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5/2/15

COLLEGE of CHARLESTON

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH
AND CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

Application Cover Page

Application for Summer Undergraduate Research with Faculty (SURF) Grant

Applicants should refer to the SURF Program Description and Guidelines and the SURF Application Check List to ensure a complete application.
Incomplete applications will not be considered for funding.

PROPOSAL TITLE: Letter to a Man De-constructed: Analyzing choreographic interpretations of mental illness

PRIMARY MENTOR APPLICANT*:

NAME: [REDACTED]

CofC Email: [REDACTED]

Department: Theatre and Dance

Faculty Status:

- Tenured/Tenure-track
 Instructor
 Visiting
 Adjunct
 Other (please specify _____)

UNDERGRADUATE APPLICANT**:

NAME: [REDACTED]

CofC Email: [REDACTED]

CofC ID Number: [REDACTED]

Primary Major: Dance

Current Enrollment Status:

- Full-time (12 hours or more)
 Part-time (less than 12 hours)

*Please note in the guidelines the eligibility criteria for faculty mentors and limits on number of grants per faculty mentor.

**If more than one student will work on a project, separate applications must be submitted for each student.

SECONDARY MENTOR APPLICANT:

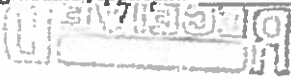
NAME: n/a

Institutional Affiliation: _____

Department: _____

Title: _____

Email: _____



Project Information Page

REQUESTED DATES OF PROJECT SUPPORT (mm/dd/yy): From 5/18/15 To 8/1/15

TOTAL AMOUNT REQUESTED FROM URCA: \$ 6,500

1. Does the proposal involve research on human subjects? Yes No
If yes, status of the IRB request (no funds can be awarded without IRB approval):
 Submitted Approved
2. Does the proposal involve research with live vertebrate animal subjects? Yes No
If yes, status of the IACUC request (no funds can be awarded without IACUC approval):
 Submitted Approved
3. Have student or faculty applicants received URCA support for this or any other project since September 2013 or do they currently hold funding through the URCA program?
 Yes No
If yes, which type? SURF MAYS RPG AYRA
If the applicant holds funding in the current cycle, specify name of applicant and award amount:
4. Does the student have another proposal under consideration by URCA during the current cycle? Yes No
If yes, what type of grant proposal is it? SURF MAYS RPG AYRA
5. Does the faculty mentor have another proposal under consideration by URCA during the current cycle? Yes No
If yes, what type of grant proposal is it? SURF MAYS RPG AYRA
6. Is there another internal proposal current or pending for this research/creative work?
 Yes No
If yes, please list the source(s) as well as amount of request and dates of award:
7. Is there an external proposal current or pending for this research/creative work?
 Yes No
If yes, please list the source(s) as well as amount of request and dates of award:
South Carolina Center for Dance Education- request \$200 (pending)
8. Does the project involve biohazards or other safety issues? Yes No
9. Does the project have potential for copyright or invention? Yes No

FERPA WAIVER

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974 establishes the rights of students with regard to educational records. The act makes provision for inspection, review and amendment of educational records by the students and requires, in most instances, prior consent from the student or their parent/guardian if under the age of 18 for disclosure of such records to third parties. The consent must be in writing, signed and dated by the student and must specify records to be released, reason for release, and the names of the parties whom such records shall be released. The act applies to all persons formerly and currently enrolled at an educational institution. Access to educational records does not give permission to make changes to the student's record. For more information visit:

<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>

I hereby give permission for the College of Charleston Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities personnel and committee members to obtain

- information concerning my academic transcript
- information concerning my academic advising notes
- information concerning my in-class performance and grades

This waiver will be in effect as long as I am a student at the College of Charleston, or seeking the services of faculty and staff on the College of Charleston campus.

Signatures (Required for All participants): Please read the SURF Guidelines prior to signing this page. Signatures below indicate awareness of and intention to follow appropriate Program, FERPA Waiver, Departmental, School, College and State rules and regulation for conducting projects, travel, and expenditure of funds.

Undergraduate Applicant: _____
Signature Date 2/2/15

Faculty/Mentor Applicant: _____
Signature Date 2/2/15

Faculty/Mentor Applicant: _____
Signature Date

Chair: I acknowledge that the above student and faculty mentor(s) are applying for URCA Funding and that the funds for successful proposals will be transferred into the departmental R & D account for dispersal based on the budget included in this proposal.

Chair: _____
Signature Date 2/2/2015

Proposed Budget Table

	I	II	III	IV	V
	SURF Funding Requested*		Dept/School Other Internal Support for Project	External Support for Project	Total Cost of SURF Project (Add Columns I-IV for each row)
	For Use Prior to June 30	For Use After July 1			
A. Student Salary (taxable amount)	\$1200.00	\$550.00			1750
B. Faculty Salary (taxable amount)	\$	\$1000.00			1000
C. Student Travel**	\$2000.00	\$500.00			2500
D. Faculty Travel**	\$2000.00	\$500.00			2500
E. Supplies & Materials		\$400.00			400
F. Other					0
G. Total Costs Per Column (Add values from cells A-F for each column)	5200	2950	0	0	8150
TOTAL SURF REQUEST: (Add values from cells G-I + G-II)	8150				

COLLEGE of
CHARLESTON

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH
AND CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

Summer Undergraduate Research with Faculty (SURF) Grant Application

PART II

**To be submitted electronically as a PDF to urca@cofc.edu by 5pm,
February 2, 2015**

**Part I and Part II of the application must be submitted in order to be considered for
funding. Part I of the application can be accessed at www.urca.cofc.edu.**

PROPOSAL TITLE: *Letter to a Man Deconstructed: Analyzing choreographic interpretations of
mental illness*

PRIMARY MENTOR APPLICANT: [REDACTED]

UNDERGRADUATE APPLICANT: [REDACTED]

SURF Application Instructions

A complete description of the application requirements and instructions can be found on the
URCA website (www.urca.cofc.edu) in the SURF Description and Guidelines handbook.

1. STUDENT STATEMENT OF INTENT

Through coursework as a double major in communication and dance, the practice of combining the two and studying how these areas complement one another interests me. Both disciplines focus on nonverbal communication, conveying direct messages to an audience, and understanding the complexity of performing for a diverse audience. I am currently completing the year long capstone communication course COMM 480/481: Dramatism and Event Planning, which provokes thoughts of viewing communication events as performances and using theatre as a metaphor to explore social interaction. The combination of this intensive course with my dance curriculum has inspired me to conduct an independent study of choreography that explores the combination of how social interactions are perceived by multiple parties and how the representation of self affects this. In addition to these studies, I discussed with [REDACTED] how the role of mental illness may affect not only the performances and fronts that one puts forward but the way that these actions are then perceived. It was then that we discussed influential choreographers who have experienced mental illness and how this may have affected their works. She has been influential in guiding me through this process of applying for this grant so that I may further enrich not only my knowledge of dance and communication but how multiple factors may alter the outcome of a performance.

In researching the way that choreographers and audiences understand the connection between mental illness and creativity, I have established three main interests and goals. First, I am exploring the avenue of pursuing a career into choreographic study, so I believe that this opportunity would help direct my career. Secondly, as a double major in dance and communication, this will be an opportunity to discover how the two disciplines intersect. Not only will this grant allow me to deeply explore the work and processes behind choreography, but to do so as a choreographer and as a researcher in non-verbal communication. Furthermore, one of the components of this project will provide me with the opportunity to examine the power of nonverbal communication, as one cannot rely on verbal cues to ascertain a meaning in the movement. Finally, I hope to gain insight into how non-verbal communication informs the creative and choreographic processes. This goal is immediately applicable to understanding my own strengths, weaknesses, and predilections as an emerging choreographer.

Mikhail Baryshnikov will premiere *Letter to a Man*, a work developed from the journals of famed choreographer Vaslav Nijinsky, at the Festival dei Due Mondi in Spoleto, Italy. Although Nijinsky was an astounding choreographer, he suffered from mental illness, which affected his choreographic process and the way that the audiences perceived (and continues to perceive) his dances. Witnessing Baryshnikov's artistic interpretation of Nijinsky's journals educates the researchers' understanding of how mental illness is transcribed into a non-verbal art form.

2. NON-TECHNICAL PROJECT ABSTRACT

Choreography is a collaborative art form that exhibits specific themes, ideas, and is often related to personal experiences of the choreographer. Throughout the planning process it is pertinent that the choreographer make strategic decisions that will allow the audience to perceive the work in the way intended. Once the work is complete and presented, the audience is given the freedom to interpret the piece in the way that they saw it. Because choreography is designed from personal experiences, the question arises of whether the choreographer can successfully transpose the feelings elicited by one with mental illness.

“*Letter to a Man Deconstructed: Analyzing choreographic interpretations of mental illness*” allows for an intensive look into how mental illness affects creativity and how such illness is communicated through non-verbal expression. This research project will investigate how mental illness affects both the messenger and the message in choreographic work. An in-depth analysis of Nijinsky’s journals, on-going research on creativity and mental illness, and movement analysis via LMA will clarify how Nijinsky’s illness was perceived by Baryshnikov and expressed through the construction of this new work.

3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

(a) Technical Project Abstract

Mikhail Baryshnikov, an astounding dancer and choreographer, is premiering his work *Letter to a Man* in the summer of 2015 at the Festival dei Due Mondi in Spoleto, Italy. Faculty mentor, [REDACTED], and student participant, [REDACTED], are currently researching how mental illness in choreographers is interpreted and perceived by others through a non-verbal mode of transmission (choreography). Prior to the beginning of the funding period, the faculty mentor and student are exploring current research into the relation between mental illness and creativity, analyzing the personal journals of Vaslav Nijinsky, and investigating how the use of Laban Movement Analysis (LMA) can help decode non-verbal messages communicated through choreography. Once extensive preliminary research is complete, the researchers will travel to Spoleto to attend the performances of *Letter to a Man*. The presentation of this work will be analyzed through LMA principles, and the construct of how mental illness may be expressed through choreographic means will be understood. Finally, investigating what affects the choreographic subject’s mental illness has on audience perception of a work. It is pertinent that both Dr. McLaine and I conduct a portion of this research in Spoleto, Italy. Dr. McLaine brings an extensive knowledge in dance history, particularly of Russian-born male choreographers from the Ballets Russes period, and has completed previous research, publications, and presentations on the relationship between mental illness and creativity, particularly seen in the lives of choreographers. In addition, she brings the knowledge of Laban Movement Analysis (LMA), which is a systematic method of analyzing non-verbal communication into our analysis of the nonverbal movement of the dance. I bring to this excursion both my knowledge of nonverbal communicative performances along with my desire and enthusiasm for more experience in understanding how one’s mental state can influence his/her work. Attending and analyzing the premiere of *Letter to a Man*, created and performed by Mikhail Baryshnikov, affords an amazing opportunity to explore how the deep thoughts and inner workings of Nijinsky’s mind are communicated.

Undergraduate Applicant:

(b) Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes

The primary objectives of this project focus on the student participant's development of understanding the complexity of thematic processes in choreography and understanding the research process. With the viewing of *Letter to a Man* serving as the framework for this project, faculty and student will complete preliminary objectives including analysis of Vaslav Nijinsky's journals and extensive research on the relationship of mental illness and creativity.

Expected outcomes of this project include the presentation of findings at various future conferences within the disciplines (dance and communication), greater understanding and detailed analysis for the student's future choreographic practices, and the dissemination of written research in the fields of communication and dance.

The specific outcomes for the student participant include exposure to extensive research in the combined fields of communication and dance, and a greater understanding of the importance of nonverbal communication and the influence it provides in both fields.

(c) Project Significance

Undergraduate research in dance is a growing field, and opportunities to conduct meaningful and scholarly research in conjunction with an experienced faculty researcher are limited. This research serves to not only benefit the student, but to further add significant research in the dance field on how messages are constructed and perceived through non-verbal communication (choreography). The development of this project could lead to publications, further research related to non-verbal communication and a graduate-level research agenda for the student.

There has been continued interest in the value of non-verbal communication and how LMA can help decode hidden meanings seen in various movements. Analysis of movement patterns in a wide variety of settings remains an under-researched topic capable of producing valuable applications in the dance and communication fields.

(d) Methods of Work

The research methods used in this project are standard to the disciplines of dance and communication, and include traditional library research of articles, databases, and other scholarly sources; access and use of online archives, i.e. Mikhail Baryshnikov archives in the New York Public Library's Jerome Robbins Dance Collection and the Ballets Russes digital archives; observation of *Letters to a Man* at Spoleto, Italy (attending two performances of the work); analysis of choreographic movements through the application of Laban Movement Analysis; and reporting results in scholarly journals and conference presentations.

(e) Faculty Mentor and Student Participant Roles

The faculty mentor and the student participant will have daily interaction throughout this project. While the faculty mentor will oversee the project and guide the choices made, the project will be collaborative allowing the student to fully explore the choices made by choreographers when mental illness is involved and how the choreographic decisions affect the perception of the work.

Additional study in Laban Movement Analysis (LMA) will support the researchers' analysis of nonverbal messages; collaborative understanding of LMA will require a significant investment of time for both faculty and student.

Undergraduate Applicant:

(f) Current and Pending Support

The faculty mentor is undergoing the application process for a grant worth \$200 from the South Carolina Center for Dance Education. However, the due date for the grant application is not until March 1, 2015. The student participant is currently undergoing the application process for the School of Humanities and Social Science Travel Award. The applications are due mid-March 2015. Both participants are intending to submit application prior to the established deadline.

(g) Student Development

Funding of this project will ensure important growth in the student participant's development in research skills and growth as a choreographer. This project provides the student an opportunity to bridge both disciplines of study in an intensive environment that will focus on the exploration of nonverbal communication. The student will have the opportunity to put already learned skills and ideas presented in coursework to use in a professional setting. Further skills in research, analysis, communication, and evaluation will be quickly developed and accelerate the student's growth.

During this intensive research project, the student participant will be immersed into the professional research field that otherwise the student would not have exposure to in traditional coursework at the College of Charleston. The student's involvement will be at a level not possible during the school year where responsibilities are divided among various courses, topics, and work. This focused project will provide experience in research at the professional level that combines both areas of study that the student is seeking at the College of Charleston. Inclusion of this work on the student's resume will allow her to be a unique and impressive graduate school candidate.

(h) Project Dissemination

In addition to the Summer Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities Poster Session that will be held on Convocation Day, this project will be presented to the Department of Theatre and Dance with a Question and Answer session during the fall 2015 semester. The presentation be open to all College of Charleston students, but will focus on the influence of mental illness in the choreographic process and the important role that nonverbal communication serves in dance. This presentation will also highlight the significant impact of receiving a SURF grant for the student's academic and personal development.

In addition, a proposal is being drafted to report the findings of the research conducted at the National Dance Education Organization Conference in fall 2015 and at the American College Dance Association Festival in Spring 2016. URCA and the College of Charleston will be recognized in all presentations/disseminations of the findings.

(i) Student Involvement in Application Process

The faculty mentor and student participant met in person many times to discuss the nature of the project, its objectives, outcomes and methodology. Through these meetings an understanding and plan for the project were developed and collaboratively an abstract, objective, and significance were drafted. Plans for the dissemination of results and appropriate budget items were discussed together. Both the student participant and faculty mentor made edits and revisions in order to finalize the document.