



PURM

Perspectives on Undergraduate
Research & Mentoring

Mentoring Undergraduate Research in Theatre and Dance: Case Studies of the Salient Practices Framework in Action

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Universities are increasingly focused on undergraduate research as a high impact practice beneficial for student engagement and retention (Kuh 2008). In order to ensure the success of this mission, faculty need to understand and practice effective mentoring techniques. High-quality mentoring in the performing arts disciplines of theatre and dance can be difficult to achieve because faculty are not always well-versed in mentoring methods. Historically, dancers, actors, and stage technicians learn their craft from experts in their fields, who emulate pedagogical techniques learned from their teachers in an apprenticeship model. Improving undergraduate research mentoring in theatre and dance requires disruption of historical biases inherent in apprenticeship models and consideration of current research in mentoring practices. In addition, faculty need modes of measurement from which they can evaluate the success of their mentoring outcomes.

Current research in the scholarship of teaching and learning provides theatre and dance faculty with many useful models of undergraduate research mentoring. The case studies of undergraduate mentoring in theatre and dance explored in this paper adopt Wenzel's (1997) definition: "Undergraduate research [scholarship, and creative activity] is an inquiry or investigation conducted by an undergraduate in collaboration with a faculty mentor that makes an original intellectual or creative contribution to the discipline" (p. 163). This definition highlights mentoring as a key component of undergraduate research. Current research also emphasizes the importance of the role of the mentor and demonstrates that providing high quality mentoring produces the largest gains for students (Linn, Palmer, Baranger, Gerard, & Stone, 2015; Shanahan, Ackley-Holbrook, Hall, Stewart, & Walkington, 2015; Shellito, Shea, Weissmann, Mueller-Solger, & Davis, 2001; Shore, 2005; Thiry & Laursen, 2011). Osborn and Karukstis (2009) argue that all undergraduate research and creative endeavors should include four features: mentorship, originality, acceptability, and dissemination. For example, in performing arts disciplines like theatre and dance, mentored undergraduate research might result in an original analysis of an existing script, choreographic work, or acting technique, the creation and public presentation of a new work, or the exploration of a new creative process in collaboration with or guided by a mentor. The quality of the mentoring relationship contributes to the success of undergraduate research.

Johnson and colleagues identify nine distinct components of mentoring that are important when thinking about high quality mentoring relationships (Johnson, 2015; Johnson, Rose, & Schlosser, 2010; Koch & Johnson, 2000). Johnson and colleagues (2010, p. 51-52) note that effective mentoring may include the following components:

1. Mentorships are enduring personal relationships.
2. Mentorships are increasingly reciprocal and mutual.
3. Compared to protégés, mentors demonstrate greater achievement and experience.
4. Mentors provide direct career assistance.
5. Mentors provide social and emotional support.
6. Mentors serve as models.
7. Mentoring results in an identity transformation in the protégé.
8. Mentorships offer a safe environment for self-exploration.
9. Mentorships generally produce positive career and personal outcomes.

This extensive list suggests that there are numerous different roles that the mentor is asked to fulfill in the mentoring relationship. Additional research demonstrates that effective mentoring occurs when these various types of support are present (Palmer, Hunt, Neal, & Wuetherick, 2018; Thiry & Laursen, 2011). However, some research shows that these components are often not met in the mentored undergraduate research experience (Johnson, Behling, Miller, & Vandermaas-Peeler, 2015; Vandermaas-Peeler, Miller, & Peebles, 2015). Wuetherick, Willison, and Shanahan (2018) propose that the implementation of the ten salient practices of undergraduate research mentoring (Shanahan et al., 2015) can be utilized as a pedagogical tool to improve the undergraduate research experience. (See Table 1 for a brief description of these practices.)

This paper develops previous work on the practices of undergraduate research mentoring through a series of case studies exploring how the Salient Practices Framework (Shanahan et al., 2015) can be used in a variety of contexts in undergraduate research in theatre and dance. At Elon University, a primarily undergraduate private institution in North Carolina that emphasizes engaged and experiential learning, students studying in the Acting, Arts Administration, Dance Performance & Choreography, Dance Science, Drama & Theatre Studies, Music Theatre, and Theatrical Design & Technology degree programs can participate in mentored undergraduate research. This research may use a range of methods and result in a diverse array of products. For example, students might:

- Ask a question about an existing playscript or choreographic work and analyze it through a theoretical lens or disciplinary technique, resulting in an original scholarly essay
- Ask a question about a creative process or theory, apply it to an existing playscript or choreographic work, and use practice-as-research methods to test their hypothesis through creative production
- Ask a question about human culture and attempt to answer this question through a creative process, producing an original playscript or choreographic work
- Investigate reception practices by surveying audience responses to a live performance
- Explore performance pedagogies by facilitating a series of creative workshops
- Explore performance pedagogies by developing and executing a creative project for public performance

This variety of possible research methods and products demands nimble mentors able to guide students to discover which process best fits each research question. The following three case studies explore how the Salient Practices Framework, which provides a structured approach to mentoring, both intersects with current mentoring practices in the performing arts at Elon University and offers a pedagogical model specifically for mentoring in the disciplines of theatre and dance. These examples demonstrate the relevance of the Salient Practices to undergraduate research mentoring in theatre and dance and indicate that the Salient Practices Framework complements existing industry standards, providing a bridge between professional arts practices and the academic study of theatre and dance.


Table 1. *Ten Salient Practices of Undergraduate Research Mentors*

1	<p>Strategic pre-planning to support students' varying needs and abilities during research process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use existing industry and professional disciplinary standards and timelines for project planning
2	<p>Setting clear and well-scaffolded expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use existing industry and professional disciplinary roles and responsibilities for project planning
3	<p>Teaching the technical skills, methods, and techniques of conducting research in the discipline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce students to the expectations of research both in the academy and in the professional discipline • Emphasize the importance of ethical standards and safety
4	<p>Balancing rigorous expectations with appropriate emotional support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge the emotional vulnerability of creative work • Maintain strong boundaries that model appropriate personal and professional boundaries
5	<p>Building community among groups of students or a research team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model trusting interpersonal relationships through co-mentoring and co-teaching • Practice intentional team development through group research projects embedded in the curriculum
6	<p>Dedicating time to one-on-one mentoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the apprenticeship model to provide personalized guidance and advice • Through the apprenticeship and co-mentoring models, exemplify the value of time-intensive, hands-on mentoring experiences with students
7	<p>Increasing student ownership over time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the apprenticeship model to foster autonomy and relate student work to larger project goals • Assign students ownership of specific tasks in collaborative projects
8	<p>Supporting students' professional development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the apprenticeship model to provide networking and professional development opportunities • Embed research projects into the curriculum that provide professional development opportunities
9	<p>Creating intentional, ladder opportunities for peers/near-peers to learn mentoring skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use collaborative creative processes for peers and near-peers to learn mentoring skills • Use existing industry and professional disciplinary division of roles to provide guidance for expectations of peer mentoring relationships
10	<p>Encouraging students to disseminate their findings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the differences between academic and industry-specific methods for research dissemination • Translate between academic and industry professional practices and expectations so that students understand both worlds • Have students present work to the public in a modality that best fits their research goals

Note. This is an adapted version of Shanahan et al.'s (2015) *Ten Salient Practices of Undergraduate Research Mentors* (www.centerforengagedlearning.org/salientpractices/).

Case Study 1: Collaboration Creates Opportunities for Students to Learn Mentoring Skills.

While undergraduate research in performing arts disciplines like theatre and dance can take many forms, collaboration is a key element of research projects that involve live performance. An individual research project that results in a live performance requires the student researcher to interact with a creative and technical team who may provide support through costuming, sound, lighting, dramaturgy, or stage management. Because theatre and dance are collaborative disciplines, research necessitates the cooperation of others. For example, research might depend on participants for workshops, performers to embody creative ideas through acting or dance, stage managers to oversee the production process, or designers to generate the technical elements needed for a live performance. The collaborative nature of these art forms demands that individual student researchers and their mentors build support teams capable of assisting the student researcher and helping them to realize their research goals. To be clear, these teams of stage managers, designers, dramaturgs, and performers are not co-researchers, but rather non-researchers who invest in the researcher's project. Undergraduate researchers in the performing arts therefore often work with a team of peer and near-peer supporters as part of their research process.



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Salient Practice #9, “Creating intentional, laddered opportunities for peers and ‘near-peers’ to learn mentoring skills and to bring larger numbers of undergraduates into scholarly opportunities” (Shanahan et al., 2015, p. 368), therefore connects naturally to the collaborative nature of theatre and dance research. For projects resulting in a live performance, the student researcher must learn to mentor their support team. Existing professional divisions of responsibility used in the disciplines of dance and theatre provide structures that organize labor, assign responsibility, and create mentoring relationships. In one recent example at Elon University, a student researcher investigating audience responses to French theatre theorist Antonin Artaud’s Theatre of Cruelty aesthetic as applied to a production of Martin Sherman’s 1979 play *Bent* required a full theatrical production team to complete the research project. While the student researcher planned the application of aesthetic techniques, devised the audience survey method, and completed the reception analysis individually, their project demanded disciplinary skill-building and a support team of peer and near-peer actors, designers, and technicians to produce the performance event. To achieve this, the faculty mentor created laddered opportunities for the student researcher to learn the disciplinary role and professional responsibilities of a theatrical director. As a director, the student then constructed learning opportunities for their peers and mentored them in creative work. In this case, the student was first mentored individually by several faculty colleagues in the preparatory work required of a director. Then the student shadowed a faculty member’s directing process by acting as their assistant director for another production. In addition to taking a class in directing techniques, these scaffolded learning opportunities allowed the student researcher to grow into the role of director required for the successful completion of their research project. At the same time, the student researcher used their previous experience in stage management to mentor a junior student assigned to the role of stage manager for *Bent*. That junior student in turn used their earlier experience as an assistant stage manager to mentor a peer in the role of assistant stage manager. Here the typical role hierarchy of professional theatre served as a mentoring structure for students to teach peers and near-peers in the craft of theatre within the overall structure of an undergraduate research project.

In this example, the faculty mentor ensured that the student researcher helming the theatrical production process not only provided opportunities for other students to learn the skills of the discipline, but also mentored their peers in research. The faculty mentor encouraged the student researcher to provide occasions for their peers to invest in the research project as research, not just as a prospect for creative experience. The student researcher and mentor devised four different strategies for orienting and including the student's support team in the research process. First, the student researcher verbally discussed their research question and process with actors during casting and with designers during creative meetings, allowing their peers to ask questions about the project. Second, they shared research documents such as bibliographies, relevant articles, and pre-production analysis work with their support team. Third, they secured funding for a team field trip to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum for the team to learn more about the historical context of *Bent* and the aesthetic choices that the student researcher planned to test in production. Fourth, the student researcher organized a public panel discussion of the research project that included the participation of their peers and near-peers alongside faculty experts. Through these opportunities, the student researcher empowered their peer support team to understand, ask questions, and engage with the research goals of the project. Three of the junior students participating in the support team have since approached the faculty mentor about the possibility of starting their own research projects in playwriting, theatrical design, and acting technique. Each student described how the research project introduced them to the concept of undergraduate research and inspired them to ask how they too could engage in original scholarly work. The faculty mentor credits this interest to the intentional strategies which engaged the student support team in the research process, and to the modeling of industry structures. This allowed the senior students in positions with more responsibility to mentor junior students in discipline-specific skills.

Industry Practices Help Mentors Set Expectations and Plan Strategically.

The disciplinary practices of professional theatre also provide structures for mentors to organize and set expectations with student researchers in the performing arts. Salient Practice #1, "Engaging in strategic pre-planning," and Salient Practice #2, "Setting clear and well-scaffolded expectations" (Shanahan et al., 2015, p. 362), fit naturally with the mentoring of undergraduate researchers in theatre and dance because the discipline has already well-established project planning practices. The commercial theatre profession, as well as many undergraduate theatre programs, schedules theatrical productions well in advance, and uses a backwards-planning model for determining deadlines throughout the creative process. Working back from opening night, or the first planned live performance with an audience, theatre artists plan for several deadlines. They schedule dress rehearsals when all technical and design elements are incorporated, technical rehearsals for adding technical and design elements, and run-throughs where performers work through the entire piece instead of scene by scene. Additionally, theatre artists set a date for when the performers have their roles fully memorized and are described as "off book," and rehearsals for "blocking," or establishing movement patterns on stage. They also set dates for auditions and deadlines for pre-production work such as establishing budgets, securing a performance space, purchasing performance licensing rights, or analyzing the script. This process, used by faculty directors in educational theatre and by professional directors, offers a pre-existing structure for undergraduate researchers in theatre to follow.

One benefit of this structure is that it breaks down the process of creating a theatrical production into discrete tasks and sets expectations for when each element is to be added into the process. Theatre students may come to their research project, familiar with just one aspect of theatre – for example acting or stage management, but with a limited understanding of the entire production process, which in educational theatre is usually overseen by a faculty member. Explaining the entire backwards-planning process with students at the research proposal stage allows them to plan

effectively and helps them specify if and how a live performance will help them answer their research question. Because theatre is a collaborative art and the creation of live performance has established industry practices of backwards-planning, the *Bent* research project naturally used several of the salient practices of undergraduate research mentoring, including #1, “Engaging in strategic pre-planning,” #2, “Setting clear and well-scaffolded expectations” (Shanahan et al., 2015, p. 362), and #9, “Creating intentional, laddered opportunities for peers and ‘near-peers’ to learn mentoring skills and to bring larger numbers of undergraduates into scholarly opportunities” (Shanahan et al., 2015, p. 368).

Case Study 2: Apprenticeship Structures Model Networking and Disciplinary Norms.

While maintaining university teaching positions, many faculty members in theatre and dance are also practitioners, employed as dancers, choreographers, actors, dramaturgs, designers, or directors in the industry. As working professionals, faculty in performing arts disciplines may integrate their scholarly research and creative practices with their professional work. This allows for undergraduate research opportunities where students can learn disciplinary skills and norms while working alongside mentors on research and industry projects. In one sense, faculty in theatre and dance who act or direct professionally embody the 21st century actor-manager or artist-entrepreneur model. The actor-manager model refers to the centuries-old practice of actors also managing the theatre in which they perform. From the days of Shakespeare, the actor-manager model dominated the English-language stage, only to wane in the early 20th century with the advent of motion picture studios and theatrical producing consortiums. In this Early Modern model, the actor-manager had parallel careers within the trade. They were actors and producers, designers, printers, or writers. The advent of digital streaming platforms in the 21st century provides a venue for the individual actor to once again become an actor-manager, developing their own brand and managing their own new media content. As an actor-manager, the faculty mentor is both creative artist and expert in the professional discipline. In this model, actor-managers traditionally trained more junior members of the theatrical company in an apprenticeship structure. The apprenticeship model declined with the rise of professional actor training institutions in the modern era. However, faculty mentors can take advantage of the apprenticeship paradigm by combining it with best practices identified in the current scholarship of teaching and learning, for example, by incorporating undergraduate researchers into faculty-driven actor-manager research projects related to professional development, or by integrating students into curricular research as teaching apprentices.

Salient Practice #8, “Supporting students’ professional development through networking and explaining norms of the discipline” (Shanahan et al., 2015, p. 368), directly connects with the apprenticeship paradigm found in the actor-manager model. Elon University’s experiential and engaged learning emphasis allows for student Teaching and Learning Apprentices (i.e., senior students who have already succeeded in a class, working with the instructor to help train junior students in skill-building and disciplinary norms). Teaching and Learning Apprentices learn alongside their faculty research mentors, participating in the research project while also gaining valuable teaching experience. There has been much interest in determining how to integrate research and creative endeavors into the undergraduate curriculum (Malachowski, 2003; Willison, 2012). In one successful example of this in theatre, a faculty member investigating the contemporary actor-entrepreneur model developed a class titled “The Hollywood Toolbox,” which prepares students for entering the entertainment industry. Taught in Los Angeles, the curriculum includes training in networking skills as well as student professional development in content creation, personal branding, and audition skills. Students not only learn about the norms of the entertainment industry, but also experience them in a supported, low-stakes apprenticeship environment.

In one example of applying the apprenticeship model to undergraduate research at Elon University, a faculty member conducting research into the cutting-edge theatrical intimacy choreography and education techniques, combined their research with a student apprentice to professionally develop the student into a theatrical intimacy researcher. Theatrical intimacy choreography and education is a relatively new approach in the field of movement, acting, and directing. After numerous revelations of harassment in the entertainment industry intersected with the #MeToo movement, the industry needed a holistic and practical way to teach staging intimacy and violence on stage (Lehmann & Morris, 2018). Currently, theatre pioneers are developing methods to empower actors and educate industry professionals on a more thoughtful and ethical approach to staging difficult scenes. One organization of theatre professionals, Theatrical Intimacy Education (TIE), created an ethical staging technique and educates through training programs (Pace & Rikard, 2018). The faculty director of a 2018 production of the play *Moment* by Deirdre Kinahan who was conducting research into theatrical intimacy practices and pedagogy, invited the student creative team to a consultation with TIE professionals about best practices for intimacy staging. From the training received through that initial consultation, the faculty and student creative team introduced basic concepts into rehearsals with the cast. The faculty director also integrated these new practices into their directing approach. Much like how staged violence is choreographed and has a “fight call” where the actors and stage managers practice the movements each night before a performance, the team implemented an “intimacy call” for choreographed moments of romantic and sexual intimacy in the play. Because the director had choreographed the intimacy and violence as one might choreograph a dance by breaking down each movement precisely, the actors were able to learn and rehearse actions that they could replicate performance after performance, removing the fear or anxiety that comes from uncertainty (Purcell 2018). The use of theatrical intimacy practices in the production sparked research interest among the students. In particular, one student actor became very interested in further training in theatrical intimacy techniques as both a research project and a professional development opportunity. For the faculty mentor, the initial 30-minute TIE consultation led to a scholarly presentation at an international conference about the application of TIE techniques and a successful grant award to bring theatrical intimacy educators to campus for a full weekend of theatrical intimacy training.

Students and faculty participated in the weekend of training together. Then they continued this professional development in both their creative research and in the classroom. One student combined the roles of assistant director with Teaching and Learning Apprentice for a 2019 production of Christine Evans’ play *Trojan Barbie*. Using their newly gained theatrical intimacy education skills developed in the weekend workshop, this student worked alongside the faculty researcher and director in the role of the production’s Intimacy Apprentice. As the student gained in ability and confidence, the faculty mentor released certain choreographic responsibilities to them, while remaining present to offer constructive guidance and feedback. Here the apprenticeship model used the approaches of Salient Practice #6, “Dedicating time to one-on-one mentoring,” and Salient Practice #7, “Increasing student ownership over time” (Shanahan et al., 2015, p. 366-367). The faculty mentor has since mentored this student in choreographing intimacy for two more theatrical productions. For the student, the faculty member’s research presented an occasion to develop professionally. For the faculty mentor, the apprenticeship model created an opportunity to combine their own research into theatrical intimacy pedagogy with their creative directing work while also providing students with training in emerging disciplinary norms and professional development. The apprenticeship model explored in this case study demonstrates another way of considering how collaborative practices in theatre already provide a structure for mentoring undergraduate research which can be combined with the Salient Practices Framework. While the first case study argues that the salient practices of strategic pre-planning, setting clear and well-scaffolded expectations, and creating ladder opportunities for peer and near-peer mentoring fit naturally with established professional practices in theatrical production, this case study reveals that a thoughtful

apprenticeship model goes hand-in-hand with supporting students' professional development and increasing student ownership over time.

Case Study 3: Integrating Collaborative Research into the Curriculum Builds Community and Teaches Disciplinary Skills.

Undergraduate research mentorship in dance also aligns with the collaborative nature of any given group-oriented creative process. In dance, the success of many choreography projects relies on a partnership between the choreographer and dancers to deeply embody the movement and enrich the experience of audience members. This is especially true for a “collective” model of choreography in which dancers contribute equally to the creation of a dance. To successfully prepare dance majors for positions as performers, choreographers, and/or dance researchers, mentorship at Elon University takes form in one-on-one and co-mentored models and through purposeful curriculum designed to foster creative research teams and community-minded choreography. Salient Practice #5, “Building community among groups of students or a research team” (Shanahan et al., 2015, p. 366), is supported by a curriculum design that integrates collaborative research and professional practices in a senior capstone course that is co-mentored by a team of two faculty members. In this year-long course, senior dance majors team together to collectively create a full-length original dance work for public presentation, collaborating on research in a participatory learning environment. Elon Dance Program enrolls these students in the same technique and choreography classes from first year to senior year in an effort to build trusting interpersonal relationships within one cohort from the beginning of their university experience. This purposeful curriculum decision aims to counter negative competition between dancers and to support a respect for individuality and identity in a given collective.

Along with equitably contributing to a creative thesis project, the faculty co-mentors encourage students to take on responsibilities in the creative, technical, and administrative development of the research project. Roles, such as artistic director, costume designer, accountant, or production manager, are necessary for successful productions. Asking students to assign these responsibilities encourages them to work as a professional company. Each year, the students in conversation with the co-mentors decide to divide roles differently, depending on the number of students in each cohort, the conceptual approach to the research, the number of sections in each given choreography, and the overarching personality dynamic of the group. Co-mentors often suggest creating teams of three or four students to work on various sections of the larger dance. Along with co-choreographing and production responsibility, every student is also expected to perform in the final performance that emerges from the creative research process. Working effectively as a community is necessary for a successful research experience.

The act of collaboration is systematically modeled by the faculty co-mentors. They give feedback on overarching organization development, creative project development, various writing products, production timeline, and overall interpersonal communication. Throughout the process, the co-mentors suggest strategies for group problem-solving, collaborative decision-making, and best practices for inclusivity in creative brainstorming. A team-focused curriculum design builds skill in conflict resolution, heightens problem-solving skills, such as how to compromise to fit different voices without sacrificing individual voice, fosters mutual respect for peers and different creative processes, and develops critical thinking through creative problem solving. Shanahan et al. (2015) note these as important benefits for undergraduate students working in a research team.

Differences Between Academic and Professional Disciplinary Norms Challenge Mentors.

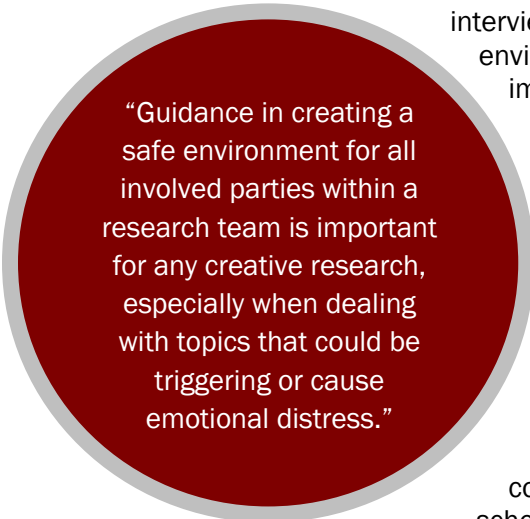
This curriculum-based collaborative research experience poses some challenges, one of which is that it does not immediately prepare students for professional work as choreographers. Since the students focus so tightly on one role during the research process, for instance, in publicity or by

choreographing a single section of a larger dance work, this model does not help students develop beyond their already identified areas of strength. However, focusing on one role does strengthen interpersonal and communication skills, which are undeniably necessary in the performing arts. In the dance profession, while there is collaboration in every setting, there are fewer examples of collaborative choreography of more than three people. Most emergent choreographers begin their careers by submitting their individual dances to various regional or national festivals. Not having a piece of their own to submit post-graduation is a major element of professional preparation lacking in this current team-focused curriculum design. This challenge highlights a disparity between expectations for dance research in the academy and disciplinary norms in the professional dance world.

Dance research in the profession and academia, while alike in many ways, uses different terminology for research skills, methods, and techniques. All technical skills, research methods, and choreographic techniques directly relate to the dance profession and mimic graduate research in dance and choreography. For example, technical skills may include embodied research that investigates performative qualities for choreography. At the same time, academic terminology is not typically used in the profession and is to be avoided in press material and social media so as not to alienate potential audiences. Therefore, undergraduate research mentors in dance must be aware of both the professional dance and academic research practices when considering Salient Practice #3, “Teaching the technical skills, methods, and techniques of conducting research in the discipline” (Shanahan et al., 2015, p. 364). This is of particular importance when mentoring individual students who are required to submit thesis proposals and/or poster presentations on their research as part of university undergraduate research programs or academic scholarships. In these instances, mentors must introduce expectations of academic dance research so that the students may practice terminology common to those across academic disciplines, such as comparative-analysis, practice-based research, or qualitative study, while honoring the unique and individual creative processes of individual students.

Mentorship in this realm also includes ensuring that students are researching in a safe and ethical manner. Since dance research often involves other people – for example interview subjects, dancers who perform the choreography, or audiences whose response to a work is investigated as part of the research – many undergraduate research projects in dance are assessed by the university’s Institutional Review Board (IRB). Mentors of undergraduate research in dance must guide student

researchers in ethical approaches to qualitative observation, surveys, interviews, and data collection. Guidance in creating a safe environment for all involved parties within a research team is important for any creative research, especially when dealing with topics that could be triggering or cause emotional distress. At the same time, mentorship includes teaching students about IRB processes and the appropriate academic language necessary to communicate choreographic or creative ideas to readers outside of the discipline. In undergraduate dance research mentoring, “teaching the technical skills, methods, and techniques of conducting research in the discipline” (Shanahan et al., 2015, p. 364) therefore entails the teaching of language specific to the academy, which is necessary for scholarly communications, including research and IRB proposals, scholarship applications, and research articles, as well as the translation of that language for the professional discipline, which



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is more focused on strategic communications, including grant applications, branding, artist's statements, and press releases.

Conclusions

These three case studies affirm the usefulness of the Salient Practices Framework (Shanahan et al., 2015) to theatre and dance research mentoring. Some of the practices lend themselves naturally to work in creative fields, especially where professional practices provide pre-existing structures and models for collaboration, division of responsibilities, and project planning and organization. Another easy fit for theatre and dance mentorship is Salient Practice #4 “Balancing rigorous expectations with emotional support and appropriate personal interest in students” (Shanahan et al., 2015, p. 364). The performing arts of theatre and dance are embodied disciplines that engage with human experiences, and exploring emotions is part of the creative process. Undergraduate researchers in the performing arts are asked to use their personal senses, emotions, and physicalities in the research process. Although sensory, emotional, and physical explorations are key to creative research, university students often do not yet know their personal blind spots, nor do they always possess a well-developed self-awareness of what is required in order to engage fully with the research at hand. The mentor is responsible for modeling strong personal boundaries and the ability to communicate and educate the student researcher about how to develop their own personal and professional boundaries. Theatrical intimacy choreography and education, for example, specifically trains students to engage in questions about their physical and emotional boundaries within a creative process. In addition, the undergraduate researcher learns boundaries from observing their mentor. Therefore, mentors must consider their own mental well-being and model healthy work-life balance. Mentors must create safe containers in which students can explore human experiences safely and ethically by establishing from the start clear expectations, openly discussing responsibilities, roles, and appropriate boundaries, and ensuring students are educated in institutional policies and best practices surrounding health and safety. This process is important in contemporary contexts where emphasis on content creation, no matter for a dance work or a short-filmed performance, is an important path to success in the entertainment industry. Students taking ownership over the creative process ensures that they can continue their work after the formal mentorship ends.

One Salient Practice that creates some challenges for undergraduate research mentoring in theatre and dance is #10, “Encourage students to share their findings and provide guidance on how to do so effectively in oral and poster presentations and writing” (Shanahan et al., 2015, p. 369). Outside of the academy, creative research processes spotlight the end result – live performances of dance and theatre. When the work is presented, the process typically remains hidden to audiences. For example, professional choreographers presenting their work at a dance festival or student researchers presenting at the American College Dance Festival, rarely present orally about their research process but instead exhibit the choreographic result of that work. While public conversation may follow the presentation, audience reception may not focus on the research process. Because of this, undergraduate research mentors must help student researchers to translate between the expectations of public research presentations in the academy, where students are more likely to be required to present orally or in writing, and the expectations of industry standards, where live performance is the showcase.

This tension between preparing students for the professional practices of the industry and teaching them academic research communication and presentation norms highlights the relevance of the Salient Practices Framework to theatre and dance research mentors. As a pedagogical approach to mentoring, the Salient Practices Framework allows undergraduate research mentors to combine industry and academic practices in some areas, and to indicate and specify their differences where appropriate. Although limited in scope, these three case studies nevertheless demonstrate that

undergraduate research mentoring in the performing arts both complements and intersects with the pedagogical goal of preparing theatre and dance students for healthy, successful, and creative careers as industry professionals. Further research, particularly in the disciplines of music and studio art, will help clarify how the Salient Practices Framework could be effective more broadly across all fine and performing arts disciplines.

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