

Natasha McCandless

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EDUCATION

State University of New York at Buffalo, Buffalo, NY *2024*

Graduated with Distinction

M.F.A. Dance | Secondary Emphasis in Educational Psychology

Thesis Committee: Chanon Judson (Chair), Dr. Ariel Nereson, James Beaudry

Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA *2017*

Graduated Summa Cum Laude

B.A. Theatre – Dance Performance

B.S. Secondary Education – English Language Arts

HONORS & AWARDS

State University of New York at Buffalo

Excellence in Teaching Award for Graduate Teaching Assistants *2024*

- Awarded for exceptional teaching ability, dedication to mentoring and advisement, and commitment to maintaining high academic standards
- Recognizes superb and creative performance in the classroom, as well as unwavering support for the intellectual growth of students

Teaching Assistantship, Department of Theatre and Dance *2021-2024*

Judge's Choice Award, Art of Research Competition, The Graduate School *2023*

Lucille and Jack Yellen Award, Department of Theatre and Dance *2021 and 2022*

Pennsylvania State University

Student Marshal for the College of Arts and Architecture *2017*

FELLOWSHIPS & GRANTS

[Public Humanities Grant, Humanities New York](#) *2023-2024*

\$4,000 awarded in support of my choreographic research

[Social Impact Fellowship, University at Buffalo](#) *2023*

\$5,000 awarded for 10-week internship with a local nonprofit

TEACHING EXPERIENCE – HIGHER EDUCATION

Part-Time Assistant Professor, Boston Conservatory, Online: Synchronous

T-LT 79914: Musical Theatre Dance History *Spring and Fall 2025*

Adjunct Instructor, SUNY Fredonia, Fredonia, NY

DANC 375: Dance Pedagogy *Fall 2025*

DANC 264-02: Choreography 1 *Fall 2025*

DANC 211: Contemporary 2 *Fall 2025*

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DANC 114: Tap Dance 1 *Spring 2025*

Lecturer, Niagara University, Lewiston, NY

DAN 255: Dance History *Spring 2025*

DAN 312: Jazz 4 *Spring 2025*

DAN 311: Jazz 3 *Spring 2025*

DAN 251: Independent Study: Advanced Jazz Pedagogy *Spring 2025*

DAN 230: Jazz 1 *Fall 2024*

DAN 231: Jazz 2 *Fall 2024*

DAN 224: Independent Study: Jazz Pedagogy *Fall 2024*

Adjunct Instructor, D'Youville University, Buffalo, NY

MFA 531: Movement and Physical Awareness 1 *Fall 2024*

Instructor of Record, State University of New York at Buffalo, Buffalo, NY

DAC 210: Tap Dance 1 *Spring 2024*

DAC 371: Jazz Dance 3 *Fall 2023*

DAC 104: Appreciating Dance, co-taught with Dani Schofer *Fall 2023*

DAC 118: Jazz Dance 1 *Spring 2022*

Teaching Assistant, State University of New York at Buffalo, Buffalo, NY

DAC 454: Teaching Methods, Professor Jeanne Fornarola *Spring 2024*

DAC 350: Laban Movement Analysis, Professor Anne Burnidge *Fall 2022*

DAC 104: Appreciating Dance, Professor Jeanne Fornarola *Fall 2021*

Workshops:

Precision Jazz, Friday Forum, University at Buffalo *April 17, 2026*

Guest Instructor, Advanced and Beginning Tap, Penn State University *February 3-5, 2026*

Precision Jazz, Company Class, SUNY Fredonia *September 13, 2024*

Jazz Dance in the Swing Era, Jazz 4, University at Buffalo *March 13, 2023*

Intro to Jazz Dance, UB Athletics, University at Buffalo *October 25, 2022*

Jazz Dance in the Swing Era, Jazz 3, University at Buffalo *October 19, 2021*

TEACHING EXPERIENCE – K-12 & COMMUNITY

PA Teaching Certification: English Language Arts 7-12, Communications 7-12 *Active 2017- 2022*

Adult Dance Workshops, Second Generation Theatre, Buffalo, NY *2023-2026*

Styles include: Jazz, Tap, Theatre Dance

Verbal Skills Tutor, Huntington Learning Center, Doylestown, PA	2021
Dance Instructor, Performing Arts School of Central PA	2021
Dance Instructor, Nightingale-Bamford School, New York City	2018-2019
“Girl Code” Instructor, The Coding Space, New York City	2018
Substitute Teacher, Manhattan Staffing	2018
Guest Dance Instructor	2017-2018
Allegheny Ballet Company (Altoona, PA), Holliday Dance (Hollidaysburg, PA), Dance Fusion (Tyrone, PA), Centre Dance (State College, PA), Pennsylvania Academy of the Arts (Centre Hall, PA)	
Student Teaching, Abington Junior High School, Abington School District	Fall 2017
9 th grade: English Language Arts and Theater	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15-week practicum teaching a full course-load of three preparations and five 48-minute class periods per day • Utilized Promethean board and Google Classroom technologies • Participated in rehearsals for the school musical <i>The Addams Family</i> 	
Pre-Service Teaching, Altoona Area High School, Altoona School District	Spring 2017
10 th and 11 th grade: English Language Arts (120 teaching hours)	

PUBLICATIONS

Journal of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Training	2025
“Sculpting a story: guiding felt experiences in pedagogical space through iteration”	
MusicTheatreDance, Inaugural Journal	2025
“Made of Water: Emotion and Touch in Pedagogical Spaces”	

PANELS & CONFERENCES

Niagara University CCTL International Conference on Teaching and Learning	January 2025
“Reflective Practices as Reciprocal Feedback: Using Formal and Informal Reflections to Guide Student-Centered Teaching and Learning”	
American College Dance Association, Northeast Regional Conference	March 2024
Intermediate Theatre Dance	
Association for Theatre in Higher Education, Bruce Kirle Memorial Debut Panel in Music Theatre Dance, Adjudicated by Dr. Donatella Galella (UC Riverside)	August 2023
“Made of Water: Emotion and Touch in Pedagogical Spaces”	
SUNY Graduate Research Conference, Poster Presentation	April 2023
“Made of Water: Emotion and Touch in Pedagogical Spaces”	
A Roundtable Conversation on <i>Twelfth Night</i>, Presented by the Queer Studies & Performance Research Workshops, University at Buffalo	2022

RESEARCH

IRB Study 00006073: Mindfulness and Self-Reported Anxiety, University at Buffalo

Approved Fall 2021, Conducted Fall 2023

Research Assistant, Professor Chanon Judson, University at Buffalo*2022-2023*

- Facilitated pedagogy workshops for Urban Bush Women
- Interviews and transcriptions of collaborators and company members for the world premiere of Urban Bush Women's *Haint Blu* in New Orleans, Louisiana

Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI): Completed Courses*2021*

Conflicts of Interest, Social & Behavioral Research Investigators, and Social and Behavioral Responsible Conduct of Research Course

SERVICE

Mark Diamond Research Fund Review Council, University at Buffalo*June 2024***Graduate Student Association Board Member for the Dept. of Theatre and Dance***2022-2024***CHOREOGRAPHY**

Upcoming: *Seussical*, Second Generation Theatre Academy, Buffalo, NY*Summer 2026*

Choreographer; Director: Matt Refermat

Fredonia Dance Ensemble, SUNY Fredonia*Spring 2026*

Choreographer: "The Crapshooters"

Pagliacci*, Buffalo Opera Unlimited, Buffalo, NYSeptember 2025*

Choreographer and Dance Soloist

Fredonia Dance Ensemble, SUNY Fredonia*Spring 2025*

Choreographer: "Some... Day..."

Into the Woods* (Grades 7-12), Mel's School of Music & Theater, Buffalo, NYSummer 2024*

Choreographer; Director: Daniel Lendzian

MFA Thesis Concert, University at Buffalo*Spring 2024*

Director/Choreographer: "hers for the reading"

- Supported by a Humanities New York Public Humanities Grant and an interdisciplinary team of sound, set, props, and lighting designers.
- My thesis research focused on choreographic values of storytelling and worldbuilding, as well as on theories of affect, embodiment and care with a goal of fostering wellness for dancers in the pedagogical space of rehearsal.

MFA Showcase, University at Buffalo*Fall 2023*

Director, Choreographer: "hers for the reading" (thesis work-in-progress)

<i>Rogers + Hammerstein's Cinderella, University at Buffalo</i> Co-Choreographer with Director James Beaudry	<i>Spring 2023</i>
MFA Showcase, University at Buffalo Choreographer and Performer: "mirth shorn"	<i>Fall 2022</i>
Emerging Choreographers Showcase, University at Buffalo Choreographer: "made of water"	<i>Fall 2022</i>
<i>Twelfth Night, University at Buffalo</i> Choreographer, Director: Danielle Rosvally	<i>Spring 2022</i>
ChoreoLab: Informal Showing, University at Buffalo Co-Director, Choreographer: "We Call to Hearth and Hall"	<i>Spring 2022</i>
MFA Showcase, University at Buffalo Choreographer: "Albatross"	<i>Fall 2022</i>
The Rooftop Project, Brooklyn, NY Producer and Choreographer	<i>2019-2021</i>
<i>American Idiot, Penn State Centre Stage</i> Assistant Choreographer, Dir: Erin Farrell Speer, Chor: Michele Dunleavy	<i>2017</i>
<i>S'Wonderful, Penn State Centre Stage</i> Associate Director and Choreographer, Dir/Chor: Erin Farrell Speer	<i>2016</i>
Mosaic Concert, Eisenhower Auditorium, State College, PA Choreographer and Performer, Collaboration w/ Anthony Poehailos (clarinet)	<i>2016</i>
<i>Good Kids, Penn State Centre Stage</i> Assistant Choreographer, Dir: Holly Thuma, Chor: Michele Dunleavy	<i>2015</i>
National Honors Society for Dance Arts, Penn State University Choreographer and executive board leader for student-run showcases	<i>2014-2017</i>

PERFORMANCE

<i>White Christmas, Musical Fare, Shea's 710, Buffalo, NY</i> Ensemble, Dir: Chris Kelly, Chor: Kristy Cavanagh	<i>2025</i>
<i>The Prom, Musical Fare, Buffalo, NY</i> Ensemble, Dir: Doug Weyand, Chor: Michael Oliver-Walline	<i>2024</i>
<i>Guys & Dolls, Musical Fare, Buffalo, NY</i> Ensemble, Dir: Chris Kelly, Chor: Kristy Cavanagh	<i>2023</i>
<i>Cabaret, Second Generation Theatre, Buffalo, NY</i> Helga/Dance Captain, Dir: Kristin Bentley; Chor: Kelly Capps	<i>2022</i>

MFA Thesis Concert, University at Buffalo Dancer, "Fragmented Multiplicity," Chor: Meg Kirchoff	<i>Spring 2022</i>
ChoreoLab, University at Buffalo Dancer, "Cultivator," Chor: Dr. Ariel Nereson	<i>Spring 2022</i>
Industry Showcase, Steps on Broadway, New York, NY Dancer, Chor: Felipe Galganni and Sekou MacMiller	<i>2019</i>
Table of Silence Project, Buglisi Dance Theatre, New York, NY Dancer, Dir/Chor: Jacquelyn Buglisi	<i>2019</i>
Venus and Adonis, Brooklyn Opera Works, Brooklyn, NY Dancer, Chor: Marie Zvosec	<i>2018</i>
Alexa, Inwood Art Works Culture Hub, New York, NY Ensemble/Assistant Chor/US Alexa, Chor: Cassie Nordgren, Roddy Kennedy, Ali Marconi	<i>2018</i>
Danza Highbridge Festival, New York, NY Dancer, Chor: Cassie Nordgren	<i>2018</i>
"Another Day of School" (short film), New York, NY Dancer, Feirstein Graduate School of Cinema, Dir: Laura Archer, Chor: Ashley Marinelli	<i>2018</i>
All Shook Up, Nittany Theatre at the Barn, State College, PA Ensemble/Dance Captain, Dir/Chor: Courtney Young	<i>2016</i>
My Fair Lady, Fuse Productions, State College, PA Ensemble/Dance Captain, Dir: Richard Biever, Chor: Jill Brighton	<i>2016</i>
Steel Valley Rhythms, Dunleavy Dance Projects Dancer/Rehearsal Director, Dir/Chor: Michele Dunleavy	<i>2016-2018</i>
PRODUCTION	
Director, MFA Showcase, University at Buffalo	<i>Fall 2023</i>
Director, Informal ChoreoLab Showing, University at Buffalo	<i>Spring 2023</i>
Co-Director, Informal ChoreoLab Showing, University at Buffalo Professor Jenna Zavrel	<i>Spring 2022</i>
Production Assistant, Zodiaque Dance Company, University at Buffalo Directors: Kerry Ring, Michael Deeb Weaver	<i>2021-2022</i>
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & ADDITIONAL TRAINING	
Mental Health First Aid Certification, Theatrical Intimacy Education	<i>March 2026</i>

- Upcoming: Uprooted Teacher Training Workshop** *July 2026*
Lynn Simonson Scholarship recipient: honoring deep appreciation of jazz music, interest in rhythmic nuances and syncopation of movement, and curiosity around anatomy and modalities of wellness
- Choreography Symposium, Dance Lab New York** *May 2-3, 2026*
Facilitated by Josh Prince
- Anti-Racist Theater Training, Theatre Alliance of Buffalo** *Jan. 4 & 11, 2025*
Taught by Jacqueline Lawton
- Intimacy Choreography Workshop, Theatrical Intimacy Education** *Nov. 16, 2024*
Taught by Leo Mock
- Best Practices Workshop, Theatrical Intimacy Education** *Dec. 18, 2023*
Taught by Kim Shively
- Broadway Choreography Intensive, New York, NY** *2022*
Directed by Josh Prince and Valerie Salgado
- Consent in Academia Workshop, Intimacy Directors & Coordinators** *Sept. 12, 2022*
Taught by Francesca Betancourt
- Intimacy Workshop for Choreographers, Intimacy Directors & Coordinators** *August 6, 2022*
Taught by Marcus Watson
- Faculty Development Session, University at Buffalo** *July 14, 2022*
Keynote Session: Love Students to Success: How a Culture of Caring will Save Higher Education,
Dr. Russell Lowery-Hart
- Department Training, University at Buffalo** *April 29, 2022*
Workshop with Koritha Mitchell, Responsible Teaching in a Violent Culture
- Disrupting Gender Assumptions, NDEO** *January 26, 2022*
Challenging Cis-Heteronormative Narratives in Dance
Panelists: Anthony Alterio, Lindsey Bauer, Barbie Diewald, Dr. Ari Calvano, and Natalie Swan
- Private training in precision jazz technique with Rhonda Malkin, NYC** *2018-2020*