

DCE 101-05 Course Syllabus

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

Course: DCE 101-05 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.

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Office: 220G

Office Hours: By Appointment

This class meets in **HHP 152** Tuesdays and Thursdays from 5-6:15.

Come to Class

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

WITH: paper and pen or pencil for taking notes and completing in class assignments.

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 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, readings 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.

Grading Scale:

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

Course Outline:

The course will be taught through four basic components.

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.

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.

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.

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. Performance videos will be used to demonstrate Western European and African-American influences on the development of modern dance.

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 a 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.

Course Requirements and Grading:

1. **Attendance, Participation, and Improvement:** 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, effort, openness to new ideas, overall improvement, and active participation in discussion and movement work and in-class assignments will count as **20% of your final 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. If a student must miss class, it is expected that he/she will arrive at the next class prepared. This means that the student has contacted another student in the class and has caught up on the missed material. Students' journals should contain catch-up notes for days missed, if not the participation grade will be lowered.

2. **Four Projects:** At the end of each unit*, there will be a project that allows the students to demonstrate their understanding of the material in class as well as the readings and assignments that are part of that unit. Students will be given class time to work on projects and will also be expected to work outside of class. The projects will be graded and together will count as **20% of your final grade (Completion of all projects is required to complete the course)**. Specific guidelines for these projects will be discussed in class and posted under "Documents" on Blackboard.

*Repertory Project - The class will learn three dances. The student's participation and performance in the dances will be graded. The students' will pick one of the three dances to research.

3. **Journal:** Journals will include notes from class and weekly reflections on the course. Responses to assigned readings and out of class assignments should be included in the weekly reflections. Students are also encouraged to include images, drawings, and articles that relate to class material. Journals will be collected at the end of each unit and will count as **25% of your final grade**. The readings and assignments are listed below in the course calendar, along with all due dates. Reading prompts will be posted in assignments on Blackboard. All outside of class journal entries must be TYPED and written in complete sentences.

4. **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. There will be specific guidelines under "Documents" on Blackboard for these papers. They will be graded and together to count as **20% of your final grade (Attendance at two concerts is required to complete the course)**. I will not accept e-mailed papers. See the concert calendar below and put these dates on your own calendar. You must notify me within the first TWO WEEKS of classes if you have a conflict.

Required:

- Faculty Concert: An evening of dance works created by Dance Department faculty. Friday and Saturday, February 13 and 14 at 8pm in the Aycock Auditorium. **(3-5 page response due Tuesday, February 24)**

Choose ONE of the following concerts:

- MFA Thesis Concert: Work by Elizabeth Lane. Friday and Saturday, March 20 and 21 at 8pm in the Dance Theater. **(3-5 page response due Tuesday, March 31)**
- MFA Thesis Concert: Work by Ali Duffy. Friday and Saturday, April 3 and 4 at 8pm in the Dance Theater **(3-5 page response due Tuesday, April 14)**
- MFA Thesis Concert: Work by Erin P. LaSala. Friday and Saturday, April 17 and 18 at 8pm in the Dance Theater **(3-5 page response due Tuesday, April 28)**

5. **Group 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 your class to work with your group. There will be specific guidelines posted in course documents on Blackboard for this project which will count for **15% of your final grade (Participation in the Group Choreography Project is required to complete the course)**.

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.

Course Calendar

NOTE: Schedule below is approximate and subject to change. Changes will be announced in class.

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

Course Introduction

- **Mini-research project on modern dance due in class 1/22**

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

Improvisation

- Read: **"Improvisation,"** by James Penrod, posted in e-reserves
- Read: **"Five Premises for a Culturally Sensitive Approach to Dance"** by Deidre Sklar, posted in e-reserves
- Complete **exercise 5** from *The Creative Habit*, posted in Course Documents

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

Improvisation

- Read: **"The Critical Appreciation of Dances,"** by Larry Lavender, posted in Course Documents
- Complete **exercise 20** from *The Creative Habit*, posted in Course Documents

Week Four (2/10 & 2/12)

Improvisation

- Read: **"Imagining Dance,"** by Joan Acocella, posted in e-reserves
- **Improvisation Project 2/12**
- **Journals due in class 2/12**
- Attend the **Faculty Dance Concert** on 2/13 or 2/14 at 8pm in Aycock Auditorium

Week Five (2/17 & 2/19):

Technique

- Read: **"Modern Dance - Tradition in Process,"** by Marcia Siegel, posted in e-reserves
- **Collect images** that relate to movements and movement concepts we are working on in class

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

Technique

- **Response to the Faculty Concert due in class 2/24**

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

Technique

- Read: **"African Americans and the Modern Dance Aesthetic,"** by Gerald E. Myers, posted in e-reserves
- **Technique Project on 3/5**
- **Journals due in class 3/5**

SPRING BREAK (3/10 & 3/12)

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

Repertory - Revelations (1960), choreographed by Alvin Ailey

- **MFA Thesis Concert: Work by Elizabeth Lane**, 3/20 and 3/21 at 8pm in the Dance Theater

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

Repertory - Chair/Pillow (1969), choreographed by Yvonne Rainer

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

Repertory - 59 Places (2001), directed by Amie Dowling and Julie Lichtenberg

- **Response to MFA Thesis Concert: Work by Elizabeth Lane due in class 3/31**
- **Journals due in class 4/2**
- **MFA Thesis Concert: Work by Ali Duffy, 4/3 and 4/4 at 8pm in the Dance Theater**

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

Composition

- Complete **exercise 11** from *The Creative Habit*, posted in Course Documents
- Start **exercise 8** from *The Creative Habit*, posted in Course Documents

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

Composition

- **Create Chance Score**, bring written score to class on 4/14
- Complete **exercise 8** from *The Creative Habit*, posted in Course Documents
- **Response to MFA Thesis Concert: Work by Ali Duffy due in class 4/14**
- **MFA Thesis Concert: Work by Erin P. LaSala, 4/17 and 4/18 at 8pm in the Dance Theater**

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

Composition / Work in class on Group Choreography Projects

- **Bring in a nursery rhyme, prop (object), a phrase of 8 movements, and 6 spatial designs on 4/21**
- **Composition Project 4/21**
- **Journals due in class 4/23**

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

Work in class on Group Choreography Projects

- **Response to MFA Thesis Concert: Work by Erin P. LaSala due in class 4/28**

FINAL EXAM: SATURDAY 5/9 3:30-6:30

Perform Group Choreography Projects!

- Hand in group documentation of process
- Hand in Journal