

COURSE SYLLABUS
DCE 101 INTRODUCTION TO DANCE
FALL 2009
MONDAY/WEDNESDAY 8:00-9:15
ROOM 306-DANCE THEATER

Course Number: DCE 101-03
Course Title: Introduction to Dance
Credits: 3:3
Prerequisites: None

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

Instructor: Melissa Pihos, mppihos@uncg.edu
Office: 220G HHP Phone: 334-4064
Office Hours: By appointment

Come to Class

WITH: the appropriate dancewear for this course. All students must dress out in clothing fit for movement. No jeans.

WITH: a positive and supportive attitude. As a member of this class you are part of a community.

WITH: you cell phone turned off. Out of respect for the learning environment cell phones will not be tolerated.

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

Course Objectives: The primary objective of this course is to introduce students to the aesthetic sensibilities inherent in modern dance, based on the notion that modern 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.

1. Students will develop a basic understanding of modern dance technique through studio experiences and discussion.
2. Students will develop a basic understanding of dance improvisational ideas through studio experiences, readings, and discussion.
3. Students will develop a basic understanding of the elements of dance composition through studio problems, readings, video presentations, live concerts, and discussion.
4. Students will develop a basic understanding of the dance rehearsal process and performance through the process of learning and performing a section of a dance.
5. Students will develop the ability to describe, in writing and discussions, certain aims and methods of artistic and intellectual expression in dance through their experiences in technique, improvisation, composition, and performance.

6. Students will develop the ability to demonstrate, in writing, an understanding of dance as an expression of culture in the twentieth/twenty-first century.
7. Students will develop the ability to demonstrate, in writing and discussion, an understanding of and sensitivity toward both Western European and African -American influences on the development of modern dance in America.
8. Students will develop the ability to demonstrate, in studio practice and discussion, the importance of dance as expression of self-understanding.

Teaching Strategies:

1. Students will be given direct studio experiences in dance technique, improvisation, composition and performance that will be directed by the instructor.
2. Students will be required to read about the history of key modern dance artists to provide a cultural and aesthetic perspective on this art form.
3. Students will be required to observe live modern dance events and videos of key figures in modern dance. They will write papers to describe, analyze and interpret the dance performances they observe.

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 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.

Requirements/ Texts/Readings/Video Tape Viewings:

- Video Tapes to be shown in class
- Assigned Internet Searches
- Required readings posted on blackboard
- Attend two Dance Concerts and write about them

Grading Scale:

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

Course Outline:

The course will be taught through four basic components.

Technique Class: Technique will be taught to enhance the student's understanding of committed movement through space and to develop an understanding of use of the body in modern dance. Our approach to modern technique will aim to increase coordination, range of movement qualities, strength and musicality. Ideas about how to take a class, sensitivity to injury and the importance of the proprioceptive nervous system will run throughout the technique sections of class. Students will be asked to write about and discuss their experiences to develop their descriptive skills.

Improvisation: Various approaches to improvisation will be taught to place the students in close interaction so they learn to work together and have the opportunity to know one another fairly well. Improvisation will also introduce principles of self-expression, body awareness, dynamic range of movement, discovery of a broader range of movement qualities and energies, exploration of elements such as weight, flow and time in movement.

Composition, Movement Invention, and Abstraction: This segment will introduce students to improvisational ideas that lead to movement invention, and to compositional techniques that can be used to form set material from improvisation.

Repertory: During this segment students will rehearse and perform a short section of a modern dance piece by a contemporary choreographer. Through this experience, students will learn not only about the dance but also about rehearsal process and performance.

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.

Attendance:

The Dance Department REQUIRES an 80% participation rate to get credit for the course. You will be permitted **TWO absences ONLY** without penalty. **1/3 of your final letter grade will be deducted for each absence incurred beyond these two absences. Three tardies equals one absence.** A tardy constitutes being late to class **OR** leaving early. Upon the sixth absence, students will be dropped from the course at the discretion of the instructor.

Late Work – late work turned in **one class period after the due date will lose 10 % and 20% by the second class. After the second class, I will not accept it.**

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

Class Requirements and Grading:

1 –Attendance and Participation: Two absences are allowed; more will affect the student's grade. If a student is injured or sick, but well enough to attend, he/she may watch class and this will count as having attended. Since much of the learning is experiential, full participation is expected during each class meeting. Students are expected to participate fully in at least 80% of the class meetings in order to receive a passing grade. Attendance and active Participation will **count as 40% of the final grade.**

2- **Concert Papers.** You will be required to see two dance concerts during the semester. PLAN AHEAD. You will write a **3-5 page response to each concert, 12 point font, double spaced.** They will be graded and together to count as **20% of your final grade. You have to turn in your papers one week after you attend the concert you choose: exception-end of semester-Departmental Concert.** I will not accept e-mailed papers. See the concert calendar on page 6 and put these dates on your own calendar. You must notify me within the first TWO WEEKS of classes if you have a conflict. (See outline for concert papers on page 7)

2. **Projects-** There will be various mini projects and projects throughout the semester. Students will be given class time to work on projects and will also be expected to work outside of class. These projects should demonstrate a student's overall understanding of improvisation, modern dance technique, performance, and composition. These projects will add up to count **for 20% of your final grade.** Specific guidelines for these projects will be discussed in class and posted under “Documents” or in the discussion board on Blackboard.

3. **Reflections and Responses:** All readings will either be on “E-Reserve” on Blackboard or posted as a PDF or Word file under “Documents” on Blackboard. They are intended to teach you about the development and history 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 respond in writing to each assigned reading. I am looking to see that you understand what you read and can relate the topic to our class experiences. Although reading responses are not formal like an essay, I still expect you to write a grammatically sound response. This means proofread for spelling and grammar errors. These reflections and responses will count as **20% of your final grade.**

Course Calendar: *schedule below is approximate and subject to change-changes will be announced in class*
8/24 and 8/26

- Course Introduction- Technique/Movement –get into groups
- Mini Research Project assigned

8/31

- Technique/Movement
- **Mini Research Project due Aug 31**

9/2

- Technique
- **Blackboard Response to “Modern Dance- Tradition in Process,” by Marcia Siegel due 9/2**
- Technique-movement

9/7 – Labor Day – No Class

9/9

- Technique
- **Collect Images that relate to movement we have worked on in class bring for class on 9/14.**

9/14

- **Blackboard Response to “African Americans and the Modern Dance Aesthetic,” by Gerald Myers due 9/14**
- Technique-**Bring images to class**-work on Image Study

9/16

- **Image Study due 9/16**

9/21 and 9/23

- Improvisation

- **“Improvisation” by James Penrod Blackboard Response due 9/21**

9/28 and 9/30

- **“Imagining Dance” by Jane Acocella Blackboard Response due 9/28**
- Improvisation Study

10/5

- **"The Critical Appreciation of Dances” by Larry Lavender Blackboard Response due 10/5**
- Improvisation Study
- **Alumni Homecoming dance concert paper due 10/5**

10/7

- Improvisation Project assigned
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10/12 **Fall Break- No Class**

10/14

- Work on Improvisation project
- **Cyrus Art Production paper due 10/14**

***10/16 Last Day to Drop a Course without Academic Penalty**

10/19 and 10/21

- **Improvisation Projects due 10/19 – show projects**
- Composition Project Assigned- work on Composition Project

10/26 and 10/28

- Composition
- **Blackboard response for “Check List from the Art of Making Dances,” due 10/26.**
- Composition Project assigned

11/2

- Work on Composition Projects

11/4

- **Composition Projects due 11/4**

11/9 and 11/11

- Repertory – Revelations (1960), choreographed by Alvin Ailey
- **Blackboard Response for Shapes of Change: Images of American Dance" by Marcia Siegel due 11/9**
- **Dances from the 1920s Paris paper due 11/9**
- **Martha Graham Dance Company paper due 11/9**

11/16 and 11/18

- Repertory-Revelations

11/23

- **NC Dance festival paper due 11/23**
- **Show Revelations to class 11/23- Start 59 Place**

11/25

- **No class 11/25, Thanksgiving**

11/20 and 12/2

- Repertory/Composition

- **John Gamble Dance Theater paper due 11/30**
- *59 Places*

12/7

Black board response to *59 Places* Manuscript by Amie Dowling due 12/7

Work on *59 Places* Project

Departmental Concert paper due 12/7

Final Exam :

12/11 3:30-6:30

59 Places Project Due

Concert Calendar:

Tickets sold at the UNCG Box Office (in the EUC) Bring your student ID.

Required:

9/26 SAT at 8PM| Alumni Homecoming Dance Concert (\$12 general admission; \$9 seniors and children; \$6 students)

An evening of dance work by UNCG Department of Dance alumni E. Gwynn Co., Liz Carlson, Tracie Foster Chan, Tamara Begley, Erin Brown Craven, and Madeleine Reber.

10/1-2 THURS-FRI at 8PM, SAT 10/3 at 2PM & 8PM| Cyrus Art Production (\$15 general admission; \$12 seniors and children; \$9 students)

Original choreography by UNCG Department of Dance faculty member Duane Cyrus.

10/24 FRI at 8 pm Martha Graham Dance Company Aycock Auditorium

10/30-31 FRI-SAT at 8PM | Dances from 1920s Paris: Two Works by Cocteau (\$12 general admission; \$9 seniors and children; \$6 students)

Two works will be performed, which were originally by French poet, novelist, dramatist, designer, boxing manager, playwright, artist, and filmmaker, Jean Cocteau.

11/6-7 FRI-SAT at 8PM | North Carolina Dance Festival (\$15 general admission; \$12 seniors and children; \$9 students) Held in Aycock Auditorium

The Festival is an annual showcase of North Carolina dance artists that travels to five communities. Eight different companies will tour, performing alongside artists local to the host communities, making the actual concerts a mix of local and statewide artists.

11/19-21 THURS-SAT at 8PM | John Gamble Dance Theater (\$15 general admission; \$12 seniors and children; \$9 students)

Original choreography by UNCG Department of Dance faculty member John Gamble.

12/4 FRI at 8PM & SAT, 12/5 at 2PM & 8PM | Departmental Concert (\$12 general admission; \$9 seniors and children; \$6 students)

Dance works by faculty and students of the Department of Dance.

OUTLINE FOR CONCERT PAPERS

1. **Describe:** Choose two or three dances (or sections of the dance) from the concert, and describe these dances in as much detail as possible.

- a. the movement of the dancers
- b. the structure of the choreography
- c. the costumes
- d. the music
- e. the decor (if appropriate)
- f. any other elements you notice and deem important

2. **Analyze or Interpret:** What do you think the dances you described were about? What kind of images did the dances evoke? Can you relate those images to other experiences you have had? Did you have an emotional response? How do the things you described in number 1 support your interpretation.

3. **Evaluate:** Did you think the dances were successful? Why or why not?

Papers should be 3-5 pages
12 point type
Double spaced