

**BEGINNING AFRICAN DANCE  
FALL 2009**

**Course Prefix Number:** DCE 132

**Course Title:** Beginning African Dance

**Credits:** 1:0:3

**Prerequisites/Co-requisites:** None

**For Whom Planned:** Non majors and BEGINNING level dance students

**Instructor:** Professor Robin Gee

**Class Times:** Tuesday/Thursday 5:00–6:15pm

**Office:** 220A HHP Building

**Office Hours:** By Appointment

**Phone:** 256-1487

**E-mail:** [rmgee@uncg.edu](mailto:rmgee@uncg.edu)

**Description:** Introduction to the cultural history and movement vocabulary of West African dance, emphasizing the central role that dance plays in African cultures. This *introductory* course examines, through theory and praxis, the techniques and philosophy of dance in various West African cultures. Selected dances, songs and rhythms are taught as conveyors of cultural tenets, regional variation, and national trends. Students must be injury-free and physically fit to complete the requirements of this course.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

1. Maintain the bodily alignment intrinsic to and necessary for the performance of elementary-level African dances;
2. Demonstrate correct rhythm and timing/phrasing of movements in the performance of elementary-level African dances.
3. Grasp and retain the sequence of exercises and combinations presented in class.
4. Identify musical accompaniment as related to specific dances learned in class.
5. Demonstrate a deep exploration of the qualitative aspects of movement sequences with a projection of energy while dancing.

**Teaching Strategies:**

To enable student achievement of the learning goals, I will

1. Demonstrate, explain, analyze, and lead students through the movement sequences of selected elementary-level African dances;

2. Observe students' daily work in class and (a) orally assess students' achievement of the learning goals and (b) make recommendations for improvement in achieving learning goals\*
3. Provide a written assessment of students' achievement at mid-term and again at the end of the semester;
4. Provide opportunities for individual appointments in which students may discuss their learning efforts;
5. Provide opportunities for students to assess their own and others' progress toward the achievement of the learning goals;

*\* Not every student will receive individual feedback during each class, but all students will receive individual feedback via the Dance Technique Feedback Sheet.*

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

To achieve the learning goals, the fundamental and ongoing assignments in this class for which students are responsible are:

1. Attend to movement material presented, as well as to explanations and analyses of its specific components;
2. Listen carefully to and apply all corrections and recommendations for improvement that I provide in class;
3. Learn the movement material as quickly as you can through observation and practice;
4. Perform the movement material as accurately as possible each time you are called upon to do so;
5. Reflect in writing as assigned on your progress toward and actual achievement of the learning goals;
6. Observe other dancers and assess their performance as assigned.
7. Address movement material on an ongoing basis both in and outside of class.

I will assess students' achievement of the learning goals through:

1. Daily oral feedback on work done in class;
2. Written mid-term and final evaluations of achievement via the **African Dance Feedback Sheet.**

Your achievement in mastering the learning goals to the degree appropriate for this course, and as documented on the **African Dance Feedback Sheet**, will provide the primary basis for calculating your final letter grade. Your attendance record and your score on the midterm and final movement evaluations assignments will be additional factors in calculating your final letter grade.

There is a FINAL EXAM for this course. The exam will be conducted ONLINE and students are EXPECTED to be available during the time listed below. The exam will be posted online and available ONLY during the exam window assigned to the course. The instructor will give exam details and values during the semester.

<b>93-100=A</b>	<b>90-92=A-</b>	<b>87-89=B+</b>	<b>83-86=B</b>	<b>80-82=B-</b>	<b>77-79=C+</b>
<b>73-76=C</b>	<b>70-72=C-</b>	<b>67-69=D+</b>	<b>63-66=D</b>	<b>60-62=D-</b>	<b>Below 60=F</b>

The relationship between attendance and your final letter grade is as follows: 1/3 of a letter grade will be deducted for each absence incurred over the maximum absences allowed for this class.

### **Attendance Policy**

In classes meeting two days a week **two absences** are allowed per semester. For each absence over the number allowed, the final grade will drop 1/3 of a letter (for example, from an A- to a B+, or from a B to a B-). When injured or ill (but not contagious), students may still be counted as present if they attend class and are able to accommodate some form of movement activity (to be prescribed by the instructor). If a student is not able to participate in class they must *first speak with the instructor to obtain permission to watch class*. However, this will not be counted as a day of participation in the class. You are allowed **one** make up lesson (allowable only if you have three or more absences.) You may attend another African, Ballroom, Jazz or Brazilian class as a make-up. See below for the participation requirements.

***Please note:** there are no “excused” absences in this class. It is not necessary to e-mail me regarding your absences unless you will be absent beyond the allowable limit or if you are injured and cannot participate in class. If you are ill or injured THEN you should see a physician and provide detailed documentation on your illness and limitations. You are allowed two absences in this class and ANY additional absences will adversely affect your grade. It is your responsibility to keep track of your absences in the course. You will receive an “absences to date score” on the midterm and final ADFS.*

### **Lateness:**

Students who arrive more than 15 minutes after class has begun should not come directly onto the dance floor. Anyone who arrives after opening exercises should begin to warm up on the side of the class and wait for the instructor to indicate when to enter into class. If you arrive after the opening exercise is finished, please sit out and watch. Arriving after the opening exercise is finished three times is the equivalent of one absence.

### **Topical Outline:**

Warm-up exercises and combinations (derived from elementary-level African dances) designed to enable your achievement of the learning goals will remain fairly consistent over the course of the semester. Other exercises and combinations – i.e., longer and more

complex materials derived from elementary African dances – will be introduced and taught over the course of the semester.

### **Participation**

The Dance Department requires an 80% participation rate (students must dance in 24 out of the 30 meetings in classes that meet twice a week, and in 36 out of the 45 meetings in classes that meet three times a week) to get credit for the course. Sitting and watching a class does not count as participation. Students who do not meet the participation requirement for any reason will need to repeat the course.

Additional Requirements for this class:

You will need to be prepared for class, each and every day. This means:

Appropriate attire: Women should wear their lapas; men should wear sweats and tee shirts. Please pull back long hair.

Appropriate etiquette: Be on time, ready to dance. Turn off your cell phone. Do not bring gum or food into the studio. It is a good idea to bring a water bottle.

Appropriate behavior: Be aware of your peers during class. When it is not your turn to dance, respect the others by remaining QUIETLY attentive. Ask questions when you have them. You learn as much from listening, watching and asking as you do from doing.

\*Please see the African Dance Code of Conduct at the end of this document

### **Academic Honor Code:**

Academic integrity is founded upon and encompasses the following five values: honesty; trust; fairness; respect; and responsibility. Supporting and affirming these values is essential to promoting and maintaining a high level of academic integrity.<sup>1</sup> Each member of the academic community must stand accountable for his or her actions. As a result, a community develops in which students learn the responsibilities of citizenship and how to contribute honorably to their professions.

If knowledge is to be gained and properly evaluated, it must be pursued under conditions free from dishonesty. Deceit and misrepresentations are incompatible with the fundamental activity of this academic institution and shall not be tolerated. Members of the UNCG community are expected to foster in their own work the spirit of academic honesty and not to tolerate its abuse by others.

First responsibility for academic integrity lies with individual students and faculty members of this community. A violation of academic integrity is an act harmful to all other students, faculty and, ultimately, the university.

UNCG cares about your success as a student. We recognize students often balance many challenging personal issues and demands. Please take advantage of the University resources designed to help. For assistance accessing these resources contact the Dean of Students Office at 334-5514 or Student Academic Services at 334-5730. The Counseling and Testing Center is available for mental health assistance at 334-5874. You may also visit me during my office hours.

### AFRICAN DANCE CODE OF CONDUCT

- \* Lapas must be worn every day. If you do not have your lapa let me know. Please make sure that you are covered (top and bottom) in class.
- \* No socks in class
- \* No jewelry, watches, long earrings or necklaces should be worn in class.
- \* Do not chew gum during class.
- \* Turn cell phones off during class.
- \* If you are more than 25 minutes late for class you will be marked absent
- \* If you need to arrive late or leave early please let me know in advance.
- \* There are no stagnant “watches” in this class. If you are not able to participate due to injury/illness, you must let me know before class starts and together we will construct exercises for you during that class period. You must be able to participate in some way in order to receive credit for the class.
- \* There is movement “homework” each day. Please revisit movement material between class times and be able to address any movement/ideas that you do not understand. If you are absent from class it is your responsibility to find out what you missed. Check with your fellow classmates to address material covered in your absence.
- \* I am available for conference/discussion via e-mail and before midterm evaluations when necessary.

### **Important Dates:**

**Monday September 26<sup>th</sup> – Last day to drop w/tuition refund**

**Thursday October 8<sup>th</sup> - MIDTERM VIDEOTAPING**

**Friday October 9<sup>th</sup> thru Tuesday October 13<sup>th</sup> – FALL BREAK**

**Thursday October 15<sup>th</sup> – MIDTERM CONFERENCES**

**Friday October 16<sup>th</sup> – Last day to drop class w/out academic penalty**

**Wednesday November 25<sup>th</sup> – Friday November 27<sup>th</sup> – THANKSGIVING BREAK**

**Thursday December 3<sup>rd</sup> - Last day of classes**

**Thursday December 10<sup>th</sup> - Final Conferences (Optional)**

**Tuesday December 15<sup>th</sup> - FINAL EXAM – 3:30 – 6:30pm (ONLINE)**

***\* Midterm and Final Conference Sign-up sheets will be posted on my door - RM 220A  
HHP***