Organization
Ballet Nouveau Colorado (BNC) is a contemporary ballet company based out of the greater Denver area. The dance corp is made up of 11 dancers who are “valued for the unique personal perspective they bring to the creation process,...” The company is a member of the National Guild for Community Arts Education and operates a dance school for all ages from pre-school through adult. Students at the school participate in BNC’s annual Nutcracker performance as well as various dance competitions and other community performances.

Website Overview
The BNC homepage opens with a large picture at the top which is used as a “wow factor” element. This element carries through the most other pages utilizing other images for each page. In the upper left corner is the BNC Logo designed in a grey color. Links across the top are red and stand out against the black, white, blue picture. Links include: Home, Performances, Company, School, Community, Blog, Join our E-Blast, Donate Today, and Contact Us. Below the large picture, the information is split up into two columns. The columns include information related directly to the links at the top of the page. Most chunks of information are connected to a small photo though there are three links with no information. These three links (“Buy Tickets”, “Give the Gift of Dance”, and “Older”) are in yellow boxes that draw my attention away from the more interesting links. At the bottom of the page is another box of links to sub navigation connected to the main links at the top of the page. There is also a search box and logos/links to what I presume are the company’s sponsors.

The “Performances” page, “Company” page, “School” page, and “Community” page all follow the same layout as the home page. Each has a large picture at the top with two columns below splitting information. These pages seem to follow the concept that videos and sub-navigation stay in the right column while the important information is in the left.

The “Blog” page follows a standard, time based layout that most blogs offer.

The “Join Our E-Blast” page, “Donate Today” page, and “Contact Us” page each utilize a thinner black header with the BNC logo and no large picture. Each page also includes online forms that are fillable without downloading or navigating away from the site. The donation page is interesting in that it is the only page that opens a new window.

Assessment
The grand scheme of the website is fairly straight forward but there are some issues that need addressing. The large image that is so prominent on 4 pages, for example, is large enough that to view the entire image, a monitor must be set to a resolution of 1920x1080 or larger to view. The logo, when paired with the large image, visually takes a back seat to the picture. In a time when image is everything, the logo should be more noticeable. The homepage is filled with information to the point that it takes multiple
screens to view the entire page. Scrolling that far may lose the attention of a common
web surfer. The information on the home page also seems to lack organization though
to the designer, there may have been a specific method to the layout. Within the pages,
the sub-navigation is not always obvious. Most important information and headers are
red meaning they stand out but so are the links. Until the cursor is placed over the link,
one cannot be sure if it is a link or just another piece of information. The random yellow
boxes on each page also causes confusion. Each yellow box contains a link but the
yellow color stands out so much that it draws attention away from the information
around it. The video clips are a nice touch as each one provides insight into a
performance or event, but care should be taken to use video services that do not use
advertisements as it can be irritating to be forced into a commercial when learning about
the company. Finally, the “Donate Today” link is the only link that opens a new window.
This new window also does not have all the navigation links at the top as the rest of the
site does. This can cause confusion when a person is taking a look through the
information and suddenly cannot find their way back to the home page.

Other than these points, which are minor in the grand scheme of website design, the
site is highly navigable, and provides plenty of information for possible donors, possible
students, future corp dancers, and audience members. The vibrant pictures, especially
those connected to the dancer biographies, are eye catching and keep the viewer
interested.

Prescription
The two main points that would help the site look more professional is to unify the look
of all of the pages and to have a standard look/location for the navigation links. To unify
the look of the pages; remove the yellow boxes and use type size to make important
information stand out; use a large picture at the top of all of the pages, not just the first
five OR make all pages look more like the dancer bio pages, clean with a smaller
picture and sub-navigation in the right column. If the red text is to signify links, only use
red for links, again, type size can make the other important information stand out
enough.