

**Dance History**

DANC 3800.001

F 2:00 pm - 4:50 pm

DATH 131 / RTFP 135

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)

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

**Course Description & Overview:**

The purpose of this course is to develop awareness, appreciation, and enjoyment of concert dance forms within their historical, geographical, and socio-cultural contexts. More specifically, it's a study of modern dance and ballet on stage from 1900 to the present with an emphasis on dance in the United States. We will examine the evolution of these two concert dance forms through the lives of choreographers; the historical, political, social and cultural context of significant pieces of choreography; and the aesthetic movements and themes represented by specific dances through time. Through numerous readings and viewings, as well as physical experiences, students will engage with skills of observation, movement learning, contextual and comparative analysis, and descriptive and critical communication about dance. The following premises will guide the course structure: "1. Movement knowledge is a kind of cultural knowledge, 2. Movement knowledge is conceptual and emotional as well as kinesthetic, 3. Movement knowledge is intertwined with other kinds of cultural knowledge, 4. One has to look beyond movement to get at its meaning, and 5. Movement is always an immediate corporeal experience" (Sklar qtd. in *moving history/dancing cultures*, pp. 30-31).

**Course Prerequisites:**

DANC 1250, DANCE 2800

**This course fulfills:**

Dance Major requirements and Elective requirements

**Learning Outcomes:**

This course will tap into multiple modes of learning, incorporated through movement, written responses, readings, visual observation, verbal responses and written analysis.

Upon successful completion of this course students will:

- demonstrate awareness of the forms, trends, and key individuals in dance from 1900-Present
- identify critical frameworks useful for evaluating the impact of historical, social, and political influences on dance practices.
- demonstrate an ability to compare and critique dance practices and their historical periods/styles
- apply strategies for critical reading and observing dances and dance writing styles
- design and execute a research project
- demonstrate a comfortable and dynamic presence/presentation in front of an audience

**Course Materials and Supplies:**

Reynolds, Nancy, and Malcolm McCormick. *Dance in the Twentieth Century: No Fixed Points*. New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2003. Print.

**Major Course Assignments and Examinations:**

*Assignments will include viewing and listening to videotapes and online audio resources.*

1. Each week students are expected to bring two reflections, comments, and/or questions, grounded in the assigned reading. These responses will guide our class discussion. If more than one chapter is assigned, please write one response per chapter, though you are always welcome to write more if desired. The responses will be submitted to the instructor through Bb and a copy brought to class. You are asked to engage and interact with the text in order to assert your own agency in our class discussions and in the field of dance. I charge you to be an active participant and learner in class.

2. For the mid-term assignment, students will develop an oral presentation through the Blackboard course shell concerning a historical dance figure of their choice. The presentation will include the following areas: artist as a person, historical/geographical/political context, artistic characteristics, and cultural relevance. Cited visual imagery and cited text from various sources, including (but not limited to) readings and discussions in class, will aid in the production of the oral presentation. Additional sources may be obtained through local libraries or the web (not Wikipedia). Research will be formally cited in MLA format.

3. At the end of the semester, students will complete and present a comprehensive group project which will include research, creating a visual aid, writing a dance critique, and recreating and performing a short dance. Individual members will perform separate tasks as determined by the instructor. Cited visual imagery and cited text from various sources, including (but not limited to) readings and discussions in class, will aid in the production of the project. Additional sources may be obtained through local libraries or the web (not Wikipedia). Research will be formally cited in MLA format.

#### **Activities, Assignments, and Grading Policy:**

Introductory Assignments		5%
Scavenger Hunt	2%	
Introduction/Bios	2%	
Three Responses to Bios	1%	
Weekly Assignments:		55%
Each Assignment (12)	4.5%	
Mid-term Oral Presentation:		15%
Dance Critique:		10%
Final Project/Presentation:		15%

#### **Grading Scale:**

90-100: A; 89-80: B; 79-70: C; 69-60: D; 59 and below: F

#### **How to Keep Track of Your Grade Throughout the Semester**

Blackboard allows you two ways to keep a running or continual track of where your grade is with the graded record of each assignment. If you scroll all the way to the right in your gradebook screen, you will see a "Running Total" and a "Running Weighted Total." The Running Total adds up your points in relation to the total points possible to accumulate throughout the entire course.

The Running Weighted Total keeps track of how your points are calculated in relation to the assigned percentage for each assignment. **In this class, the easiest way to keep track of your grade is through the percentage level you receive through the Running Weighted Total. It will tell you where you are in terms of your grade scale with each assignment.**

#### **ATTENDANCE POLICY:**

This course meets once a week. Only ONE absence is allowed in this course. It is advised to only take an absence for extreme and urgent circumstances. Missing class material impacts your ability to progress and succeed in this course. Attendance is imperative in a course where the discussions and interactions

may not be duplicated. The themes and concepts developed in class discussions, movement activities, and videos create the basis for our analytical studies over the course of the semester. Absent students are expected to inform themselves of the material and videos, as well as any handouts missed. It is the student's responsibility to verify his/her attendance with the instructor after attendance has been taken.

**LATE WORK:** Late work is not permitted in this class after 24 hours from the deadline (10% immediately deducted from late submissions after deadline). Exceptions to this policy will only be considered for extreme 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 mid-term, 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.**

All required assignments in this course may be checked for plagiarism using Turnitin.com

#### EVALUATION METHODS:

Written work and course assignments are graded on fulfillment of the assigned parameters. Participation and contribution in class discussions is expected. Preparation for class includes completion of and reflection on assigned readings, as well as prepared ideas for discussion. Class participation will reflect student demonstration of the following:

1. arrive ready
2. ability to articulate and engage the concepts presented in class
3. contribution to creating a better environment

#### Additional Information:

Students must have access to UNT's Blackboard platform and UNT outlook (email). The instructor will arrange for each student to have access to his or her own Blackboard shell.

**Very Important: Lack of access to a computer or technical problems with a computer is not an acceptable excuse for missing assignments or meeting deadlines.**

**Plan ahead and develop a backup plan.**

- Students must also save a copy of the important course documents and course assignments on their computers or memory stick in the event that Blackboard or the UNT web site becomes unavailable.
- Students should use only their UNT e-mail account when communicating with the instructor, classmates, and completing online coursework.
- Students must make a consistent practice of sending a carbon copy to themselves of any e-mail they send out in order to document their work and to keep these in a designated electronic computer folder on their own computer or external drive.

#### 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:

<b>8/29</b>	<b>Introductory Assignments</b>	
<b>9/5</b>	<b>Chapter 1</b> <b>pp. xi (preface) – 32</b>	Pre-20 <sup>th</sup> century: Romantic Ballet; Early modern dance pioneers in America: 1900-1940
<b>9/12</b>	<b>Chapter 2</b> <b>pp. 33–76</b>	Experimentalism in ballet: 1900–1930's
<b>9/19</b>	<b>Chapter 3</b> <b>pp. 77 –105</b>	Influences from Europe: Laban and Expressionism; 1910–1945
<b>9/26</b>	<b>Chapter 4/5</b> <b>pp. 106 –177</b>	Heroic and political eras of American modern dance: 20's–40's; Ballet influences: 1900-1960's
<b>10/3</b>	<b>Chapter 8</b> <b>pp. 265 - 318</b>	America founds its own ballet companies: 1935 – 1965
<b>10/10</b>	<b>Chapter 9</b> <b>pp. 319 - 353</b>	Modern dance: The Second Generation; 1935 - 1980's
<b>10/17</b>	<b>Chapter 10</b> <b>pp. 354 – 392</b>	Third Generation: Modernism; 1940's - 2000 MIDTERM PRESENTATIONS
<b>10/ 24</b>	<b>Chapter 11</b> <b>pp. 393 – 423</b>	Early postmodern dance: 1960 – 1980 MIDTERM PRESENTATIONS
<b>10/ 31</b>	<b>Chapter 12</b> <b>pp. 424 – 492</b>	Ballet and modern dance merging: Internationalism: 1950 -2000
<b>11/7</b>	<b>Chapter 13</b> <b>pp. 493 – 531</b>	The ballet boom in the U.S.: 1970 – 2000
<b>11/14</b>	<b>Chapter 15</b> <b>pp. 605 – 673</b>	Late postmodern dance: 1970's - 2000
<b>11/21</b>	<b>Chapter 16</b> <b>pp. 674 – 743</b>	Dance in film: Hollywood & concert dance world; 1900 – 2000
<b>11/28</b>	<b>Thanksgiving Break</b>	Elements of Final project due
<b>12/5</b>	<b>UNT Reading Day</b>	Elements of Final project due
<b>12/12</b>	<b>FINAL</b>	Final Group Presentations

## **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](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](http://www.unt.edu/csrr)

## **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.

## **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.

\*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.