



CDTA EXAMINATIONS IN THE AMERICAN STYLE DVIDA® SYLLABUS

Congratulations! You are about to embark one of the most exciting, rewarding processes of your dancing career. There is no greater way to truly learn and understand dancing than to prepare for a formal certification exam. We applaud your commitment to excellence.

The Examination

The examination will have four parts. You will be graded in the following areas:

Part A - dancing (40%), 2)

Part B - theoretical questions (30%), 3)

Part C - general teaching questions (20%), and 4)

Part D - overall presentation (10%).

Demonstration of Dancing (Part A), you will dance a routine for each dance containing all the figures from your syllabus:

American Smooth: Waltz, Tango, Foxtrot, Viennese Waltz

American Rhythm: Cha Cha, Samba, Rumba, Mambo, Bolero, Merengue, East Coast Swing, West Coast Swing).

You will dance this routine with a partner, (you will need to arrange a partner for this segment of the exam) to music, two times, once as a leader and once as a follower. The examiner will then ask you to dance an amalgamation of three or four figures, to music, by yourself. The purpose of the amalgamation section is to ensure that you can dance an amalgamation while staying on time with the music, without the assistance of your partner.

Each candidate must receive a minimum score of 2.0, Leader and Follower combined average in each dance, as well as a 2.0 total average in Part A in order to pass the exam.

You should have your routines memorized, and choreographed to fit the room where the examination will be held. You will select the music, and you should have a DJ to start and stop the songs during the exam. Your partner can act as a DJ if you can't find anyone else.

Theoretical portion (Part B), you will be asked to identify the theoretical elements such as: footwork, amount of turn, CBM, etc. of the syllabus figures.

Each examination will contain different theoretical questions.

In American Smooth the candidate will be responsible for answering theoretical questions on all dances in that style.

In American Rhythm the candidate will be asked to choose **4 of the 8** dances for which they will answer theoretical questions.

The specific questions will be marked on the examination. The examiner will also be able to ask one theoretical question, per dance, of the examiner's choice.

You should have all the elements of every figure memorized for both the leader and the follower's part. You should practice saying these elements aloud while dancing the figure. The quicker you are able to articulate the elements correctly, the higher your grade will be. This takes a great deal of memorization and *practice*. It is not enough just to be able to dance the patterns although this is also important. You must be able to demonstrate the elements in isolation, for both the leader and the follower's parts.

The following definitions of types of leads may help you in this portion of the exam.

Weight Change – The tone in the frame and body allows the leader to convey each step through each weight change.

Physical – The arm is used through contraction and extension to communicate to the follower.

Shape – The leader uses the shape of the body and arms to communicate the lead to the follower.



Visual – The Leader will indicate the lead by gesturing with the body, arms, or eye contact without actual physical contact with the follower.

Note: Your verbal response in the theoretical portion of the exam should be limited to the response required for demonstrating the element asked for. For example, if you are asked to demonstrate the Alignment for the Leader in the Two Way Underarm Turn for the American Style Waltz, you would fully demonstrate the entire figure, however your verbal response should be:

Step 1 Facing Wall
Step 2, 3 and 4 Backing Against Line of Dance
Step 5, 6 and 7 Facing Line of Dance
And continuing in this manner through all steps of the pattern.

General teaching questions section (Part C), you will be asked specific questions about music, how to teach certain elements (frame, etc.) to students, and will be asked to conduct certain aspects of a group class. This will enable the examiner to evaluate your general teaching skills. Be sure you know how to start a group class to music for each dance.

Overall presentation (Part D) Finally, you will receive a grade for your overall presentation, which will encompass your poise, demeanor, vocal projection, and clarity throughout the exam.

INFORMATION TO ASSIST IN PREPARING FOR EXAMINATIONS

Dress Code

Be sure to dress professionally and be well groomed. You should wear clean and well fitting ballroom dance shoes. Ladies may wear slacks and teaching shoes if they wish. If you choose to wear a skirt or dress, please be certain the length is such that the examiner may clearly see your legs and feet. A good general rule is no longer than a few inches below the knee.

Scoring

The examination will be scored as follows:

High Honors	3.6 - 4 Points
Honors	3.2 – 3.59 Points
Pass	2.8 – 3.19 Points
Fail	0 – 2.79 Points

You will receive a numerical grade (0-4) for every question. If the examiner feels a response falls between two numbers, the examiner can assign .5 (for example, 1.5, 2.5, 3.5).

The specific scoring for each portion of the exam is explained as follows: In **Part A** (dancing, worth 40%), the examiner will use the following grading key:

4 Points: *All of the syllabus figures were danced accurately. You danced with grace, musicality, and good partnership skills.*

3 Points: *Most of the syllabus figures were danced accurately and you showed a good sense of musicality and partnership awareness.*

2 Points: *More than half of the syllabus figures were danced accurately and you were on time with the music.*

1 Point: *Less than half of the syllabus patterns were performed correctly, and/or you were off time with the music more than 50% of the time.*

0 Points: *Candidate was unable to perform the figure or ran out of time and did not complete the test*

In **Part B** (theoretical questions, worth 30%) and **Part C** (general teaching questions, worth 20%), the examiner will use the following grading key:



4 Points: *You answered the question perfectly and without hesitation, and correctly demonstrated all other elements of the figures shown in response to the question. If, for example, a candidate is asked for the footwork of a figure, you will receive 4 points for the question **only if** all other elements (alignment, timing, amount of turn, etc.) are also demonstrated correctly. If you provide the correct footwork, but other elements of the figure are demonstrated incorrectly you will not receive 4 points.*

3 Points: *You answered the question correctly and relatively quickly (some hesitation is permissible.)*

2 Points: *You provided information that was more than 50% correct.*

1 Point: *You provided information that was less than 50% correct.*

0 Points: *Candidate was unable to answer the question or ran out of time and did not complete the test*

In **Part D** (overall presentation, worth 10%), the examiner will use the following grading key:

4 Points: *You were clear, articulate, and graceful, and presented the material in an engaging, lively, intelligent fashion.*

3 Points: *You spoke well and clearly, and presented the information in a pleasant, friendly, fashion.*

2 Points: *You spoke with a clear voice and maintained composure most of the time.*

1 Point: *It was difficult to hear or understand you more than 50% of the time, and/or you became flustered, frustrated, impatient, or angry in a way that had a demonstrable effect on your performance.*

0 Points: *Candidate was unable to complete the test.*

Results of examination: While the examiner will score the examination, *all final score tallying will be done by CDTA.* At the close of the examination, the examiner will make a copy of the score sheet for him or herself, and then send the original to CDTA. CDTA will notify you of the official results within two weeks of the examination (or sooner when possible). The examiner may let you know if you have done well on the test or if you need additional work on your dancing and/or theory but will not be able to give you the final score.