

WELCOME TO THE UNIVERSITY OF LETHBRIDGE
BALLET PROGRAM ELEMENTARY DIVISION
September 2015

Dear Parents,

Here is a synopsis of the ballet program and its aim and ideal. Although the children are not formally put through exams, a grading system is in place. Ballet is beneficial to all, whether tall, short, large, or small. Fees are kept as low as possible, so that all children can enjoy the rewards and not just an elite group. Apart from ballet steps and dance movements, the students are exposed to good music, and the seed is planted for appreciation of music and dance. The students also learn confidence and poise; ballet develops a discipline in which children are taught how to use their bodies with grace. It's visual, it's intellectual, it's musical, it's creative and it's physical. Children that have this range of training become extremely gifted in other areas. It enhances every aspect of their education.

The best way to describe the program is to point out that it is set up primarily according to age. During the first to third year, ages three/four and up, the child receives their pre-ballet training. This consists of learning the fundamental awareness and movement of arms, legs, hand, head, in time to music along with instruction in correct posture, musicality, the vocabulary of ballet terms and how to participate in a group. Once this is accomplished the child is ready for the next stage – Classical Ballet. Barre work is now introduced along with more concentrated center floor exercises. The children will work to obtain more flexibility of their body. They will continue to develop poise, balance and control. The feeling of beauty that they have learned will be applied to their ballet combinations. Concentration and coordination become very important.

When a child reaches 9 or 10 years of age he/she has the option of taking a second ballet class each week. If the child has reached a point in his/her training where he/she is ready to excel and has the desire to do so, he/she may attend what is called 'The Junior Division'. Mrs. Godlonton teaches the ballet classes within Junior Division. Students must have shown a serious attitude towards ballet and be mature enough to take and apply corrections constructively. It is in these classes that girls will eventually be introduced to PREPARATORY exercises for pointe work. About age 14 is when we would begin pointe work. This is not a rigid age, nor a guarantee; it depends on body growth and how the body is developing with extra training.

And now every child's dream – the recital. This event takes place every third year and is a joy for all those who participate. The next show is in the Spring of 2016. You may question why only every third year. In a recital year a great deal of time is spent on learning and rehearsing the recital work. While this is advantageous to the rounding out of a child's ballet education, it is also necessary that we teach and maintain the basic ballet syllabus which could not be accomplished if a recital was held on a yearly basis. Christmas and year-end demonstrations take place in other years and give the child the opportunity to perform in front of an audience. Only a few of those who study ballet will become professional dancers, but all will experience the excitement of performing. Those who enter careers other than dance will carry with them their confidence and poise. A young lady who walks confidently into an interview and who gracefully takes a seat is bound to make a favorable impression with any interviewer. Every year the National Ballet of Canada and The Royal Winnipeg Ballet School conduct auditions in Calgary.

Update

With Miss Mary's retirement, Carol Godlonton is our new Artistic Director. The teaching duties will be handled by our in-house instructors; Maddison Meierhofer, Chanelle Fibke and DeAndra Sullivan. Their biographies will be posted soon.

We would also like to welcome Bonnie Brown; she will be our resident piano accompanist.

All communication will be done by *email, online* at (<http://www.uleth.ca/sportrec/>) under the tab "Updates/Newsletters" and *hardcopy* in the glass case outside PE110

SECOND HAND SALE

Thank you parents, for contributing to the second hand sale. This sale helps many families who are faced with 'school start up' expenses each year. Items that have not sold are being returned to students in class. If you do not receive either money or your item within the next couple of weeks please see Miss Maddison, Miss Chanelle, or Miss DeAndra.

THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY – Friday, October 9 to Saturday October 17, 2015

There will be no ballet classes during these dates. *The exception will be Carol Godlonton's classes taking place at CASA.*

BATHROOM

Please ensure that your child uses the bathroom BEFORE ballet class. It is disruptive for your child to leave during ballet class.

CROWNS (5 year old class ONLY)

Children who are in the 5 year old class ONLY have been asked to bring crowns to class each week until Christmas. This is not meant to be an expense for parents. Homemade crowns, decorated by the child can be beautiful. They must be able to put the crown on and take it off by themselves. The children are learning a dance called 'Cinderella' which teaches them the classical ballet 7 positions of the head.

FANS (6 year olds ONLY)

Children in the 6 year old class have been asked to bring fans to ballet class each week until Christmas. These can be home made.

PARENT VIEWING DATES

Parents will be invited to watch their child's ballet class the week of November 30th – December 5th. This will be our final class until the week of January 4th, 2016.

Dates to mark on your calendar - THIS IS A SHOW YEAR!

The University of Lethbridge Ballet Program Performance will take place April 20 to 23, 2016. Please note that there will be rehearsals for students Sunday April 17 to Tuesday April 19. All students in the ballet program will be on stage in a beautiful costume. Three (3) days of rehearsal are scheduled, because we have approximately 280 students in the program. We need to have each child practice their dance on stage before performance day. Each child will be asked to attend only two of the rehearsals. Details about scheduling will be given at a later date.

During a show year, student attendance becomes more important than usual. There will be more notices given to parents to keep them up to date with information. We will also be looking for help with costuming, more details about that will follow later.

Closed Door Policy

Parents, thank you for your understanding our closed door policy. We know you can understand when one parent watches the class, why not the others...then come the brothers and sisters. Soon, the atmosphere in the room is much different from what is needed. Parents will be invited to watch the children in December. As always, if a relative from out of town is visiting they are most welcome.

We are looking forward to a wonderful year with your children,

Chanelle Fibke (Miss Chanelle)
Instructor Elementary Division

Maddison Meierhofer (Miss Maddison)
Instructor Elementary Division

DeAndra Sullivan (Miss DeAndra)
Instructor Elementary Division

Carol Godlonton (Mrs. Godlonton)
Artistic Director and Principal Instructor Junior Division

Frank Huss
Program Supervisor
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"Growing old is mandatory, Growing Up is optional!!"

AUDITIONS in Calgary 2015 – (to attend professional schools)

Royal Winnipeg Ballet School – October 15, 2015

www.rwb.org/school

The National Ballet School, Toronto – November 11, 2015

www.nbs-enb.ca

The School of Alberta Ballet, Calgary – November 24, 2015

schoolofalbertaballet.com

403-245-2274 ext. 227

For Your Information

BALLETS IN CALGARY – Alberta Ballet's 2015 – 2016 season

September 24 - 26	Balletlujah
October 29 - 31	Paul Taylor Dance Company
November 18 – 21	Up Close
December 17 -24	The Nutcracker
January 15 – 16	Shaping Sound
February 11 - 13	Dynamic Directions
March 31 - April 2	Romeo and Juliet
May 5 – 6	Love Lies Bleeding