

Modern Dance Level III

DANC 3400.001

M/W/F 10:00 am - 11:20 pm

Fall 2014

University of North Texas

Department of Dance and Theatre Arts

Instructor: Whitney Geldon, MFA

Office Hours: M/W 11:30 - 12:30 (or by appointment)

E-mail: whitney.geldon@unt.edu

You may email me at any time. I will respond within 48 hours (except over the weekends).

Course Description:

This contemporary modern dance technique class acknowledges a dance field of many different training methodologies. Emphasis will be placed on experiencing and questioning the roles of performer, choreographer, and improviser within a professional contemporary dance context. Students will deepen their study of contemporary dance technique through conceptual frameworks of somatic awareness principles as expressive tools, movement sequences choreographed by the instructor, and participate in challenging improvisation and partnering experiences. At the same time they will be asked to challenge their physical boundaries and their ideas about what dance technique can be.

We will explore contemporary modern technique as...

- The 6 basic principles of Movement Fundamentals: Alignment, Function, Range, Efficiency, Vocabulary, and Intention
- The awareness of Modern Dance Principles as a soloist, partner, and in an ensemble
 - weight
 - momentum
 - space
 - time
 - energy
 - focus
- The development of a community in which ideas, desires, difficulties, and class experiences are shared openly
- The engagement of real time decision-making and movement creation

One of the most exciting things I find about dance is utilizing our technique to move beyond what we think is possible. I challenge us to blur the line between clarity and abandonment.

Prerequisites For Doing Well In This Class:

Students will need knee pads (and possibly long sleeves/pants) for contact improvisation and floor work. Students should arrive to class in dance clothing that allows freedom of movement. Students should approach each class with openness, fresh ideas, creativity, and willingness to share with a community.

Required Texts:

There is no required textbook; although articles to read and writing responses will be assigned.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify and perform dance movement concepts, fundamental movement patterns, proper mechanics, stylistic components and contemporary dance movement vocabulary in the context of one's own individual body on an intermediate professional level, both in improvisation and in learned movement patterns.
2. Demonstrate partnering and improvisational skills by effectively negotiating, communicating and cueing spatial intentions through clarity of weight and dynamic body positioning.
3. Develop an individual sense of movement potential through an exploration of Movement Fundamentals such as Alignment and Function; Range and Efficiency; and Vocabulary and Intention.
4. Contribute to a collegial classroom environment conducive to inner exploration and self-learning through the performance of active listening during class as well as supportively observing peers in performance and providing constructive feedback when possible.
5. Identify soma fitness principles, apply them to dance technique and design a personal practice by reflecting on personal growth, achievements, desires, questions, and difficulties orally with the class and one-on-one with the instructor.

Each of the above student learning outcomes must be performed at an appropriate level as stated in each course assignment requirements, grading scale or rubric.

Exemplary Objectives for Visual and Performing Arts:

1. To demonstrate awareness of the scope and variety of works in the arts.
2. To understand those works as expressions of individual and human values within diverse historical, social and cultural contexts.
3. To engage in a creative process or interpretive act in order to comprehend the physical and intellectual demands required of the author or visual/performing artist.
4. To develop an appreciation for the aesthetic principles that guide or govern the arts.

UNT Core Objectives:

1. Gain an awareness of fundamental areas of knowledge and the interrelationships among them.
2. Gain the skills required to explore and test ideas.
3. Have the ability to read intelligently, write clearly and speak well.
4. Value different ideas, perspectives, cultures and viewpoints.
5. Demonstrate personal and social responsibility.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS/EVALUATION:

Daily participation grade is an assessment of student engagement in class, in movement, discussion, group and partner work as well as your achievement and growth.

The following is a percentage breakdown of final grades.

Daily Participation (5pts/day)	60%
Midterm Assessment	10%
Final Project	10%
Responses (4)	10%
Video Response (2)	10%

Grading Scale for Daily Participation:

Daily participation grades (5 pts) will reflect student demonstration of the following:

1. Clarity: Student demonstrates a clear ability to understand and articulate the concepts presented in class, both cognitively and physically.
2. Presence: Student arrives ready, not only by being on time, but by preparing their body to move, by asking questions, and by dancing fully.
3. Community: Student contributes to creating a better environment for the class through observation of their peers, constructive criticism when asked, and bringing a supportive attitude to class.
4. Safety and Risk: Student pushes self to explore the edges of their own physicality, while listening to the needs of their body as to not cause health problems or injury.
5. Creativity: Student takes the concepts, phrases, and intentions explored in class and expresses ownership. Intent is not to perfect or imitate movement, but rather, embody it uniquely.

These categories are designed to help you understand how I define daily participation throughout the semester. However, in a given class, I may assess you through the lens of one or two of these criteria. After the first week of class, I will also determine which specific movement/artistry concepts we will hone in on throughout the semester. It will be through these specific concepts that you will be evaluated.

Opportunities for Make-up Work:

If a student is unable to fully participate in class due to injury or illness, instructor should be informed when student arrives to class. The student must take notes in class both describing the class and then articulating what the student learned from observing the class and why. (It's not enough to just describe what happened in class.) The student must turn in writing at the end of class to receive any credit, with a maximum of 4 attendance points for the day. You are allowed to do this twice without losing full attendance points.

LATE WORK:

Late work is not permitted in this class. Exceptions to this policy will only be considered for extremely extenuating circumstances. Students must speak with the instructor immediately if they foresee a problem in submitting their work on time.

If the student has not amassed at least 30% of their 100 % grade by midterm, the student will receive an unsatisfactory progress notice. If the student continues making unsatisfactory progress he or she will be asked to drop the course.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:

UNT's Policy of Academic Dishonesty found in the Student Handbook applies to this course. If caught plagiarizing (meaning copying) published sources or another student you will be referred to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities and you will also fail this course. This policy also applies if you are caught falsifying your attendance or misrepresenting your work in any way. For your own sake please be sure that you are familiar with the rules and regulations regarding Academic Dishonesty. "The term 'plagiarism' includes, but is not limited to: 1. The knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement [or citation] and/or 2. The knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or by an agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials."

-http://www.unt.edu/csrr/student_conduct/misconduct.html

STUDENT BEHAVIOR IN THE CLASSROOM:

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 Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities 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. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at www.unt.edu/csrr

DISABILITIES STATEMENT-MOVEMENT:

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. As a faculty member, I am required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Student responsibility primarily rests with informing faculty of their need for accommodation and in providing authorized documentation through designated administrative channels. Information regarding specific diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining academic accommodations can be found at the Office of Disability Accommodation in the University Union (room 321) or call them at (940) 565-4323. If you need or think you might need academic accommodations please let me know today after class.

The content of this class requires each student to:

1. Participate physically and mentally in a safe manner.
2. Exhibit mastery of specific steps and movement patterns through both visual and verbal cues.
3. Process visual and verbal cues spontaneously.
4. Exhibit ability to carry their own body weight as well as the weight of others.

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, athletics, and other obligations, sometimes impose conflicting pressures on DT students. One of the principal responsibilities of each student is to carefully identify and monitor the commitments that comprise his/her production work and outside obligations do not constitute an excused absence from DT classes or from the completion of any required class assignments.

CLASSROOM POLICIES:

No food or drinks in the classroom, besides water in a closed container. Please dress in comfortable, but not baggy clothing. Socks are permitted for warm-up only, but not suggested. Turn cell phones OFF when entering the classroom.

TENTATIVE CALENDAR:

Week 1: 8/25, 8/27, 8/29

Syllabus and Expectations

Week 2: 9/1 No Class, 9/3, 9/5

Anatomy and Function

RESPONSE 1 Due 9/7 on Blackboard

Week 3: 9/8, 9/10, 9/12

Core-Distal

Week 4: 9/15, 9/17, 9/19

Head-Tail

RESPONSE 2 Due 9/21 on Blackboard

Week 5: 9/22, 9/24, 9/26

Upper-Lower, Falling, and Efficiency

VIDEO RESPONSE 1 Due 9/28 on Blackboard

Week 6: 9/29, 10/1, 10/3

Texas Dance Improvisation Festival 10/3-4

Body Half and Initiation

Week 7: 10/6, 10/8, 10/10

MIDTERM VIDEO 10/10

Midterm RESPONSE Due 10/12 on Blackboard

Vocabulary and Intention

Week 8: 10/13, 10/15, 10/17

Repetition

Midterm Individual Meetings

Week 9: 10/20, 10/22, 10/24

Partnering

RESPONSE 3 Due 10/26 on Blackboard

Week 10: 10/27, 10/29, 10/31

Redirecting and Interrupting Patterns of Habit

Week 11: 11/3, 11/5, 11/7

Disorientation and Randomizing the joints

VIDEO RESPONSE 2 Due 11/9 on Blackboard

Week 12: 11/10, 11/12, 11/14

TBA

Week 13: 11/17, 11/19, 11/21

TBA

RESPONSE 4 Due 11/23 on Blackboard

New Choreographers Concert 2014

November 21-22 @ 8 PM

November 23 @ 2 PM

Week 14: 11/24, 11/26, 11/28 No Class

Final Project

Thanksgiving

Week 15: 12/1 & 12/3

Final Video 12/3

Week 16: Finals Week

TBA

*To graduate, students majoring in dance and theatre are required to have a minimum grade of B in dance/theatre courses that comprise his/her major.

*Students who miss the first day of class without consent of the instructor are subject to be administratively dropped from the course so that other students may be added. Students who must miss the first day of class because of illness or some other acceptable excuse must notify the instructor on record the day of the absence.

***The instructor reserves the right to amend this syllabus as necessary.