

University of North Texas
Department of Dance and Theatre Arts
DANC 4410: Ballet IV
Spring 2013 T/Th 12:00-1:50

Location: Stovall Hall 176
Professor: Whitney Boomer, MFA
Office: Stovall Hall
Office Hours: T/Th 2-2:30 (or by appointment)
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TEXTBOOKS / MATERIALS

Technical Manual and Dictionary of Classical Ballet (3rd edition) by Gail Grant.

Along with the required textbook, the instructor may also distribute readings or a guideline of terms and movement principles needed in order for the student to perform, observe, and write effectively about the art form of Ballet. Selected videos/films may be shown in class or may be required for viewing from online video databases.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This class is an advanced professional-level of study. Emphasis is placed on experiencing and understanding the roles of performer, choreographer, and improviser within a professional ballet dance context. Students will deepen their study of advanced ballet technique, demonstrate fundamental movement patterns, spatial relationships and musical rhythms, and participate in improvisation and partnering experiences intrinsic to an advanced ballet class. To accomplish these goals students will perform short ballet variations choreographed or adapted by the instructor and students, discuss their own performances as well as those of professional ballet dancers, and discuss the development of ballet that will include viewing and critiquing selected ballets.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. To describe and perform terminology, mechanics, stylistic components and movement concepts in context of one's own individual body in a classical ballet context on an advanced professional level through reading, discussions, daily movement evaluations, and mid term and final exams.
2. To identify and perform such basic "fundamental" movement patterns as core to distal, yield and push and reach and pull, head/tail, upper/lower, body half and spirals within the steps, actions and phrases of classical ballet. Students will do this by engaging in advanced patterning exercises, observational assignments and reading homework.

3. To demonstrate advanced partnering and improvisational skills in a classical ballet context by working together in space through group sensory and leading and following exercises during daily, mid term and final evaluations.
4. To create a non-judgmental and safe environment in a professional context conducive to inner exploration and self-learning through observation and discussion, partner witnessing and student and teacher assessments.
5. To understand what it means to take ownership of one's body through the learned, adapted, and improvised movement material as a ballet dancer and its impact on communication to an audience. Students will engage in class performances and receive performance assessments, daily evaluation grades, and written and/or verbal feedback from the instructor and outside reviewer at least once a semester.
6. To identify and perform musicality and rhythm components as an advanced dancer within the classical ballet vocabulary through exercises at the barre, and center on a daily basis.

Student's Learning Objectives:

Course Content:

- I. Principles of Ballet Technique
 - A. Alignment, Connectedness, Breath, External Rotation (Turnout)
 - B. Verticality
 - C. Line
 - D. Musicality
 - E. Spatial Awareness
 - F. Dynamics
 - G. Performance Focus and Projection
- II. Ballet Technique, Theory and Terminology
 - A. Intermediate/advanced principles of Ballet
 - B. Intermediate/advanced Barre
 - C. Center Work
- III. "Reading" Dances
 - A. Critical Viewing Process
 1. Description
 2. Analysis
 3. Interpretation

4. Evaluation
 - B. Viewing and Discussing Ballet Variations Performed in Class
 - C. Viewing and Discussing Ballets on Video
 - D. Viewing and Discussing Ballets in Performance
 - E. Frameworks for Viewing and Valuing
 1. Formulating aesthetic criteria based on the work itself and the traditions of classical ballet
 2. Process of making justified judgments

DRESS CODE

Appropriate attire for freedom of movement is required (no tight jeans or clothes that inappropriately expose too much skin when the dancer is actively moving). The instructor has the right to set the standard for appropriate dress in each class. 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.

Major Course Assignments and Examinations:

1. Attendance and full commitment to each class activity is of most importance in any studio dance class. Without this commitment, the student is unable to participate in the form of classical ballet dance as a means of artistic expression and communication.

Student should demonstrate a consistent application of feedback, particularly those concerning somatic patterning and kinesiology-appropriate performance of technique. This is important for development safety.

Students will participate in informal in-class showings, homework assignments and discussions analyzing and performing movement.

2. Focus Workshop Performance and Observation Assessment requiring students to be conversant with ballet dance genres and movement practices.
3. Final Performance and Observation Assessment requiring students to be conversant with self and witness assessments.

Activities, Assignments, and Grading Policy:

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

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| 1. Participation in Class (Quality of Performance, Discussion & Evaluations) | 60% |
| 2. Focus Workshop Performance Assessments | 15% |
| 3. Assignments | 15% |
| 4. 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. Evaluation of technique and in-class showings of modern dance combinations 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" 5 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" 4pts (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" 3pts (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" 2pts (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" 1pt (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.

INJURY / ILLNESS POLICY

If a student is unable to fully participate in class due to injury or illness, instructor should be informed when student arrives to class. If injured, student may participate by observing class and submitting a written observation of assigned subject. This paper should be typed (1 page) and submitted in hardcopy at the beginning of the next class. Spelling and grammar will be a factor. You are allowed to do this twice without losing attendance points.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Consistent and attentive attendance is vital to academic success, and is expected of all students. Grades are determined by academic performance, and instructors may give students written

notice that attendance related to specific classroom activities is required and will constitute a specific percentage of students' grades. Students should not schedule doctor appointments (unless emergency), conferences with other teachers, or job interviews during this class time. There are no "unexcused" or "excused" absences. Students have two free absences. Any more than two absences will result in zero participation points for that day. Reminder: Students should let instructor know (by email) of absence prior to class if possible.

Reminder: If you are late to class it is your responsibility to inform the professor that you came in and are not absent. No Late Work will be accepted.

Student Obligations to Academic/Production Work

DT students are expected to budget and organize their time and efforts in order to meet both their academic and production commitments satisfactorily and on time. The faculty and staff recognize that the academic and production assignments within the Department, as well as outside employment and other obligations, sometimes impose conflicting pressures of on DT students. One of the principle responsibilities of each student is to carefully identify and monitor the commitments that comprise his/her departmental assignments and outside of obligations. It is also important to keep in mind that production work and outside obligations do not constitute an excused absence from the DT classes or from the completion of any required class assignments.

Americans with Disabilities Act

The UNT Department of Dance and Theater does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the recruitment and admission of students. The content of this class requires each student to: (a) participate physically and mentally in a safe manner, (b) exhibit mastery of specific steps and movement patterns through both visual and verbal cues, (c) spontaneously process visual and verbal cues, and (d) exhibit ability to carry their own body weight as well as the weight of others. The student has the responsibility of informing the instructor of any disabling condition which will require modifications. If you have a disability and you are unable to meet the requirements of this class without reasonable accommodations, please contact the instructor to discuss your particular disability.

The University of North Texas is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of federal equal opportunity legislation; reference Public Law 92-112 – The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended. With the passage of new federal legislation entitled Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), pursuant to section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, there is renewed focus on providing this population with the same opportunities enjoyed by all citizens.

Scholastic Dishonesty

A student caught cheating on tests or plagiarizing written work will be given a written warning and zero credit for the assignment or test. The final grade will be automatically lowered one letter grade. The grade of "A" will not be given even if the total points reflect such a grade. Students should become familiar with UNT's academic dishonesty policy.

Withdrawal

Should a student choose to drop this course, they must initiate the drop and acquire all the proper signatures and paperwork to ensure that they are dropped officially, otherwise be subject to a WF or F at the close of the semester.

DAILY CLASS SCHEDULE

January 15 & 17: Intro

January 22 & 24: Weight / Syllabus; Assignment 1

January 29 & January 31: Focus Workshop: Adagio

February 5 & 7: Focus Workshop: Adagio with 1st Assessment

February 12 & 14: Suspension; Assignment 2

February 19 & 21: Focus Workshop: Turning

February 26 & February 28: Focus Workshop: Turning with 2nd Assessment

March 5 & 7: ACDFA / Conditioning

March 12 & 14: Spring Break: NO CLASS

March 19 & 21: Strength

March 26 & 28: Agility; Assignment 3

April 2 & 4: Focus Workshop: Partnering

April 9 & 11: Focus Workshop: Partnering with 3rd Assessment

April 16 & 18: Proposed Earth Day Class

April 23 & 25: Work on choreography for final projects

April 30 & May 2: Work on choreography for final projects; Perform Projects

Final: Tuesday, May 7 / 10:30-12:30: View project videos and discuss process

Instructor reserves the right to amend or adjust this Syllabus at any time with notice to the students.