**Kentucky Dance Academy Curriculum- Pre-Professional Ballet Division**

**Level I**

**Requirements for entering this level:**

* Must be 8 years old as of enrollment date

**Technique Goals**

* Proper body placement in 1st, 2nd, and 5th positions at the barre and in center work
* Comprehensive understanding of basic barre work including- pliés, tendus, dégagés, ronds de jambes, fondus, frappés, développés or relevés lents, and grand battements. Almost all combinations at this level will be repetitive and simple using only the outside leg at the barre. En croix is the general pattern for most of these combinations and the term should be understood without demonstration.
* Balances at the barre with proper placement- 1st position relevé, soussous, retiré (on flat initially, en relevé by end of year).
* Comprehensive understanding of center work including basic petit allegro (sautés, échappés, changements, and soubresaut- may also include glissades, assemblés, and jetés), beginning pirouette and balancé combinations (not traveling), basic waltz combinations (including balances, turns, pas de bourées, and croisé/éffacé positions), and arm pattern combinations.
* Comprehensive understanding of across the floor movements from corner to corner including piqué turns, soutenou turns, chainés, triplet steps (prep for waltz turns), bourées, piqué arabesques, piqué passes, chassés through both second and fifth positions, pas de chats, and leaps.
* Proper arm placement and memory for each step- no complicated arms should be introduced in this level.
* Introduction to basic head placement and coordination by the end of the year, especially at barre (i.e. head following hand during pliés, head turned to mirror when working dévant with arm in fifth position, head over hand in first arabesque, spotting in turns).

**Other Goals**

* Ability to learn simple combinations with the teacher using verbal commands only by the end of the year- for example, the combination “Four tendus en croix from fifth postion with arm in second position, balance in soussous to finish” should be understood without demonstration.
* Ability to explain proper execution, placement, and general good technique for steps listed above (without needing demonstrations or reminders).
* Understanding and working towards flexibility goals, including splits.
* Proper behavior in class, and respect for the teacher and other dancers at all times.
* Ability to memorize class combinations and choreography and execute them with good timing and rhythm.
* General understanding of the pattern of class (we always start with pliés, then tendus, then dégagés , etc)
* Ability to perform with confidence and bearing fitting a Pre-Professional Track dancer.

**Level II**

**Requirements for entering this level:**

* Must have completed Level I at Kentucky Dance Academy and demonstrated proper understanding of Level I’s concepts and goals

OR

* Must have completed one of Kentucky Dance Academy’s Summer Intensives and demonstrated proper understanding of Level I’s concepts and goals

OR

* Must take a placement class with the Academy Director to determine level placement

**\*All levels (II-VI) are ultimately decided by the Academy Director and may be adjusted at the discretion of the Academy Director\***

**Technique Goals**

* All Level I technique goals, then adding:
* Proper body placement in 4th position, paying close attention to grand pliés in this position at barre.
* Increased knowledge and understanding of barre work (ex.- frappés may be performed with either a flexed or pointed foot, fondus may be performed either remaining on flat or rising to relevé).
* Petit battements (beginning of the year on flat, end of year relevé) at a slow rhythm.
* Pas de cheval added slowly, then incorporated into tendu combinations.
* Relevé lent introduced, then incorporated into adagio combinations.
* The inside foot may be used during barre combinations to increase trickiness and challenge, as well as en cloche movements.
* Balances at barre add- passé only on releve, both inside and outside foot, coupe devant, coupe derrière, sur la cou de pied, arabesque and attitude derrière, both inside and outside foot.
* Increased understanding of center work, increasing in length of each combination through the year.
* Adagio performed in center with more frequency, including basic, slow promenades in arabesque and attitude positions.
* Tombé pas de bourée/chassé pas de bourée steps introduced with pirouettes en de hors traveling from the corner.
* Combinations using more than one type of traveling turn from corner to corner.
* More challenging petit allegro combinations incorporating glissades, assemblés, jetés, pas de chats, and pas de bourées all incorporated into the same combination. Petit allegro should increase in speed through the year.
* Tombé pas de bourée preparation with leaps/pas de chats.
* Waltz turn preparation- emphasis on feet only until mastered, then slow introduction of arms. May be taught traveling down the barre first to remember which direction to turn.
* In this level heads and arms should still be simple and repetitive, with more emphasis on coordinating head/arms with lower body than previously in Level I.

**Prepointe Goals**

* Prepointe goals for Level II are very basic. Dancers should not be spending a lot of time on strengthening exercises since their bodies are still very young.
* Elevés/ relevés may be repeated facing the barre in 1st position as a basic strengthening exercise. Proper weight distribution and placement of the ankles over the toes are REQUIRED at all times in this level. Any strengthening must be done with absolutely correct placement of the whole body.
* Emphasis placed on the dancer working towards their highest relevé position every single time they are on demi-pointe.
* Échappés en relevé may be introduced both at barre and in center as a preparatory step for pointework.

**Other Goals**

* Ability to execute the above listed steps to the expectation of the teacher without reminders or demonstrations.
* Ability to, by the end of the year, understand almost all combinations in Level II classes with verbal commands only.
* All Level II dancers are expected to be a good example to Level I dancers in combined classes and in the dressing rooms/waiting areas of Frankfort School of Ballet.
* Increased flexibility and improved goals for flexibility including splits, heel stretches, etc

**Level III**

**Requirements for entering this level**

* Must have completed Level II at Kentucky Dance Academy and demonstrated proper understanding of Level II’s concepts and goals

OR

* Must have completed one of Kentucky Dance Academy’s Summer Intensives and demonstrated proper understanding of Level II’s concepts and goals

OR

* Must take a placement class with the Academy Director to determine level placement

**\*All levels (II-VI) are ultimately decided by the Academy Director and may be adjusted at the discretion of the Academy Director\***

**Technique Goals**

* All Level I and II goals, then adding:
* Comprehensive understanding of barre work, using proper head and arm placement at all times.
* Ability to add more complicated head and arm positions in all combinations, though especially at barre. “Brain teasers” may be introduced to improve coordination, challenge learning times of combinations, and to avoid too much repetition in barre and center work.
* Rond de jambe en l’air added to all barre work where appropriate- may refer to both types of ronds including the full circle at 45 and 90 degrees as well as the smaller circle with leg extended a la seconde at 45 and 90 degrees. Both en de hors and en de dans are understood.
* Penché devant and derrière may be introduced in adagio work or during stretches at barre. Height is not necessarily important, but a complete understanding of the mechanics of the movement should be demonstrated.
* Ability to demonstrate all basic barre work (tendus, dégagés, fondus, etc.) in center without the support of the barre exhibiting proper understanding of body positions and placement. These combinations should be executed as a warm up for more complex center work to “get on your leg”.
* Arabesque positions (1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th, as well as Cechetti 3rd) should be discussed and understood, especially during adagio combinations.
* Pirouettes with varying preparations en de hors and en de dans should be practiced weekly. Pirouettes should have different leg positions (attitude, arabesque, passé, etc) and dancers should be able to identify whether a pirouette is en de hors or en de dans immediately from demonstration by the end of the year.
* Fouetté turns may be taught at this level. They should begin at the barre without turns and progress to center as the dancers demonstrate understanding of mechanics and strength. The goal is to have four consecutive fouettés on flat by the end of the year.
* Waltz turns with proper arm placement is expected by the end of the year. Waltz turns may be incorporated into other combinations as the dancers progress.
* Pas de Basque (of the quicker, jumping variety) should be understood by the end of the year.
* The beating jumps royale and entrechat quatre may be introduced as petit allegro speed and agility improves. The strength to sauté on one foot should also be incorporated.
* Sissone fermé in arabesque should be executed from corner to corner.
* Tour jetes may be introduced alone or as a new component in grand allegro combinations.

**Prepointe Goals**

* All barre combinations after rond de jambes (fondus, frappés, adagio, and grand battements) should be repeated on relevé as often as possible for strength and balance.
* Elevés and relevés should be repeated on both one foot and two feet facing the barre as often as possible to build strength. Placement should still be the focus, as in Level II.
* Dancers should have a Theraband (or similar band) to be used for foot strengthening in class (when time permits) and especially as part of their pre-class warm up.
* Dancers should understand and strive for full articulation of their feet during all parts of class, especially at the barre.

**Pointe Goals**

* Elevés / relevés in 1st, 2nd, and 5th positions facing the barre, with one hand on the barre, and in center (progressing as they become stronger and safer).
* Elevés / relevés on one foot facing the barre and with one hand on the barre, aiming to be able to relevé in center on one foot.
* Echappes sur la pointe in 2nd and 4th positions facing the barre, with one hand on the barre, and in center.
* Pique passé, arabesque, and attitude with proper placement and strength. Piqué turns should follow soon after pique passé.
* Pas de bourees en pointe en de hors in both coupe and retire positions facing the barre and in center.
* Strong relevés as a pirouette preparation, as well as single pirouettes consistently on both the right and left sides.
* Ability to wear shoes for an entire class and demonstrate strong, efficient technique throughout.
* Bourées should be executed from corner to corner on both sides with no stopping or falling off of pointe.

**Other Goals**

* Dancers in this level should demonstrate a good ability to learn dance steps and combinations quickly, and a good ability to retain corrections and choreography from class to class.
* Dancers in this level are expected to spend more time outside of class on strengthening and stretching exercises. Class time alone is not sufficient to build the strength necessary for pointe work. The teacher will demonstrate and explain all exercises and will expect the dancers to take ownership of their personal progression at this level.
* While we at Kentucky Dance Academy expect all students to “mark” combinations with full arm movements from the Youth Division on, at Level III dancers MUST begin to mark all choreography and combinations without reminders from the teacher. As combinations become more complex the dancers must be aware of how to learn quickly and correctly.

**A note about pointe work: Pointe is a big milestone in a dancer’s life, and many dancers are eager to begin pointe as soon as possible. At KDA it is of the utmost importance that all our dancers are safe and secure at all stages of their dance development. Since pointe work has the potential to cause lifelong injuries, we as a studio take the step of beginning pointe very seriously. If the teacher has any doubts about a dancer’s strength, development, maturity, or ability, that dancer will not receive pointe shoes until any and all doubts are alleviated. The teachers and Academy Director will always keep an open line of communication with both parents and students about any concerns before, during, and after beginning pointe work.**

**Level IV**

**Requirements for entering this level**

* Must have completed Level III at Kentucky Dance Academy and demonstrated proper understanding of Level III’s concepts and goals

OR

* Must have completed one of Kentucky Dance Academy’s Summer Intensives and demonstrated proper understanding of Level III’s concepts and goals

OR

* Must take a placement class with the Academy Director to determine level placement
* Dancers must, excepting very rare cases, have pointe shoes and have completed all the pointe work goals for previous levels.

**\*All levels (II-VI) are ultimately decided by the Academy Director and may be adjusted at the discretion of the Academy Director\***

**Technique Goals**

* All Level I-III goals, then adding:
* Quick, efficient learning and execution of all barre work, demonstrating proper head, arm, and body placement. Combinations should increase in difficulty at this level.
* Combinations using both inside and outside legs at barre, and beginning to introduce half pirouettes at barre for balance.
* Fouetté arabesque both at barre and in center, flat using promenade mechanics followed by releve mechanics.
* Écarté position may be introduced at this level in barre and then in center- emphasis on body positions and difference between devant and derrière, and positioning of body. Height is not necessarily important at this stage.
* Pas de bourées both en de hors and en de dans should be incorporated into center work.
* Pas de Basque step using rond action may be introduced in center, especially in adagio combinations.
* Ménage may be introduced at this level with simple turning combinations- the important part of ménage at this level is the spotting pattern, maintain negative space in the center, and maintaining technique and balance throughout.
* More beating jumps may be introduced into petit allegro- entrechat trois, entrechat cinq, and entrechat six should be mastered by the end of the year.
* Beating assemblés and jetés may be introduced in petit allegro.
* Sissones should be executed in all directions (dévant, a la seconde, and derrière), both as small jumps and larger jumps.
* Precipitée and contre temps should be incorporated as a transitional step in all allegro combinations.
* Fouetté turns should be executed in many classes- the goal by the end of the year is for eight consecutive fouettés.

**Pointe Goals**

* All pointe work from Level III is expected to be able to be executed easily by Level IV dancers.
* Dancers should be working towards multiple pirouettes at every opportunity.
* Dancers should have sufficient strength to take any class en pointe without stopping, and should be able to handle rehearsals for performances en pointe.
* Fouettés should be attempted en pointe by the end of the year- the goal is for four consecutive turns.

**Other Goals**

* Dancers at Level IV are expected to be able to perform in KDA productions en pointe. This is not guaranteed for each and every show, but all dancers should strive for the consistency and strength to perform as a representative of KDA.
* Dancers at Level IV should be quick and attentive learners, and show improvement in retention from Level III.
* Dancers at Level IV are often combined with Levels V-VI and are expected to be enthusiastic and fearless when approaching new steps. No teacher expects perfection, and at Level IV dancers should be confident and capable of trying new steps and more difficult combinations without stress or fear.

**Level V**

**Requirements for entering this level**

* Must have completed Level IV at Kentucky Dance Academy and demonstrated proper understanding of Level IV’s concepts and goals

OR

* Must have completed one of Kentucky Dance Academy’s Summer Intensives and demonstrated proper understanding of Level IV’s concepts and goals

OR

* Must take a placement class with the Academy Director to determine level placement
* Dancers must have pointe shoes and have completed all the pointe work goals for previous levels.

**\*All levels (II-VI) are ultimately decided by the Academy Director and may be adjusted at the discretion of the Academy Director\***

**Technique Goals**

* All Level I-IV goals, then adding:
* Full pirouettes at barre, with emphasis on spotting, placement, and balance.
* Longer combinations with less demonstration by the teacher throughout class.
* More complicated turning combinations with both en de hors and en de dans pirouettes together. All dancers must be capable of multiple pirouettes.
* Pas de bouree entournant en de hors and en de dans may be introduced at this level- consecutive pas de bourees entournants should be executed in center alone and then combined into traveling combinations.
* Brisés should be introduced at this level- both traveling through 4th position and closing in 5th. Devant should be mastered before derrière is taught.
* Ballotés, cabrioles, and jumping fouetté arabesque should be added to petit and grand allegros.
* Petit allegro should be able to be performed both en de hors and en de dans.
* Italian pas de chat may be added to grand allegro.
* Fouettés should be done in most classes- the goal is sixteen consecutive turns on flat.

**Pointe Goals**

* All classes should be able to be done en pointe, though not all will be.
* All rehearsals for KDA productions are expected to be completed en pointe.
* All ballet performances are to be done en pointe.
* Fouettés should be practiced regularly en pointe- the goal is for eight consecutive turns.
* All pirouettes in passé should be double turns en pointe. All larger position turns may remain singles, with attempts at multiples as strength increases.
* Hops en pointe may be introduced- changements should be the first hop mastered, followed by hops on one foot.
* Courou may also be used at this level, with an emphasis on speed and a calm upper body.
* Balloné en pointe should be attempted from corner to corner, first devant and then derrière.

**Other Goals**

* Dancers in Level V should be excellent role models to Level IV in combined classes.
* Dancers in Level V should be working on perfecting simple steps and becoming comfortable with steps that remain too difficult to execute perfectly. No step should be too easy or too difficult for the Level V dancer.
* In rehearsals, Level V dancers are expected to retain complex choreography from class to class. Dancers should spend time outside of class and rehearsal working to improve technique and choreography.
* **Level VI**

**Requirements for entering this level**

* Must have completed Level V at Kentucky Dance Academy and demonstrated proper understanding of Level V’s concepts and goals

OR

* Must have completed one of Kentucky Dance Academy’s Summer Intensives and demonstrated proper understanding of Level V’s concepts and goals

OR

* Must take a placement class with the Academy Director to determine level placement
* Dancers must have pointe shoes and have completed all the pointe work goals for previous levels.

**\*All levels (II-VI) are ultimately decided by the Academy Director and may be adjusted at the discretion of the Academy Director\***

**Technique Goals**

* Level VI dancers should have the cleanest overall technique of all KDA dancers to be placed in the highest level. Barre work should reflect this clean technique and be effectively used as a proper warm up with minimal mistakes in learning and retaining combinations.
* Level VI dancers should be familiar with all the terms listed throughout this curriculum, without the need for demonstrations or reminders.
* Level VI dancers should be able to handle longer, more complicated class combinations, especially in center.
* Pirouettes should always be multiple, unless specified by the teacher, and more unusual positons (a la seconde, transitioning positions during a turn) may be introduced.
* Renversé may be used in Level VI classes as a transitional step in turning, waltzing, and allegro combinations.
* Brisé volé may be introduced at this level, both devant and derrière.
* Petit allegro should almost always be beated.
* Tours en l’air may be used- this is almost always a male step, but may occasionally be performed by females and used for strength training.
* Tombe coupe jeté may be used in grand allegro and in a ménage.
* Fouettés should be used in most classes- the goal is 32 consecutive turns on flat.

**Pointe Goals**

* In Level VI dancers should be attempting all steps they can execute on flat en pointe as well. Ideally, dancers should appear as comfortable en pointe as they do on flat.
* Dancers should feel confident performing classical variations en pointe.
* Dancers will always perform en pointe for KDA productions.

**Other Goals**

* Level VI dancers are the highest caliber of dancer at KDA. They are always expected to represent themselves, FSB, and their fellow dancers with respect, and to treat everyone both inside and outside the studio with the same respect.
* Level VI dancers are expected to be excellent role models to all students of KDA.
* Level VI dancers are usually cast in the most demanding roles in KDA productions- they are expected to have excellent attendance, excellent skills at retaining choreography, and excellent patience during the rehearsal process.
* For all their technical abilities, Level VI dancers are expected to have a high level of artistry and meaning behind their movement. We at KDA strive to be artists above all else.