

Dance 100.002 - INTRODUCTION TO BALLET

Fall Term 2016

Department of Dance, Studio B, M/W 9-10am

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"I do not try to dance better than anyone else. I only try to dance better than myself."

- Mikhail Baryshnikov

"I hope that every dance I do reveals something of myself or some wonderful thing a human can be."

- Martha Graham

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Movement is a fundamental means by which we exist. We rise in the morning, brush our teeth, rush off to class, interact with our friends and colleagues, and shift around in our seats trying to stay up entirely too late to cram ever increasing amounts of information into our tired brains. Even at rest our very cells are perpetually engaged with unrelenting tasks, the governing rules of which pervade everything we know about our universe. Macroscopically, ballet is a system that organizes the natural motions of the joints into a series of codifiable movements we can combine to express emotion, tell stories, and appreciate the versatility and potential of the human form. A four hundred year old tradition, ballet is simultaneously historical and ever evolving. In this course we will engage with ballet as a physical practice both technically and creatively, explore ways of seeing ballet through viewings, readings and writing exercises, and ultimately use what we learn to create dances of our own.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Participation/Preparedness: This is an experiential course. As such, being physically present is only half of the work it takes to succeed in the studio portion of this class. A disciplined presence, concentration, ability to self-motivate and apply corrections, enthusiasm, cumulative information retention, and a demonstration that you have processed assigned readings and viewings will all be considered in the assessment of your course grade.

Timely completion of all assignments: Throughout the semester you will be required to complete several assignments geared toward increasing your understanding of, appreciation for, and skills in ballet. Your grade will be adjusted to account for late, missing or incomplete assignments.

Attendance and Tardiness Policies: The Attendance Roll Call portion of your grade will be calculated based on 100 points. Being present counts as 100%, an absence counts as 0%, and arriving late or leaving early (without informing me prior to class) counts for 80%. There will be two "free" days added to your attendance score (i.e. two absences at 0% will be changed to two present at 100%). You will be able to track your current attendance grade in Canvas and it will be updated every two weeks. For instance, after

two classes, a student with one present value (100%) and one lateness value (calculated at 80%) will have a score of 90 points, or 90%, in that Attendance Assignment column. There are no make-ups for missed classes.

- **Protocol for Observing Class:** If you are injured, you may observe class and write your critical observations for the day's attendance credit. Inform me of your intent to observe that day and why (if applicable). Then proceed by taking notes and you will be included in the class discussions and activities whenever and wherever possible. To receive attendance credit for the observation day, you must turn in your observation notes (see guidelines in Canvas) by 11pm the following day (Monday observation day notes are due by Tuesday at 11pm; Wednesday's observation day notes are due by Thursday at 11pm, etc...)
 - Only two observation days will receive attendance full credit – additional observation days will be treated like arriving late and will receive 80%.
 - If you arrive 10 minutes after class begins, you may be asked to observe class and only by turning in your observation notes will you receive the 80% of that day's attendance credit.
 - If no notes are received, that day will count as an absence.
- **Tardiness:** It is important that you arrive on time (or early) to each and every class so that you may adequately prepare your body and mind for whatever the instructor has planned for that class period. It is also a matter of respect for your instructor and fellow classmates to be punctual as to not disrupt the class that has already begun.
- Please do not come to class if you are contagious, however, sustained absences due to illness or injury will affect your grade.

*Note: If injury/illness continues for an extended period of time, please get in touch with me immediately so that we may arrange an alternate plan of action. It is solely the responsibility of the student to communicate and arrange alternate work.

Again, there are no "make-ups" for missed classes

ASSIGNMENTS

- 1) **Introduce Yourself:** your first assignment is to tell me who you are and why you are here. Where are you from? What are you studying at U of M? What inspired you to sign up for this class and what are you hoping to walk away with at the end of the semester? (The expectation of an "easy A" is an informative response.) What is your previous experience with ballet/dance/sports/other physical practices, if any? What physical practices are you engaging in now, if any? Have you seen ballet on film or in a theater and if so what have you seen? Do you have any injuries? Do you have any concerns about your participation you would like to tell me about before we dive in? ("I'm a rocket scientist and I haven't written about art since AP Art History" is an informative response.)

Due: Wednesday, September 26

Format: 1-2 pages, 12 pt. font, double spaced, bullet points are acceptable

Form of Submission: Canvas under 'Assignments'

2) **Attend a Live Dance Concert and write a Reflection Paper:** During this course you are required to attend at least one dance concert. After attending the concert, write a reflection paper and submit it no more than **ONE WEEK** after the performance. A list of recommended concerts is available on the last page of this syllabus, although you may attend a concert not included on the list at the discretion of the instructor. **Email me ahead of time to notify me of the concert you are attending.** Please refer to the readings posted on Canvas to help structure your papers. I encourage you to bring a pen and a notepad to your performance so you can jot down notes during and directly after the concert, especially during pauses and intermission. Please be mindful not to turn pages during the performance as the noise is disruptive to your fellow audience members. Please include a photo of your ticket stub, program or selfie in the theater with your paper (this does not count as one of your pages).

Due: ONE WEEK after the performance

Format: 2-3 pages, 12 pt. font, double spaced

Form of Submission: Canvas submission; under 'Assignments'

Please note: **proofreading is important!** If you submit papers with lots of typos it will affect your grade. For non-native English speakers: you will not be penalized for grammatical errors. Go ahead and take risks!

3) **Final Project (Two Parts):**

Part 1: Working in groups, choreograph your own dance using ballet vocabulary in lieu of a final exam. If you wish to participate in the **Dance 100 Final Showing on Saturday September 10, 1-3pm**, you will help combine your dances into a single 5-minute dance for the entire class. Participation in the Saturday performance is not a requirement of the course and **your grade will not be affected if you choose not to participate.** We have found in past years that Dance 100 students love sharing their work with their friends, which is why we have created this opportunity.

Part 2: Write a short reflection paper (1-2 pages, 12 pt, double spaced) on what you have learned over the semester. How did this class compare to your expectations coming in? Have you accomplished the goals you set for yourself at the beginning of the semester? What challenges did you encounter? What have you overcome? How has this movement course affected your life outside of the studio? Has it influenced the way you think about your studies in other disciplines? Have your other disciplines provided a lens through which you processed the material in this course? Have you been inspired to continue engaging with dance as a participant and/or spectator?

GRADING CRITERIA

70% Attendance and Participation in Class

- Attendance (100 points)
- Participation (100 points)

5% Introduction paper(10 points)
10% Concert Response Paper (50 points)
10% Final Project: Part 1 (50 points)
5% Final Project: Part 2 (10 points)

Please note: your final grade will be adjusted to account for late/missed/incomplete assignments.

You will receive an evaluation of your progress midway through the semester. You may also schedule a meeting with me at any time to discuss your progress.

Lastly... this semester you will have the opportunity to participate in a **flashmob** as part of the Dance Department's halftime show at the Wisconsin football game on October 1, 2016. Participation in this extracurricular activity will count as ONE absence changed from a 0% to a 100% at the end of the term.

A range - Outstanding, Excellent

Student exhibits a hunger and passion for learning, willingness to take movement risks, and integrates corrections; consistently strives to exceed their personal best and demonstrates exceptional improvement by the end of the course; actively participates in final group assessment with commitment, creativity, enthusiasm, and teamwork; written assignments are submitted on time, meticulously proofread and with thoughtful discussion and articulation of ideas.

B range - Very Good, Good

Work shows uniform solidity, dedication and concentration; consistent work habits and demonstrates improvement over the semester; actively participates in final group assignment and class discussions; written assignments submitted on time.

C range - Average, Adequate

Actively participates but lacks energy or commitment to push toward new heights; work habits are inconsistent; participates in the final group assignment, but contributes little; written assignments are incomplete or missing.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Plagiarism, whether from the Internet or from print sources, will result in failing the course and may be the cause of immediate dismissal from the University. If you are unsure of what constitutes plagiarism consult the university website:

<http://www.lib.umich.edu/academic-integrity/understanding-plagiarism-and-academic-integrity>

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Changing Rooms, Clothing, and Security

Changing rooms/Bathrooms for both men and women are located in the main corridor of the Dance Building. Carry valuables with you at all times. Students should wear form-fitting clothing in order for the instructor to provide feedback and corrections. Hair should be pulled off the face and neck. Please

refrain from wearing jewelry that is potentially dangerous or that impedes movement (eg. rings, spike chokers, dangling earrings, bulky jewelry, etc...). Gum chewing will not be permitted in class. **Please purchase ballet shoes (pink, black, white, skin-tone are all fine).** You can find them at the local dance shop, www.downstagedancewear.com, or order online from www.discountdancesupply.com (be mindful of sizing notes as dance shoes are rarely true to size). While you are waiting to purchase your shoes, you may wear socks or jazz shoes if you have them.

Dance Floor

NO STREET SHOES are allowed on the dance floors at any time. NO FOOD OR DRINKS are allowed in the studios except for bottled water that can be sealed shut. Close all windows and doors before you leave the studio. Modern dancers like to roll on the floor, as may you one day; let's keep it nice for all of us.

Door Code

The door code to the dance studio will be given out during the first week of class. **DO NOT SHARE IT WITH ANYONE.** This is for your safety and the safety of our building.

Cell Phones

During class, all cell phones must be turned off (or placed on silent) and left inside the student's bags. Yes, we live in a digital world, but for the 50 minutes that you are in this class, please turn off your cell phones. Even a vibrating phone is distracting to the class.

Facebook Policy

Do not "Friend" your instructor. She will not acquiesce to your request.

Safe Space

You are expected to bring a positive and pro-active attitude toward each class. You are also expected to bring an open mind and be respectful of others and of yourself. Derogatory terms, shaming, and bullying are not tolerated in this classroom, as this class is considered a safe place for students to express their creative selves (through word and/or deed) in a nurturing environment.

Classroom Etiquette

Much like attending a lecture course, dance classes are governed by a series of unspoken rules. While some may seem arbitrary if this is your first experience in a dance class, they are, for the most part, universal and if you are aware of them you will feel comfortable walking into any dance class knowing what is expected of you as a member of the dance community. While some rules may vary from teacher to teacher, the following is a list of standard etiquette we will use in this class.

- Unless asked by the teacher to speak, it is assumed there will be no talking during class.
- Questions always welcome, but wait until an exercise is over and raise your hand.
- Do not stop moving as you are going across the floor unless you have been injured. If something goes wrong (eg. you forget the combination), try to continue traveling with your group or move to the side where you will be safe from collisions as the dancer coming up behind you expects that you will not be in their path when they start to move.

- Do not sit on the floor or on chairs during class unless instructed to do so by the teacher in context of a combination or choreography. It is both considered rude and interrupts the movement experience the teacher is creating for you during class.
- When waiting on the sides of the room, don't lean on the walls or barres. This is considered rude.
- At the end of every class when the teacher indicates the class is over, it is customary to acknowledge the instructor, accompanist (if applicable), yourself and your peers with applause. If you are really inspired by the accompanist, you can beat the floor with the palms of your hands as a sign of respect and appreciation.
- **Safety first!** It is ok to stop moving and ask for help if you are being instructed to do something that you know you shouldn't due to an existing injury or limitation, if you feel pain in a joint, or if something just doesn't feel right. Learning to recognize the difference between good and bad pain is important and comes with time, particularly if you study with multiple teachers whose movement philosophies differ.

Observance of Religious Holidays (from the SMTD Student Handbook p. 4)

“The University of Michigan has established a policy to allow members of the University to observe their religious holidays without academic penalty. Students who expect to miss classes, examinations, or other assignments as a consequence of their religious observance are not excused from these activities, but will be provided a reasonable opportunity to fulfill their academic obligations without penalty. For detailed information, please see the following link:

http://www.provost.umich.edu/calendar/religious_holidays.html#conflicts”

Please inform your instructor at the start of term if you know you will be missing classes due to observance of religious holidays. She will arrange for make-up work so you are not penalized.

Corrections and Physical Contact

In some instances, the instructor may choose to correct technique or inform artistry using physical contact, also known as providing proprioceptive feedback for tactile learners. The instructor may also ask students to engage in physical contact with each other. This is for instructional purposes only. If you have any concerns with this, please speak with your instructor.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you think you need an accommodation for a disability, please let me know at your earliest convenience. Some aspects of this course, the assignments, the in-class activities, and the way the course is usually taught may be modified to facilitate your participation and progress. As soon as you make me aware of your needs, we can work with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office to help us determine appropriate academic accommodations. SSD (734-763-3000; <http://ssd.umich.edu>) typically recommends accommodations through a Verified Individualized Services and Accommodations (VISA) form. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such.

This syllabus is subject to change without notice.

Live Dance Performance Options

Dance Department Concerts

- UMMA Performance
November 17 UMMA Free
- Dance and Related Arts Showing
December 2 and 3 Betty Pease Studio Theatre Ticketed
- Dance Department Composition Showing
December 8 Betty Pease Studio Theatre Free
- BFA in Dance Concert
December 8, 9 and 10 Betty Pease Studio Theatre Ticketed
- Performance Improvisation Showing
December 10 Betty Pease Studio Theatre Free

UMS Concerts

- Layla and Majnun - Mark Morris Dance Group
October 13, 14, and 15 Power Center Ticketed
- Dorrance Dance
October 20 and 21 Power Center Ticketed
- portrait of myself as my father - Nora Chipaumire
November 17, 18, 19, and 20 Downtown Boxing Gym Ticketed

Other Options

- The Osiris Legend
October 8 and 9 Music Hall in Detroit Ticketed
- Dance Cuba!
November 9 Music Hall in Detroit Ticketed
- Oakland Dance Festival Showcase Performance
November 19 Harrison High School in Farmington Hills Ticketed
- Slava's Snowshow
December 1, 2, 3, and 4 Music Hall in Detroit Ticketed
- Wayne State Winter Dance Concert
December 9 and 10 Music Hall in Detroit Ticketed
- Broadway Touring Shows - https://www.detroittheater.org/index_musical.php