



## 2025-2026 COLLEGE CLASSIC RULES AND REGULATIONS

Thank you for your interest in DTU's College Classic National Championship. This set of rules and regulations will assist you in preparation for your 2025-2026 competition season. The rules and regulations will apply to all College teams and mascots. Please read thoroughly. Rules and Regulations are subject to change. For any questions or concerns, contact The College Classic at [info@thecollegeclassic.com](mailto:info@thecollegeclassic.com). **Substantive changes to the rules and regulations from the 2024-2025 season are printed in red.** We look forward to seeing you at one or more of our competitions this year!

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## **SECTION I: GENERAL RULES**

### ***HOW TO HANDLE PROCEDURAL QUESTIONS***

1. **RULES & PROCEDURES** – The coach or advisor of a competing team or mascot should contact us regarding any questions or concerns pertaining to the rules and regulations.
2. **PERFORMANCE** – Should there be questions regarding the team's or mascot's performance, the coach or advisor of the team or mascot should contact us to discuss any concerns.

### ***DISQUALIFICATION***

Teams that do not abide by the Rules and Regulations are subject to disqualification from the event. A disqualified team or mascot will automatically forfeit its rights to any prizes or awards presented at the event.

We reserve the right to disallow any team, mascot, coach, dancer, cheerleader, spectator or other person from attending any of our or our affiliates' competitions, for any reason, in our sole and final discretion.

### ***GENERAL SAFETY GUIDELINES***

1. Teams and mascots should have an emergency plan in the event of an injury.
2. Coaches have the responsibility of recognizing the abilities of their performer(s), and should make sure the presented routine does not exceed that person's/team's capabilities or include elements that create a safety risk for their team or mascot regardless of whether the element is not specifically listed as a safety risk in the routine guidelines below.
3. Technical skills should not be executed without an advisor/coach present. Performers should always practice in an area suitable for their safety. Performers should not perform technical skills on:
  1. Concrete, asphalt, or any other hard or uncovered surface
  2. Wet surfaces
  3. Uneven surfaces
  4. Surfaces with obstructions
4. Appropriate warm-up and stretching should be implemented by the performer(s) both before and after a performance.
5. All College Classic events will be run in accordance with applicable laws and regulations regarding health and safety, and coaches, teams and spectators will be expected to fully comply with such laws and regulations, as well as any more restrictive health and safety rules put in place for such events from time to time.
6. Additional safety guidelines applicable to dance and cheer teams can be found in SECTIONS III and IV.

## **SECTION II: JUDGING**

### ***JUDGING PROTOCOL***

Dance Team Union appoints judges based upon a host of factors, including their relevant experience and feedback received throughout the year judging at our regional competitions. The appointed judges will be evaluating each performance based upon a scoring system as specified in the applicable score sheet. The total score from each judge will be combined with scores from the other judges and averaged, generating the team's or mascot's overall score.

### ***EVALUATION PROCESS***

Each judge will evaluate performances using an individual score sheet designated to the performing team or mascot. The judge will be responsible for providing a thorough evaluation and sufficient feedback for each competing team or mascot. Score sheets will be released to each individual team or mascot after each competition or competition round, and detailed score rankings will be available for teams and mascots to review after the competition.

### ***ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF JUDGING AND EVALUATION POLICIES***

Each judge will be evaluated after the College Classic based upon, among other things, input from competing teams and mascots. Each judge's responsibility is to make fair decisions based solely upon the score sheet, using his/her knowledge of dance/cheer/mascot (as applicable) and training as a professional judge. Each participating team and mascot acknowledges that the decisions of the judges are final. However, because the integrity, transparency and professionalism of our judging process is key to our competition philosophy, we encourage each team to bring any judging issues to our attention either through our formal post-competition evaluation process or by other means. Just as our judges' frank evaluation of your routines will help your team or mascot to improve, your frank evaluation of our judges and judging process will help us and our judges to improve as well.

## SECTION III: DANCE TEAMS

### Part 1: Entry Guidelines and Awards

#### ENTRY GUIDELINES

1. College/university teams may compete in the following styles: Pom, Jazz, Hip Hop and Team Performance. At any event, we may choose to combine categories or add additional categories in order to increase competitiveness or for any other reason at its discretion. Teams may not enter the same routine in more than one style at the same competition.
2. At The College Classic National Championship, we will have Spirit Showdown divisions. Regional or virtual competitions may have Spirit Showdown divisions at our discretion. If we do not have a Spirit Showdown division at a Regional or virtual competition, then college/university teams at that event may compete their Spirit Showdown routine in the Open division.
3. The same program at the same college or university may not enter multiple routines in the same division of the same style (e.g., two teams from the same program entered in Division II Jazz) when all of the dancers in both routines are the same. If a program wishes to enter multiple routines in the same division of the same style and all dancers are not the same in each routine, then the program must designate different team names (e.g. Alaska State University Blue Team and Alaska State University Gold Team), and the following shall apply:
  - a. If there are one or more overlapping dancers in the routines, then only the highest scoring routine will advance to finals and receive a placement in the final awards.
  - b. If there are no overlapping dancers in the routines, then all routines are eligible to advance to finals and receive a placement in the final awards.

If there are multiple programs from the same college or university competing in a division (for example, an official athletic team and a club team), the limitations above will apply to each program separately.

4. The following team size guidelines will apply:
  - a. Team size will be determined as of the registration date.
  - b. At least 5 dancers must be registered to perform in each team routine. A team will still be allowed to compete if they drop to fewer than five dancers at performance time but at least five dancers must be registered and paid for in order for the routine to compete.
  - c. Teams may use a different number of dancers in each routine subject to the minimums above required to be registered.

**ELIGIBLE TEAMS**

1. REGIONAL COMPETITIONS AND COLLEGE CLASSIC: College teams may compete at all Dance Team Union regional competitions, in addition to The College Classic.
2. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
  - a. Each team must be an official dance team at the team's college/university either under athletics or as a club sport or fine arts program, and DTU reserves the right to require verification from the college/university indicating the team is an official team as part of the registration process. Regardless of the character of the team's designation at the university (athletics, club sport, fine arts), the team will be grouped for competition with other teams in accordance with the Competition Divisions section below. Multiple teams from the same college/university may compete in the same event and in the same division as each other, as long as they are both recognized as official dance teams at such college/university.
  - b. Teams from outside the United States may compete in regional or virtual competitions or the College Classic in the division at or above the division they would compete if their team was from the United States (as determined by The College Classic based on available data, in The College Classic's sole discretion).
  - c. An All-Star team for which all performing dancers are from the same school (or from the same cooperative school or group of schools if not disallowed by their state) may choose to compete in a school division for any category it enters.

**ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS**

Any performer who is eligible to be a member of their team based on their college's or university's eligibility rules may perform at The College Classic or any Dance Team Union regional or virtual championship. We reserve the right to require documentation at any time in order to confirm, in our sole discretion, whether an individual is eligible to compete.

**COMPETITION DIVISIONS**

1. Teams may be grouped within each style into divisions based upon their NCAA, NAIA or similar sporting affiliation or division (provided, however, that all teams from NCAA Division I FBS schools participating in the Big Ten, Big 12, ACC, SEC and Pac 12 for the 2024-25 football season will be considered Division 1A and all other Division I schools will be considered Division I).
2. A team will not be considered to be within a division until its athletics programs are eligible to win national championships in that division (i.e., if a school moves from NCAA Division II to Division I, it will remain in Division II for our purposes during any waiting period for championship eligibility).
3. Any split between divisions will be determined by DTU based upon the number of entries received for each competition. In addition, DTU may choose to combine styles or add additional categories in order to increase competitiveness in DTU's sole discretion.

4. Any team may elect to “compete up” – that is, compete in a division for teams of larger school sizes in accordance with the above guidelines. Teams may not elect to “compete down” with teams of smaller school sizes.

### **COMBINING DIVISIONS**

At The College Classic National Championship, DTU may combine any division that contains four or fewer entries (for dance teams) or three or fewer entries (for cheer or mascot) with either (i) an adjacent classification or (ii) a different style of dance, each in DTU’s sole discretion. This may result in divisions that include multiple school sizes in a single style (e.g. Division 1/1A Team Performance) or multiple styles in one or more divisions competing in an Open division. No single team divisions will be permitted at The College Classic National Championship unless DTU determines in its sole discretion that there is a division that cannot reasonably be combined with any other division.

### **REGIONALS AWARDS**

1. Trophies will be awarded to at least the top 50% of teams in each division for each style.
2. Additional specialty awards may be awarded at our discretion.

### **COLLEGE CLASSIC ADVANCEMENT AND AWARDS**

1. The following rules will apply to advancing teams from preliminaries at The College Classic National Championship:
  - a. Including teams advancing from any Semifinal pursuant to the next sentence, at least 50% of teams that compete in the preliminary round (up to a maximum of 20 finalist teams, unless otherwise approved by DTU in its sole discretion) will ultimately advance to finals.
  - b. DTU will determine whether or not to hold a Semifinal for a division at The College Classic in its sole discretion based on the number of teams in the division and other scheduling factors.
  - c. For divisions with a Semifinal round:
    - i. Participating in the Semifinal benefits each team by giving it an additional round of feedback from DTU judges, and has no negative effect on the team’s opportunity to win a national championship. Scores from the preliminary and Semifinal rounds do not carry over to finals. Although DTU may decide, in its sole discretion, to advance one or more teams from a preliminary round or group directly to finals, **most teams competing in the preliminary round will be invited to dance again in the Semifinal round.**
    - ii. **There is no specific qualifying score or placement in a preliminary round or group that guarantees advancing directly to finals. The only team guaranteed**

**to advance directly to finals in a specific division is the first place team in the preliminary round in that division.**

- iii. Where there are multiple preliminary groups in a division at The College Classic (for example, Division I Jazz A and Division I Jazz B), DTU will look at each preliminary group independently when deciding whether to advance any team or teams directly to finals. DTU will not compare scores or placements across different preliminary groups when making this decision, as factors such as different judging panels or performance orders may impact the scoring of a preliminary group.
  - iv. Teams may opt out of competing in the Semifinal by notice to DTU given in accordance with instructions provided by DTU prior to The College Classic.
  - v. The highest scoring team(s) in each Semifinal will advance to finals. The total number of teams advancing to finals from a Semifinal will be determined by DTU in its sole discretion, but at a minimum enough teams will advance to finals so that the total number of teams competing in finals meets the requirements of Section 1(a) above.
2. Finalists in categories with 6 or more finalists will compete figure skating-style (in sub-groupings with lowest scores competing first, based upon their scores from the previous round, but within each sub-grouping, teams will draw for random order). Finalists in categories with 5 or fewer finalists will compete in reverse order of their preliminary scores.
  3. All finalists will receive trophies. In addition, all The College Classic National Champions will receive banners, jackets or fleeces, and rings. In recognition of the tremendous success of each champion, no Grand Champion award(s) will be given at The College Classic.
  4. DTU aims to use a mixture in finals of (i) judges who have seen the finalist routines in a prior round, and (ii) judges who are seeing the finalist routines for the first time. This approach attempts to balance teams' interest in showing improvement from round to round, and teams' interest in having new judges take a "fresh look" at their routine in finals. However, given the complexity of the nationals schedule, judge availability and the unpredictable nature of preliminary and semifinal results, DTU cannot and does not guarantee that any finals judges will have judged one or more finalist teams in an earlier round.

#### **THE DANCE BATTLE ROUND AT THE COLLEGE CLASSIC**

The College Classic will hold a Dance Battle Round at the National Championship. The primary purpose of the Battle Round is to promote a fun, supportive environment for selected teams in various styles of dance to showcase their routines for each other and the viewing audience. The College Classic will conduct the Battle Round in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. Within the Dance Battle Round:
  - a. Individual Dance Battles will be divided by dance style.

- b. The total number of Dance Battles and groupings of styles will be announced by The College Classic prior to the National Championship.
2. No scoring or critiques will be done by judges in the Battle Round. Judges will view all routines in each Battle, collaborate and announce a Battle champion shortly after the conclusion of the applicable Battle. Each dance judge will be asked to vote for a winner based on overall performance quality, showmanship, and best representation of the style(s) presented. Battle champions will receive a Battle Cup (and bragging rights until next year's National Championship!).
3. In the interest of allowing teams to see and cheer on all other participating teams, **no dance team may perform more than once in the Dance Battle Round.**
4. The College Classic may invite teams to participate in a Battle Round beginning after the conclusion of all preliminary routines for teams eligible for that Battle Round, and invitations may continue to be issued throughout finals for that group of teams. For example, if preliminaries for all Jazz divisions eligible for the Jazz Battle conclude Saturday at 5:00 pm, and the Dance Battle Round is scheduled to begin Sunday at 7:00 pm, then The College Classic may issue Jazz Battle invitations at any time between those times, based on either preliminary or finals performance, in The College Classic's sole discretion.
5. Preliminary round scores and finals performance quality will be a factor in determining Battle Round invitees; however, these will not be the only determining factors. The College Classic may also consider factors such as entertainment value, showmanship, creativity, appropriateness for a "battle" atmosphere, and/or judge recommendations in issuing invitations. No team is guaranteed to participate in the Battle Round by virtue of having the highest score in preliminaries, and a team with a lower score may be invited to the Battle Round if it meets one or more criteria set forth above.
6. A schedule for each Battle within the Dance Battle Round will be published in advance of the National Championship with start times for each Battle category; however, a specific performance time for each participating team will not be published in advance.
7. **Battle Round invitations and results are completely independent of the official results of The College Classic National Championship.** Battle Round results are based solely on the team's performance in the Battle Round, in accordance with the Battle judging criteria set forth above. National Champion results are based solely on the team's performance in Finals for its style and division, in accordance with the score sheet for such division.

## Part 2: Dance Routine Guidelines

### GENERAL SAFETY

The coach of a team is responsible for monitoring the safety of each element of a dance and determining that it is safe to perform. The character of the skills being performed, as well as the skill level of the dancers performing those skills, should be considered by the coach in making this determination. All of the skills listed below as well as any other movement should be evaluated for safety by the advisor/coach prior to competition.



**TECHNICAL CONSULTANT**

At The College Classic, a technical consultant will be available during practice and official warm-ups to assist coaches with any questions or issues they have regarding the safety of their routines. During the season, teams may request the assistance of a technical consultant. If a coach/advisor is unsure of the safety of a skill, he or she can submit a video of the activity in question to [info@danceteamunion.com](mailto:info@danceteamunion.com). If a team has received approval for a track from another competition, they may rely on that approval for safety consideration purposes.

**TUMBLING AND TRICKS**

1. Front/back aerials and aerial cartwheels, as well as movements where all weight is borne on the dancer's hands and/or head, such as headsprings, should not be executed with poms in both hands that are not hands-free poms.
2. Drops directly to the knee, thigh, back, front, head, shoulder, head, neck or seat onto the performing surface are generally considered to be unsafe. In order to address the safety issue, the dancer should first bear weight on the hand(s) or foot/feet.
3. Landing in a push-up position onto the performance surface from a jump in which the legs are in front of the body and swing behind are generally not considered to be safe.
4. Dancers should not land directly on the head/neck at any time from an airborne skill. Any kip up motion should also initiate from the back/shoulder area touching the ground.

**LIFTS AND PARTNERING**

1. The Executing Dancer should be supported from a Supporting Dancer who is in direct contact with the floor throughout the entire skill. (Exception: Kick Line Leaps).
2. Hip over-head rotation of the Executing Dancer(s) is generally not considered to be a safety issue, as long as the Executing Dancer is returned to the performance floor on his/her feet or hands with support from the Supporting Dancer(s).
3. Simultaneous over or under another dancer that includes hip-over-head rotation by both dancers is generally not considered to be safe.
4. Drops to the knee, thigh, back, front, head, shoulder, or seat onto the performing surface are generally considered to be unsafe. In order to address the safety issue, the dancer should first bear weight on the hand(s) or foot/feet.

**RELEASE MOVES**

1. It is generally not considered to be unsafe for an Executing Dancer to jump, leap, step, or push off a Supporting Dancer, and a Supporting Dancer may generally release/toss an Executing Dancer without creating a safety issue.

2. "Basket tosses" are not considered to be safe for dance teams. However, a dancer may be safely released and caught in a dance lift with his/her head above his/her feet.

### **COMPETITION ROUTINE GUIDELINES**

1. Teams may make substitutions in the event of injury. Substitute participants must be listed on the team's participant roster in the team's registration form.
2. Any equipment or items that may damage the performance floor are prohibited. Floor markers (including, without limitation, tape, rope, or cones) are not permitted at The College Classic but are permitted at Regional Competitions so long as there is nothing affixed to the actual performance floor (e.g., taping the floor for the purpose of marking is prohibited) and so long as use of floor markers by a team does not delay the competition beyond the published scheduled performance time(s) for the team.
3. **There is no minimum or maximum time limit for any routine; however, a team must notify us upon registering and no later than two weeks before the competition if any routine is longer than 2 minutes 30 seconds, for scheduling purposes.**
4. A responsible adult must be present to assist in the start and finish of the routine music. **IT IS RECOMMENDED TO UPLOAD YOUR MUSIC TO THE REGISTRATION SOFTWARE BY ONE WEEK PRIOR TO COMPETITION.**

### **JEWELRY**

Jewelry will be allowed for dance team members, so long as it is not considered hazardous to the safety of the performers. We reserve the right to require a team to remove any jewelry it deems hazardous at any point during the competition.

### **PROPS AND BACKDROPS**

1. Props are permitted in any dance category as long as they are wearable, handheld, or freestanding and can be taken off or released safely (as determined by DTU).
2. No dry ice, confetti, glass, canned smoke, water or other liquid, flammable material or other similar loose material that may obstruct the judges' view or affect the condition of the performance floor may be used.
3. No prop may be tossed off the performance floor or used in any way that risks damage to or obstruction of any persons or property in the vicinity of the performance floor (including, without limitation, the ceiling, a performance backdrop or any lighting on the front of the floor).
4. For any questions or concerns regarding prop choice, please send a photo of the prop to DTU prior to the competition.
5. Backdrops **may** be permitted, but only with prior written approval of DTU. DTU reserves the right to disapprove a backdrop for any reason in its sole discretion, including (without limitation) if DTU believes the backdrop may damage the floor, damage or obstruct any part of the practice or

performance area, or disrupt the flow of the event (including any excessive time moving the backdrop on and off the practice or performance floor).

6. Poms are not considered “props” for the purpose of the remainder of this section, and may be used only in the Pom, Team Performance and Spirit Showdown categories.

### **AUDIENCE INVOLVEMENT**

Crowd appeal is an important element of any dance team performance; however, teams will be judged based only on performance elements taking place on the competition floor. Involvement of non-regular members of a dance team (“Other Participants”) in the performance of the routine is allowed in the Spirit Showdown divisions only, subject to the following restrictions:

1. Only registered and paid individuals may be on the official performance floor
2. Any Other Participants must be located in the Fan Zone and stay in the Fan Zone for the entire performance
3. The involvement of Other Participants is subject to all of the rules and regulations set forth herein for competing dancers, including the safety guidelines.

## SECTION IV: CHEER TEAMS

### Part 1: Entry Guidelines and Awards

#### **ENTRY GUIDELINES**

College/university teams may compete in Co-Ed or All-Girl categories, as well as the Partner/Group Stunt category. Any mascot that is part of a college/university's official spirit program may compete in the Mascot category. A college or university may enter one routine in each team routine style (maximum of 2 routines total), and an unlimited number of Partner/Group Stunt or Mascot routines. If a college/university wishes to enter multiple team routines in a single team category, they must designate different teams (e.g. Lincoln University Gold Team and Lincoln University Silver Team) and only the top scoring team will be eligible to receive a final awards placement. The following team size guidelines will apply:

- a. Team size will be determined as of the registration date.
- b. At least 5 performers must be registered to perform in each team routine. A team will still be allowed to compete if they drop to fewer than five performers at performance time but at least five performers must be registered and paid for in order for the routine to compete.
- c. Teams may use a different number of performers in each routine subject to the minimums above required to be registered.
- d. Two (2) performers must compete in each Partner Stunt routine. Partners may be of the same gender or different genders. Three (3) or four (4) performers must compete in each Group Stunt routine.
- e. Any Co-Ed cheer team with 1-4 male cheerleaders will compete in the Small Co-Ed division; all other Co-Ed teams will compete in the Large Co-Ed division.
- f. Only one (1) mascot may perform in any routine in the Mascot division; however, there is no limit on the number of individual mascots who can enter the Mascot division from the same college/university. Every performer must be an official mascot that is considered as such within the college/university's official spirit program.

#### **ELIGIBLE TEAMS**

College/university cheer teams and mascots may not compete at Dance Team Union regional competitions, but are encouraged to compete at The College Classic and the College Virtual Championship. Each team must be an official cheer team at the team's college/university either under athletics or as a club sport or fine arts program, and DTU reserves the right to require verification from the college/university indicating the team is an official team as part of the registration process. Regardless of the character of the team's designation at the university (athletics, club sport, fine arts), the team will be grouped for competition with other teams in accordance with the Competition Divisions section below. Teams from outside the United States

may compete in The College Classic in the division at or above the division they would compete if their team was from the United States.

### **ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS**

Any performer who is eligible to be a member of their team or perform as a mascot based on their college's or university's eligibility rules may perform at The College Classic. We reserve the right to require documentation at any time in order to confirm, in our sole discretion, whether an individual is eligible to compete.

### **COMPETITION DIVISIONS**

1. Teams may be grouped within each style into divisions based upon their NCAA, NAIA or similar sporting affiliation or division (provided, however, that all teams from NCAA Division I FBS schools participating in the Big Ten, Big 12, ACC, SEC and Pac 12 for the 2024-25 football season will be considered Division 1A and all other Division I schools will be considered Division I).
2. A team will not be considered to be within a division until its athletics programs are eligible to win national championships in that division (i.e., if a school moves from NCAA Division II to Division I, it will remain in Division II for our purposes during any waiting period for championship eligibility).
3. Any split between divisions will be determined by DTU based upon the number of entries received for each competition. In addition, DTU may choose to combine styles or add additional categories in order to increase competitiveness in DTU's sole discretion.
4. Any team may elect to "compete up" – that is, compete in a division for teams of larger school sizes in accordance with the above guidelines. Teams may not elect to "compete down" with teams of smaller school sizes.

### **COMBINING DIVISIONS**

At The College Classic National Championship, **DTU may combine any cheer division that contains three or fewer entries with an adjacent classification in DTU's sole discretion.** This may result in divisions that include multiple school sizes (e.g. Division 1/1A All-Girl Cheer). No single team divisions will be permitted at The College Classic National Championship unless DTU determines in its sole discretion that there is a division that cannot reasonably be combined with any other division.

### **COLLEGE CLASSIC AWARDS**

At least 50% of teams that compete in the preliminary round will ultimately advance to finals. No semifinal or Second Chance Round will be held. Finalists in categories with **six** or more finalists will compete figure skating-style (in sub-groupings with lowest scores competing first, based upon their scores from the previous round, but within each sub-grouping, teams will draw for random order). Finalists in categories with **five** or fewer finalists will compete in reverse order of their preliminary scores. All finalists will receive trophies. In addition, all The College

Classic champions will receive banners, jackets or fleeces, and rings. In recognition of the tremendous success of each champion, no Grand Champion award(s) will be given at The College Classic.

### ***THE CHEER BATTLE ROUND AT THE COLLEGE CLASSIC***

The College Classic will hold a Cheer Battle Round at the National Championship. The primary purpose of the Battle Round is to promote a fun, supportive environment to showcase selected athletes' skills and routines for each other and the viewing audience. The College Classic will conduct the Battle Round in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. Within the Cheer Battle Round, there will be two Individual Cheer Battles:
  - a. Pyramid Battle, for cheer teams selected by The College Classic for the Battle, and
  - b. Tumble Rumble, where any team may select one (1) cheerleader to participate. The College Classic may allow more than 1 cheerleader to represent a team at its sole discretion.

More details will be provided by The College Classic leading up to the event.

2. No scoring or critiques will be done by judges in the Battle Round. Judges will view all performances in each Battle, collaborate and announce a Battle champion shortly after the conclusion of the applicable Battle. Each judge will be asked to vote for a winner based on overall technical quality, crowd appeal, difficulty and creativity. Battle champions will receive a Battle Cup (and bragging rights until next year's National Championship!).
3. The College Classic may invite teams to participate in the Pyramid Battle beginning after the conclusion of all preliminary routines for teams eligible for that Battle Round, and invitations may continue to be issued throughout finals for that group of teams. For example, if preliminaries for all divisions eligible for the Cheer Battle conclude Saturday at 5:00 pm, and the Cheer Battle is scheduled to begin Sunday at 7:00 pm, then The College Classic may issue Cheer Battle invitations at any time between those times, based on either preliminary or finals performance, in The College Classic's sole discretion.
4. Preliminary round scores and finals performance quality will be a factor in determining Battle Round invitees; however, these will not be the only determining factors. The College Classic may also consider factors such as entertainment value, showmanship, creativity, appropriateness for a "battle" atmosphere, and/or judge recommendations in issuing invitations. No team is guaranteed to participate in the Battle Round by virtue of having the highest score in preliminaries, and a team with a lower score may be invited to the Battle Round if it meets one or more criteria set forth above.
5. A schedule for each Battle within the applicable Battle Round will be published in advance of the National Championship with start times for each Battle category; however, a specific performance time for each participating team will not be published in advance.
6. **Battle Round invitations and results are completely independent of the official results of The College Classic National Championship. Battle Round results are based solely on performance**

in the Battle Round, in accordance with the Battle judging criteria set forth above. National Champion results are based solely on performance in Finals for that style and division, in accordance with the score sheet for such division.

## Part 2: Cheer Routine Rules and Guidelines

### GENERAL SAFETY

The coach of a team is responsible for monitoring the safety of each element of a cheer or mascot routine and determining that it is safe to perform. The character of the skills being performed, as well as the skill level of the athletes performing those skills, should be considered by the coach in making this determination. All of the skills listed below as well as any other movement should be evaluated for safety by the advisor/coach prior to competition.

### SAFETY GUIDELINES

All teams and partners competing in any cheer division(s) at The College Classic should adhere to Open Championship Series safety rules and regulations in effect as of the competition date. Visit [www.openchampionshipseries.com](http://www.openchampionshipseries.com) for more information.

### COMPETITION ROUTINE GUIDELINES

1. Teams may make substitutions in the event of injury. Substitute participants must be listed on the team's participant roster in the team's registration form.
2. Any equipment or items that may damage the performance floor are prohibited.
3. There is no minimum time limit for any routine. The maximum time limit is 2:30. Routines will be evaluated upon the first sound in the music or the first physical movement. The final note or physical movement will be considered the end of the performance. Routines will be given a maximum grace period of five seconds above the 2:30 time limit to account for minor differences in music equipment timing or performance errors.
4. A responsible adult must be present to assist in the start and finish of the routine music. **IT IS RECOMMENDED TO UPLOAD YOUR MUSIC TO THE REGISTRATION SOFTWARE BY ONE WEEK PRIOR TO COMPETITION.**

### JEWELRY

Jewelry will not be allowed for cheer team members. We reserve the right to require a team member to remove any jewelry we deem hazardous at any point during the competition.

### PROPS AND BACKDROPS

1. Props are permitted in any cheer category as long as they are wearable, handheld, or freestanding and can be taken off or released safely (as determined by DTU).

2. No dry ice, confetti, glass, canned smoke, water or other liquid, flammable material or other similar loose material that may obstruct the judges' view or affect the condition of the performance floor may be used.
3. No prop may be tossed off the performance floor or used in any way that risks damage to or obstruction of any persons or property in the vicinity of the performance floor (including, without limitation, the ceiling, a performance backdrop or any lighting on the front of the floor).
4. For any questions or concerns regarding prop choice, please send a photo of the prop to DTU prior to the competition.
5. Backdrops **may** be permitted, but only with prior written approval of DTU. DTU reserves the right to disapprove a backdrop for any reason in its sole discretion, including (without limitation) if DTU believes the backdrop may damage the floor, damage or obstruct any part of the practice or performance area, or disrupt the flow of the event (including any excessive time moving the backdrop on and off the practice or performance floor).
6. Poms are not considered "props" for the purpose of this section, and may be used only in the Pom and Spirit Showdown categories.

#### **AUDIENCE INVOLVEMENT**

Crowd appeal is an important element of any cheer or mascot performance; however, teams will be judged based only on performance elements taking place on the competition floor. Involvement of non-regular members of a team ("Other Participants") in the performance of the routine is allowed in the Spirit Showdown divisions only, subject to the following restrictions:

1. Only registered and paid individuals may be on the official performance floor
2. Any Other Participants must be located in the Fan Zone and stay in the Fan Zone for the entire performance
3. The involvement of Other Participants is subject to all of the rules and regulations set forth herein for competing performers, including the safety guidelines.

#### **STATE REQUIREMENTS**

DTU will require teams to follow NFHS safety guidelines (instead of the safety guidelines set forth above) when holding any state or regional dance competition in a state that requires NFHS rules to be followed.



## SECTION V: PROTOCOL IN UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES

1. In the event of an unforeseen interruption of performance (i.e. production equipment malfunction that directly affects the team's or mascot's performance, music malfunction, or other potential factors), the team or mascot will be presented the option to perform again.
2. Should the affected team or mascot choose to perform again, the initial performance scores will be replaced with an entirely new score from the judges based only upon the second performance.
3. Should a team's or mascot's routine be interrupted due to an unforeseen malfunction of the team's or mascot's performance equipment, the team or mascot will not be presented the option to perform again within the performance round.
4. In the event of injury, a team's or mascot's performance may be stopped by the officials, the coach or advisor of the performer(s), or the injured individual.
5. At our discretion, the competing team or mascot may be presented the option to perform the routine again at a later time. The time of performance will be determined by us.
6. Should the injured performer express an interest in performing again, the following protocols will be followed:
  - a. Approval must be granted by the medical professionals on site, as well as the parents of the performer and the coach or advisor of the team or mascot.
  - b. If the injured participant does not receive approval from the medical professionals on site, the signature of a parent or legal guardian on a separate medical waiver will be required in order for the participant to return to the competition. If the medical professionals suspect a concussion/head injury, the participant would then require clearance from a licensed medical professional with training in head-related injuries.

## SECTION VI: MUSIC

### OUR POLICY

Our camps and competitions comply with all applicable laws. We will obtain the music license(s) we need as hosts in order to present our camps and competitions.

Our music policy for teams and performers attending our camps and competitions is straightforward: you may perform to **any** music that complies with the law. The law permits you to use original songs, “cover” songs or so-called “exclusive” songs (generally new songs by “unknown” music artists) under various circumstances depending upon your team’s specific use. You should always legally purchase your music, and then you should obtain any necessary permission(s) for your music based on your own consideration of applicable law.

We note that a recent case, *Tresona Multimedia v. Burbank High School Vocal Music Association* (decided March 24, 2020), ruled that the use of a song as part of a show choir’s music mix for educational purposes (not for commercial profit) was fair use and did not require any permission by, or license fee to, the song’s license holder. The court also required the licensor to pay all of the show choir’s legal fees incurred in defending the suit. Although every team and music mix is different, teams should read about this case as part of educating itself about music use law, given that many teams use music similarly to the show choir and may decide they have a strong fair use argument. A link to the case is here: <https://cdn.ca9.uscourts.gov/datastore/opinions/2020/03/24/17-56006.pdf>

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

***Do you have a list of “preferred” music vendors whose songs are definitely acceptable at your competitions?***

No. We do not promote a “preferred” list of music vendors because we believe teams should have maximum creative freedom. Although we respect the rights of vendors that sell and/or mix covers of popular songs (and you are welcome to use those songs at our competitions, subject to our music policy), we believe encouraging or “preferring” that teams use covers instead of original songs takes profits away from record labels and original music artists. Generally, a competition company that “prefers” cover music vendors simply “prefers” them because the “preferred” cover music vendors have agreed to insure the competition company (not your team) against legal liability.

Creative freedom is a foundation of the spirit industry and The College Classic. We believe that a rule that encourages teams to use the music they want, while still honoring the legal rights of copyright holders, is most appropriate for our industry and our company. Thus, we repeat our general rule: you may perform to **any** music that complies with the law.

***Why not just give us a list of music, vendors and edits that are definitely okay or not okay?***

Our simple rule that you may perform to **any** music that complies with the law, without detailing specific songs, vendors or edits that are definitely okay, is best for your team because:

1. *Our approach permits maximum creativity.* Creating a “short list” of permissible songs, vendors or edits necessarily excludes other songs, vendors or edits that may be perfectly legal based on your individual circumstances.
2. *Our approach allows you to control your team’s destiny.* You can and should educate yourself about copyright law and make your own determination. No one knows your team, your situation or your music needs better than you.
3. *Our approach does not give you a false sense of security.* No competition company (including us) can provide you with legal advice or guarantee that your specific music mix is legally acceptable, given how many millions of possible variations of songs and types of edits you might use. A competition company might adopt a policy that certain specific music and/or a certain type of edit is permitted (or not) at its competitions, but that does not mean that (a) teams following that policy are complying with the law, or (b) teams NOT following that policy (or companies that choose to adopt a different policy) are “illegal.” **Competition rules are just competition rules - they are not the same as the law. Educate yourself about the rights of copyright holders and make informed music choices for your team.**

#### ***What will you require for compliance?***

We will simply require you to confirm within the online registration process for our camps and competitions that you have read and understand all of our rules and regulations (including our music policy) and agree to comply with them.. You should also have information about your music available in case a copyright holder has any questions about it.

#### **RESOURCES FOR YOUR TEAM**

For a richer understanding of the music permissions universe and how to protect your team’s copyrightable work (including your choreography and the right to broadcast your team’s performances), take a look at the FAQ published by the National Dance Coaches Association (NDCA), found here:

<https://www.facebook.com/notes/national-dance-coachesassociation/ndca-faq-copyright-and-dance-teams/274095962980858>.

This FAQ may also help you evaluate whether you may or may not need specific music permissions.

## SECTION VII: SCORESHEETS

### DANCE CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS

The College Classic encourages creativity in all categories. There is no particular style or “formula” required in any category. Dance team is about more than just imitation of previous award-winning routines - we want to inspire your dancers to showcase their own unique style. Our judges will strive to provide you with the most valuable feedback you will receive all season.

Full category descriptions may be found [linked on the Rules and Scoresheets page of our website](#).

### CHEER AND MASCOT CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS

The College Classic encourages creativity in all categories. There is no particular style or “formula” required in any category. Cheerleading is about more than just imitation of previous award-winning routines - we want to inspire your performers to showcase their own unique style. Our judges will strive to provide you with the most valuable feedback you will receive all season.

Full category descriptions may be found [linked on the Rules and Scoresheets page of our website](#).



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## HIP-HOP SCORESHEET

2025-2026

There is no one definition to describe hip-hop dance. Hip-hop dance is continuously transforming and redefining itself with each new generation of dancers. Any general street or hip-hop style (or combination of styles) is acceptable in this category. Movements should complement the music and teams will be judged on both musicality and uniformity. Teams should also display an ability to connect with the audience and provoke an emotional response (i.e., excitement, laughter, joy, sadness and/or sense of drama) appropriate to the style presented.

### TECHNIQUE

Hip Hop Technique	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Proper Execution of Hip Hop Style(s) <b>and Style Components</b> Presented (such as isolations, grooves, locking, waacking, house, krumping, breaking, voguing, popping, stepping, etc.)</li><li>• Credit Clear Demonstration of Hip Hop Style(s) <b>and Style Components</b></li></ul>
Difficulty of Hip Hop Movement	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Technical Demand of Hip-Hop Movements</li><li>• Intricacy and Tempo Variation</li><li>• Credit "Tricks" only if a recognized Hip Hop Style (e.g. breaking)</li><li>• Must consider difficulty of ALL of the above, <b>REGARDLESS OF THE QUALITY OF EXECUTION</b></li></ul>
<b>Overall</b> Movement Quality	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Credit Overall Movement Quality</b></li><li>• Control of Movement (Control of Speed, Momentum and Direction of Movement)</li><li>• Movement Flow (<b>CREDIT CONTINUOUS DANCING; DEDUCT FOR EXCESSIVE SETUP OR RECOVERY FROM TRICKS (IF ANY)</b>)</li></ul>

### EXECUTION OF ROUTINE

Execution of Style	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Consistency of Style(s) Among Team Members (Consider Intent of Style)</b></li><li>• <b>Deduct for Individual Major</b> Errors</li></ul>
Execution of Spacing and Transitions	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Uniform Spacing</li><li>• Smooth Execution of Transitions</li></ul>
Execution of Musicality	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Execution of Choreography to the Music</li><li>• Capturing Nuances of Vocal and/or Musical Cues and Tempo Variations</li></ul>

### ARTISTRY

Uniqueness of Concept/Movement	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Concept of Routine is Fresh and New</li><li>• Movement of Dancers Throughout Routine Includes Creative and Unpredictable Elements</li></ul> <p><i>Deductions go here for inappropriate music, movement or costuming only after crediting other factors – points will not be deducted from any other scoring category</i></p>
Visual Effect	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Purposeful Visual Impact of Formations and Transitions, Ripples, Levels, and Other Movements as a Series of Group Pictures</li></ul>
Musicality of Choreography	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Choreography, From Beginning to End of Routine, Communicates the Details and Overall Mood of the Music</li><li>• Tricks, if any, are Fully Integrated into Choreography and Heighten Routine's Theme, Personality and Excitement</li></ul>

### SHOWMANSHIP

Communication and Projection by Dancers	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ability to Connect with Audience and Provoke Appropriate Emotional Response</li><li>• Authenticity of Performance</li></ul>
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## JAZZ SCORESHEET

2025-2026

Our “jazz” division encompasses styles commonly referred to as jazz, Broadway, contemporary, lyrical or modern and teams have successfully competed in the jazz division with all of these styles. Combinations of these styles may also be used. The team should demonstrate difficulty using advanced dance skills (e.g., turns, leaps, extensions). Movements should complement the music and teams will be judged on both musicality and uniformity. Teams should also display an ability to connect with the audience and provoke an emotional response (i.e., excitement, laughter, joy, sadness and/or sense of drama) appropriate to the style presented.

### TECHNIQUE

Technique of Skills	10 pts	• Proper Technical Execution of all Leaps, Turns, Jumps, and Extensions
Difficulty of Skills	10 pts	• Difficulty of Leaps, Turns, Jumps, and Extensions • <b>ALL the above items will be considered, REGARDLESS OF THE QUALITY OF EXECUTION</b>
Quality and Difficulty of Other Movement	10 pts	• <b>Overall Quality of Movement (excluding Skills)</b> • <b>Technical Difficulty of Movement (excluding Skills)</b>

### EXECUTION OF ROUTINE

Uniformity of Movement	10 pts	• Uniform Placement of Entire Body by Entire Team • Individual Errors considered
Execution of Spacing & Transitions	10 pts	• Uniform Spacing • Smooth Execution of Transitions
Execution of Musicality	10 pts	• Execution of Choreography to the Music • Capturing Nuances of Vocal and/or Musical Cues and Tempo Variations

### ARTISTRY

Uniqueness of Concept/Movement	10 pts	• Concept of Routine is Fresh and New • Movement of Dancers Throughout Routine Includes Creative and Unpredictable Elements <i>Deductions go here for inappropriate music, movement or costuming only after crediting other factors – points will not be deducted from any other scoring category</i>
Visual Effect	10 pts	• Purposeful Visual Impact of Formations and Transitions, Ripples, Levels, and Other Movements as a Series of Group Pictures
Musicality of Choreography	10 pts	• Choreography, From Beginning to End of Routine, Communicates the Details and Overall Mood of the Music

### SHOWMANSHIP

Communication and Projection by Dancers	10 pts	• Ability to Connect with Audience and Provoke Appropriate Emotional Response • Authenticity of Performance
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## POM SCORESHEET

2025-2026

Any style of dance may be used to accomplish this and there are no required movements. Turns, leaps, jumps, kicks, lifts, or tricks are not required. The team should demonstrate difficulty through the incorporation of intricate pom motions. Movements should complement the music and teams will be judged on both musicality and uniformity. Teams will also be judged on the creative use of poms for visual effect. Teams should also display an ability to connect with the audience and provoke an emotional response (i.e., excitement, laughter, joy, and/or sense of drama) appropriate to the style presented.

### TECHNIQUE

Pom Motion Technique	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Arm Motions are Performed with Proper Technique (Shoulders Down, Straight Wrists and Elbows, Proper Placement)</li><li>• Core Engaged on Motions</li><li>• Control and Strength of Motions</li><li>• Ease of Movement</li></ul>
Difficulty of Pom Motions	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Risk, Intricacy and Control Required by Pom Motions</li><li>• <b>ALL the above items will be considered, REGARDLESS OF THE QUALITY OF EXECUTION</b></li></ul>
Quality and Difficulty of Other Movement	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Overall Quality of Movement (Excluding Pom Motions)</li><li>• Technical Difficulty of Movement (Excluding Pom Motions) - note that <b>jazz skills such as leaps, turns or extensions are NOT required; do not deduct for their absence</b></li></ul>

### EXECUTION OF ROUTINE

Uniformity of Movement	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Uniform Placement of Entire Body and Props by Entire Team</li><li>• Individual Errors considered</li></ul>
Execution of Spacing & Transitions	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Uniform Spacing</li><li>• Smooth Execution of Transitions (including Transitions from Pom to Pom, if any)</li></ul>
Execution of Musicality	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Execution of Choreography to the Music</li><li>• Capturing Nuances of Vocal and/or Musical Cues and Tempo Variations</li></ul>

### ARTISTRY

Uniqueness of Concept/Movement	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Concept of Routine is Fresh and New</li><li>• Movement of Dancers Throughout Routine Includes Creative and Unpredictable Elements</li></ul> <p><i>Deductions go here for inappropriate music, movement or costuming only after crediting other factors – points will not be deducted from any other scoring category</i></p>
Visual Effect	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Purposeful Visual Impact of Formations and Transitions, Ripples, Levels, and Other Movements as a Series of Group Pictures</li></ul>
Musicality of Choreography	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Choreography, From Beginning to End of Routine, Communicates the Details and Overall Mood of the Music</li></ul>

### SHOWMANSHIP

Communication and Projection by Dancers	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ability to Connect with Audience and Provoke Appropriate Emotional Response</li><li>• Authenticity of Performance</li></ul>
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## SPIRIT SHOWDOWN - GAME DAY FOR DANCE SCORESHEET

2025-2026

The Dance Spirit Showdown – Game Day division allows a dance team to show the type of routine the team might do at an event as a dance team. A Dance Spirit Showdown - Game Day routine at DTU competitions will have two sections, performed in order, as follows: 1. Spirit Raising Routine – One or more (at the team's option) of the following: (a) a fight song routine, (b) a sideline routine, (c) a stand routine, (d) **step routine and/or (e)** a drum cadence. 2. Performance Routine – A routine of any style designed to appeal to the crowd at a school event (such as a sporting event).

Thought should be given to a well-thought out, clear and complementary choreographic program script as a whole, as well as seamless transition (s) joining the two routines. There is no time limit.

Note that for a Dance Spirit Showdown - Game Day routine: (i) the routine should focus on dance and not cheerleading – as such, any section that includes a coordinated cheer or chant not accompanied by a dance element will not be judged or earn any points for the team, and (ii) no dance skills, such as leaps, turns, extensions, acrobatic tricks, lifts, etc., are required.

### SPIRIT RAISING ROUTINE

Technique	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Proper Carriage, Posture, Arm Placement and Balance</li><li>• Style-specific proper technique (including equipment usage) is demonstrated with ease, control and strength</li><li>• <b>Technical elements (if included) are well-executed and controlled</b></li></ul>
Execution	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Uniformity of Movement (<b>deduct for errors in execution of equipment use, if any, in this caption</b>)</li><li>• Spacing and Transitions</li><li>• Execution of Musicality (<b>timing aligns with musical and/or rhythmic cues</b>)</li></ul>
Artistry	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Choreography Includes Creative and Unpredictable Elements</b></li><li>• <b>Movement is Relevant to Spirit Raising and Authentic to Team Culture</b></li><li>• <b>Visual Effect</b></li></ul>

### PERFORMANCE ROUTINE

Technique	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Style-specific Proper Technique is Demonstrated with</b> Ease, Control and Strength</li><li>• Proper Carriage, Posture and Balance</li><li>• <b>Movement is Intentional and Clear as Appropriate to Chosen Style(s)</b></li></ul>
Execution	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Uniformity of Movement</li><li>• Spacing and Transitions</li><li>• Execution of Musicality (<b>timing aligns with musical and/or rhythmic cues</b>)</li><li>• <b>Technical elements (if included) are well-executed and controlled</b></li></ul>
Artistry	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Choreography Includes Creative and Unpredictable Elements</b></li><li>• <b>Entertaining and Unique</b></li><li>• <b>Visual Effect</b></li></ul>

### OVERALL PROGRAM

Communication and Projection by Dancers	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ability to Connect with Audience and Provoke <b>Genuine</b> Emotional Response</li><li>• Authenticity of Performance</li></ul>
<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>10 pts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Flow Between Routines and Segments</b></li><li>• <b>Cohesion and Storytelling</b></li><li>• <b>Memorability</b></li></ul>





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**SPIRIT SHOWDOWN - RALLY DANCE SCORESHEET**

2025-2026

The Spirit Showdown – Rally Dance division provides teams with the opportunity to showcase creative, entertaining, and program-specific routines that might be performed at a pep rally, halftime, annual school tradition, community event, non-traditional spirit sport (e.g.: volleyball, baseball, golf etc), or similar setting **that would not fit into any other current DTU categories. This category is intended to highlight the unique identity, energy, and innovation of a team—not to replicate a traditional game day or spirit raising performance.**

There are no required elements; turns, leaps, kicks, props or tricks are not required. **This division encourages bold creativity, team personality, and dynamic musicality through any dance style or stylistic fusion. Props, themes, and audience involvement (within safety guidelines) are welcome. Teams are encouraged to take risks, present something new, and fully own their narrative or concept.**

**Because Rally Dance routines often reflect local traditions, music, or community themes, teams may submit a short written explanation of the routine and how it aligns with this category. This will assist judges to understand the context and clarify the intent of the performance.**

**EXECUTION**

Quality of Team Movement (Execution, Technique and Spacing)	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Proper Technical Execution of Movement Within Selected Style(s)</li><li>• Overall Movement Quality</li><li>• Uniform Execution of Movement by Entire Team</li><li>• Uniform Spacing Throughout Routine</li></ul>
Execution of Musicality	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Execution of Choreography to the Music</li><li>• Ability to Capture Nuances of Vocal and/or Musical Cues and Tempo Variations</li></ul>

**CHOREOGRAPHY**

Entertainment Value of Routine (Movement and Overall Concept)	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Concept of Routine and Movements of Team Members Include Entertaining, Creative and Unpredictable Elements</li><li>• <b>Routine is Memorable and Appealing to Audience</b></li></ul>
Showcase of Unique Style	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Routine's Movements, Concept and/or Elements are Unique to this Team</li><li>• <b>If utilized, Props, Costuming, and/or Theme Have Purpose and Enhance Overall Routine</b></li><li>• Routine Tells the Viewer Something About this Particular Team, Town, <b>Culture, Specific Program Event</b> and/or School</li></ul>

**SHOWMANSHIP**

Communication and Projection by Dancers	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ability to Connect with Audience and Provoke <b>Genuine</b> Emotional Response</li><li>• Authenticity of Performance</li></ul>
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DANCE TEAM UNION  
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COLLEGE TEAM PERFORMANCE SCORESHEET

2025-2026

Team Performance in our college divisions is a combination of pom, jazz, and hip-hop styles. Please see the descriptions of those individual styles for more information. Teams should demonstrate proficiency in each style to maximize their score. Judges are instructed to award 0 points in the Technique and Difficulty caption for any style they do not see in the routine at all, and judges will reduce a team's score in the Technique and Difficulty caption for any style that is not present in an amount deemed sufficient by that judge to evaluate the team's proficiency in the applicable style. For this reason, it is recommended that teams have well-defined sections devoted to each of these styles of at least 30-40 seconds in length. Movements should complement the music and teams will be judged on both musicality and unison. Teams should display an ability to connect with the audience and provoke an emotional response (i.e., excitement, laughter, joy, sadness and/or sense of drama) appropriate to each style presented.

**TECHNIQUE:** Each style will be judged SEPARATELY, taking into account BOTH that style's proper technique AND the difficulty of the movements performed within that style, REGARDLESS OF THE QUALITY OF EXECUTION

Pom Technique and Difficulty	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Arm Motions are Performed with Proper Technique</li><li>• Consider Placement, Control and Strength of Motions</li><li>• Difficulty considered</li></ul>
Jazz Technique and Difficulty	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Proper Technical Execution of All Leaps, Extensions and Turns</li><li>• Difficulty considered</li></ul>
Hip Hop Technique and Difficulty	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Execution of Hip Hop Style(s) Being Performed</li><li>• Ease of Movement</li><li>• Purpose/Control of Arms, Legs and Body</li><li>• Difficulty considered</li></ul>

**EXECUTION OF ROUTINE**

Uniformity of Movement	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Uniform Placement of Entire Body by Entire Team</li><li>• Individual Errors considered</li></ul>
Execution of Spacing & Transitions	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Uniform Spacing</li><li>• Smooth Execution of Transitions</li></ul>
Execution of Musicality	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Execution of Choreography to the Music</li><li>• Capturing Nuances of Vocal and/or Musical Cues and Tempo Variations</li></ul>

**ARTISTRY:** Overall routine will be considered, taking into account artistry of each individual style within Team Performance

Uniqueness of Concept/Movement	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Concept of Routine is Fresh and New</li><li>• Movement of Dancers Throughout Routine Includes Creative and Unpredictable Elements</li></ul> <p><i>Deductions go here for inappropriate music, movement or costuming only after crediting other factors – points will not be deducted from any other scoring category</i></p>
Visual Effect	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Purposeful Visual Impact of Formations and Transitions, Ripples, Levels, and Other Movements as a Series of Group Pictures</li></ul>
Musicality of Choreography	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Choreography, From Beginning to End of Routine, Communicates the Details and Overall Mood of the Music</li></ul>

**SHOWMANSHIP**

Communication and Projection by Dancers	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ability to Connect with Audience and Provoke Appropriate Emotional Response</li><li>• Authenticity of Performance</li></ul>
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DANCE TEAM UNION  
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**SUPER SPIRIT SHOWDOWN SCORESHEET**

2025-2026

The Super Spirit Showdown division is a chance for a college spirit program (dance, cheer, and mascot) to perform a routine that it might perform at a school or community function (such as a pep rally, halftime show or similar) and showcase its hometown, college/university or team in a unique way. There are no required movements. **Entertainment value and creativity are each worth 20% of the score in Super Spirit Showdown!** Props and audience involvement (subject to limitations described above) are permitted, and any style or combination of styles of dance may be used. Turns, leaps, jumps, kicks, or tricks are not required. The performers should display an ability to connect with the audience and provoke an emotional response (i.e., excitement, laughter, joy, and/or sense of drama) consistent with the spirit of this category.

**The Super Spirit Showdown is not a cheerleading or song-leading competition, and teams should not feel bound to be “traditional” or focus solely on “spirit raising” in deciding upon choreography, costuming or music. This category is an additional opportunity for teams to show the audience something that is entertaining, fresh, new and unique to their program. It also allows teams to take creative risks with very few rules and to have fun!**

Because teams' content should be very team-, school- and/or community-specific in this category, and judges may not understand the routine out of context, we will allow teams entering the Super Spirit Showdown at The College Classic to submit a short description of the routine being showcased and how it fits this category. Judges will have access to this information during the judging process.

**EXECUTION**

Quality of Team Movement (Execution, Technique and Spacing)	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Proper Technical Execution of Movement Within Selected Style(s)</li><li>• Overall Movement Quality</li><li>• Uniform Execution of Movement by Entire Team</li><li>• Uniform Spacing Throughout Routine</li></ul>
Execution of Musicality	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Execution of Choreography to the Music</li><li>• Ability to Capture Nuances of Vocal and/or Musical Cues and Tempo Variations</li></ul>

**CHOREOGRAPHY**

Entertainment Value of Routine (Movement and Overall Concept)	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Concept of Routine and Movements of Team Members Include Entertaining, Creative and Unpredictable Elements</li><li>• Routine is Memorable and Appealing to Audience</li></ul>
Showcase of Unique Style	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Routine's Movements, Concept and/or Elements are Unique to this Team</li><li>• If utilized, Props, Costuming, and/or Theme Have Purpose and Enhance Overall Routine</li><li>• Routine Tells the Viewer Something About this Particular Team, Town, Culture, Specific Program Event and/or School</li></ul>

**SHOWMANSHIP**

Communication and Projection by Dancers	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ability to Connect with Audience and Provoke Genuine Emotional Response</li><li>• Authenticity of Performance</li></ul>
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## SPIRIT SHOWDOWN - GAME DAY FOR CHEER SCORESHEET

2025-2026

The Spirit Showdown – Game Day for Cheer division allows a cheer team to show the type of routine the team might do at an event as a member of a spirit raising program within its college or university. A Spirit Showdown - Game Day for Cheer routine at our competitions will have two sections, performed in order, as follows:

- 1) Spirit Raising Routine – A routine that emphasizes spirit raising.
- 2) Performance Routine – A routine of any style designed to appeal to the crowd at a school event (such as a sporting event).

There is no time limit. **Note that for a Spirit Showdown - Game Day for Cheer routine** no dance skills, such as leaps, turns, extensions, lifts, etc., are required.

### SPIRIT RAISING ROUTINE

Technique	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All Movements (Including Stunting and Tumbling) are Performed with Proper Technique, Ease, Control, and Strength</li><li>• Proper Carriage, Posture and Balance</li></ul>
Uniformity	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Uniformity of Movement</li></ul>
Spacing	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Execution of Spacing and Transitions</li></ul>
Choreography	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Crowd Appeal and Effectiveness in Eliciting Crowd Response</li><li>• Visual Effect</li><li>• Unpredictability and Memorability</li></ul>

### PERFORMANCE ROUTINE

Technique	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All Movements (Including Stunting and Tumbling) are Performed with Proper Technique, Ease, Control, and Strength</li><li>• Proper Carriage, Posture and Balance</li></ul>
Uniformity	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Uniformity of Movement</li></ul>
Spacing	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Execution of Spacing and Transitions</li></ul>
Choreography	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Entertaining and Creative</li><li>• Visual Effect</li><li>• Incorporation of Game Day Elements</li></ul>

### OVERALL EFFECT

Communication and Projection by Athletes	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ability to Connect with Audience and Generate Excitement</li></ul>
Overall Effectiveness	10 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Flow Between Routines and Segments</li><li>• Cohesion between Segments</li></ul>



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**CHEER PERFORMANCE SCORESHEET**

**2025-2026**

The Cheer Scoresheet has a maximum total score of 100 points. It is designed to evaluate a well-rounded routine that includes stunts, pyramids, tosses, jumps, tumbling, and overall performance elements. Judges will assess both the difficulty and technique of skills, along with choreography, creativity, and showmanship to recognize excellence in execution and presentation. Deductions will be taken off the total score based on the deductions table provided, including falls, rule violations, and other performance errors.

**STUNTS & TOSSES**

Partner Stunts	5 pts	Difficulty
	5 pts	Technique
Pyramids	5 pts	Difficulty
	5 pts	Technique
Tosses	5 pts	Difficulty
	5 pts	Technique

**JUMPS & TUMBLING**

Standing Tumbling	5 pts	Difficulty
	5 pts	Technique
Running Tumbling	5 pts	Difficulty
	5 pts	Technique
Jumps	5 pts	Difficulty
	5 pts	Technique

**OVERALL PERFORMANCE**

Overall Execution	10 pts	• Evaluates the routine as a whole for cleanliness, consistency, and control across all elements. Judges will look for minimal mistakes and strong attention to detail throughout.
Choreography	10 pts	• Assesses the structure and design of the routine, including transitions, musicality, visual effects, and use of space. Strong choreography is seamless and enhances overall performance flow.
Creativity	10 pts	• Recognizes originality and innovation in skill selection, transitions, formations, and musical interpretation. High scores are awarded for unique, engaging elements that stand out.
Performance/Showmanship	10 pts	• Judges the energy, expression, confidence, and connection with the audience. Teams should maintain consistent projection and enthusiasm from start to finish.



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## CHEER DEDUCTIONS

2025-2026

Violation	Deduction	Example
Athlete Fall	0.25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hands down in tumbling/jumps, knees down in tumbling/jumps, incomplete twist in tumbling, multiple body parts touch the floor in tumbling/jumps, drop to floor in individual skills, incomplete flipping or twisting stunt skill</li></ul>
Minor Stunt Fall	0.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cradle, dismount, or bringing down stunt/pyramid early for non-timing issues, base balling to floor during dismount, intentional boundary violation</li></ul>
Major Stunt Fall	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Falls from individual stunt/pyramid/toss where multiple athletes and/or flyer fall to the ground</li></ul>
Unsportsmanlike Conduct	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use of profanity or vulgarity, taunting, excessive spirit during team entrance</li></ul>
Safety/Rules Violation	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Inappropriate choreography, inappropriate uniform, jewelry, uniform malfunction</li></ul>
Timing Infraction	0.1 0.3 0.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 3-5 seconds over</li><li>• 6-10 seconds over</li><li>• 11 or more seconds over</li></ul>



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**CHEER SKILL PROGRESSIONS**

2025-2026

<b>PARTNER STUNTS</b>	<b>PYRAMIDS (14 or less)</b>	<b>PYRAMIDS (15 or more)</b>	<b>BASKET TOSSES</b>	<b>STANDING TUMBLING</b>	<b>RUNNING TUMBLING</b>	<b>JUMPS</b>
Beginner Level Stunt Skills	1 structure: Beginner Pyramid Skills (2-high non-transitional pyramids)	2 or more synchronized structures: Beginner Pyramid Skills (2-high non-transitional pyramids)	Non-flipping, non-twisting skills	Tumbling passes that included a round-off, cartwheel, or walkover	Tumbling passes that included a round-off, cartwheel, or walkover	Single Jump
Novice Stunt Skills	1 structure: Novice Pyramid Skills (2-high with incorporated transitional mounts and discounts OR basic braced 2 1/2 high)	2 or more synchronized structures: Novice Pyramid Skills (2-high with incorporated transitional mounts and discounts OR basic braced 2 1/2 high)	Non-flipping tosses with single full twisting skills - toss single full twists, kick single, full twisting, etc. Note: a 1/4 positioning move is allowed in twisting skills	Standing back handspring or multiple back handsprings	Tumbling passes that included a back handspring	Multiple Single Jumps, not connected
Intermediate Stunt Skills	1 structure: Intermediate Pyramid Skills (Basic unbraced 2 1/2 high pyramid)	2 or more synchronized structures: Intermediate Pyramid Skills (Basic unbraced 2 1/2 high pyramid)	Non-flipping tosses with double full twisting skills - toss double full twists, kick double full twists, etc. Note: a 1/4 positing move is allowed in twisting skills	Standing back tuck, standing back handspring with a back tuck, or connected jump to back handspring	Tumbling passes that included a tuck	Double Jump Combination
Advanced Stunt Skills	1 structure: Advanced Pyramid Skills (Advanced braced 2 1/2 high pyramid)	2 or more synchronized structures: Advanced Pyramid Skills (Advanced braced 2 1/2 high pyramid)	Flipping toss - back tucks, layouts, pike open	Standing layout, standing back handspring with a layout, or connected jump to back tuck	Tumbling passes that included a layout or arabian	Double Jump Combination + Single Jump, not connected
Elite Stunt Skills	1 structure: Advanced Unbraced 2 1/2 high pyramid	2 or more synchronized structures: Advanced Unbraced 2 1/2 high pyramid	Two position flipping tosses or back layout full twist* (All-Girl or 2 or less males), or allowable tosses with 3 or more male throwers: layout straddle full, layout split/kick full, tuck x-out full, tuck split/kick full, layout double full twist*	Standing full, standing back handspring with a full,, or connected jump to layout or full	Tumbling passes that included twisting skills	Triple Jump Combination



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## STUNT EXAMPLES

2025-2026

	COED/PARTNER STUNTS	2-PERSON STUNTS	GROUP STUNTS
<b>Beginner Level</b>			
Mounts	Toss chair, Walk-in to hands, Toss hands, etc.	Toss chair, Walk-in to hands, Toss hands press extension, etc.	Toss extended double leg stunt, connected single leg stunt, connected 1/2 twisting to extended double leg stunt, etc.
Dismounts	Pop off, Straight Cradle, etc.	Pop off, Straight Cradle, etc.	Pop off, Straight Cradle, Sponge, Side Prone, 1/2 Turn Cradle, etc.
<b>Novice Level</b>			
Mounts	Walk-in to Extension, Toss hands press extension, etc.	Toss extended double leg stunt, connected single leg stunt, connected 1/2 twisting to extended double leg stunt, etc.	Toss extended single leg stunt, Walk-up extended immediate body positions, toss 1/2 twisting to prep press extended double leg stunt, low-to-high tick tock, etc.
Dismounts	Pop off with flair, 1/4 twist to cradle, etc.	Pop off, Straight Cradle, Sponge, Side Prone, 1/2 Turn Cradle, etc.	Pop off, full down from two feet, waterfall, inverted braced dismounts, etc.
<b>Low Intermediate Level</b>			
Mounts	Walk-in to single leg stunt or toss extended double leg stunt, Walk-in or toss hands pump and go single leg/single arm stunt, etc.	Toss extended single leg stunt, Walk-up extended immediate body position, toss 1/2 twisting to prep press extended double leg stunt, low-to-high tick tock, etc.	Toss extended immediate body position stunt, full up to extended stunt, inversion (release) to prep pass extended stunt, inversion (no release) to extended level stunt, toss 1/2 twisting to extended level stunt, high-to-high tick tock, etc.
Dismounts	Pop off 1/2 twist, full twist from 2 feet, etc.	Pop off, full down from 2 feet, waterfall, inverted braced dismounts, etc.	Body position full down cradle, full twist to sponge, 1 1/4 Full down, 3/4 to Prone, etc.
<b>High Intermediate Level</b>			
Mounts	Toss hands pump and go to body positions, toss extended single leg stunt, Toss full up to hands	Toss extended immediate body position stunt, Full up to extended stunt, Inversion (release) to prep pass extended stunt, Inversion (no release) to extended level stunt, toss 1/2 twisting to extended level stunt, high-to-high tick tock, etc.	Toss inversion that starts at the half or pump and go to extended double leg stunt, 1 1/2 twist up to extended level stunt, Full up to immediate body position, low-to-high 1/2 around tick tock, 360 switch up, etc.
Dismounts	Full twist pop off, Full twist from single leg to cradle, etc.	Body position full down cradle, full twist to sponge, 1 1/4 Full down, 3/4 to Prone, etc.	Body position full down cradle, full twist to sponge, full twist pop off, 3/4 flip to prone or cradle, kick full cradle, forward inverting dismounts, front flip to ground, etc.
<b>Advanced Level</b>			
Mounts	Toss extended immediate body position stunt, Toss full up to extended stunt, Toss extended one art stunt, release inversion to hands press extended stunt, etc.	Toss inversion that starts at the half or pump and go to extended double leg stunt, 1 1/2 twist up to extended level stunt, Full up to immediate body position,, low-to-high 1/2 around tick tock, 360 switch up, etc.	Toss inversion that start from the ground and immediately hits to the extended single leg stunt, Toss to inversion that starts from Hand to Hand or Handstand Inversion with pump and go to extended single leg stunt, 1 1/2 twist up to extended single leg stunt, back tuck rewind to two fee, low-to-high 360 tick tock, etc.
Dismounts	Front inverting dismounts, kick full cradle, etc.	Body position full down cradle, full twist to sponge, full twist pop off, 3/4 flip to prone or cradle, kick full cradle, forward inverting dismount, front flip to ground, etc.	All doble downs, inverting dismounts that include either 1 1/4 flip or a flip twist, 3/4 flip with 1/2 turn cradle, etc.
<b>Elite Level</b>			
Mounts	Release inversion to extended double leg stunt, Toss full up to one arm, Toss full up to immediate body position, back tuck rewind to two feet, low-to-high 360 tick tock, etc.	Toss inversion that start from the ground and immediately hits to extended single leg stunt, toss inversion that start from Hand to Hand or Handstand Inversion with pump and go to extended single leg stunt, 1 1/2 twist up to extended single leg stunt, back tuck rewind to two feet, low-to-high 360 tick tock, etc.	Inverted stunts with continuous movement and release from floor to body position. Toss inversions that start from Hand to Hand or Handstand Inversion to extended immediate body position, Toss inversion with 1/2 twist or more to extended level stunt, Double twist up to extended level stunt, high-to-high 360 tick tock, back tuck rewind to one foot, etc.
Dismounts	Double down, Backwards inverting dismounts, etc.	All doble downs, inverting dismounts that include either 1 1/4 flip or a flip twist, 3/4 flip with 1/2 turn cradle, etc.	All doble downs, inverting dismounts that include either 1 1/4 flip or a flip twist, 3/4 flip with 1/2 turn cradle, etc.





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**CHEER QUANTITY RUBRIC**

2025-2026

**PARTNER STUNTS**

# of Athletes	Minimum	Majority	Most
8-11	-	1 stunt group	2 stunt groups
12-15	1 stunt group	2 stunt groups	3 stunt groups
16-19	2 stunt groups	3 stunt groups	4 stunt groups
20	3 stunt groups	4 stunt groups	5 stunt groups

**JUMPS AND TUMBLING**

	Minimum	Majority	Most
# of Athletes	25-50% of team	51-74% of team	75% or more of team

**TOSSES**

# of Athletes	Minimum	Majority	
8-11	-	1 toss	
12-15	1 toss	2 tosses	
16-19	2 tosses	3 tosses	
20	3 tosses	4 tosses	



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**GROUP AND PARTNER STUNT SCORESHEET**

**2025-2026**

Partner and group stunt routines combine athleticism, precision, and creativity to showcase elite-level stunting in dynamic and engaging ways. Whether performed by a pair or a small group, routines should highlight strength, control, and synchronization through a variety of skills and transitions.

The Partner/Group Stunt Scoresheet is designed to evaluate all routines within the partner and group stunt divisions. With a maximum total score of 50 points, this scoresheet emphasizes skill execution, technique, and overall routine quality. Judges will assign scores based on the following five subcaptions, each worth 10 points.

**CATEGORY**

Stunt Stability and Technique	10 pts	• Control, balance, and proper technique during stunts, including body positions, grips, and transitions.
Choreography and Routine Flow	10 pts	• Structure and organization of the routine, including logical transitions between skills, efficient use of time, and overall pacing.
Difficulty and Variety of Skills	10 pts	• Complexity and diversity of skills performed, including stunts, release moves, transitions, and innovative elements.
Execution and Perfection of Routine	10 pts	• Precision, cleanliness, and attention to detail throughout the performance, with an emphasis on hitting stunts solidly without falls, bobbles, or incomplete skills.
Overall Impression	10 pts	• The total impact of the performance, including confidence, energy, and control of the skills presented.



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## MASCOT SCORESHEET

2025-2026

Mascot routines bring together elements of dance, theater, and crowd engagement in fresh and entertaining ways. Any interpretation of mascot performance—whether humorous, dramatic, spirited, or character-driven—is welcome in this division. Movements should complement the music and theme, and performers should demonstrate a strong connection with the audience, provoking an emotional response (i.e., excitement, laughter, joy, or school spirit) appropriate to the character and concept presented.

The Mascot Scoresheet is designed to evaluate all routines within the mascot divisions. With a maximum total score of 50 points, this scoresheet emphasizes performance quality, creativity, and audience engagement. Judges will assign scores based on the following five subcaptions, each worth 10 points.

### CATEGORY

Character	10 pts	• Assessment of the mascot's commitment to character portrayal, consistency, and personality throughout the performance.
Creativity	10 pts	• Originality and inventiveness in choreography, theme, costuming, and concept execution.
Crowd Appeal	10 pts	• Ability to connect with the audience, generate excitement, and maintain energy throughout the routine.
Dance	10 pts	• Overall dance ability including technique and musicality, appropriate to the mascot character and performance style.
Use of Props and Staging	10 pts	• Effective incorporation of props, use of performance space, and creativity in staging elements to enhance the overall impact.