

Choreography III & Laboratory

DANC 3250.001 AND DANC 3250.301

MW 3:30 pm - 4:50 pm

Lab 4 hrs M-Su 8 am - 10 pm

DATH 110

Spring 2020

University of North Texas

Department of Dance and Theatre Arts

Instructor: Whitney Geldon, MFA

Office Hours: M/W 2:30 - 3:30 PM (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 address creativity, vision, and craft in making dances. To improve choreographic ability and understanding, we delve into exercises and sources for movement investigation, shape solos and group work from source material, uncover structures that fit the various content, and heighten each dance composition via conscious attention to the moment-to-moment unfolding of a dance. As artists, self-assessment and peer reviews with constructive feedback are also part of the content of this course. Through numerous physical experiences, readings, and viewings, students will engage with skills of observation, movement learning, contextual and comparative analysis, and descriptive and critical communication about dance.

Each student creates (3) choreographic studies in response to a variety of exercises. Students will complete solo and group works, some of which will be presented as part of the final project in an informal performance setting for an audience.

Lab/Studio Credit:

This course meets weekly on Monday and Wednesday. In addition to normal class meetings, this course requires students to also participate in 4 hours of Independent Lab work per week in a UNT dance studio within the times of: Monday - Sunday 8 am - 10 pm. This time will be used for self-studies and group rehearsals throughout the semester. You are accountable and responsible for your time and out of class studio assignments. STUDENT MUST ENROLL IN LAB HOURS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS COURSE.

Students must fill out a space request with the DATH office assistant in order to reserve dance studio space to complete their 4-hr weekly Lab requirement. Requests must be submitted AND approved before studio is confirmed.

Course Prerequisites:

DANC 1250, DANC 2250, DANC 2060

Concurrent enrollment in Modern Technique Level IV or higher

Learning Outcomes:

This course will tap into multiple modes of learning, incorporated through movement, physical experimenting, written responses, readings, visual observation, verbal responses and giving & applying constructive feedback.

Upon successful completion of this course students will:

1. Increase the palette of creative approaches to dance making and identify critical frameworks useful for evaluating the impact of one's work

2. Demonstrate an ability to observe and perceive choreography and apply strategies for critical reading and observing dances
3. Heighten verbal and written language, which describes and responds to dances
4. Demonstrate an ability to facilitate, coach, and rehearse dances with others
5. Design and execute varied production tasks in the mounting of a dance performance
6. Demonstrate an ability to work with modern and postmodern music compositions

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 Materials and Supplies:

Nagrin, Daniel. *Choreography and the Specific Image: Nineteen Essays and a Workbook*. Pittsburgh, PA: U of Pittsburgh, 2001.

Major Course Assignments and Examinations:

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

1. Reading Responses and Discussion: 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. The responses will be submitted to the instructor through Canvas 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. Journals:

- Suggest a blank page (no lines) bound/artist sketchbook. Bring to class everyday.
- Writing in journals for note taking encouraged during class!
- There will be 5 minutes given for journaling at the end of each class.
- Journaling will also include outside musings and observations from rehearsals & “dailyness” that applies to your creative process.

- Video Journals will also be taken during lab hours.

3. Each student creates (3) choreographic studies in response to a variety of exercises. Students will complete solo and group works, some of which will be presented as part of the final project in an informal performance setting for an audience. Peer, instructor, and personal feedback will be included in the showing process, in addition to evaluation on the basis of originality, evidence of preparedness, growth in solving creative problems, application of the concepts presented, and efforts towards revision/editing of the dance work when necessary.

4. Students will present adjudicated work in concert to be evaluated on presentation of adjudicated work, production value, work ethic, and professionalism. Students will submit a written analyses of the strengths and areas of opportunity regarding both process and product for one, or possibly two, of the three dance works created. Analysis will reference, but is not limited to, videos of the dance works, strengths and opportunities of process and product, the required and supplemental text for the course, and relevant insights from journal entries, which shed light on the student's process and product for the dance work(s). Lastly, students will submit Journal entries from the entirety of the semester.

Activities, Assignments, and Grading Policy:

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|-----|--|
| 20% | Daily In-Class Participation: Discussions, Exercises & Choreographic Experiments |
| 20% | Reading Responses |
| 20% | Completion & Evaluation of Studies 1, 2 & 3 |
| 20% | Journal |
| 20% | Performance/Production/Paper |

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

Canvas 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:

Attendance is vital in this course, where movement and analysis is completed in real time. More than 2 absences will result in dropping a letter grade. Beyond 4 absences, you will be asked to drop the course, in accordance with the UNT Attendance Policy. It is advised to only take an absence for extreme and urgent circumstances. Attendance is imperative in a course where the discussions and interactions may not be duplicated, which may impact your ability to progress and succeed in this course. The themes and concepts developed in class discussions and movement activities create the basis for our analytical studies over the course of the semester. Absent students are expected to inform themselves of the material, 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:

- Creative work is evaluated on the basis of originality, evidence of preparedness, growth in solving creative problems, application of the concepts presented, and efforts towards revision/editing of the dance work when necessary.
- Written work and course assignments are graded on fulfillment of the assigned parameters, as well as content, attention to detail, organization, language & grammar, analytical processing, insights, imagination, and presentation.
- Participation and contribution in class discussions and movement investigations are 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 Canvas platform and UNT outlook (email). The instructor will arrange for each student to have access to his or her own Canvas 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 Canvas 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 email 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:

It is expected that you will be respectful, supportive, and tolerant of each of your colleagues in this class. A multitude of topics and images will be presented in class that may cause discomfort and may reflect one's life, familial, or cultural experiences. When engaging in critical discussions, it is important to be mindful of how our words and body language can impact others. This is also a general life skill that will serve you outside of the academic setting.

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.

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

TENTATIVE CALENDAR:

WEEK 1 OVERVIEW / INTRODUCTION
Choreographer Survey

Reading: Nagrin, Chapters 1 RESPONSE DUE: W 1/22

WEEKS 2-4 UNLEASHING CREATIVITY - STUDY 1 / SOLO
Continuing introduction to philosophy / theory / practice
Establishing known comforts and boundaries
Stepping outside of the box. Discovering and embracing new realms
Application of theory from readings and class experiences / exercises
{Multiple versions / adaptations will be presented during class sessions with feedback}

Reading: Nagrin Chapters 2-3 RESPONSE DUE: M 1/27
Reading: Nagrin Chapters 4-5 RESPONSE DUE: M 2/3
STUDY 1 IN-CLASS SHOWING: M 1/27 - Final Showing: M 2/3

WEEKS 5-8 FINDING PLACE and SPACE – STUDY 2 / DUETS
Initiating, developing, and shaping dances that build on the earlier investigations
Investigation of choreographic role as visionary and collaborator
Choreographer as Communicator

Reading: Nagrin Chapters 6-8 RESPONSE DUE: M 2/10
Reading: Nagrin Chapters 9-13 RESPONSE DUE: M 2/17
Reading: Nagrin Chapters 14-15 RESPONSE DUE: M 2/24
STUDY 2 IN-CLASS SHOWING: M 2/24

WEEK 8 PROPOSAL / AUDITIONS / ORGANIZATION & MARKETING
Democracy of decision making / Democracy of dance

STUDY 2 FINAL SHOWING: M 3/2
Reading: Nagrin Chapters 16-17 RESPONSE DUE: M 3/2

****STUDY 3 AUDITIONS: W 3/4, 5:00 – 6:30p // CASTING 6:30-9:30p**

SPRING BREAK / ACDA

****STUDY 3 PROPOSALS & Journals (MT) DUE: M 3/16**

WEEKS 9-12 ABOVE & BEYOND / STUDY 3
Deeper investigation into the craft of choreography
Honing skills as visionary / communicator
Coaching performance

Reading: Nagrin Chapters 18-19 RESPONSE DUE: M 2/16
STUDY 3 IN-CLASS SHOWING: M 4/6
FINAL SHOWING: M 4/13

WEEKS 13-15 VISION TO LIFE & STAGE / FINAL PREPARATION
Adjudication of studies for final presentation
PRODUCTION / TECH PREPARATION:
Organization & Flow

Marketing
Front of House
Research: Music & Costuming

WEEK 15 PROJECT / PERFORMANCE SHOWCASE

TECH & DRESS: M 4/27, 5-10p [ALL choreographers and cast]
PERFORMANCE: W 4/29, 7p // CALL 5p [ALL choreographers and cast]

WEEK 16 FINAL PACKET DUE WEDNESDAY, MAY 6

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 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).

*To graduate, students majoring in dance and theatre must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5 in dance courses, make a B in dance technique courses and at least a C in all other dance courses comprising 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.