

Spring 2009 -- DCE 101.02: **INTRODUCTION TO DANCE**

3 credit hours – no prerequisites

Tuesday-Thursday 11:00 – 12:15 SRC [NOTE: STUDENTS MUST SHOW ID TO ENTER]

Instructor: Dr. Amy Ginsburg

Office: 220B HHP Building

Office Hours: Monday/Wednesday 2-4 and by appointment. Note that my schedule may change, so please contact me in advance if possible.

Email: [alginsbu@uncg.edu](mailto:alginsbu@uncg.edu)

Office phone: 334-3262

**Instructor's Assistant:** Sarah Wildes Arnett

**Course Description:** Introduction to the basic concepts and principles of modern/postmodern dance through studio experiences, video, discussions, readings, written work, and concert attendance.

**For Whom Planned:** General university students seeking a studio experience course in dance that fulfills General Education Core (GEC) requirements in the Fine Arts.

**Course Objective:** The primary objective of this course is to introduce students to the aesthetic sensibilities inherent in modern and postmodern dance, based on the notion that dance embodies a way of moving, thinking, feeling, and being in the world that is unique to this art form. Specific artists and schools of thought will be introduced and compared to demonstrate that there is a wide range of aesthetic points of view within the modern dance community, but that there are also basic principles that are foundational.

**Class Policies:**

- Please wear appropriate attire (dancewear) in order to move freely. No jeans. No hats. No large or dangling jewelry.
- NO STREET SHOES ALLOWED in the studio space; be prepared to be barefoot
- NO GUM OR FOOD in the studio space. You may bring a covered water bottle.
- Long hair must be secured.
- If you have health problems or learning problems that impact your work in this course, please notify me about this as soon as possible.
- Please be ready to begin class on time.
- Please be prepared for class. You are expected to be familiar with class information posted on Blackboard, and with the assigned readings. This will enable you to participate in class, and will contribute to your success in the course.
  - o PLEASE BRING A NOTEBOOK AND PEN(S) FOR IN-CLASS WRITING ACTIVITIES.
- Constructive, thoughtful participation in movement experiences and class discussion is expected of all students. The quality of your participation, including proper attire and attitude, will factor into your final grade.
- Cell phones MUST BE TURNED OFF. Out of respect for the learning environment cell phones will not be tolerated.
- PAPERS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED BY EMAIL.
- And most important: as a member of this class, you are part of a community. Please come to class with an open mind and a supportive attitude to ensure the best learning experience for yourself and everyone in the class.

### Student Learning Goals:

- 1.) To develop a basic understanding of modern dance technique, improvisation, and composition through studio experiences, discussion, and assignments
- 2.) To demonstrate in writing, discussion, and through the creation and participation in movement studies and choreography, selected methods of artistic and intellectual expression in dance
- 3.) To discuss the cultural implications and associations of modern and postmodern dance as a facet of twentieth/twenty-first century history
- 4.) To recognize and describe the impact of modern/postmodern dance on the creation, cultivation, and expression of identity and self-understanding.

### Teaching Strategies:

1. Students will participate in studio experiences in dance technique, improvisation, composition and performance directed by the instructor.
2. Students will create movement and/or dance studies in response to instruction.
3. Students will read about the history of key modern dance artists to provide a cultural and aesthetic perspective on this art form.
4. Students will observe live modern dance events and videos of significant figures in modern dance.
5. Students will write observations, descriptions, and responses in relation to movement experiences in and out of class, readings, and dance concert performances.

\* Not every student will receive individual feedback during each class, but all students will receive individual feedback regularly throughout the course of the semester.

### Attendance:

The Dance Department REQUIRES an 80% participation rate to get credit for the course. You will be permitted **two (2) absences without penalty**. 1/3 of a letter grade will be deducted for each absence beyond these two absences. A tardy consists of being late to class OR leaving early. Two (2) tardies equals one absence. Students who have more than two absences may be allowed to make up one absence prior to the last week of the semester. Please contact the instructor for specific information if this becomes necessary. If you are injured or sick, but well enough to attend, you may observe and take notes on the class, and this will count as having attended. No more than TWO days of observation are allowed. If you must be absent, please try to contact the instructor before class. When absence is unavoidable, it is the student's responsibility to find out what she/he missed.

**Make-up tests will be given ONLY in the case of a documented medical emergency.**

**Required Texts:** Readings will be posted on Blackboard as e-reserves or course documents. They are included to provide you with information about the history and development of modern dance, and to inspire deeper thinking about related aesthetic, cultural and social issues. We will discuss these readings in class and you will be required to submit written responses under "Assignments" on Blackboard.

**THESE SUBMISSIONS MUST BE IN THE CORRECT FORMAT, WHICH MEANS THAT YOU NEED TO SAVE THEM AS ".doc", NOT IN ANY OTHER FORMAT.** The readings are listed below, along with the dates that each response is due. These written responses will count as 10% of your final grade.

**Required Concerts:** All students are required to attend a minimum two (2) live dance performances (concerts) at UNCG. (You are encouraged to attend more, whether or not you write about them, but a minimum of two papers based on your viewing are required.) Students tickets cost \$9.00 each, so students should plan to spend \$18 - \$27\* for this important aspect of the course. (Note that there is no cost for a textbook.) PLAN AHEAD: these concerts may sell out quickly, especially those that take place in the UNCG Dance Theater.

Tickets are sold at the UNCG Box Office (334-4849). Bring your student ID.

\*A word about Concert Papers:

- All students are required to attend the Faculty Concert. There will be 2 performances:
  - o **Friday and Saturday, February 13 and 14 at 8pm in Aycock Auditorium.**
- If you have an unavoidable conflict with those dates, you may receive permission to see the Prime Movers Concert as a substitute (Friday, Feb. 27 at 8pm; Sat. Feb. 28 at 2pm and 8pm in the UNCG Dance Theater.)
- In addition to the Faculty Concert, you may choose from among the concerts listed below. You are required to see and write about one (1) of these performances. You have the option to submit a paper about one additional concert. If you choose this option, I will count the higher of the two grades you receive on the papers written about performances that take place after Spring Break.
- Concert Papers are due in class no later than the Thursday after the weekend performance. (It helps to write while your memory is still fresh.)
- You must notify me within the first TWO WEEKS of classes if you have any conflicts with dates, including the dates of the Faculty Concert.

### **Post-Spring-Break Concert Schedule**

**(Suggestion: put all concert dates on your calendar and get tickets as early as possible.)**

MFA Thesis Concert: Work by Elizabeth Lane \*

Friday-Saturday, March 20-21      8pm      UNCG Dance Theater

MFA Thesis Concert: Work by Katherine Kiefer Stark \*

Friday-Saturday, March 27-28      8pm      UNCG Dance Theater

MFA Thesis Concert: Work by Ali Duffy

Friday-Saturday, April 3-4      8 pm      UNCG Dance Theater

MFA Thesis Concert: Work by Erin LaSala

Friday-Saturday, April 17-18      8 pm      UNCG Dance Theater

Departmental Concert

Friday, April 24 at 8 pm; Saturday, April 25 at 2pm and 8pm      UNCG Dance Theater

\*NOTE: These concerts may be more challenging for the purpose of your assignment because they will not be broken up into discrete dances.

### **Assignments and Grade Percentages:**

Attendance and Participation:	35%
Written Quiz (midterm):	10%
Reading Responses:	10%
Movement Evaluation (midterm):	5%
Performance of Repertory:	10%
Concert Papers:	15%
Choreography Project (with written documentation):	15%

Specific guidelines for assignments will be discussed in class and posted under “Documents” on Blackboard. A basic outline:

- **Attendance and Participation:** This class emphasizes experiential learning. In addition, many class activities require working together with others in the class. To be successful in this class, it is essential that you are fully present and actively engaged in all movement activities and class discussions. NOTE: Some preparation/practice of movement material outside of class time will be required for each section of the course.
- **Written Quiz:** This will cover highlights of material presented in class and in readings.
- **Reading Responses:** discussed above under Required Texts.
- **Movement Evaluation:** This will be an assessment of your performance of a movement sequence developed in class. If you work with consistent effort, you will be able to accomplish this.
- **Performance of Repertory:** This refers to your work in the process of rehearsing and performing selections of modern dance choreography.
- **Concert Papers:** discussed above.
- **Choreography Project:** You will work in small groups to create a short dance. These will be presented in class at the end of the semester. You will have some class time to work on the project but will also need to find time outside of class to work with your group. The written documentation will focus on the process of creating the dance.

### **Evaluation Methods and Guidelines for Assignments:**

1. Students will be evaluated by the instructor on their attendance and participation. How fully did they contribute to their experiential learning process?
2. Students will be evaluated by the instructor on their level of achievement. How well did they meet the craft and aesthetic demands of a beginning Modern Dancer?
3. Students will be evaluated by the instructor on the depth and the insightfulness of their written assignments. How thoughtfully did they reflect on in-class experiences and/or posted readings? How well did they observe and record their observations of live performances, and performance videos?
4. Instructor evaluations may be conducted through conferences and/or written evaluations, as well as recorded grades.

NOTE: All requirements are required. Failure to submit or complete any required assignment or in-class requirement will result in an incomplete for the class.

**Grading Scale:**

97-100 =A+  
93-96 = A  
90-92 = A-  
87-89 = B+  
83-86 = B  
80-82 = B-  
77-79 = C+  
73-76 = C  
70-72 = C-  
67-69 = D+  
63-66 = D  
60-62 = D-  
59 = F

**Course Outline**

There are four basic components to this course:

***Technique Class:*** Technique will be taught to enhance the student's understanding of committed movement through space and the use of the body in modern dance. Our approach to modern technique will aim to increase coordination, range of movement qualities, strength and musicality. We will also emphasize the use of breath and weight. Ideas about how to take a class, the significance of dynamic alignment to enrich expressivity and avoid injury, the importance of the proprioceptive nervous system, and the basic concepts of ideokinesis will run through this segment. Students will be asked to write about and discuss their experiences to develop their descriptive skills.

***Improvisation:*** Through various approaches to improvisation, students will explore elements of dance such as space, weight, time, and energy, leading to the discovery of a broader range of movement possibilities. This segment of class work will also introduce principles of trust, support, and ease in movement as students learn to work together and create a sense of community. Students will be asked to write about and discuss their experiences to deepen their exploration of the creative process and self-awareness.

***Repertory:*** During this segment students will rehearse and perform short section(s) of selected work(s) created by modern dance artists. Through this experience, students will learn not only about the dances but also about the processes of rehearsal and performance.

***Composition:*** This segment will introduce students to ideas that lead to movement invention, and to compositional techniques that can be used to manipulate, develop and arrange movement material into a set form.

To augment these components, performance videos will be used to demonstrate Western European and African-American influences on the development of modern dance. Readings and concert attendance will further support in-class activities.

**Academic Integrity:**

ALL STUDENTS will abide by the UNCG Academic Integrity Policy for this class. (All out of class assignments are to be completed individually unless otherwise directed by the instructor) IF YOU HAVE NOT READ the Academic Integrity Policy it can be found online at <http://studentconduct.uncg.edu/policy/academicintegrity/>. This is your responsibility and you will be held accountable for any violation of this policy.

**Drop Policy:** Withdrawal from this course without academic penalty must take place by the University withdrawal deadline, with the exception of students who must withdraw late due to injury or illness.

**Course Calendar**

NOTE: Schedule below is approximate and subject to change. Changes will be announced in class. Work should be posted on Blackboard before class time on the dates listed. Papers are due in class on the date listed. Reminder: Emailed papers will not be accepted.

Week One (1/20 and 1/22):

Course Introduction

- Print syllabus and bring to class on Thursday, 1/22
- Mini-research project on modern dance due in class Thursday, 1/22

Week Two (1/27 and 1/29):

Improvisation and Technique

- Print “Definition of Good Alignment” (go to [www.uncg.edu/dce](http://www.uncg.edu/dce); click on “syllabi” on the left. This is the second to the last document on that page.) Bring to class on Thursday, 1/29
- Read “Modern Dance – Tradition in Process” by Marcia Siegel (MS) pp. 85-97 (top). Post Reading Response (RR) to Blackboard (Bb) before class time on Tuesday, 2/3.

Week Three (2/3 and 2/5):

Improvisation and Technique

- RR due before class on 2/3
- Read “Improvisation” from The Dancer Prepares as background for class work
- Read “A Critical Appreciation of Dances” by Larry Lavender. Post RR to Bb before class time on Thursday, 2/12.

Week Four (2/10 and 2/12):

Technique and Improvisation

- RR due before class on Thursday, 2/12

\*\*\* FACULTY CONCERT: FRIDAY AND SATURDAY, FEB. 13 AND 14

Week Five (2/17 and 2/19)

Technique and Improvisation

- Concert Paper on Faculty Concert due in class on Thursday, 2/19
- Read “Modern Dance – Tradition in Process” by Marcia Siegel (MS) pp. 97-106. Post RR to Bb before class time on Thursday, 2/26

Week Six (2/24 and 2/26):

Technique and Improvisation

- RR due before class on 2/26
- Improv Project (make scores, etc.) – assign Tuesday, due Thursday?

Week Seven (3/3 and 3/5):

Technique and Improvisation

- Movement Evaluation (Technique) on Tuesday, 3/3
- Midterm Quiz on Thursday, 3/5
- Read “African Americans and the Modern Dance Aesthetic” by Gerald Myers. Post RR on Bb before class time on Tuesday, 3/17.

Tuesday, March 10 and Thursday, March 12: Happy Spring Break!

Week Eight (3/17 and 3/19):

Repertory

- RR due before class on 3/17

Week Nine (3/24 and 3/26):

Repertory

Week Ten (3/31 and 4/2):

Repertory

- Print “Imagining Dance” by Joan Acocella and bring to class on 4/9

Week Eleven (4/7 and 4/9):

Repertory

- Complete repertory work (perform; or perform each sep’ly?)
- Acocella article in class on Thursday, 4/9

Week Twelve (4/14 and 4/16):

Composition

Week Thirteen (4/21 and 4/23):

Composition

Week Fourteen (4/28 and 4/30):

Composition

- Perform Group Choreography Projects on Thursday, 4/30

Final Exam time: Thursday, May 7, 12:00 noon – 3pm. We will not have a final exam, but we will use this time. More information to follow.