

**Ballet Dance Technique**

DANC 3416.001

T/TH 9:00 - 10:20 am

DATH 111

Spring 2024

University of North Texas

Department of Dance and Theatre

Instructor: Whitney Geldon, MFA

Pronouns: she/her

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Office Hours: TR 10:30am - 12pm 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 course is for the intermediate/advancing ballet dancer, in the dance major curriculum and is considered a pre-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 ballet through the lens of somatic practices and contemporary approaches to technique, becoming 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.

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

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Level VI ballet technique represents a high level of technical skill and creative process expertise in which students should be able to recognize, understand, and apply physical and technical-somatic knowledge while strengthening individual artistic integrity and personal responsibility.

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:
(Acknowledgements to Shelley Padilla)

- **Engaging the body in Vocabulary and Dynamic Alignment**

- Adagio, Moderate, Petit, and Grand Allegro to be performed in some combination with smooth transitions, appropriate propulsion, rhythmic clarity, proper placement, sufficient strength and buoyancy, and a sense of artistic intention visible through performance focus.
- Dynamic Alignment to be demonstrated as a refined use of properly turned out ilio femoral hip alignment in all foot gestures
 - Femur appears to be “dropped” into hip socket
 - Ilio femoral hip creases are deep and articulated in front and side position.
 - Exhibits visible fine motor control of foot and ankle in développ   and envelop  .
 - Performs with open shoulder girdle and upper body support in back of body as well as front of body.
 - Hip bones maintain even placement in all leg gestures from tendus to grand battements, front, side and back.
 - Ankle and sole of foot are evenly balanced in pli   and other weight shifts.
 - In relev  , balance weight is centered between second and third toes.

- **Performance, Musicality, Movement Dynamics**

- Perform clear relationship to musical down beats, syncopations, and adapt counts and meter where necessary.
- Use ballet vocabulary to tell a story, allude to images and shift responsibly between movement qualities.
- Maintain spatial relationships and responsiveness to others in all group combinations.

- **Exercising Community Respect**

- Articulate possible causes for injuries and choose appropriate actions for recovery.
- Gauges the dynamics of the learning environment in a way that responsibly promotes empowered learning by asking appropriate questions and taking the space needed to deepen skills and expand knowledge.
- Actively commits to individual growth as a dancer/artist by
 - preparing self directed class goals that relate to professional artistic goals and by developing reflective physical and written practices.
 - Consistent attendance to class with no tardies or early exits and an ability to monitor energy as needed while dancing fully.
 - Participates during class (not sitting out, texting, talking or going to the restroom unless it is a major emergency) and independently adapts classroom material while participating to accommodate minor injuries in a way that supports progress in learning.
- Works with others in a professional manner regardless of interpersonal dynamics.

- Immediately process, apply and show positive change in regard to instructor and peer provided technical and performance feedback.

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

Recommended: Grant, Gail. *Technical Manual and dictionary of Classical Ballet*. NY, NY: Dover Publications, 1982. Print.

Major Course Assignments and Examinations:

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

1. Attendance and full commitment to each class activity is of utmost importance in any studio dance class. Without this commitment, the student is unable to participate in the form of ballet dance as a means of artistic expression and communication.
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 record a weekly journal, documenting significant moments, sequences, imagery, feedback, questions, etc, for further dialogue in personal assessments.
4. Two Module Performance and Observation Assessments requiring students to be conversant with ballet dance genres and movement practices, with self and witness assessments.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS/EVALUATION:

Participation 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 Engagement (10pts/day)	65%
Journals (weekly entry required)	10%
Video Assessments (2)	25%

Engagement:

Daily engagement grades (10 pts) will reflect student demonstration of the following within a class:

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 engagement throughout the semester. However, in a given class, I may access 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.

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. There may be multiple formats for achieving the accountability standards for this course, including instructor-led practice, self-practice, articles read, viewings, video demonstrations of principles, with self, peer, and instructor feedback. Therefore, it is imperative to be present and working through class material during all class meetings.

More than 2 absences from class 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. There are no excused absences beyond UNT's [Student Attendance and Authorized Absences Policy](#). Students are responsible for requesting an excused absence in writing, providing satisfactory evidence to substantiate the request (including COVID illness/quarantine). A reasonable deadline will be agreed upon between faculty of record and student. A student needing assistance verifying absences due to illness or extenuating circumstances for all courses should contact the Dean of Students office. The Dean of Students office will verify the student's documentation and advocate on the student's behalf, as appropriate, to instructors.

In the event of an absence, students are responsible for notifying the instructor, prior to the absence if possible, as well as the material or content covered, in addition to completing the journal requirements including video and/or written responses.

It is expected that you should not arrive late to class or ask to leave early. Please plan to arrive 5-10 minutes early to prepare yourself for practice. Late arrivals will be reflected in daily professional engagement. Students arriving more than 5 minutes late may not be allowed to take the class.

Opportunities for Make-up Work:

If a student is unable to fully participate in class due to injury or illness, the instructor should be informed ASAP via email and when they arrive at class. The **student must articulate how they will modify the content** to protect from further injury and inform recovery. If the student elects to observe, they must take notes, describing and articulating what the student learned from observing the class and why. (It's not enough to just describe what happened in class.) The student will add the notes to their weekly journal (in addition to weekly requirements).

In the event of an injury or serious illness that prevents a student from engaging in any activity for more than two weeks, the student should drop the course rather than risk receiving a failing grade. However, students may continue enrollment in a class by fulfilling minimal participation requirements agreed upon with the teacher until recovery from the injury or illness allows for return to full participation.

Minimal or adapted participation may be in the form of substituting floor work for standing work, working the upper body while sitting in a chair, adapting choreography assignments to accommodate physical limitations, refraining from jumping, or working with a reduced range of motion. In addition, an extended Pilates program may be the appropriate course of action during injury recovery. The goal is to maintain physical conditioning and fitness during recovery so that the return to full activity will not compromise health and wellness.

A period of minimal or adapted activity due to injury or illness should not exceed a total of four (4) weeks during any long semester.

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 are required. **Appropriate attire** for freedom of movement is 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. Specific attire choices noted below. No jewelry (large earrings, dangling necklaces, large watches, etc.) is allowed in class for the safety of all class participants. You will need a **journal/notebook** to record significant moments, sequences, imagery, feedback, questions, etc. You will need a **tennis ball** or lacrosse ball (depending on desired firmness) for warm-up.

Specific Attire:

Ballet shoes may be canvas or leather, with a split sole.

Clean lines. Solid colors or prints only. No clothing with writing on it.

SHE/THEY: should wear tights that cover the legs and hips, with a leotard worn over, which covers the hips and trunk (or a unitard). Tights should be footless or convertible. You may also

elect to wear a leotard worn under leggings. A well-fitting bra should be worn to give ample support. Please no ballet skirts, as they cover the line of the body.

HE/THEY: should wear tights/leggings (not baggy). The tights are usually of heavier material, less sheer than women's tights (or unitard). Seams are worn in the back. A dance belt is worn under the tights (same color as tights). Male dancers frequently hold the tights up with an ordinary belt around the waist, and roll the tights down over the belt. You may also use clip-on suspenders or elastic bands sewn onto the tights. A tight fitting, waist-length tee shirt is worn over the torso and tucked into tights.

(acknowledgement to Cher Anabo for description)

CLASSROOM POLICIES:

No food or drinks in the classroom, besides water in a closed container. Turn cell phone sound OFF when entering the classroom. Phones may be utilized for documenting personal and peer performance.

Class Recordings & Student Likenesses

In-class performances of movement material in this course may be recorded for students enrolled in this class section to refer to throughout the semester. Class recordings are the intellectual property of the university or instructor and are reserved for use only by students in this class and only for educational purposes. Students may not post or otherwise share the recordings outside the class, or outside the Canvas Learning Management System, in any form. Failing to follow this restriction is a violation of the UNT Code of Student Conduct and could lead to disciplinary action.

Prohibition of Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation (Policy 16.004)

The University of North Texas (UNT) prohibits discrimination and harassment because of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal or state law in its application and admission processes; educational programs and activities; employment policies, procedures, and processes; and university facilities. The University takes active measures to prevent such conduct and investigates and takes remedial action when appropriate.

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 Dean of Students 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. Visit UNT's [Code of Student Conduct](https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct) (<https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct>) to learn more.

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](tel: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.

Principles of Engagement

PoE refers to the way students are expected to interact with each other and with their instructors. Here are some general guidelines:

- While the freedom to express yourself is a fundamental human right, any communication that utilizes cruel and derogatory language on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal or state law will not be tolerated.
- Treat your instructor and classmates with respect in any communication online or face-to-face, even when their opinion differs from your own.
- Ask for and use the correct name and pronouns for your instructor and classmates.
- Speak from personal experiences. Use “I” statements to share thoughts and feelings. Try not to speak on behalf of groups or other individual’s experiences.
- Use your critical thinking skills to challenge other people’s ideas, instead of attacking individuals.
- Avoid using all caps while communicating digitally. This may be interpreted as “YELLING!”
- Be cautious when using humor or sarcasm in emails or discussion posts as tone can be difficult to interpret digitally.
- Avoid using “text-talk” unless explicitly permitted by your instructor.
- Proofread and fact-check your sources.
- Keep in mind that online posts can be permanent, so think first before you type.

Technical Assistance

Part of working in the online environment involves dealing with the inconveniences and frustration that can arise when technology breaks down or does not perform as expected. Here at UNT we have a Student Help Desk that you can contact for help with Canvas or other technology issues.

UIT Help Desk: [UIT Student Help Desk site](#)

Email: helpdesk@unt.edu

For additional support, visit [Canvas Technical Help](#)

Academic Support & Student Services

Mental Health

UNT provides mental health resources to students to help ensure there are numerous outlets to turn to that wholeheartedly care for and are there for students in need, regardless of the nature of an issue or its severity. Listed below are several resources on campus that can support your academic success and mental well-being:

- [Student Health and Wellness Center](#)
- [Counseling and Testing Services](#)
- [UNT Care Team](#)
- [UNT Psychiatric Services](#)
- [Individual Counseling](#)

Chosen Names

A chosen name is a name that a person goes by that may or may not match their legal name. If you have a chosen name that is different from your legal name and would like that to be used in class, please let the instructor know. Below is a list of resources for updating your chosen name at UNT.

- [UNT Records](#)
- [UNT ID Card](#)
- [UNT Email Address](#)
- [Legal Name](#)

Pronouns

Pronouns (she/her, they/them, he/him, etc.) are a public way for people to address you, much like your name, and can be shared with a name when making an introduction, both virtually and in-person. Just as we ask and don't assume someone's name, we should also ask and not assume someone's pronouns.

You can [add your pronouns to your Canvas account](#).

Below is a list of additional resources regarding pronouns and their usage:

- [What are pronouns and why are they important?](#)
- [How do I use pronouns?](#)
- [How do I share my pronouns?](#)
- [How do I ask for another person's pronouns?](#)
- [How do I correct myself or others when the wrong pronoun is used?](#)

Additional Student Support Services

- [Registrar](#)
- [Financial Aid](#)
- [Student Legal Services](#)
- [Career Center](#)
- [Multicultural Center](#)
- [Counseling and Testing Services](#)
- [Pride Alliance](#)
- [UNT Food Pantry](#)

Academic Support Services

- [Academic Resource Center](#)
- [Academic Success Center](#)
- [UNT Libraries](#)
- [Writing Lab](#)

TENTATIVE CALENDAR:

Week 1: 1/16, 1/18

Anatomy and Function

Week 2: 1/23, 1/25

Week 3: 1/30, 2/1

Week 4: 2/6, 2/8

Spring Dance Concert 2/8-11

Week 5: 2/13, 2/15

Week 6: 2/20, 2/22

Range and Efficiency

Week 7: 2/27, 2/29

Week 8: 3/5, 3/7

Module 1 Due 3/10 Canvas

SPRING BREAK 3/11-15 NO CLASS

Week 9: 3/19, 3/21

Midterm Meetings

Week 10: 3/26, 3/28

Vocabulary and Intention

Week 11: 4/2, 4/4

Week 12: 4/9, 4/11

Week 13: 4/16, 4/18

Week 14: 4/23, 4/25

Week 15: 4/30, 5/2

Week 16: Finals Week

Final Meeting 5/9 8-10 AM

Module 2 Due 5/7 Canvas

*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.