The purpose of El Centro Hispano Center at Fort Lewis College is: To offer a place to those who are interested in learning about Hispanic Culture and assist with the retention of Hispanic and multicultural students.

Ballet Folklorico de Durango is an El Centro-sponsored dance program and student-run club open to anyone. Classes for youth are held weekly at Fort Lewis College beginning in the fall, ending in May with Cinco de Mayo community celebrations.

Adult and college students also participate in the program, creating a unique mentorship model aimed at increased educational successes for our underrepresented k-20 students in the Durango area.

Ballet Folklorico de Durango is a traditional Mexican dance program. You will learn and perform traditional dances in a fun and supportive environment.

Please call or email at least one of the dance instructors when your child will not be attending class or performance.

Melisa M. Smith
970-769-2207 (cell)

Veronica Flores
505-249-0003 (cell)

Ballet Folklorico is a program of Fort Lewis College’s Hispano Resource Center, El Centro de Muchos Colores:

El Centro is a Tier 1 Partner with Durango School District 9-R:

... with many thanks to the “Save Ballet Folklorico” Dance Committee members, support from Jerry Martinez at CJ’s Diner, Brennan’s, LPEA & Mercury Gives grants, and our dancer’s family & supporters!

Ballet Folklorico de Durango 2015 Fall Semester Calendar!

*Some Performances are tentative (*T) based on dancer availability & participation, and additional requests are possible throughout the semester

Monday, Aug. 31, 5:30-6:30 p.m. Dance Practice Begins, (classes EVERY Monday night through Dec. 7)

Monday, Sept. 7, 5:30-6:30 p.m. Dance Practice
Monday, Sept. 14, 5:30-6:30 pm Dance Practice

Tuesday, Sept. 15, 5:00-5:30 p.m. Performance – 11th Annual Fiesta on the Mesa, FLC amphitheater, free & open to public, dinner provided for dancers & family

Wednesday, Sept. 16, 5:30 p.m. Performance – Ignacio Community Library Hispano Heritage Month kickoff party

Monday, Sept. 21, 5:30-6:30 pm Dance Practice

*T Saturday, Sept. 26, 11 a.m. Performance – Mancos Valley Arts Council’s Annual Street Fair

Monday, Sept. 28, 5:30-6:30 pm Dance Practice

*T Saturday, Oct. 3, 10 a.m. Parade Performance – Durango Cowboy Poetry Gathering Parade, Main Ave.

Monday, Oct. 5, 5:30-6:30 pm Dance Practice

*T October Performance, mid-day/mid-week TBD — Bayfield Elementary all-school assembly

*T Saturday, Oct. 10, Noon Performance — Animas Museum annual Wood Market, Durango

Monday, Oct. 12 5-6 pm Performance — Real History of the Americas on Columbus Day, FLC Ballroom

Monday, Oct. 19, 5:30-6:30 pm Dance Practice

Monday, Oct. 26, 5:30-6:30 pm Dance Practice

Monday, Nov. 2, 5:30-6:30 pm Dance Practice

Monday, Nov. 9, 5:30-6:30 pm Dance Practice

Monday, Nov. 16, 5:30-6:30 pm Dance Practice

November 23-25 Fall Break, NO CLASS everybody!

Monday, Nov. 30, 5:30-6:30 pm Dance Practice

Monday, Dec. 7, 5:30-6:30 pm Last 2015 practice

(visit www.fortlewis.edu/elcentro for updated calendar)
About Our Instructors

Melisa Smith

Melisa Smith is local to Durango, graduating from Durango High School in 2007 and Fort Lewis College in 2012. She lives and works in Durango, applying her Bachelor’s degrees in International Business and Spanish. She has been involved with Ballet Folklorico from a young age, getting her start under DLEC-later Del Alma, and studying under instructor Jennifer Cossey. Melisa brought the dance group to Fort Lewis College in 2007 and it flourished under leadership from her younger sister Kathy Smith and now-retired instructor Jennifer Cossey. Melisa’s teaching style is hands on. She believes it is necessary to know the background and culture of the dances while maintaining a high level of fun. Dance shouldn’t feel like just any another class, it should lift the spirits and be enjoyable not only for the audience but for the dancers as well. I believe that when the dancers are having fun, it shows!

Veronica Flores

My name is Veronica Flores and I am from Albuquerque, New Mexico, a 2014 high school graduate of West Mesa High School. I am nineteen years old and am currently a student at Fort Lewis College working on a bachelor’s degree in Forensic Psychology. I would like to welcome those of you returning, and those of you who are looking to join our Ballet Folklorico program here at FLC! I will be one of the new instructors coming in as a first-year participant working with El Centro. I am very excited to see what lies ahead in assisting with the teaching skills, choreography, and history behind the bailes. Dance has always played a valuable part of my life and character. Throughout my childhood as well as “pre-teen years,” I took pride in participating in many programs that varied between styles in the world of dance – one of them being Ballet Folklorico. I had the most fun with Folklorico. I enjoyed every aspect of the traditional dance, including the costumes and music. In becoming a part of this team as an instructor I hope to influence others to enjoy the dance as I did and continue to do so. My goal is to make sure that everyone participates and has an exciting and fun, memorable experience in learning new things. I am grateful to start my journey with you all and am looking forward to seeing many faces join the group.

Rules & Expectations of Dancers

Each dancer represents Ballet Folklorico de Durango and should exhibit a high level of commitment and discipline. Any behavior that violates these rules and expectations is unacceptable.

- Dancers will demonstrate the utmost respect to the dance instructors and other dancers.
- They will also show respect to costumes, shoes, and accessories. No eating or drinking while in costume. No gum or candy.
- Practice Attire: Please wear clothes that are comfortable to move in. No skirts. Have your hair combed back and out of the face. No jewelry, like bracelets or rings. Nothing that can be distracting to the student. Shoes & practice skirt will be provided.
- Performance Attire: Please wear black spandex shorts with white tank top. No underwear should be showing. Hair must be pulled back in bun. Makeup: ages 5-10 must wear red lipstick and blush. Ages 11 & up, check with dance instructor.
- Be on time to dance practice and performances. Dancers will be assigned costumes. At no time will the dancers be allowed to take anything belonging of the dance group home. All materials will be provided.
- No running in the hall ways. No interrupting the dance instructor. If you have a question, please raise your hand.

Parents Roles & Expectations

Parents, you are an important part of this group. It is our objective to work with parents in a mutually respectful environment to achieve the goal of shaping the future dancers of our community. Communication between parents and dance instructors is critical. Please keep us informed of any issues, concerns, or outside commitments of your child. When you do have concerns or questions please keep the following in mind:

- Schedule an appointment with both dance instructors. Please do not confront the dance instructors at the time of practice or performance.
- Address all issues at the time of appointment. El Centro coordinator can be brought when/if necessary.
- When concerns do arise the following is acceptable topics: health and safety, personal growth and development, abusive treatment by dance instructor, scheduling conflicts, and/or positive feedback.

Other Expectations:

- Parents are expected to help out in someway with fundraisers.

- Please be on time to practice and performances! If you cannot make either please inform dance instructor.

- No cell phones at practice (both parents and students)

Contact Us:

El Centro de Muchos Colores
(970) 247-7654

or

Visit: www.fortlewis.edu/elcentro