

Department of Dance and Theatre College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences FALL 2025

Appreciation of Dance as a Contemporary Art Form DANC 1200.001

Thursdays: 6:00pm - 8:50pm Location: WH 322 (Wooten Hall)

Instructor: Emi Matsushita Email: emi.matsushita@unt.edu

DATH Office Phone: 940-565-1121

Office hours: By appointment. Zoom or in-person (in DATH 103J)

Course Description:

This course primarily explores the aesthetics of dance as an art form. It also examines many components that go into creating a dance, including investigating the dancer-artist, the dancer -body, the 'business' of dance, and the artistic practices and methods used to create art from moving bodies. There is emphasis placed on the development of an appreciation for dance as a form of communication, connection, and as a reflection of contemporary society through the lens of dance in the 20th and 21st centuries. It also explores dance's evolution throughout history in various contexts (societies/cultures). This course includes lectures, films, digital mediums, live performances, and group/partner discussions, as well as written and verbal critical analysis. Course content will cover a wide survey of dance genres from all over the world including social/cultural forms to more codified, traditional forms that are more generally known; everything from kathak to ballet to tango to butoh and beyond. The course is 3 credit hours.

Course Reading:

No required reading. Supplemental readings will be assigned and provided by the instructor as the course proceeds.

Required Materials:

-Anything to take notes during class lectures and discussions. (i.e., notepad & pen, tablet, etc.)

Recommended Materials:

-laptop/tablet for occasional use in class sessions (such as research)

Course Objectives:

Students will develop a critical and informed understanding of dance as both an art form and cultural practice in its contemporary context. This will be achieved through the study and observation of a wide range of styles, which can include ballet, contemporary, jazz, modern, tap, improvisation/freestyle, and global/social dance forms. Styles will be examined through both its historical background and present-day practice, using diverse sources such as live performance, digital media, and literature. Students will learn to recognize distinctive movement qualities and aesthetics across genres, as well as analyze the creative process from multiple perspectives—choreographer, performer, producer, and beyond. By the end of the course, students will be able to confidently discuss, analyze, and appreciate dance using informed, discipline-specific language.

The course will also explore the broader relationship between dance, society, and culture. Students will consider dance's historical and current significance, its role in the global economy, and the influence of emerging artists shaping the field today. Finally, attention will be given to the health, sustainability, and career pathways of dance artists, providing students with a comprehensive view of the art form and its evolving place in the world.

Classroom Etiquette & Student Expectations:

*Practice respect. We will engage in frequent group discussions about dance. Because art is subjective and levels of understanding vary, it's essential to maintain an open and respectful environment for meaningful and productive dialogue.

*Come prepared. Bring all required materials (assignments, readings, supplies, etc.) to class. Phones must be silenced and not used during class unless for course-related engagement. Misuse may result in confiscation. You are responsible for your own learning—make the most of this opportunity.

*Arrive on time. Class begins promptly. Arrivals *more than 10 minutes late* will be marked as tardy. Three tardies equal one absence (see Attendance Policy).

- *Food and drink. No food or snacks during instruction to avoid distraction. Water bottles and covered drinks are permitted. Breaks may allow snacks at the instructor's discretion. Please clean up after yourself.
- *Stay open-minded and engaged. Your mindset directly impacts your learning. Take notes, ask questions, contribute to discussions, and support your peers in creating a positive and collaborative learning space.
- *Stay updated. Check email and Canvas regularly for announcements or changes.
- *Uphold professionalism. This is a university-level course. Show commitment by demonstrating maturity and investment in your learning. As dance often involves the body, performances may include partial nudity, strong themes, or uncensored music. Approach all material with maturity, discretion, and appreciation. If such content may be uncomfortable, it is recommended to reconsider enrollment.
- *Communicate appropriately. Use clear, professional language in all communications (in class and via email). Avoid slang, emojis, or overly casual tone. Respect the privacy of sensitive information.
- *Seek support when needed. If issues arise, contact your instructor promptly so they can be addressed.

Required Live Performances:

A key learning component of this course is attending and observing live dance performances in the DFW metroplex. This semester, students are required to attend all three designated performances (alternative performances may only be approved in advance by the instructor under rare circumstances).

Students are responsible for coordinating their own transportation to and from the venue. Please plan ahead for travel time, traffic, parking (including potential fees of \$5–\$15), and appropriate attire. Performance ticket costs are covered by course fees—no additional payments are required.

Attendance at these performances is considered an extension of classroom learning, and the same expectations for professionalism and respect apply. Students are encouraged to bring note-taking

materials to jot down thoughts and impressions between pieces. Please note that recording or photographing performances is **prohibited** in most venues. Regular class sessions will not meet during weeks when mandatory performances occur.

Check-In Procedures:

- *Arrive at the venue at least one hour prior to showtime (unless otherwise directed).
- *Tickets will be distributed by the instructor at check-in.
- *If you miss check-in, tickets will be available at the box office under the instructor's name; however, it is your responsibility to notify the instructor upon arrival.
- *Many venues do not allow late seating. Plan to arrive early rather than on time.

Live Performance Etiquette:

- Turn off cell phones or put on DO NOT DISTURB mode during the show.
- Do not use your cell phone flashlight to take notes during performance pieces.
- NO pictures or videos are permitted.
- NO talking during performances.
- Remain in your seat for the performance. If needed, wait until intermission to get up.

The required live performances for this season include:

OCT 3 (FRI):	Axis Dance Company: "ECOS" Arrive by 7:15pm	
@ Coppell Arts Center	505 Travis Street, Coppell, TX, 75019 Show @ 8:00 PM	
OCT 18 (SAT)	Bridges Collaboration Festival Arrival TBA	
@ Courtyard Theatre	1509 H Ave, Plano Show @ TBA	
NOV 14 (FRI): TWU Dance: DanceMakers Arrive by 6:30 pm		
@ TWU Margo Jones Performance Hall 1100 Oakland St, Denton Show @ 7:00 PM		

^{*}additional dates/times for performances may be added to accommodate for class size & need.

Live Performance Attendance & Alternatives

Experiencing dance in a live setting is a central component of this course. Students are required to attend all designated live performances, as these provide irreplaceable opportunities to observe artistry, atmosphere, and audience-performer dynamics.

If a student is unable or unwilling to attend a live performance, an **alternative assignment** will be required to ensure an equivalent learning experience. Alternatives involve significantly more work than attending in person—for example, watching two full-length recorded performances and submitting an extended written analysis, researching a current choreographer or company, or completing an in-class presentation. Specific alternative options must be coordinated and approved with the instructor in advance.

Please note: While alternatives are available in special circumstances, they are intentionally designed to be more rigorous. Attendance at live performances is strongly encouraged as the most rewarding and accessible way to meet this course requirement.

Course Evaluation Procedures:

Class Participation:

Daily class participation is mandatory and highly encouraged. Your willingness to fully engage, work hard consistently, and take responsibility will be a critical factor in your learning. In order to achieve the course objectives, the expectation is that you will consistently work to observe and uphold classroom etiquette, student expectations, and thoroughly complete assignments.

Class Participation includes:

- o Attending required performances as dictated by instructor (in syllabus)
- o Observing dance works (live or via class instruction) with respect, openness, and curiosity
- o Partaking in any practical application of taught topics, concepts, techniques, etc.
- o Actively listening to presentations by instructor or peers, taking notes if needed
- o Contributing to classroom discussions on topics (sharing insights, asking questions, etc.)
- o Participating actively in any required group work, each member of the group holding equal weight in contributions

Assignments:

- o In & Out of Class assignments- These will be a mix of group and individual work as dictated by the instructor and the content to which it relates.
- o Quizzes will be given occasionally to test knowledge on recently taught topics.

o Research/Reading will be required as assigned by the instructor throughout the course. These will help inform the students' understanding of a concept to be able to fully engage in class discussions, debates, observe dance with a critical eye, and to increase general knowledge.

o For assignments that are required via online submission, please note the time it is due by AND the method of submission (via email, Canvas, in person, etc.).

Post-Performance Projects/Debates (in class):

Following each mandatory live performance, students will participate in an in-class debate as a way to critically analyze and reflect on the work. Students will be divided into groups and assigned either a **PRO** or **AGAINST** position on a case statement related to the performance (e.g., "The performance was impactful"). Groups will prepare arguments supported by research, citing at least TWO sources in APA format, and will present their cases head-to-head while the class engages as the audience and votes on the outcome. These debates emphasize the application of course concepts, collaboration, and critical thinking. **These in-class debate projects are weighted 20% of your total grade.**

Group Research (Midterm) Project:

There will be a 10 minute group presentation project required around the midpoint of the term. The topic will be about a specific dance form and will include:

- a critical analysis of a performance in that dance form.
- -A brief teaching/demonstration segment where the group introduces the class to key movements, stylistic elements, or techniques of the dance form.

Project topics and performances shall be proposed and approved prior to the starting work on the presentation. Each student will both be graded individually and as a group. It is expected that each group member upholds equal involvement in the presentation. A major portion of the grade will incorporate a peer-grading and self-grading system. This assignment is worth 20% of your total grade. *NO grace period submission for ALL midterm project assignments

Final Project: Reflection & Research Video Submission

In lieu of a final exam, students will complete a reflection & research video presentation (minimum 6-7 min long, maximum 10 min long). This final project will mostly serve as the students' informed reflection of one the final performances observed PLUS commentary on lessons learned throughout

the course. By the end of the semester, it is assumed that the student will have developed a critical eye for dance and will thus be able to accurately communicate their thoughts, supported by credible external sources. This project should cover the concepts taught in class and utilized in a way to thoroughly analyze the observed final performance. It will also highlight valuable (and personally relevant) lessons learned by the student as they engaged with the course. It is required that the student cite 4 sources (minimum) in APA format to fortify their thoughts and submit alongside a robust outline of talking points. **This assignment is worth 30% of your total grade.**

*NO grace period submission for the Final Project

Extra Credit:

Throughout the semester, there will be opportunities to receive extra credit via further engagement with dance outside of the formal coursework. Opportunities will be posted in Canvas. Some of these extra credit opportunities include attending a dance/movement class or an extra curricular performance.

Grading Breakdown	Grade Weight (%)	Grading Scale	
Assignments & Class Participation: Quizzes, in-class assts, homework, attendance	20%	100-90%	А
Post-Performance Debates/Projects (2)	25%	89-80%	В
Group Research Project	25%	79-70%	С
Final Project: Reflection & research Video	30%	69-60%	D
TOTAL:	100%	Below 60%	F

^{*}It is recommended that you keep your graded work throughout the semester. This is in case there are discrepancies with any grade records. Students can track their grades and progress via Canvas.

Late Work, Makeup Work, and Alternative Assignment Policy:

NO late work is accepted. All assignments have deadlines posted in Canvas. A **24-hour grace period** is offered for most submissions (*excluding the midterm/group research and final projects*). Work submitted after this grace period **will not be graded**, even if only one minute late. Technical issues are **not a valid excuse** for missing the deadline. If a student cannot submit via Canvas, files may be emailed directly to the instructor, but the submission must still meet the grace period deadline. Partial or incomplete submissions will earn partial credit rather than a zero.

Extenuating Circumstances:

Exceptions to this policy may be considered in cases aligned with **UNT Policy 06.039 (excused absences)**. Students must:

- 1. Contact the instructor within one week of the missed deadline.
- Provide substantiated documentation from a valid source (e.g., doctor, school official, coach, family member).
- 3. Alternatively, students may seek advocacy from the **Dean of Students**, who will communicate directly with the instructor to validate the situation.

★ In general, missed assignments—especially in-class work—cannot be made up. Students should contact the instructor immediately to discuss a remedial plan. In most cases, an alternative assignment (often an approved extra credit project) can be submitted to recover the points.

Guidelines:

- Submit make-up work via email or Canvas message directly to the instructor.
- Make-up assignments must be completed within 1 week of the original due date.
- Note: Completing an extra credit assignment as a make-up does not provide additional
 "extra" credit beyond the points for the missed assignment.

Attendance Policy:

Students are **responsible for engaging with all mandatory in-person elements** of this course, including class sessions and performances. It is the student's responsibility to adhere to the policies stated in the syllabus. Absences follow a **"no questions asked"** policy; documentation is not required for all absences, unless desiring an "excused absence".

Daily attendance is critical due to its direct impact on learning objectives. Roll may be taken or a sign-in sheet used; **signing in for another student is prohibited**.

Each student is allowed two (2) absences for the term.

- Third absence: overall course grade lowered by 20% (e.g., $80\% \rightarrow 60\%$)
- Fourth absence: automatic failing grade for the course
- Note: Live performance attendance is recorded separately.

If absent, students are expected to **catch up on missed material independently**. Make-up points for missed assignments are only available through the **alternative assignment protocol** outlined in the Late Work policy (above).

Sickness/Injury Policy:

o As mentioned prior, no matter the nature of the absence, there is a "no questions asked" policy. If a student is sick and cannot attend class, they **do not** have to inform the instructor. It is the student's responsibility to learn all missed material before returning to class AND to make up any points from missed assignments via the alternative assignment policy stated above.

o If an injury or a condition/illness prevents a student from participating fully in course activities, it is still required for the student to be present for class. To be considered active in class participation, the student must still take part in as many aspects of the class as possible (see *Daily Participation* section). If the injury/illness/condition impacts the student's engagement in the course significantly, the student will be encouraged to reach out to the Dean of Students for further accommodations. The instructor will then work collaboratively with the student to create a plan to ensure continuing engagement in the course.

Tardiness & Early Departures (Classroom):

- Students are expected to show up prepared to start class on time. Anyone who is **more than 10 minutes** late will have their tardy documented and counted against them.
- Early departures from class are not permitted.
- Three tardies and/or early departures will equal one absence, with the potential to lower a students' grade.

Cheating/Plagiarism:

NO cheating or plagiarism is allowed. If caught, you will receive a "FAIL" for the assignment and you may be removed from the class! The University upholds a strict policy on academic dishonesty. This can also include falsifying your attendance or misrepresenting work.

Student Submission Standards:

Students must submit high-quality writing that demonstrates critical thinking and clear communication, using APA citation for all assignments that require it. Writing should reflect proper grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, and course vocabulary. The institution's policy on academic dishonesty will be enforced (see section below): <a href="https://www.unit.com/un

<u>Academic Honesty Statement:</u> Scholastic dishonesty, including cheating, plagiarism, and collusion, violates UNT's Honor Code. As a student, you are expected to follow this code, as outlined in the <u>UNT policy handbook.</u> Cheating involves unauthorized use of materials or assistance, plagiarism is using another's work without acknowledgment, and collusion is unauthorized collaboration. Academic dishonesty can result in a failing grade on the assignment, failure of the course, or suspension from the college.

Al usage: In this course, it is the general requirement that students submit their original ideas and produce work written in their own voice to uphold maximum academic integrity. Although Al is not recommended to draft a submission completely, it may be used to edit and refine a **student's** efforts. It will be assumed that the student's voice and original content will approximately make up 80% of the work while 20% may be allotted to Al assistance. Overall, a student's original ideas, critical analysis, and creativity will be encouraged and rewarded. In all cases intellectual honesty and integrity will be assumed unless there is reasonable doubt otherwise. In those cases, the instructor will take any necessary action to align with academic standards listed above; i.e., filing a formal report, working with the student to mitigate dishonest behavior, etc.

Course Calendar FALL 2025

Date	AUGUST	
21 (TH) Week 1	Introduction to Course. Syllabus ReviewDance OriginsObserving Dance as an art form -Scavenger hunt assignment - due 9/5 FRI @ 11:59 PM *best completed on weekdays (Mon-Thurs) between 9am-2pm	*in class assignment
28 (TH) Week 2	Investigating the Dancer	*in class assignment

Date	SEPTEMBER		
4 (TH) Week 3	Dance Forms: History & Evolution of Western Dance	*in class assignment	
11 (TH) Week 4	Library Orientation Session *BRING LAPTOP Group Research Project	*Quiz	
18 (TH) Week 5	Group Research Project Presentations I (½ class)	CLASS IN DATH 129 (DO NOT go to WH322!)	
25 (TH) Week 6	Group Research Project Presentations II (½ class)	CLASS IN DATH 129 (DO NOT go to WH322!)	

Date	OCTOBER		
2 (TH) Week 7	NO CLASS- LIVE PERFORMANCE on OCT 3 (FRI) *Arrive by 7:15 PM Axis Dance Company: "ECOS" @ Coppell Arts Center 505 Travis Street, Coppell, TX, 75019 Show @ 8:00 PM *Beware of FRIDAY TRAFFIC!		
9 (TH) Week 8	Post- Performance Reflection & Analysis: Debate		
16 (TH) Week 9	NO CLASS- LIVE PERFORMANCE on OCT 18 (SAT) *Arrival TBA Bridges Collaboration Festival @ Courtyard Theatre 1509 H Ave, Plano Show @ TBA		
23 (TH) Week 10	NO CLASS: Post- Performance Independent Project		
30 (TH) Week 11	Social Styles: Hip Hop Dance Battles Investigation *in class assignment		

Date	NOVEMBER		
6 (TH) Week 12	Dance in Digital Spaces –in RTVP room 184 kNOwBOX Dance Film Festival 2024 viewing (DO NOT go to WH322!)		
13 (TH) Week 13	NO CLASS- LIVE PERFORMANCE on NOV 14 (FRI) *Arrive by 6:30 PM TWU Dance: DanceMakers @ TWU Margo Jones Performance Hall 1100 Oakland St, Denton Show @ 7:00 PM		
20 (TH) Week 14	Dance as Impact (Wellness) *BRING LAPTOP *in class assignment Final project briefing		
27 (TH) Week 15	THANKSGIVING BREAK!!! NO Class! YAY!		

Date	DECEMBER	
4 (MON) Week 16	Independent Final Project Preparation (Attendance in class is NOT mandatory) Extra Credit Movement Class Session	
11 (TH) Week 17	Final Project Due ONLINE by TUESDAY DEC 9th at 11:59 PM	

^{**}Syllabus & Schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Academic Integrity (Policy 06.003)

The University of North Texas promotes the integrity of learning and embraces the core values of trust and honesty. Academic integrity is based on educational principles and procedures that protect the rights of all participants in the educational process and validate the legitimacy of degrees awarded by the University. In the investigation and resolution of allegations of student academic dishonesty, the University's actions are intended to be corrective, educationally sound, fundamentally fair, and based on reliable evidence.

Accommodating Students with Disabilities (ODA Statement) (Policy 16.001)

UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one's specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a

new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the ODA website at disability.unt.edu.

Emergency Notification & Procedures

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Canvas for contingency plans for covering course materials.

Retention of Student Records

Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Course work completed via the Canvas online system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. Students have the right to view their individual record; however, information about student's records will not be divulged to other individuals without proper written consent. Students are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the University's policy. See UNT Policy 10.10, Records Management and Retention for additional information.

Acceptable Student Behavior

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The University's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including University and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. Visit UNT's Code of Student Conduct (https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct) to learn more.

Access to Information - Eagle Connect

Students' access point for business and academic services at UNT is located at: my.unt.edu. All official communication from the University will be delivered to a student's Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect and how to forward email. (https://it.unt.edu/eagleconnect).

Student Course Evaluation (SPOT)

Student feedback is important to help improve the quality of instruction and student experience in their courses. The SPOT (Student Perceptions of Teaching) survey allows students to submit confidential feedback on their experiences. Students will receive an email from "UNT SPOT Course Evaluations via IASystem Notification" (no-reply@iasystem.org) with the survey link. Students should look for the email in their UNT email inbox. For additional information, please visit the SPOT website (http://spot.unt.edu/) or email spot@unt.edu.

Technical Requirements/Assistance:

If you ever have any issues with the technical systems needed to access course resources, correspondences, or for assignment submissions. Please contact the instructor and also the UNT Help Desk: http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm or through email: helpdesk@unt.edu.

Phone: 940.565-2324

In Person: Sage Hall, Room 130 Code of Conduct (Policy 07.012):

The University of North Texas is deeply committed to advancing educational excellence and preparing students to become thoughtful, engaged citizens of a diverse, global community. The University has established the Code of Student Conduct to promote the wellbeing, honor and dignity of all who live, learn and work in our educational community. The Code of Student Conduct is intended to foster a safe environment conducive to learning and development, as well as to hold students accountable through an educational process that balances the interests of individual students with the interests of the University. Students and student groups are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that demonstrates respect for the rights and property of others and upholds the integrity and values of the University community.

DANC 1200 Student Contract Student Expectations and Guidelines

Classroom Etiquette:

- Engage respectfully in discussions; participate actively (take notes, ask questions).
- Turn off/silence cell phones (unauthorized use may result in confiscation).
- Arrive on time (more than 10 minutes late = tardy); three tardies equal one absence.
- No food/snacks during class; water bottles/covered drinks allowed; keep the classroom clean.
- Act professionally and maintain an open mindset; approach performances and class content with maturity and respect.

Student Expectations:

- Check Canvas & emails regularly to stay up to date with notifications & correspondences.
- Abide by the late work submission and makeup work policies (see syllabus). Note- **No grace period** for midterm or final projects.
- Take responsibility for your learning by making the most of every opportunity.
- Know that students are <u>allotted 2 class absences</u> (maximum) in the semester and understand that grades will begin to be affected following any proceeding absences.

Live Performance Requirements:

- Must attend ALL THREE mandatory live performances
 *if you cannot attend ALL performances this term, please consider dropping the course (OR you must complete alternative assignments with instructor approval)
- Understand the student's responsibility to arrange their own transportation to/from performances; account for transit time, parking fees (\$5-\$15); follow dress codes.
- Arrive on time: Check in with the instructor at least 1 hour before showtime; if missed, pick up your ticket from the box office & notify the instructor. *some shows may not allow late seating
- Uphold classroom etiquette at live performances: Set cell phones to DO NOT DISTURB/SILENT; no pictures/videos; refrain from talking; wait until intermission to leave your seat if necessary.

By signing this contract, I acknowled	dge that I have <u>read AND understood</u> the expectations &
guidelines listed above and respecti	ve policies detailed in the syllabus. I agree to adhere to
these standards to create a safe & ri	ch environment to optimize learning for myself & others.
Student Name:	_ Student Signature:
Data	