University of Florida School of Theatre + Dance  
McGuire Theatre and Dance Pavilion G-6  
M/W/F 10:40AM-12:10PM  
Fall 2015

SYLLABUS

Contact Information

Instructor: Melissa Brenner  
Email: Mbrenner@arts.ufl.edu  
Office Hours: By appointment only  
Email Policy: Use ONLY your CANVAS and UFL.EDU account for e-mail correspondence.

Syllabi are posted at CFA website under Student Life:  
http://arts.ufl.edu/syllabi/

ALL DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THIS COURSE CAN BE FOUND ON CANVAS

Course Description

This 2-credit course will introduce the student to the art of modern dance through application of physical and aesthetic elements such as line, shape, energy and use of space. Class will consist of warm-up, use of proper alignment, body awareness, moving through space, improvisation, and center combinations based on lyrically athletic movement. The technique will center on the specific use of weight and momentum, specific movement initiation points, spatial awareness, dynamic range and shifts, and the use of 3-dimensional space. Class will also be used as an environment for open discussion about artistic concepts and movement in terms of anatomical motivation. Additionally, musicality and performance skills will be cultivated through discussion and application. Students will have the opportunity to research and present established modern dance artists and critique live dance.

Course Objectives

• To learn what contemporary dance is and to experience it personally.  
• To understand the major traditional aesthetic premises and development of contemporary dance.  
• To develop an informed view of the interaction of art and society in the 20/21st Century.  
• To develop fundamental technique and performance skills.  
• To learn how to develop strength, stretch, and range of mobility.  
• To approach all training, practice and performance from an anatomically correct standpoint.  
• To explore the expressive and qualitative range of movement and performance.  
• To develop musicality, dynamics, clarity and articulation in time and space.  
• To empower the person/dancer/thinker/choreographer in each student.  
• To get hands on experience with the creative process & production of contemporary dance.

Text

Required

Prime Movers: The Makers of Modern Dance in America
Course Requirements

ATTENDANCE
In the UF Dance Program, three unexcused absences will reduce your grade one-letter grade (i.e., from B to C). Each subsequent unexcused absence lowers your grade by half letter grade (i.e., from C to C-). After five unexcused absences the student may not return to class and result in automatic failure of the course. A student with medical documentation may apply to UF for Medical Withdrawal.

Dance Technique Class Attendance Guide
• Mindful participation in each class meeting is the only way to meet the objectives of this course.
• Attendance, which is mandatory, means that when you enter the classroom, you are present, alert, and contributing to the progress of the class every second.
• If you are not present when attendance is taken or class begins you are marked absent.
• In the case of extended health issues, refer to the Injury and Illness Policy in the SoTD 2015–16 Handbook (SoTD website) and included in this syllabus.

Dance Technique Class Absence Policy
• Five (5) or more absences (excused or unexcused) result in automatic failure.
• All undocumented absences are unexcused: each unexcused absence = 5 point deduction.
• 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. (See Make-up Policy for more information on excused absences.)
• 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, 3 points are 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 complete an 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.
• A 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.

1. CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT 25 points
These following areas are used by faculty to assess student progress throughout the semester:
• Self-awareness—the student demonstrates an ability to retain an awareness of self while integrating their movement into spatial relationships with other persons and groups.
• Transitional Skills—demonstrates an understanding and dynamic use of different types of phrasing with an ability to sequence a variety of movements into an extended phrase: recognizing and moving through transitions and demonstrating follow-through of movement impulses as appropriate.
• Performance Quality—observable growth as a performing artist both in class and on stage.
• Creative Risk-taking—student dares to explore new territory.
• Overall Improvement—student demonstrates a clear positive progression throughout the semester.

2. EVENT ATTENDANCE 15 points
• Attendance to the events (listed below) is required for all majors.
• An entry, VIA CANVAS, is required for each event under Event Reflection.
• Event Reflections should be no less than one paragraph long and are due no later than three days after the event.
• One Critical Analysis paper will be due on one of the events listed with an asterisk (*).
• The Critical Analysis paper must be submitted VIA CANVAS no later than one week after the event.
• Writing and submission guidelines can be found in CANVAS.

3. PROOF OF ACHIEVING TECHNICAL APTITUDE
   Midterm Evaluations 15 points - Wednesday October 7, 2015
   • PLACEMENT AND ALIGNMENT
   • CORE SUPPORT AND CONDITIONING
   • SPATIAL AWARENESS AND FULL BODY INTEGRATION
   • RHYTHMIC CLARITY/MUSICALITY
   • PROFESSIONALISM (all categories are outlined in the larger syllabus)

4. PROOF OF ACHIEVING TECHNICAL APTITUDE
   Final Evaluations 15 points - Friday December 4, 2015
   • PLACEMENT AND ALIGNMENT
   • CORE SUPPORT AND CONDITIONING
   • SPATIAL AWARENESS AND FULL BODY INTEGRATION
   • RHYTHMIC CLARITY/MUSICALITY
   • PROFESSIONALISM (all categories are outlined in the larger syllabus)

5. HISTORICAL PROJECT
   • Presentation 10 points - Various Dates (Full details can be found in CANVAS)
     With a partner, you will present a modern dance pioneer studied in Prime Movers.
   • Written Exam 10 points - Friday, November 20, 2015
     A written exam will be given, in class, and will cover historical information from Prime Movers and class presentations.
6. COMMUNITY IN MOTION 10 points
Majors (BFA/BA) = 10 hours, Non-Majors = 5 hours
- Status report after hours are completed via CANVAS. Last day to submit: December 3.
- Include specific details about the assignments. (If e-learning is not available, an alternate method will be provided.)
- Requirement outlined at the end of syllabus

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Date Due</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technique Assessment</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>25 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Event Attendance</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>15 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Evaluation</td>
<td>10/7/15</td>
<td>15 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Evaluation</td>
<td>12/4/15</td>
<td>15 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Historical Project</td>
<td>Various Dates</td>
<td>10 points</td>
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<td>Presentation</td>
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<td>Written Exam</td>
<td>11/20/15</td>
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<td>Community In Motion</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>10 points</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td><strong>100 Points</strong></td>
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Grading Scale
A  93–100
A−  90–92
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

*Your overall score may be affected by your attendance record.

**Required Performance and Event Participation**
*To help you to “think outside the box,” you must venture outside the studio!*  

BFA/BA Majors: In addition to attending all classes, attendance is required at the following events plus 1 outside professional show. Your current instructor will provide guidelines as to proof of viewing that will be produced within one week after viewing production. Depending on your technique schedule, you may use these same events/performances for other technique classes, as well.

**Performance Behavior/Decorum:**
- Yes, please dress nice!
• No cell phones/texting at all, ever, never during a performance (unless the show requests it!)
• Represent the SoTD at the show!

Required Performance and Event Dates
Dates/times subject to change – please check dance bulletin board and/or contact appropriate box office. You will receive a voucher (coupon) at the beginning of the semester for assigned SoTD productions with instructions of how to use it to get discount tickets. Viewing of SoTD plays is highly recommended, but not required. Non-majors, please verify event schedule with instructor, as you may not be required for attendance at all events.

(Majors only) Dance Area All Majors Meeting, Monday August 24 7:00-9:00, G-6
Faculty Auditions, Wednesday August 26, 6:30-8:30, G-6
BFA Fall Dance Showcase Auditions, Thursday, August 27, G-6, 6:30-8:30
UnShowing #1, August 31, 6:30-8:30, G6
UnShowing #2, September 14, 6:30-8:30, G-6
UnShowing #3, September 21, 6:30-8:30, G-6
UnShowing #4, September 28, 6:30-8:30, G-6
UnShowing #5, October 5, Adjudication #1 ACDA/Senior Proj 6:30-9:30, G-6
UnShowing #6, October 12 Adjudication #2 6:30-finish Senior Proj/Solos, G-6
UnShowing #7, October 19 6:30-9:30 Designer Showing, G-6
*BFA FALL DANCE SHOWCASE October 28 – November 1, 2015 (SoTD Dance)
Location: McGuire Studio Dance Theatre, UF
*DAVID DORFMAN DANCE – PROPHETS OF FUNK (Dance)
  • November 10, 2015 at 7:30 pm Location: Phillips Center
*AGBEDIDI November 19-22 (ex 21st), 2015 (SoTD Dance)
  Location: Constans Theatre, UF
UnShowing #8, featuring Faculty work, November 23, 6:30-8:00, G-6
UnShowing #9, December 7 6:30-8:30, G-6

Other Dance Event Options:
*ROOM TO DANCE
  • October 28-29, 2015 at 7:30 Location: Santa Fe College FAH Theatre

YOUNG DANCER’S WORKSHOP PERFORMANCES (Dance)
  • October 30 & 31 Times 8:00 Location: Santa Fe College Fine Arts Hall
HAUNTED SWAN LAKE – Dance Alive National Ballet
  • October 30, 2015 at 7:30 pm Location: Phillips Center
CINDERELLA – Dancompany (G’ville)
  • December 5, 2015 at 1:30/7:30 pm Location: Phillips Center

Other Theatre Event Options
PETER AND THE STARCATCHER
  • September 3 (SoTD/Hipp play) Location: Hippodrome State Theatre
THE DROWSY CHAPERONE
  • September 16 (SoTD Musical) Location: Constans Theatre, UF
GOLDEN DRAGON
  • September 3 (SoTD play) Location: McGuire Black Box Theatre
Community In Motion Project

As a member of the UF School of Theatre & Dance community, you will take part in one or more of the following projects and complete a minimum of 10 hours of work that will be documented and submitted via email to your instructor. Examples of CIM projects:

• Fall Dance Showcase – tech support
• Video taping a show
• Crew on a showcase
• Assisting with Auditions (recluding technique class)
• Your duties may include assisting faculty with organization, production, or as a community liaison.

EACH STUDENT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR MONITORING HER/HIS OWN PROGRESS

Evaluations:
Midterm and Final evaluations occur during the class. You will be observed by the instructor and perhaps other members of the dance faculty, and grades will be assigned based on the technical proficiencies listed above. If there is rotation in the instructors, all participating instructors will contribute to your grade. For the BFA major, application of your technique work to concert/performance work will be factored into your technique grade.

General Information

Student Injury and Illness Policy:
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.

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:

1. The student is required to see a health care professional immediately.
2. 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.

3. 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.

4. 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.

5. 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.

If involved in a SoTD produced production (with or without credit), there is required attendance at the production’s Strike (as stated in the current SoTD Production Handbook):

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**Strike**

- Strike is the restoring of the stage to its original condition. This mainly consists of the breakdown of technical components of the production.
- Strike typically takes place immediately following the final performance of the production.
- Strike is run by the Technical Director or Scenic Studio Supervisor.
- Safety is of the utmost importance! Proper footwear and clothing must be worn. Additional Safety Equipment may be required depending on the task.
- The Strike requires the presence of all undergraduate performers involved in the show and crew, Props Master, Master Electrician, and Technical Director or Scenic Studio Supervisor.
- Only the Technical Director, Master Electrician and Costume Supervisor can release anyone from Strike.
- Additionally, all cast members and crew must sign out with the Stage Manager.
- All undergraduate students involved in the production are REQUIRED to attend.
- Graduate Actors are released after 1 hour of participation at Strike due to their GTA responsibilities. Grad Actors must sign out with the Stage Manager before leaving.
• Only the Technical Director may approve an absence from Strike. Under extenuating circumstances may a student be “excused” from or permitted to leave early from Strike. If the student is “excused” from a REQUIRED strike or leaves early from Strike, the Strike must be “made up” by one of the 3 following options:

  • The student must participate in two Strikes within the current academic semester.
  --or--
  • The student must participate in one strike and serve 6 hours in the shop within the current academic semester.
  --or--
  • The student must serve 12 hours in the shop within the current academic semester.

• If a student does not adhere to the above penalties for missing Strike or leaving early from Strike, or if the students misses or leaves Strike early without approval of the Technical Director the student will be:

  • Ineligible for Theatre and Dance Scholarships.
  • Ineligible to be cast in School of Theatre and Dance productions for the upcoming semester.
  • Ineligible to register for classes.
  • If enrolled in any section of P&P the student’s grade will be lowered.
  • If enrolled in Senior Project the student’s grade will be lowered.
  • If enrolled in Dancers for Choreographers or Dance Ensemble the student’s grade will be lowered.
  • If enrolled in West African Dance or World Dance (Agbedidi) the student’s grade will be lowered.

ALL BFA/BA Dance Majors Freshman, New Transfers and Seniors are required to attend an end-of-year conference (Jury) December 10/11 with the dance faculty during Reading Days (the two days following end of classes). Do not make travel plans at this time—grade points will be deducted.

It is your responsibility to know your schedule. Check your (UF) email & the dance studio bulletin boards regularly.

*Students requesting accommodation for disabilities must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation. *

*Academic Honesty Guidelines: The academic community of students and faculty at the University of Florida strives to develop, sustain and protect an environment of honesty, trust and respect. Students are expected to pursue knowledge with integrity. Exhibiting honesty in academic pursuits and reporting violations of the Academic Honesty Guidelines will encourage others to act with integrity. Violations of the Academic Honesty Guidelines shall result in judicial action and a student being subject to the sanctions in paragraph XI of the Student
Conduct Code. The conduct set forth hereinafter constitutes a violation of the Academic Honesty Guidelines (University of Florida Rule 6C1-4.017). *

Instructor Biography:

A native of Florida, Melissa Canto attended Douglas Anderson School of the Arts followed by the University of Florida, where she received her B.F.A. in dance performance and choreography in 2003. Melissa holds an M.F.A. from Arizona State University and a Pilates certification from Pilates Sports Center. As a performer, Melissa has danced with Mary Fitzgerald Dance, Karen Schupp Dance, Ann Ludwig Dance Theatre and has performed the works of Ashleigh Leite, Shapiro and Smith Dance, and Elina Mooney. While studying in Arizona, Melissa served on the board of the Arizona Dance Educators Organization, the University Graduate Council, was the President of the Graduate Dance Organization, and taught a number of classes at Arizona State including Modern, Ballet, Pilates/Yoga, and Introduction to Dance. Her choreography has been selected and presented on stages and site-specific locations throughout the U.S. since 2001. Melissa spends most summers performing and participating in festivals such as American Dance Festival, Bates Dance Festival, Strictly Seattle and La Alternativa in San Francisco. Currently, Melissa is an Adjunct Assistant Professor at the University of Florida and Santa Fe College and is Assistant Director of Dance Theatre Santa Fe.