

CONTEMPORARY BALLET PRACTICES 2 – DAA 2205 SPRING 2024

***Syllabus Note/Disclaimer:** This syllabus represents current plans and objectives. Through the semester, the constitution of the class cohort, unforeseen events, and schedule changes may dictate changes. **Such changes, communicated clearly, are not unusual and should be expected. Any amendment to the syllabus will be sent to you, updated on Canvas, and be clearly stated and available.**

Day: Monday/Wednesday 1-2:30 PM
Place: G-6 studio, Nadine McGuire Pavilion

INSTRUCTOR OF RECORD:

Associate Professor Elizabeth Johnson
ejohnson@arts.ufl.edu

*Email Policy: Use ONLY your **UFL.EDU** email account for e-mail correspondence related to class. Please include your name & class in the subject line or within the body of all correspondence.

Syllabi are posted here: <http://arts.ufl.edu/syllabi/>

Office: Room 234, Nadine McGuire Theatre & Dance Pavilion
Office Hours: T/TH: 3:30-5:00 PM and Fridays by appointment.
Also available through Zoom: <https://ufl.zoom.us/j/5885911063>
Office Phone: 352-273-0522

REQUIRED TEXT:

Readings from various sources will be provided digitally/free of charge. TBD.

RECOMMENDED TEXT FOR VOCABULARY:

TECHNICAL MANUAL AND DICTIONARY OF CLASSICAL BALLET by Gail Grant

CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

DAA 2205 Credits: 2, Grading Scheme: Letter Grade

Contemporary perspectives in basic ballet technique with discussion of terminology and history. Prerequisite: [DAA 2204](#) or Dance major or minor.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course says we're about to do contemporary ballet practices. What does that mean? Your journey in dance is your own; each person learns and reflects learning differently.

VALUES

My dance courses are an experimental laboratory where we explore the fundamental skill of attention/attending while experiencing lots of other things: the rigor and pleasure of moving, doubt, frustration, and confident embodiment (among many possible others). I think dance class should also be a place of humility and openness where you can trust yourself as a mover but also develop the patience to **not** know, make mistakes, and be radically accepting of your imperfection (the human condition).

Your **experience** of taking ballet class is as important as "learning the technique" (and possibly more). Only you know how and what your body feels. As the instructor, my perspective is limited; I can only see things from an observational, outside 3rd person point of view and (unless you directly tell me) have no possible way to know how you are thinking, feeling, or experiencing class. Knowing is quite different from assessing—my outside eye can be a helpful tool but I sadly can't read minds or intentions. So the primary goal of this class is for you to pay more and more authentic attention to your own experience instead of anxious less and less attention which generally forces humans towards unconscious and possibly harmful habits. A common example is anxiously attempting to achieve a movement or step while simultaneously overriding bodily signals like musculoskeletal pain or fatigue (hoping to make the teacher "happy").

I am not interested nor will we focus on the attainment of bodily shapes, ideas of perfection (which is unattainable), the "right way" to "do technique" etc. I passionately **will not** teach from that vantage point. I am interested in human movement, health, and using anatomical and kinesiological knowledge and wisdom to experience freedom while dancing. Anything called *technique* should serve these goals.

What you can expect:

- **Decentering Ballet's primacy as the measure of overall dance skill**
- **Recentring priorities around Ballet as a *specific physical and cultural practice* that can serve these goals:**
 - Experiencing body relationships of the *parts to the whole*
 - Thinking about ballet as a whole body activity instead of performing shapes and isolated parts/movements.
 - Differentiating between shape making and transitions—passing organically through shapes to keep a sense of flow and enlivened energy in your movement.
 - Focusing on rhythmic accuracy, weight sensing/shifting, phrasing, and musicality
 - Integrating technical and performance skills, e.g. the most efficient/functional approach to upper/lower coordination, arm pathways, and spiraling are also aesthetically accurate.
- “Traditional” elements of ballet class: barre, centre, and petit and (eventually) grand allegro.
- Working with alignment awareness, clarifying ballet line (including rigor regarding outward rotation of the hips), continued fluency in the French vocabulary, and attention to overall coordination (which is reliant on rhythm and phrasing).
- Critical thinking: what are the ways that ballet technique relates/transfers to and supports other dance forms/practices (including contemporary and world forms)?
- An approach to ballet that shifts gaze to a decidedly mind/body lens and values accurate anatomical and kinesiological knowledge at the same level as aesthetics.
- Somatic lenses: Laban/Bartenieff Movement Analysis, the Alexander Technique, the Dart Procedures, Framework for Integration, Body-Mind Centering, and Dynamic Embodiment.
- The expectation to increase your body-mind consciousness, minimize muscular tension, and claim ballet class as fun work instead of anxiety producing or “too hard.”

COURSE CONTENT:

Course content will include a continuation and application of ballet practice, which is located in European/Western history and culture. Ballet is NOT the foundation of “dance technique” but rather one form amidst a plethora of global, historic forms that train the body in clear physical and aesthetic skills. Ballet has a particular and exclusive white, European history of styles and training practices that germinated from royal and court culture as well as the court's appropriation of common or folk dances. While this must be acknowledged to fully understand the aesthetic approach of the form, this course is a **ballet LAB** that will focus on body USE (Alexander Technique), physical clarity, performance quality, and self and community awareness. Assignments may include readings, video viewings, and/or a related research assignment.

COURSE OBJECTIVES/PURPOSE and EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES:

During and upon completion of this course, students should:

1. Embody clear and continued development of kinesthetic and anatomic understanding through taking class.
2. Continue building overall dancing and life skills.
3. Integrate expanding personal knowledge and awareness in collaborative dialogue with instructor's observations
4. Enhance learning perception through all proprioceptive and cognitive systems.
5. Broaden the ability to learn visually and integrate visual information kinesthetically to the body.
6. Recognize habits and develop increasingly mature solutions for coping or change.
7. Broaden the ability to hear the rhythm of the music, and understand phrasing, musicality, and “the bounce” in general.
8. Increase adaptability and endurance—understand that everyone's capacity is unique
9. Practice performance presence and skills: positive energy, concentration, willingness to learn, mental adaptability
10. Challenge preconceived and rigid ideas concerning what ballet is “about” and leave mind open for shifts and changes in understanding.
11. Develop and refine expression and artistry.
12. Observe and write about progress and challenges in the course critically and analytically.
13. Enhance the appreciation of the theory, criticism and aesthetic behind the art form.
14. Learn about historically invisibilized contributors to ballet histories.

Teaching Strategies:

To facilitate and promote the Course Objectives and Expected Learning Outcomes, as the instructor I will:

1. Design a class order, progression, and exercises that develop and support said learning objectives.
2. Encourage a sustainable and compassionate class community where students can take risks and make mistakes free from unneeded stress, judgment, or harsh criticism.
3. Demonstrate and embody class material as accurately as is possible attending to specific details and qualities I would like to see.
4. Explain concepts and answer questions thoroughly.

5. Provide honest and specific assessment and clear communication in class and through email and Canvas correspondence.
6. Provide space and time in class for questions and the working through of concepts including practicing peer assessment.
7. Provide meaningful resources that enhance dance, writing, and historical literacies
8. Listen actively and sensitively to student suggestions, feedback, and concerns.
9. Make changes to the course that honor access, equity, student experience, and student input.
10. Include and relate to students as collaborators and decision makers in assignments and grading.

****Please note that while students will receive individual feedback as time allows, I expect the class community to take general feedback as personally applicable.**

Course Evaluation will be based in the assignments listed below. Each student's assessment is based solely on individual level of engagement with the course material, theory and concepts and working to integrate the information at the individual's developmental level.

LATE WORK: all written assignments will be given a 2 week grace period with no penalty. After 2 weeks, each week the assignment is late will decrease its value by 10%. Without communication or prior agreement with the instructor, assignments that are not completed within reasonable time parameters will receive a zero grade with no make-up alternatives.

EVALUATION – (values subject to change or necessary adjustments in the syllabus)

Midterm Evaluation *self graded	10%	Tuesday 2/26 and/or Thursday 2/28 filming in class - written response follows
Final Reflection – TBD *collaboratively graded	10%	Final written assignment reflecting on the work of the semester
Mini-Research Discussion Post – Somatics reading *class collaboration + choice	10%	Application of teaching concepts and/or historical research
Overall approach to class which includes: physical skill building, aesthetic understanding, and artistry – *collaborative grading	50%	Level of physical coordination/skill and artistic expression should be progressing
Instructor assessment of overall course progress	10%	Improvement in all areas over the semester
Contributions to class community – <i>this grade is correlated to and affected by attendance</i> – *instructor graded	10%	Reflects the kind of energy and attitude with which you approach your work and treat others

➤ **Instructor Expectations: For the best learning outcome, all course assignments should be completed. There are built in extensions for all work with clear penalties outlined.**

➤ **Communication is KEY: a lack of communication prior to late work or for chronic attendance problems will not help your case.**

Your overall score may be affected by your attendance record.

A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	88-89
B	87-85
B-	80-82
C+	78-79
C	73-77
C-	70-72
D+	68-69
D	67-63
D-	60-62
E	59 and below

EACH STUDENT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR MONITORING HER/HIS OWN PROGRESS

UF grading policy is here: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

Dress Policy:

- Female identifying: Close fitting dancewear and soft ballet shoes. **Speak to the teacher about individual needs and if you have an interest in taking the class en pointe.
- Male identifying: Close fitting shirts and leggings such as bike shorts and yoga pants. Tights not required. Ballet shoes. Recommended: dance belt.
- Hair must be secured and worn in a neatly and out of the face.
- No oversized clothing.
- Ankles must be visible.
- No large jewelry that can scratch you or catch in others' clothing or hair by mistake
- No chewing gum.

Course Policies:

SOTD DANCE ATTENDANCE:

Dance Technique Class Attendance Guide

- Mindful participation in each class meeting is the only way to meet the objectives of this course.
- Attendance is considered mandatory
- In the case of extended health issues, refer to the Injury and Illness Policy in the current SoTD Handbook: https://arts.ufl.edu/site/assets/files/90100/sotd_student_handbook_ay_2022-23.pdf

Dance Area Attendance Policy

For Studio Courses:

For classes that **meet two times a week:**

- Students can take **2** absences with **no documentation** with **no penalty**.
- 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**.
- **Requirements / opportunities to make up missed material is 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.

Note: Any absence from class for the following reasons must be supported by official acceptable documentation to avoid a grade penalty:

- illness (doctor's note must be on official letterhead with address and phone number, noting the date and time of visit and diagnosis verifying that an absence from class is warranted and when the return to class activity is expected, doctor name and signature)
- serious family emergencies
- special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences)
- military obligation
- severe weather conditions
- participation in official university activities such as music performances
- athletic competition or debate
- court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena)

Students must inform the instructor by the end of the second week of classes of religious observances of their faith that will conflict with class attendance this semester.

MAKE-UP POLICY:

Dance Technique Class – Makeup Policy

- You are responsible for all material covered during any absence
- Makeup options for absences are available across technique styles and classes. Please communicate with your instructor for approved options.
- Absences from Written Exams, Quizzes, Mid-Terms, and/or Finals may only be made up with approved documentation
- To earn credit (amount of credit determined by the instructor) for an excused absence you must do two things:
 - ❖ Immediately after your return to class, turn in approved/legal documentation to instructor. If you need the original documentation, the instructor will accept copies.
 - ❖ Make-up the class with an approved assignment submitted on the required date. If the assignment is to attend another class as a make-up, the student must request permission of that instructor.

Student Injury and Illness Policy:

FIRST: Please contact the Dance Wellness Clinic through the Canvas site. Also: email Marina at mrenzi@ufl.edu

The Dance Area of SoTD believes that dance student's physical and mental well-being is paramount to success in all arenas of their dance training, from class to the stage. In the case of injury, fostering a productive and holistic response insures a speedy and effective recovery.

1. If the dance student becomes ill or injured to the degree that they cannot attend and participate in dance classes, SoTD sponsored rehearsals, or performances, the 5 steps of the dance student injury and illness policy are to be followed:
2. The student is required to see a health care professional immediately.
3. If the illness or injury prevents the student from participation in dance class, rehearsal, or performance, the student is to request documentation from the health care professional that explicitly projects the duration of the injury, and/or the amount and type of activity recommended for the welfare of the student.
4. Following the appointment with the health care professional, the student is required to bring medical recommendations and related documentation to the attention of his or her instructor(s), choreographer(s), or director(s) as the basis for discussion.
5. Unless otherwise medically advised, the student is prohibited from active participation in all related UF dance activities, classes, events, performances, etc. The student may not personally select one activity as having a higher priority over another. The student is not to dance in any events, activities, performances or rehearsals if the student is not in dance class. If the infirmity culminates in a medical withdrawal, this is also a withdrawal from all performance related activities.
6. The student is never allowed to sacrifice classroom participation for the demands of a performance. The student will not be allowed to participate in a performance if they miss dance class due to an injury. The student is expected to follow the student injury and illness policy even if performances take place beyond the scope of SoTD, as with another UF, professional, or community performing group, etc.

Required Meetings, Auditions, and Showings:

Spring '24 Dance Calendar – tentative and subject to change. Faculty meetings & retreats, Open Discussions, and CRA dates still to be determined.

JANUARY

8 – 1st Day of classes, welcome back meeting @ 6:30pm, G6

9 – Spring into Dance Auditions from 6:30-9:30pm, G6

15 – MLK Day, no classes

22 – UnShowing #1, 6:30-9:30pm in G6

23 – Parsons Dance @ Phillips Center, 7:30pm

26 – BFA Auditions

29 – UnShowing #2, 6:30-9:30pm in G6

FEBRUARY

5 – Possible Dance Open Conversation, 6:30-8:00 in G6

16 – Masterclass visit with Bharatanatyam artists (CAME)

- SoTD Town Hall, 10:45am-12:15 pm on Zoom

11-13 – BFA Showcase Spacing rehearsals

14-16 – BFA Showcase Tech rehearsals

18-20 – BFA Showcase final Tech and Dress rehearsals

21-25 – BFA Showcase

23 – 12:50-2:45: Halifu Osumare guest lecture (during Dance History)

26 – Dark Day – NO DANCE MAJOR CLASSES

27 or 29 – Bagels and Ballet, 10-11 AM (tentative)

MARCH

4 – Possible Dance Open Conversation, 6:30-8:00 in G6

5 – Step Africa @ Phillips Center, 7:30pm (alumnus Ariel Dykes is in the company!)

11-14 – ACDA in Brenau University, Gainesville, Georgia

9-17 – SPRING BREAK

19 – Adia Whitaker Master Class, 3:00pm G6

25 – UnShowing #3, 6:30-9:30pm in G6

APRIL

1 - All classes and rehearsals in G6 move to Constans Stage
7-10 – Spring Into Dance Spacing Rehearsals
11 – Crew Watch Spring Into Dance
12 – Spring Into Dance Tech #1
14-15 – Spring Into Dance final Tech rehearsals
16 & 17 – Spring Into Dance Dress Rehearsals
18-21 – Spring Into Dance
22- Dark Day – NO DANCE MAJOR CLASSES
- All classes and rehearsals resume in G6
23 – Ballet Tockadero de Monte Carlo @ Phillips Center, 7:30pm
24 – Last Day of Classes
- Senior Circle, 12:10-12:30pm in G6 [TBD]
- SoTD Convocation, 4-5pm in Black Box Theater
- Final UnShowing/ BA Senior Project Symposium, 6:30-9:30pm in G6
29 - CRAs – Graduating Seniors – Times TBD (tentative)

Critical Response Appointments for Fall Semester TBD (will be communicated later in the semester):

BFA seniors graduating and all Dance majors: it is your responsibility to know your schedule. **These are required meetings.**

COURSE CALENDAR: Important calendar updates regarding guests will be shared as the semester progresses.

Weeks 1-2: establish class rhythm and applied somatic lens. This will go more slowly and we may not yet progress through an entire barre to grand allegro. Framework for Integration work on physioballs.

Weeks 3-5: Full barre and center with applied somatic lens. Emphases on weight shift, spatial intent, imagination, direction, “peas and applesauce”/Dart related body patterning, upper and lower coordination, dynamic/adaptive approach to balance.

Week 6: Full barre and center with applied somatic lens. Emphases on weight shift, spatial intent, imagination, direction, “peas and applesauce”/Dart related body patterning, upper and lower coordination, dynamic/adaptive approach to balance.

Week 7: Full barre and center with applied somatic lens. Emphases on weight shift, spatial intent, imagination, direction, “peas and applesauce”/Dart related body patterning, upper and lower coordination, dynamic/adaptive approach to balance.

Week 8: MIDTERM recording and upload, Class and work on midterm reflection, due in Week 9 or 10.

Week 9: Class discussion for mini research assignment. Form partners or groups. Work on Midterm.

Week 10: SPRING BREAK/ACDA, Midterm due

Weeks 11-12: Class as per usual – increasing complexity of center and traveling

Week 13: Class as per usual

Week 14: Class as per usual

Week 15: Class as per usual

Week 16: Class as per usual – classes end

UF Policies:

Current UF Grading Policies: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

UF Absence Policy

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies, as follows:

Source: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

- Students are responsible for satisfying all academic objectives as defined by the instructor. Absences count from the first class meeting.
- In general, acceptable reasons for absence from or failure to participate in class include illness, serious family emergencies, special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences), military obligation, severe weather conditions, religious holidays and participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition or debate. Absences from class for court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena) must be excused. Other reasons also may be approved.
- You cannot participate in classes unless you are registered officially or approved to audit with evidence of having paid audit fees. The Office of the University Registrar provides official class rolls to Instructors.
- If you do not participate in at least one of the first two class meetings of a course or laboratory in which you are registered, and you have not contacted the department to indicate your intent, you can be dropped from the course. You must not assume that you will be dropped, however.
- The university recognizes the right of the individual professor to make attendance mandatory. After due warning, professors can prohibit further attendance and subsequently assign a failing grade for excessive absences.

Student on-line evaluation process

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

University Policy on Accommodating Students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, <https://disability.ufl.edu/>) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

UNIVERSITY POLICY ON ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code (<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor.

NETIQUETTE: COMMUNICATION COURTESY:

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

Note on in-class recording:

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A "class lecture" is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or guest lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To "publish" means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform,

including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student

Please take advantage of these services:

Campus Resources:

Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit <https://umatter.ufl.edu/> to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: <https://counseling.ufl.edu/> or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or <https://shcc.ufl.edu/>

University Police Department: <https://police.ufl.edu/> or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608: <https://ufhealth.org/locations/uf-health-shands-emergency-room-trauma-center/>

GatorWell Health Promotion Services: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the <https://gatorwell.ufsa.ufl.edu/> or call 352-273-4450.

ADDITIONAL MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES:

1. UF has an Equal Access Mental Health Clinic that has a Free Therapy Night every Monday night that UF is considered open. Here is the FB page through which one can book appointments as well: <https://www.facebook.com/equalaccessclinic/>

2. The UF School of Medicine Equal Access Clinic website is here and has the above mental health services as well as specialized Women's and LGBT medicine: <https://equalaccess.med.ufl.edu/specialty-clinics-classes/>

3. Alachua County Crisis Center web site: <https://alachuacounty.us/depts/css/crisiscenter/pages/services.aspx>
Offers Crisis Counseling as well as a Mobile Response Unit that attends to severe mental health crises.

Academic Resources

E-learning technical support: Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.

Career Connections Center: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.

Library Support: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

Writing Studio: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

Student Complaints On-Campus: [Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information.](#)

On-Line Students Complaints: [View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process.](#)