a whole person, not just the amazing dancer we know you are, when we recommend you to the world.

1. Back to emails, the ones you send us: you are not texting your friends, regardless of how friendly we may become. Take your time and do it well:
  - a. Provide an informative subject line
  - b. Address your recipient by title and name

- c. Sign off with your full name, especially if you don't use your first name. We get confused.
  - d. Include your Sam ID! We will need that more often than not to complete the task on your behalf, and we will be far happier if we don't have to make a detour first to find it.
  - e. Be clear. Provide details.
2. Now, for the emails sent to YOU:
  - a. Check your emails from SHSU every day.
  - b. Read them. The whole thing. The subject line may not encompass all the information we'd like you to receive. The email may be a call for action from you. Oh, boy!
  - c. Respond to the email, promptly.
  - d. Some emails are sent to you and only you, while others go to a group. Some answers call for just "reply" to the sender, while others require "reply all" so that everyone is in the loop. Some don't require any answer at all. Learn to tell the difference and make the right choice.
  - e. Delete the emails you don't need.
  - f. Archive those that you do need. You can take screen shots, too, as backup.
3. The Dance Theater and studios are special spaces. We do not allow food or drinks in the studios, or in the theater. Water in a plastic container with a tight-fitting lid is permitted.
4. Street shoes are not to be worn on the dance floors.
5. No cell phones shall be in use, nor shall they ring, during classes, meetings, rehearsals, or performances. This policy includes any laptop, iPad, iTouch, or other electronic device. Your grade will be affected by the discourtesy.
6. You are entering a profession, and we want to help you succeed in every aspect. In order for others to take you seriously, you must take yourself seriously in how you behave and present yourself. Beyond showing up for classes and rehearsals, this translates into respect for yourself, your peers, and your teachers.
7. Please make appointments when possible, rather than expecting staff or faculty to help you on the spot.
8. Be thoughtful of the close physical nature of dance. Please attend to your personal hygiene properly. **Be clean.** Avoid using strong colognes or perfumes. Launder your dance clothes. Wear appropriate undergarment.
9. When sending emails to faculty or staff, please include an informative subject line. Emails received with no subject, or merely "Hi" or "PLEASE READ ME", are likely to be deleted unread. Similarly, emails to faculty are fundamentally different from emails or text to your friends and should be written with that in mind. Use a professional tone, correct spelling, and standard grammar.

**THE INITIAL DANCE MAJORS MEETING WILL BE HELD ON THE FIRST WEDNESDAY OF THE SCHOOL YEAR**

**from 1:00 – 2:00 pm, in the Dance Theater PAC 170**

The information that will be shared at the meeting includes:

- Introduction to faculty and staff
- Presentations by XTE, the dance honor society
- Calendar of planned events for the semester: performances, residencies, and holidays. Additional events may be scheduled within the semester. Check out website and/or your SHSU email regularly.

- Explanation on how to reserve studio space online
- You will be asked to fill out a contact sheet. You will need to provide your SHSU email account. This will be used to create out contact list for important information.

### Auditions for Faculty Repertory (Dace Spectrum Concert)

There are many performance opportunities in the Dance Department. Audition dates for performances such as, Dance Spectrum and Senior Studio, will be announced at the initial Majors Meeting. All dancers are encouraged to audition; ***students on scholarships are required to audition.*** The format will be similar to the audition for admission to the Dance Program. Casting will be posted on the downstairs callboard within three days of all auditions being completed. The rehearsal schedule will be included at the time. ***If you are cast, and accept your casting, write your initials next to your name on the casting sheet. You will then be approved to enroll in DANC 4330, Repertory if advised.***

### Dance Majors Meetings

**MANDATORY.** Wednesdays from 1:00 – 2:00pm are reserved for dance majors’ meetings. The first Wednesday of every month will always be a majors meeting. We also use this time slot for production meetings, special guest lectures, etc. throughout the semester. We may not meet every Wednesday, but you should hold that time open. **Attendance is taken every meeting.** *Unexcused absences from majors meeting will result in deduction of credit from your dance technique courses. If you have a class conflict, email Jennifer Pontius ([dnc\\_jkp@shsu.edu](mailto:dnc_jkp@shsu.edu)) with your information.*



*From Andy Noble's "Of Mud and Marrow," Fall 2019*