

Beth Megill

Sabbatical Application Report

Sabbatical for Fall Semester 2024

Sabbatical Project Overview:

I started the adventure of becoming an intimacy coordinator thinking I was going to learn tools to keep our students safe from sexual harassment in performing arts settings. But I quickly learned that when we talk about safety, we often mean comfort—and comfort is not something intimacy choreography can, or should, guarantee. Creative work in an ensemble setting is often uncomfortable—that is often where the potential for growth resides. Consent culture and intimacy choreography best practices, then, are best described as giving the participants agency to accept risks within their window of tolerance and to keep the work moving forward.

Of course, the intimacy coordinator keeps an eye out for potential harms and does what they can to prevent them, but there is no guarantee in this work that challenges, conflicts, and hurts won't arise in the process. This work is an imperfect practice, but one filled with hope of doing better. The Theatrical Intimacy Education team has a phrase: "Better is better." In this way, I believe what I have learned will help me do better, help me navigate more complex challenges, and help me support others in their artistic process in a way that bolsters improved communication, personal agency, and sustainable work environments.

The primary work of an intimacy director is to inform, and thus many tools center around facilitating communication for the participants and constituents (performers, production team). The biggest challenges occur in instances where individuals feel trapped by circumstances to do something that goes against their values or self-respect. Recognizing signs of power imbalances, pressures of urgency, and undeveloped systems for productive communication is something intimacy choreographers can bring to the stage, rehearsal room, and production meetings. Systems are changing from the inside out, and not all spaces will have a progressive approach to consent practices, so it is vital that students learn not only the best practices but also how to navigate unskillful practices that exist in the field so they can advocate for themselves and the work when they enter into four-year programs or professional careers in the arts.

Upon completion of my project, I feel more informed about both the practical tools for staging intimacy, which was the primary objective of the project. But I am also coming away from it with a much deeper understanding of the many contextual, circumstantial, interpersonal, and historical challenges that can undermine good intentions and noble efforts. I now have a better understanding of how quickly seeds of mistrust can undermine a process, and how navigating a sustainable creative culture is one that takes courage and willingness on behalf of all involved parties to make it work. Please see the following outline of the project and let me know if you have any other questions about what I learned and was able to accomplish during my sabbatical.

Objectives of the project:

1. **Complete Levels 1 and 2 of the online coursework entitled “Foundations of Intimacy” through the Intimacy Directors and Coordinators (IDC) professional organization.**
Completed equivalent: I completed the Educator Advocate Program through Theatrical Intimacy Education and achieved my Level 1 certification as an Intimacy Choreographer as part of that week-long training.
2. **Complete 5–6 additional workshops through IDC online offerings.**
Completed equivalent: I completed workshops as part of the EAP training, including Bystander Training, Lighting for Equity, Vulnerability Practice, Introduction to Intimacy Coordination, and Discrimination of Protected Classes (sensitivity training). I also received relevant training through the Jacob’s Pillow Curriculum in Motion Institute, which focused on trust in the workplace, the 10-Lenses approach to conflict resolution, and the CIM strands and pillars, all of which are embedded in social justice work.
3. **Conduct a foundational literature review.**
Completed: See reference list at the end of this document.
4. **Gather resources on intimacy and consent culture relevant to our Moorpark College student performer and choreographer/director population.**
Completed: Various PowerPoint presentations to share with students from the perspective of being a student leader, working with sensitive content, and best practices for consent culture in the rehearsal room.
5. **Cultivate skills and apply best practices for keeping our student performers safe during the various creative practice and performance opportunities at Moorpark College.**
Completed: Mental Health First Aider Training. See also PowerPoint presentations listed above.
6. **Review current Moorpark College dance curriculum and classroom standards to ensure we are operating with sensitivity and excellence regarding intimacy and performance.**
Completed: See attached PowerPoint presentation on recommended SLOs and corresponding rubrics.

Report on expected outcomes:

1. *I will return and share my new knowledge and skills with my fellow faculty through division, department, and PAC advisory committees.*

Report: I have generated a number of resources for the Moorpark College Performing Arts community. You may view my talking through a few of them with the videos link below:

[3 Consent Highlights Part 1 of 2](#)

[3 Consent Highlights Part 2 of 2](#)

I have also created materials targeted for various needs identified within the Performing Arts programs including the following presentations which I have shared with students and faculty respectively already in the Spring 2025 semester.

For Faculty

5 Minute Consent Discussion Prompts
3 Best Practices for Consent in the Performing Arts

For Students

Choreographing Intimacy Essentials
Creating with Sensitive Content
Student Leadership/Student Director Agreement

For the Division

Consent Highlight Handout (See attached)

2. *I will be able to serve as a facilitator of best practices in a variety of performance context in the MC PAC.*

Report: I am now certified as an Intimacy Choreographer through Theatrical Intimacy Education (TIE) and have successfully completed their Educator Advocate Program, which included Bystander Training as well as Mental Health First Aider Training through an outside organization. I feel prepared to enter Moorpark College Performing Arts spaces and offer support and guidance using the best practices from TIE. This includes essential consent practices as well as supportive tools such as boundary practice, vulnerability practice, the four parts of an apology, and more. One important recommendation moving forward is to have someone in the role of intimacy coordinator who is not also serving as the Artistic Director or Choreographer, due to the inherent power imbalances.

3. *I will review and revise current curriculum and classroom practices to ensure they are meeting industry standards.*

Report: I have developed the following recommendations for Student Learning Outcomes that can be added to syllabi as appropriate to a variety of course needs. I have also developed rubrics for assessment for each and worked with my TIE mentor to develop the wording to meet current industry standards and best practices.

See accompanying PowerPoint: Consent Learning Outcomes Megill 2024

Certification Course work and Workshops:

- Educator Advocate Program through Theatrical Intimacy Education Summer 2024 cohort (EAP Program 2024)
- Certified Intimacy Choreographer (TIE)
- Bystander Training (TIE)
- Certified Mental Health First Aider (Mental Health First Aid USA 2024)
- Simonson Method Beginning Level (2024)
- Jacob's Pillow: Curriculum in Motion Fellow (in progress, estimated to complete summer 2025)

Research and Reference List

brown, adrienne maree. *We Will Not Cancel Us: And Other Dreams of Transformative Justice*. Chico, Ca, Ak Press, 2020.

Herman, Judith Lewis. *Truth and Repair*. Basic Books, 14 Mar. 2023.

Feltman, Charles. *The Thin Book of Trust*. United States, Thin Book Pub. Co, 2009.

Mark Alexander Williams. *The 10 Lenses: Your Guide to Living & Working in a Multicultural World*. Sterling, Va, Capital Books, Inc, 2001.

Pace, Chelsea, et al. *Staging Sex: Best Practices, Tools, and Techniques for Theatrical Intimacy*. New York, Ny, Routledge, 2020.

Theaterical Intimacy Education & Consent Culture Highlights



FOUNDATIONAL AGREEMENTS

1. Consent as collaboration.
2. Presume good intent.
3. Recognize Fight, Flight, Freeze Response.
4. Boundaries are unique to each person.
5. Navigate to keep people in collaboration.

OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS

Work?	How?
Think?	What?
Feel?	Which?

PARTS OF AN APOLOGY

1. STATE what you did.
2. THANK the person for bringing this to your attention.
3. SAY I'm sorry.
4. STATE how you plan to approach the next steps or changed behaviors.

SELF CARE CUE SCRIPT

1. Cue "Button."
- BREATH**
1. What do you need?
 2. I need. . . [this].
 3. Yes, you do need this. How would you like to proceed?
- Navigate next steps.

Beth Megill
Dance Faculty
Moorpark College
bmegill@vcccd.edu



Theatrical Intimacy Education & Consent Culture Highlights

CONSENT SLO FOR YOUR COR

After successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. navigate a sustainable and generative working environment for collaborative projects, ensemble learning, and collective performances.

TRAITS FOR HEALTHY COLLABORATION

- Self-Perception
- Sense of self-worth
- Belief in others' inherent dignity and worth
- Honesty
- Humility
- Flexibility
- Resilience
- Vulnerability

SHARED GOAL

Our goal in creative educational spaces is to continue the work in a sustainable environment that can withstand future challenges or sticky situations.

SPECIFIC CONSENT SLOS

After successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. assess their state of being and track the degree of activation of the autonomic nervous system.
2. communicate when a boundary has been or is about to be crossed by employing an agreed upon self-care cue.
3. follow the script for the self-care cue and subsequent negotiation protocol to then proceed according to the negotiated next steps.
4. communicate clearly and calmly with peers, staff, and faculty while in a negotiation or apology process.
5. seek appropriate support or care for themselves in order to return to class or rehearsal as soon as possible (or find alternative resolution to the situation).

Beth McGill
Dance Faculty
Moorpark College
bmegill@vcccd.edu





Consent Culture Student Learning Outcomes

By Beth Megill for Moorpark College
Spring 2025

What does a student need to know, do, think/sense, in order to participate in a consent-based PA space??

GENERAL: Consent Culture Learning Outcomes

A student should be able to:

1. assess their state of being and track the degree of activation of the autonomic nervous system.
2. communicate when a boundary has been or is about to be crossed by employing an agreed upon self-care cue.
3. follow the script for the self-care cue and subsequent negotiation protocol to then proceed according to the negotiated next steps.
4. communicate clearly and calmly with peers, staff, and faculty while in a negotiation or apology process.
5. seek appropriate support or care for themselves in order to return to class or rehearsal as soon as possible (or find alternative resolution to the situation).

The following are sample stand-alone learning outcomes that can be adopted into any COR as needed.

They are all based on the General Consent Culture Learning Outcomes just covered. They emphasize different behavioral aspects of the consent practices and thus may meet different needs for course work.



Stand Alone SLOs

At the end of this course students should be able to:

- act in accordance with salient practices for consent culture in all classroom, rehearsal, and performance spaces.
- navigate interpersonal communication as part of a consent-based learning, creative, and performing process.
- participate in a sustainable and generative working environment for collaborative projects, ensemble learning, and collective performances.
- model professional consent-based behavior including but not limited to: forming functional relationships with classmates and fellow performers; fostering trust through reliable and respectful behavior and speech; navigating discomforts inherently associated with learning and expressive practices; communicating and upholding personal boundaries; contributing to the success of the whole; and, uplifting others while doing the best work possible.



Rubric #1

Consent Culture Learning Outcomes

Rubric	Outstanding	In Progress	Not Present
1. act in accordance with essential practices for consent culture in all classroom, rehearsal, and performance spaces.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• employs and responds to self-care cue as needed.• navigates conflicts with positive/generative outcomes.• maintains good will with all classmates exhibiting healthy working relationships.• communicates and upholds personal boundaries.• models and encourages others to respect and uphold boundaries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• uses self care cue or part of the self-care cue script.• returns after conflicts or difficult situations and navigates them as needed.• has maintained or restored functional working relationships with the majority of their classmates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• does not employ self care cue• does not follow the self-care cue script.• does not resolve conflicts with a generative or restorative outcome.• does not maintain productive relationship with the majority of their classmates.• does not honor and uphold the boundaries of others

Rubric #2

Consent Culture Learning Outcomes

Rubric	Outstanding	In Progress	Not Present
2. navigate a sustainable and generative working environment for collaborative projects, ensemble learning, and collective performances.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> communicates needs effectively while honoring the needs of others. spontaneous and creatively fosters generative communication in others. helps build and strengthen relationships through clear communication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> communicates needs, but may have some challenges navigating complex issues in high stress situations. communicates effectively when provided a structure to follow. maintains generally sustainable relationships. restores relationships and respectful communication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> does not communicate effectively or skillfully in stressful or high stakes situations. does not follow provided structures for generative communication. does not restore interpersonal relationships as needed to proceed with a shared project.

Rubric #3

Consent Culture Learning Outcomes

Rubric	Outstanding	In Progress	Not Present
3. participate in a sustainable and generative working environment for collaborative projects, ensemble learning, and collective performances.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uplifts the group morale and functionality through model behavior in verbal and nonverbal communication. • helps restore classmates to their best selves. • works to diffuse conflict and mediate disagreements in order to promote a productive working environment. • takes personal responsibility for their role in a challenging situation or conflict. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintains their role in the learning or creative environment with integrity. • maintains productive relationships and good will with the class or ensemble. • exhibits trustworthy behavior. • does not actively improve difficult situations and/or may indirectly be involved in conflicts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • does not interact with integrity and therefore severs trust with others in the class. • work against the overall success of others in the group or the group as a whole (unintentionally or intentionally) . • fosters mistrust or unskillful behavior between members of the ensemble or leadership.

Rubric #4

Consent Culture Learning Outcomes

Rubric	Outstanding	In Progress	Not Present
4. model professional consent-based behavior including but not limited to: ...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • forms productive relationships with classmates and fellow performers • fosters trust through reliable and respectful behavior and speech • navigates discomforts associated with inherent learning and expressive practices • communicates and upholds personal boundaries • contributes to the success of the whole • uplifts others while doing the best work possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintains productive relationships with classmates and fellow performers. • exhibits mostly respectful behavior and speech and/or makes efforts to ameliorate missteps • makes effort to navigate discomforts inherent to the work • communicates boundaries and works to uphold them • does their part in the ensemble but no more. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • severs productive relationship with one or more classmates or fellow performers. • exhibits unskillful behavior and speech. • does not do what is needed to return to a working relationship. • works against the overall success of others in the group or the group as a whole (unintentionally or intentionally) . • fosters unskillful behavior between members of the ensemble or leadership.