

University of Florida School of Theater and Dance

DAA 2341

Contemporary African & African Diasporic Dance Practices 1

Fall 2023

Tuesday, Thursday 10:40 – 12:20pm (& Friday 10:40am – 12:20pm for BFA's)

Nadine McGuire - G6

Instructor: Rujeko Dumbutshena

Office: Constans, Room 231

Office Hours: Tues & Thurs 1:00pm – 3:00pm or by appointment

Communication: Do not hesitate to contact me. I prefer emails and will reply to them within 24 hours. I am available during office hours. If that does not work for your schedule, please email and we can set up an in person, call, or zoom meeting.

Email: rdumbutshena@ufl.edu

Email Policy: Only your UFL.EDU email account for e-mail correspondence related to class

Office Phone: (352) 294-9123

LINKS:

Dance Headquarters: https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/414947/modules#module_1363582

Course: <https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/488770>

All UF syllabi are subject to change. This syllabus represents current plans and objectives. During the semester, those plans may change, and you are individually responsible to follow updates provided. Your regular attendance and attention to announcements made on Canvas ensures you will be up to date.

Course Description:

A performance-based course aimed at developing the understanding of various styles of dance within the African & African Diasporic realm as a technique and a cultural art form. The course is an immersion into the practice, the performance, and culture that focuses on the development and exploration of African dance techniques. Level 1 technique in Contemporary African and African Diasporic dance is designed to deepen the practice of the aesthetics of neo-traditional and contemporary African dances from various countries in Africa. This course will advance the knowledge and appreciation of movements, music, and culture of the dances learned. Students will develop their efficient use of grounded, relaxed, heavy-weighted movement, isolation, and undulation while acquiring facility in a movement language that is intrinsically tied to its music and culture. We focus on integrating these concepts with movement aesthetics, combinations, and listening and internalizing rhythmic patterns. Students will read, watch, and respond to articles and videos. We will have visiting guest artists introduce us to their lived cultural

experiences to help us create historic linkages to contemporary uses of several African dances.

Class will begin with a basic warm up geared towards releasing the weight of the body by stretching, opening the hip joints, rolling down the spine, shoulder and neck rotations, and isolations of the pelvis and upper thoracic cavity. Movements will be learned alongside rhythm, song, and cultural history. You will be expected to participate fully, be present in the moment, and proceed with each exercise until you find better movement efficiency, execution, synchronicity, strength, stamina, confident projection, and individual expressivity. During seminar portions of the class students are expected to arrive having read and watched material, ready to contribute to class discussions. Some discussion will happen on the Canvas discussion board.

Contemporary African Dance Practices Learning Outcomes:

- Develop a deeper appreciation of dance aesthetic music and culture from Africa,
- Implement aesthetics, movements, transitions, and combinations of dances learned
- Implement corrections from feedback
- Grasp and retain movement sequences
- Synchronize movements with drums and other dancers
- Commit to your learning process and development through self-correction
- Understand and deepen relationship to your body through weight release and grounding
- Understand rhythm, polyrhythm, and other musical concepts as they relate to dances taught
- Learn about the contexts, culture and history of dances learned
- Develop greater cultural awareness and understanding through music, and dance
- Deepen self-awareness and community building practices
- Artistry Embodiment Communication Citizenship

Dance Course Objectives:

Retention: Students can remember phrases of moderate length, attending to shape, space and timing.

Quality: Students can demonstrate attention to movement quality and artistry after numerous repetitions

Musicality: Students can understand timing in movement phrase, including introductory elements of polyrhythmic material

Energy: Students can reproduce appropriate level and quality of energy within movement phrases with extended repetitions

UF Level I Dance Technique Learning Outcomes:

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

- Demonstrate clear rhythmic timing in movement and movement phrasing
- Perform movement with confidence
- Demonstrate a foundational level of anatomical/kinesiological awareness
- Safely and accurately replicate movement of simple to moderate complexity
- Display foundational level of strength, flexibility, endurance, muscular stabilization, and Support

Course Requirements and Assignments:

1. Participate in physical practice and coursework.
2. Submit practice video clips with self-assessment, comments, and questions.
3. Watch and respond to video performances.
4. Mid semester self-assessment
5. Mid semester combination
6. Final project presentation
7. Reflective statement

Course Work Point System

Attendance & Participation - 60 points: Students are expected to attend classes and follow dance attendance policies. Participation is based on preparedness, class discussion and movement practice. It is important to contact the instructor via email about classes you know you will miss or whenever you unexpectedly cannot attend or participate fully. If you are unable to participate or need to modify your participation in dance practice classes, communicate with the instructor and write a 300-word document outlining or describing your observations. ***Reference participation rubric below.**

Submit Practice Videos - 20 points: Students are expected to practice outside of class at least 1 hours per week and to four submit practice videos. Students must submit Self-Assessment Comments and Questions as part of their practice videos. Comments can be recorded after the practice video clip or added to Canvas when submitting the video into the assignment. Practicing with a partner or in a small group (no more than 4 people) is encouraged. If you submit with a group or partner each dancer is responsible for submitting their individual comments and one dancer can be responsible for submitting the video for the group. **Due Thursdays 9/7, 9/28, 10/19, 11/9.**

Mid Quarter Self-Assessment - 3 points: You will conduct a mid-quarter self-assessment that candidly reflects on your technique, participation, and learning in this course and demonstrates awareness of your strengths and areas you would like to focus on improving. A template will be provided in Canvas. **Due Thursday, October 12.**

Mid Quarter Combination - 3 points: You will submit a video of yourself performing the full combination of one of the dances learned in class. **Due Thursday, October 12.**

Response to Video Performances - 5 points: Watch the two performance videos posted and write a response documenting your reflections. Make sure to describe what you see and relate your reflections and observations to what we have learned and discussed collectively in class. Include word count. (300-word) **Due Thursday, November 2.**

Final Presentation Performance - 5 points: Using movement vocabulary from this quarter's practice classes we will work individually and collaboratively to create a final performance presentation. You will perform movement combinations as a group and as solos or duets. **Due Thursday, November 30 or Tuesday, December 5.**

Reflective statement - 5 points: Submit a 300-word document responding to your experience and learning in the class as a whole. **Due Tuesday, December 5**

Grading:

***Participation - 60 points**

Submit Practice Videos & Self-assessment/Comments/Questions - 20 points

(Due Thursdays 9/7, 9/28, 10/19, 11/9)

Mid-Quarter Combination - 3 points *(Due 10/12)*

Mid-Quarter Self-Assessment - 3 points *(Due 10/12)*

Written Performance Response - 4 points *(Due 11/2)*

Final Project Presentation - 5 points *(Due 11/30 & 12/5)*

Final Reflection - 5 points *(Due 12/5)*

TOTAL - 100 points

Grading Scale:

A 94-100 points

A- 90-93

B+ 86-89

B 83-85

B- 80-82

C+ 77-79

C 73-76

C- 70-72

D+ 67-69

D 63-66

D- 60-62

E 59 and below points

| Week | Dates | Tuesdays | Thursdays |
|------|-----------|--------------------------------|---|
| 1 | Aug 22&24 | NO CLASS | Intro to technique - Coucou |
| 2 | Aug 29&31 | Intro to Yamama | Yamama |
| 3 | Sept 5&7 | Yamama and Intro to Soumulonko | Soumulonko Submit practice video #1 |

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|----|----------------|---|---|
| 4 | Sept 12&14 | <i>Guest Teacher - Dundun Dance with Amo</i> Review Soumulonko & Yamama | Asynchronous Seminar Discussion 1 |
| 5 | Sept 19&21 | Intro to Ganza | Ganza |
| 6 | Sept 26&28 | Ganza | Submit practice video #2 |
| 7 | Oct 3&5 | Review, Yamama, Soumulonko and Ganza, | <i>Guest Teacher - Dundun Dance and Sorsoune with Amo</i> |
| 8 | Oct 10&12 | Rehearse and record midterm combination video | Midterm Combination Video & Midterm Self- Assessment Due Office Hours – check in |
| 9 | Oct 17&19 | Sorsoune & Intro to Mbakumba | Submit practice video #3 |
| 10 | Oct 24&26 | Sorsoune & Mbakumba | Sorsoune & Mbakumba |
| 11 | Oct 31 & Nov 2 | Intro to Soli | Soli Performance Response Due |
| 12 | Nov 7&9 | Seminar Discussion 2 | Soli Submit practice video #4 |
| 13 | Nov 14&16 | Soli | Review Sorsoune, Mbakumba, & Soli |
| 14 | Nov 21&23 | Review all dances Prepare for Final Presentations | Review Dances Submit practice video #4 |
| 15 | Nov 28&30 | Final Presentations - Group 1 Final Discussion | Review all dances |
| 16 | Dec 5 | Final Presentations - Group 2 & Reflection Due | <i>NO CLASS</i> |

COURSE POLICIES

Dance Program Attendance Policy:

- Students can have two absences with no documentation, without penalty.
- All undocumented absences are unexcused. Excused absences may include those related to illness/injury which are documented by a medical professional. Events related to family emergencies or professional obligations should be discussed with your instructor.
- If the third absence is unexcused, it will result in 5% deduction from the final grade.
- Excused or unexcused, on the third absence, a meeting is required with the instructor and/or area faculty to assess the student's continued participation in the course.
- If the fourth absence and all subsequent absences are unexcused, each will result in an

- additional 5% deduction from the final grade.
- Opportunities to make up missed material are up to the instructor's discretion.
- Due to the participatory nature of the course that includes in-class collaboration along with partner and ensemble work, 4 unexcused absences may result in automatic failure of the course.
- After five unexcused absences the student may not return to class and result in automatic failure of the course.
- For your safety and the focus of the class, you may not join class if it has already started. You are late and counted absent; with instructor permission, you may observe.
- If you should leave class early, 1 point is deducted from your grade.
- If unable to dance but still attend, with instructor permission, you may 'actively' observe for full class credit, onetime. You will submit a written/creative assignment as assigned by the instructor due at the end of class.
- UF approved religious days are excused and do not need to be made-up. (Travel time not included.) You are responsible for material covered during your absence.

Participation:

Attendance does not equal participation. Participation involves being present. The goal of class sessions is to challenge and support your development as a dance artist, and to co-create a learning community where individual experiences and voices are respected and supported, and each person is a collaborator in advancing the learning and development of the whole group. Ways to be present and participate fully include timeliness and preparation for class; removing potential distractions, such as cell phones and other devices; active listening; careful, on-point contributions to discussions; attending to fellow students' work and offering relevant feedback and critical support; and paying attention to the dynamics of the room and responding accordingly. At the college level, students are expected to take responsibility for behaving in a demeanor corresponding to the professional field. Specific responsibilities are aimed toward deepening individual and collective artistic development.

Observation:

When you observe class due to injury or illness, you must hand in an observation paper for that day at the end of class, or you will be marked absent. The subject of your observation will be determined by the instructor at the beginning of class.

*Participation Grading Rubric:

Exemplary 60-55 points

- Student is on time, present, and participates fully in movements being taught. Communicates absences and lateness in a timely fashion. Exemplary execution of each movement. Displays good to excellent retention of movement combinations. Displays consistent commitment to practicing. Easily implements correction and feedback. Consistently contributes to a collaborative, supportive, and respectful environment. Demonstrates ability to bring individual creativity to their solo movement explorations. Active contribution to class discussions reflects deep engagement with course material.

Proficient 54-50points

- Student is on time, present, and participates in movements being taught and execute each movement to the best of their ability. Displays good retention of movement combinations. Displays commitment to practicing. Implements correction and feedback. Contributes to a collaborative, supportive, and respectful environment. Demonstrates some ability to bring individual creativity to their solo movement explorations. Contribution to class discussions reflect engagement with course material.

Developing 49-42 points

- Student is mostly on time, present, and participates in movements being taught and efforts to execute each movement to the best of their ability. Displays some retention of movement combinations. Displays some commitment to practicing. Implementation of correction and feedback show some progress. Doesn't actively work collaboratively, or supportively. Developing ability to bring individual creativity to their solo movement explorations. Doesn't actively contribute to class discussions but displays retention of course material.

Unacceptable <41 points

- Student is late, not present, and participating in class fully for more than a third of the classes. Does not retain movement combinations. Has no commitment to practicing or implementing corrections and feedback. Doesn't work collaboratively or supportively. Does not bring individual creativity to their solo movement explorations. Doesn't retain course material or contribute to class discussion.

Health

In the case of extended health issues, refer to the Injury and Illness Policy in the SoTD 2020-2021 Student Handbook (can be accessed on SoTD website).

Medical Withdrawal: A student with medical documentation may apply to UF for Medical Withdrawal. Medical withdrawal will not be supported without approved documentation. An Incomplete is only considered by UF Dance in extreme cases and is not available in technique classes.

UF's physical and mental health resources: Please consult the following sites:

<http://shcc.ufl.edu/> (Student Health Care Center)

<http://shcc.ufl.edu/forms-records/excuse-notes/> (excuse note policy)

<http://dso.ufl.edu/>(Dean of Students)

Dress Policy:

Wear comfortable clothes that allow free/full range of movement but keep the alignment of the body visible. It is recommended that you wear "soft" pants (no jeans or the like; no shorts). For safety reasons, do not wear eyeglasses or large jewelry. Socks are discouraged and may be worn only for protective purposes and with prior approval from the instructor. Since your body temperature will change throughout class, it is recommended you wear and/or bring layers of clothing. It is recommended you have water available to drink during the class; please bring it in a closeable water bottle. Food is not permitted in the studio. Eating and chewing gum are not permitted in class.

IMPORTANT DATES FALL 23

August

- 18 – COTA Symposium
- 23 – Classes begin
- 23 – 6:30 pm – 8 pm in G6 - Welcome Meeting
- 25 – 1:00pm – 2:30pm – Dance Area Meeting

September

- 1 – 1:00pm – 2:30pm – Dance Coordinators Meeting
- 8 - 1:00pm – 2:30pm – Dance Area Meeting
- 14 – 12:50 – 2:20 pm G-06 – Chad Gaspard Lecture/Dance Class (Ric Rose Alumni Award)
- 15 – 10:40 – 12:25 pm G-06 – Chad Gaspard Friday Master Class (Ric Rose Alumni Award)
- 15 - 1:00pm – 2:30pm – Dance Coordinators Meeting
- 15 . 6:00 – 7:30 pm G-06 – Ric Rose Award Presentation and reception
- 22 - 1:00pm – 2:30pm – Dance Area Meeting
- 29 - 1:00pm – 2:30pm – Dance Coordinators Meeting

October

- 6 – Homecoming (no classes)
- 13 - 1:00pm – 4:00pm – Dance Area Retreat (curriculum: AI in dance curriculum modification)
- 20 – 9am – 4:30pm – BFA Program Auditions
- 26 – 8:00pm - Limon Dance Company at Santa Fe College
- 27 – Young Dancers Workshop
- 27 - 1:00pm – 2:30pm – Dance Coordinators Meeting
- 28 – Young Dancers Workshop

November

- 3 - 1:00pm – 2:30pm – Dance Area Meeting
- 10 – Veterans Day (no classes)
- 17 - 1:00pm – 2:30pm – Dance Area Meeting
- 22 – 26 – Thanksgiving Break

December

- 1 - 1:00pm – 2:30pm – Dance Area Meeting
- 1 – 7:30pm – Agbedidi Concert
- 2 – 7:30pm Agbedidi Concert
- 3 – 2pm – Agbedidi Concert

UF POLICIES

UNIVERSITY POLICY ON ACCOMMODATING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: Students requesting accommodation for disabilities must first register with the Dean of Students Office (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. You must submit this documentation prior to submitting assignments or taking the quizzes or exams. Accommodations are not retroactive therefore, students should contact the office as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations.

UNIVERSITY POLICY ON ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT: Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students should be sure that they understand the UF Student Honor Code at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/students.php>.

ETIQUETTE: COMMUNICATION COURTESY: All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in all email messages, threaded discussions and chats.

[<http://teach.ufl.edu/docs/NetiquetteGuideforOnlineCourses.pdf>

GETTING HELP:

If applicable: For issues with technical difficulties for E-learning in Sakai, please contact the UF Help Desk at:

- Learning-support@ufl.edu
- (352) 392-HELP - select option 2 • <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>

Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues MUST be accompanied by the ticket number received from LSS when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You MUST e-mail your instructor within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request a make-up.

Other resources are available at <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/getting-help> for:

- Counseling and Wellness resources
- Disability resources
- Resources for handling student concerns and complaints
- Library Help Desk support

COVID-19 Precautions

SoTD chooses to prioritize the health and safety of our community. Sanitizing supplies are available in classrooms and hand sanitizing stations are situated throughout our building. Any students who are absent from class for reasons related to illness, inclusive of COVID, should not attend classes, rehearsals, or performances. If you are sick, stay home and self-quarantine. Please visit the UF Health Screen, Test & Protect website about next steps, retake

the questionnaire and schedule your test for no sooner than 24 hours after your symptoms began. Please call your primary care provider if you are ill and need immediate care or the UF Student Health Care Center at (352) 392-1161 (or email covid@shcc.ufl.edu) to be evaluated for testing and to receive further instructions about returning to campus. UF Health Screen, Test & Protect offers guidance when you are sick, have been exposed to someone who has tested positive or have tested positive yourself. Visit the UF Health Screen, Test & Protect website for more information.