

**University of North Texas
Department of Dance and Theatre
College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences**

**Spring 2020
Monday/ Wednesday/ Friday 10:00-11:20 AM**

**Modern Dance Level VIII
DANC 4408 Section 1**

Faculty Contact Information:

Reyna Mondragon: Reyna.Mondragon@unt.edu

Office: 103G

Office Hours: by appointment.

Class Location: DATH 110

Course Description & Overview: This class is the final course within a sequence of eight modern dance classes in the dance major technique curriculum and is considered an advanced, professional-level of study. Level IV represents a high level of creative process expertise in which students should be able, with consistency and competence, to recognize, understand, and apply technical-somatic knowledge within a movement epistemology that integrates inherent, learned, and improvised movement. Level VII students demonstrate artistic integrity in their dancing and contribute to sustaining a critical and socially responsible learning community within the class.

DANC 4408.01

We will:

- a.) learn and perform teacher-generated material in order to challenge and develop beyond our current abilities
- b.) we will choreograph and share peer generated material in order to integrate new physical ideas
- c.) we will improvise with ideas to innovate and expand ways that ideas might manifest in movement.

Though most material you encounter will be generated from *my* personal aesthetic, *your* problem solving, analyzing and transforming material in personally relevant ways will lead to the development of your own agency as a creative performer.

This is a course in translation, not imitation. I will not ask you to look like me, move like me, or dance like. But I will ask you to fully embody the movement concepts presented in class, to take the model (most of the time me, but sometimes your peers) and translate the information and adapt it to your body, to remain yourself but also to challenge yourself. Translation not imitation.

This is a course in deliberate practice. Deliberate practice occurs when learners are given appropriately difficult tasks, informative feedback, and the opportunity for repetition and correction. This class is an opportunity to apply methods of deliberate practice to three aspects of your dancing: body, mind, artistry. Body: Ability to execute movement. Mind: Ability to learn movement. Artistry: Ability to perform movement. You are responsible for the deliberate development of these three parts of your dancing.

Proficiency Standards and Student Learning Outcomes

1. Engaging the Body: mechanics, dynamic alignment, technical skill

The Center Axis

In Level VII, Center Axis movement skills are present and integrated within a variety of movement contexts, performances practices or styles.

- Use core support and connectivity (lower abs and hamstring connection) when moving at high speeds in various directions, changing levels and between distal and proximal initiations.
- Apply head-tail and upper/lower articulation and opposition when performing advanced movement combinations through space at brisk tempos and/or slow motion.
- Access spinal movements such as flexion, extension, lateral flexion, rotation when moving through space at brisk tempos and/or slow motion when performing advanced movement.
- Maintain mechanical rhythm (patterning) between hip, knee and ankle flexion/extension in all related movements like pliés, relevés, weight shifts and jumps and spirals when performing advanced movement combinations.
- Maintain a clear center axis while initiating advanced movement from various parts of the body and connecting initiations sequentially or successively while moving and changing directions on or off balance.
- Balance on one leg while moving the other leg and turning and/or extended falling when performing advanced movement.

Moving within Personal Kinesphere

- Move pelvic girdle (center of gravity) through space with gravity via pelvic under curves and over curves during advanced combinations that move the center of gravity into and out of the floor, up in the air and spiraling space.
- Access the mobility, stability and coordination of the upper body/shoulder girdle (center of levity) through coordinated movement of the sternum, scapula, shoulder, elbow and

wrist in various movement combinations that involve spoking, carving, arcing, slashing and spiraling through the space and traveling in and out of the floor when performing advanced movement.

- Perform complex combinations of articulated and integrated circumduction of shoulder and hip joints when performing advanced combinations.

Moving Through Space

Level IV students should be able to access integrated connectivity within the performance of diverse, virtuosic movement combinations.

- Move clearly the center of gravity through space via five basic weight shifts including jumping, (one to one, one to two, two to two, one to another and two to one) with direction/facing changes while turning. Feet are energetically and spatially lengthened (pointed) and with clearly discernable qualitative intentions.
- Perform complex and clearly initiated sequential, successive and simultaneous movements combinations.
- Transfer weight from the lower body to the upper body or other body parts as in the performance of a variety of advanced inversions in any spatial plane or level while maintaining active core connections and shoulder stability and lengthened (pointed) feet while performing advanced movement sequences.
- Spatially hold extended shapes, particularly involving the use of hip and leg extensions, for durations relevant to advanced movement ideas.
- Perform off-balance weight shifts that are integrated with extended shapes, reaches, pulls, or changes of direction and find balance from an off-balance state when performing advanced movement.
- Perform with momentum in weight shifts and level changes and utilize momentum to aid spiraling, jumping, moving across the floor with swiftness and power, and achieving “line” and extension when performing advanced movement.
- Perform advanced movement combinations with smooth, clear transitions at high tempos and in slow motion.

2. Engaging in the Environment: performance, improvisation and musicality:

Performance and Improvisation

Level VII students should be able to discern emergent performance practice in their initial stages and be able to contribute fully to their realization thereby contributing meaningfully to the co-creation of new content. Performing partnering sequences and a variety of partnering modes, responsiveness in performance and employing improvisational methods while performing set movement material are also necessary. The student must demonstrate creativity in performance by being able to experiment with performance ideas and to seek out original ideas.

- Engage other dancers in advanced movement improvisations with spatial, tactile and weighted partnering (as in lifts) to interact creatively within the performance space.

- Use attention, intention, and visual focus to engage an audience as advanced level movement warrants, particularly being able to demonstrate internal, external, body part, directional, partner and audience foci in ways that engage an audience with the artistic context.
- Perform advanced improvised or learned movement initiated by more complex combinations of somato- sensory stimuli like perceptions of the movement environment, tactile sensations, movement patterns and anatomical imagery integrated with traditionally virtuosic elements like jumping, turning and musicality.
- Perform an advanced improvised movement score and set movement material while engaging an audience in an emergent composition with only verbal instructions.
- Accurately “pick-up” long (about 16-32 counts) advanced movement combinations by kinesthetically identifying, analyzing, sequencing, performing and retaining movements with immediacy, at high tempos.
- Support full weight of a partner for momentary durations on both pelvic and shoulder girdles with the assistance of momentum and timing.
- Engage responsively with both spontaneous and planned movement stimuli in partnering and be able to shift between the performance of set and improvised movement material.

Musicality

- Demonstrate facility with both advanced bodily phrasing rhythms and metered rhythms and be responsive to the content of the sound score or environment.
- Kinesthetically negotiate musicality as a set of relationships between advanced phrase work ideas/ images, the performance dynamics of the group and musical rhythms.
- Execute complex rhythmic patterns such as mixed/random meters (for example 2,5,3,3,6,1) when performing advanced movement combinations.
- Differentiate between various musical tempi like real time, half time, double and triple time when performing advanced movement combinations.

Course Materials and supplies:

Selected videos/films may be shown in class or may be required for viewing from online video databases.

Appropriate attire for freedom of movement is required. Sweatshirts and T-shirts may be worn at the beginning of class and through the warm-up (alignment of the body must be visible). Hair should be securely fastened and off the neck. No excessive jewelry (large ear rings, dangling necklaces, large watches, etc.) is allowed in class for the safety of all class participants. The instructor has the right to set the standard for appropriate dress in each class.

Major Course Assignments and Examinations:

Assignments and classroom activities could include viewing and listening to videotapes and online audio resources.

1. Attendance and full commitment to each class activity is of outmost importance.
2. This class requires all students to attend two concerts during the semester. One must bring ticket information.
3. Student should demonstrate a consistent application of feedback, particularly those concerning somatic patterning and kinesiology-appropriate performance of technique. This is important in order to avoid injury and to improve.
4. Midterm Performance and Observation Assessment requiring students to be conversant with modern dance genres and movement practices. ~March 4-8
5. Final Performance and Observation Assessment requiring students to be conversant with self and witness assessments. ~ April 29-May 3

Activities, Assignments, and Grading Policy:

Rubrics for each of the following activities will be supplied by the instructor.

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|------------------------------------|-----|
| 1. Daily In-Class Participation | 80% |
| 2. Mid-term Performance Assessment | 10% |
| 3. Final Performance Assessment | 10% |

Assessment throughout the Course:

Evaluation is ongoing throughout the semester via verbal and written comments from the instructor, outside observers and peers. Criteria for success in the performance of technique is based on technical expertise, the student's commitment to the activity as evidenced by energy investment, attention to performance quality, presence and classical ballet practice, contributions to discussions and application of suggestions from the instructor, peers and student to enhance quality of performance and technical expertise.

Grading and Evaluation: a student may receive 5 points per day based on the following grading criteria:

"A" 10 pts (Daily) This is an exceptional grade for distinctly superior work. Every aspect is of exceptional quality. This grade is reserved for a very few who are at the top of the class, an exception rather than the rule. The student demonstrates a clear ability to understand and articulate the concepts presented, has thoroughly mastered the subject, displays marked initiative

and exhibits intellectual curiosity. The student shows a full range of cognitive and physical skills including knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

"B" 9pts (Daily) This is an above average grade for achievement of the highest order. This grade is reserved for students who are at the top of the class but fall below an "A." The student has fulfilled the requirements and has achieved excellence in all aspects of the work including complete attentiveness, accuracy of knowledge, independence, creativity, and critical thought. The student demonstrates most levels of cognitive and physical skills including knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

"C" 8pts (Daily) The student shows evidence of knowledge about the subjects and is able to analyze concepts. The student may have an open, active, and discriminating mind but demonstrates lower and middle level ability and retention of skills specific to that class particularly knowledge, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. This student takes no initiative or leadership in their learning. This is an average grade.

"D" 7pts (Daily) The student demonstrates lower level ability and retention of skills specific to the class material, takes no initiative or leadership in learning and is consistently unprepared or unaware of concepts. This student demonstrates lower than average ability and retention of skills specific to that class particularly knowledge, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

"F" 0-6pts (Daily) The student has failed to demonstrate knowledge, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation of any of the class subject matter or concepts. This student has failed to acquire or retain skills specific to class material, takes no initiative or leadership in learning and is closed to the subject matter.

Tentative Calendar of Classes & Assignments:

See Canvas for a detailed course calendar and list of due dates.

For a complete UNT academic calendar please go to:

<https://danceandtheatre.unt.edu/dance/2019-2020-production-calendar>

SYLLABUS CONTRACT

By signing bellow, you agree that you have read and understood your responsibilities as a student when it comes to attendance policy and class etiquette (pg 5-6)

Attendance Grading Policy for Department of Dance studio classes:

Since performance in studio classes in particular relies almost entirely on work accomplished during each class any absence from class will impact the grade.

- Students are allowed two (2) absences. There are no excused absences except for personal or family emergencies or a UNT official activity, which the professor needs to approve. On the third absence your overall grade will be lowered by 5%; for example, a 90% becomes an 85%. On the fourth absence, you will earn a failing grade for the course. (UNT allows the instructor to ask the registrar to drop a student with a “WF” upon accumulation of the stated number of absences.)
- Students who do not attend the first day of class may be dropped in order to accommodate those who are on the wait list.

Lateness and Early Departures: Students should not arrive late to class or ask to leave early. Typically, **(2) tardies and/or early departures will equal one absence. If the student comes in 5 minutes late to class, they are choosing to get 5 points taken off from their daily grade.** In order to ensure all students are properly warmed up and prevent injuries, students arriving more than 10 minutes late for class may not be allowed to take class.

Observations/Sitting Out: Students should request to observe a class only in exceptional cases - the expectation is that all students will participate even though the level of activity and kind of activity may be adjusted to accommodate specific health issues. If an observation is approved by the teacher, the student will take notes following specific directions given by the teacher. These notes will be turned in at the conclusion of class. The quality of these notes will determine the student's grade for that particular day. Under no circumstances should students study for other courses during an observation.

Typically, observations are considered one-half absences, as the student is not fully engaged in the activity or the class.

Should a student need to sit down during class, they are expected to remain attentive and engaged with the class. Sitting at the front of the studio, watching and learning through attentive observation, or taking written notes is appropriate. Lying on the floor, sleeping, talking or texting on a cell phone, or engaging in conversation with other students during class is not considered appropriate. No student should be consistently sitting out as it warrants a low class participation grade. **Typically, ‘sitting out’ two times equals one absence.**

Class Etiquette/Dressing Out:

- There are certain rules of classroom etiquette: no leaving class during an exercise unless there is an emergency, no chewing gum, and no food/beverages other than water in the studio during class. Students should dress out for each class in order to comfortably and properly execute exercises.

- Cell phones will not be tolerated unless explicitly used for a research tool when asked to during class. **PLEASE SILENCE THEM**
- Be kind to your fellow classmates. We will be giving constructive critiques and will help each other on progress in the movement analysis journey.
- You will be expected to work on your own and in groups. Recognize the pace in which you work and allot the necessary time to complete your assignments.

Concert Attendance Requirement:

An important part of the educational experience in the performing arts is developing an understanding of how dance, music, and theatre are unique, yet interrelated art forms. Critical to becoming literate in the arts is being exposed to a variety of types of performances and having the opportunity to consider how meaningful worlds are created by choreographers, directors, composers, actors, musicians and dancers. Furthermore, as an interdisciplinary department committed to collaborative art making endeavors, we all should share a commitment to supporting the work of our colleagues and fellow artists.

This class requires all students to attend two concerts during the semester. One must bring ticket information and write a one double page paper describing one dance that either served as inspiration or was interesting. Teacher will give further information on the requirements for the paper.

Some Resources

- TITUS presents
- UNT Faculty dance concert
- TWU
- TCU AIDS benefit concert

Student Signature: _____

Semester: _____

Date: _____

University Policies:

Academic Dishonesty: (<http://www.vpaa.unt.edu/academic-integrity.html>): The University takes plagiarism and cheating very seriously. Plagiarized work will earn a zero for the assignment. Students will face action according to University guidelines for academic dishonesty. I reserve the right to submit any paper I suspect of plagiarism to Turnitit.com.

Academic Ethics: (<http://www.unt.edu/csrr0>): Acts of academic dishonesty are subject to discipline at UNT. Cheating plagiarism and furnishing false or misleading information are acts of academic dishonesty. The definitions of these terms are clearly described in the Undergraduate Catalog (www.unt.edu/catalog ([Links to an external site.](#))) and by the Center for Students Rights and Responsibilities.

Authorized Class Absence: (http://www.unt.edu/vpaa_fy0708_fhb/lll-a.html ([Links to an external site.](#))): All travel by students off campus for the purpose of participation in UNT sponsored activities must be authorized by the dean of the school or college of the sponsoring department. Within three days after the absence, students must obtain authorized absence cards from the dean of students for instructors.

Absence for Religious Holidays: (http://www.unt.edu/vpaa_fy0708_fhb/lll-a.html ([Links to an external site.](#))): A student absent due to the observance of a religious holiday may take examinations/ complete assignments scheduled for the day(s) missed within a reasonable time after the absence. Class participants should notify the instructor via email of planned absences for religious holidays.

Disability Support Services: (<http://www.unt.edu/oda> ([Links to an external site.](#)))): ODA Office in Sage Hall, Suite 167.

Office of Disability Accommodation Statement: (ODA)- The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of reasonable 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 reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at <http://www.unt.edu/oda> ([Links to an external site.](#)). You may also contact them by phone at 940-565-4323

To graduate, students majoring in dance are required to have a minimum grade of “B” in dance technique courses that comprise their major.