

Ballet Dance Technique I

DANC 1411.001

T/TH 12 - 1:50 pm

DATH 131

Fall 2019

University of North Texas

Department of Dance and Theatre Arts

Instructor: Whitney Geldon, MFA

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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:

This class is the first course within a sequence of eight ballet dance classes in the dance major curriculum and is considered a beginning professional-level of study. Emphasis is placed on experiencing and understanding the roles of performer, choreographer, and improviser within a ballet dance context. Students will deepen their study of beginning ballet technique, become aware of the importance of fundamental movement patterns, spatial relationships and musical rhythm intrinsic to ballet. 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.

Students are expected to have sufficient previous movement experience to allow them to begin professional study and engage in a sophisticated and challenging artistic learning environment. This somatic environment encourages students to engage with basic anatomical and movement principles, dance vocabularies, and creative/performance process skills needed for aesthetic expression.

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES: Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- demonstrate foundational technical elements of ballet, suitable for beginners (or returnees), appropriate body alignment according to their individual anatomical structure.
- demonstrate appropriate studio etiquette.
- demonstrated sensitivity to music and musical accompaniment.
- apply kinesthetic perception to self-evaluate and self-correct.

- apply a working vocabulary of ballet terminology, demonstrated through class performance, exams, and written assignments.

REQUIRED TEXT/READING: Provided by the Instructor through Canvas or as handouts.

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.

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 utmost importance.
2. 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.

3. Students will participate in quizzes through written format, discussion, and peer assessment/evaluation.
4. Students will attend, see, and observe a professional ballet company performance in the DFW area and submit a written critique of the performance, along with their ticket stub.
5. Midterm Performance and Observation Assessment requiring students to be conversant with ballet dance genres and movement practices.
6. Final Performance and Observation Assessment requiring students to be conversant with self and witness assessments.

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 (10pts/day)	50%
Midterm Assessment	15%
Final Assessment	15%
Quizzes	10%
Written Critique of Professional Ballet Company	10%

Grading Scale for Daily Participation:

Daily participation grades (10 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.

ATTENDANCE:

This class is concerned with the intellectual and physical development of the body. Evaluations are based on development from class to class, week to week, and the course of the semester. Therefore, it is imperative to be present and working in class. More than 2 absences will result in dropping a letter grade. Beyond 5 absences, you will be asked to drop the course, in accordance with the UNT Attendance Policy.

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.

Course Materials and Supplies: Ballet shoes and attire are required (no clothes that inappropriately expose too much skin when the dancer is actively moving). Layers or

looser clothing such as sweats may be worn as you warm up before class and stretch after class. No jewelry (large earrings, dangling necklaces, large watches, etc.) is allowed in class for the safety of all class participants.

Failure to wear ballet shoes will result in an automatic subtraction of three points for that day.

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 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 for every semester and must meet with each](#)

faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters 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>. You may also contact them by phone 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.

*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.