

## DAA 233\_ West African Dance

Spring semester, 2019  
M/W 4:00-6:00pm  
Constans Dance Studio G-06

Instructor: Dr. Kya Conner  
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### COURSE DESCRIPTION

A studio/performance-oriented course that focuses on development and exploration of West African dance techniques. Participants will explore the traditions, song, music, language, and dance of the people of Guinea, Senegal and Mali. Students will learn and perform traditional dances that celebrate rites of passage, courtship and healing. Emphasis is on rhythmic movement combinations, Brain compatible dance and strength building. Class may be repeated with of change of content up to a maximum of 6 credits.

### STUDENT OUTCOMES

The successful student will:

1. Demonstrate proficiency in West African dance movements
2. Demonstrate an understanding of body coordination and how to move the body expressively
3. Demonstrate correct body placement and alignment.
4. Demonstrate mastery of West African dance vocabulary
5. Build strength, flexibility and endurance with an understanding of personal strengths and weaknesses
6. Become knowledgeable about role of traditional dance in West African communities
7. Explore his/her own inner impulses and move to West African rhythms
8. Become more confident with his/her own moving body and show a willingness to engage and improvise.

### ACTIVITIES

1. Dance technique classes (See Participation rubric)
2. Journals: Students will keep a weekly, typed journal to keep track of their personal progression in class. Entries will also include a goal setting plan at the beginning of the semester, written articles and observation of dance on film (including YouTube), a midterm and final self-evaluation of your progress in class, and a reflection on any special activities as assigned during the course of the semester.
3. Skills Assessment: Students will be graded on two bantaba solo's (see rubric)
4. Event attendance and reaction essays: Students will be required to attend a minimum of two shows (The BFA Showcase and 1 other show of your choice). See list of available performances and additional detail further into the syllabus. You will be expected to attend at least two shows and to provide your professor with a one-page reaction essay with regard to your experience and reactions to the performance for each show which will be graded. Your reaction essays should include your subjective view of the performance, things you liked, your emotional reaction to the performance and any other experiential components you think are important.
5. Leading Class Warm-up/Cool-Down with the accompaniment of the drummers (see rubric)
6. Final: Choreography project (rubric to be handed out later in the semester)

**ASSESSMENT** is based on the following:

|   |               |
|---|---------------|
| Participation (26 classes @ 2 pts each)             | 52 pts        |
| Skills assessment (2 bantaba solos @ 5 points each) | 10 pts        |
| Events and Reaction Essays                          | 20 pts        |
| Journal entries                                     | 5 pts         |
| Leading Class Warm-up                               | 5 pts         |
| Final Exam (choreography assignment)                | <u>10</u> pts |
| Total   | 100 pts       |

*Rubrics will be distributed to describe every aspect of grading.*

Final grade is computed as follows:

|           |           |           |              |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
| A 95-100  | B 85-89   | C 75-79   | D 65-69      |
| A/B 90-94 | B/C 80-84 | C/D 70-74 | F 64 or less |

Grade will be dropped half a letter grade for each day the assignment is late.

*POLICY regarding digital transmission of assignments:*

If the professor agrees to allow the student to email a document (.doc) for any reason, the student must turn in a paper copy the next time s/he attends class.

***The following UF Academic Experience Goals are met through this course:***

- I. To learn to communicate effectively through reading, writing, speaking, listening and observing, so as to acquire, develop and convey ideas and information. *(All Activities)*
- II. To examine issues rationally, logically and coherently. *(All Activities)*
- VI. To be able to synthesize the knowledge of, and understand issues emanating from, a variety of disciplinary perspectives. *(All Activities)*
- VII. To exhibit an aesthetic awareness through the creation of art or the formation of a critical response to the arts. *(All Activities)*
- VIII. To identify personal values, recognize the principles underlying personal view and actions and those of others, and to defend personal positions. *(All Activities)*
- IX. To understand both the commonality and diversity of human social existence in an increasingly interdependent world. *(All Activities)*

**CLASS PARTICIPATION *(See rubric for details.)***

You can earn 52 points for participation. At 2 points per class, this allows for two sick days per semester. If you miss more than two days for any reason, you will lose points. One point per class will be deducted if you arrive late/leave early. If you observe class for an excusable reason, you will have assigned journal work to complete for which you may receive 1-2 points of credit. Number of observed classes for which full credit (2 pts.) can be received is limited to two (2).

Students will also be held responsibly for adherence to acceptable classroom behavior as defined by The University of Florida Disruption Policy. ***NO CELLPHONE USAGE IN CLASS except if used to record a portion of class (must get permission first)!***

**DRESS**

Everyone must be barefooted for class (some dance shoes may be appropriate). No distracting

clothing. No jewelry or hats. No jeans or denim pants.

**Female Students** - will need to have a lapa or sarong to be worn in class. A lapa is a traditional West African garment that can be made by using 2-3 yards of fabric tied around the waist to form a skirt. **Lapas and Sarongs are required attire by the third week of class.** Shorts, leggings, yoga or sweat pants must be worn underneath lapas and sarongs. T-shirts or tank tops preferred with sports bra; no revealing tops. Lapas can be purchased for \$20.

**Male Students** – will need to wear shorts or loose fitting athletic pants paired with a t-shirt or tank top. Traditionally men wear Socatos, loose droop-seated pants tied by a drawstring.

***No street shoes, gum, food, or drinks (except water) are allowed inside the studio. If you are caught chewing gum, you will lose participation points for the class. Water ONLY in the studio! All other drinks and any food must be kept outside the studio.***

#### **EVENTS:**

You are required to see two shows (The BFA Showcase and 1 other show of your choice). The other shows listed below are not required but will count as extra credit. However, you must show proof by bringing in a ticket stub or a program signed by a door usher working that night! You can purchase your tickets well in advance. Print your name and UFID on your ticket stub. Should you have a scheduling conflict that will prevent your from attending an assigned event, it is your responsibility to inform Professor DaCosta as soon as possible before the event in order for a substitute event to be assigned. This course follows University Honor Code.

#### **Required Performances 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 the 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.

- **Monday, January 7, 2019 - Welcome Back Dance Area Meeting with Students & Dance faculty 7:00 – 8:30 PM in Studio G6**
- **Thursday, January 10, 2019 - Fall BFA 2018 Showcase Audition 6:30 - 8:30PM in Studio G6**
- **UnShowing #1- Friday, February 1, 2019 - 10:40 AM - 12:25PM in Studio G6**
- **UnShowing #2 -Friday, February 15, 2019 - 10:40AM - 12:25PM in Studio G6**
- **Harn Museum of Dance (HMoD) Showing – Monday, March 18, 2019 – 6:30PM - Until in Studio G6**
- **Adjudication -Monday, March 25, 2019 - 6:30PM - Until in Studio G6 (Finalize Program Order)**
- **Final UnShowing - Monday, April 22, 2019 - 6:30PM - Until in Studio G6**

#### **UF Dance Productions**

**Spring 2019 BFA Showcase** –Wednesday, April 3 – Sunday, April 7, 2019: April 3, 2019 at 7:30PM Program A; April 4, 2019 at 7:30PM Program B; April 5, 2019 at 7:30PM Program A;

April 6, 2019 at 2:00PM - Community in Motion Showcase; April 6, 2019 at 7:30PM Program B;  
April 7, 2019 at 2:00PM Program A; April 7, 2019 at 4:00PM Program B  
**Dance 2019** –Friday, February 22- Sunday, February 24, 2019: February 22- 23, 2019 at 7:30PM;  
February 24, 2019 at 2:00PM

### **UFPA Performing Arts**

**National Ballet Theatre of Odessa: Swan Lake** –Wednesday, January 9, 2019 at 7:30PM

<https://performingarts.ufl.edu/events/national-ballet-theatre-of-odessa-swan-lake/>

**Complexions Contemporary Ballet** –Thursday, January 31, 2019 at 7:30PM

<https://performingarts.ufl.edu/events/complexions-contemporary-ballet-star-dust/>

**Dance Alive National Ballet: Tango Mucho Madness!** –Saturday, February 2, 2019 at 7:30PM

<https://performingarts.ufl.edu/events/dance-alive-national-ballet-tango-mucho-madness/>

**Dance Alive National Ballet: Land of La Chua**–Friday, March 1, 2019 at 7:30PM

<https://performingarts.ufl.edu/events/dance-alive-national-ballet-land-of-la-chua/>

**Lucky Plush Productions: Rooming House** –Tuesday, April 2, 2019 at 7:30PM

<https://performingarts.ufl.edu/events/lucky-plush-productions-rooming-house/>

### **Santa Fe College Dance Productions**

**Elements of Style** –Friday, March 22, 2019 – Saturday, March 23, 2019 at

7:30PM <https://tickets.vendini.com/ticket-software.html?t=tix&w=cc5d3f5d01e45efac6a75aaac3c774f8>

### **UF Theatre Productions**

**Red Velvet** – February 1 – 3 & 8-10, 2019

**White Guy on the Bus**– March 21-31, 2019

**Rough Magic**– April 12- 19, 2019

**UF Box Office #:**(352) 392-1653

**UF Performing Arts (Phillips Center) #:**(352) 392-2787

**Santa Fe Fine Arts Hall Theatre #:** (352) 395-4181

### **BFA Dance Auditions**

Friday, January 25, 2019

### **Juries (All BFA Majors, BA –first semester, Spring 2019 BFA & BA Seniors)**

April 25 & 26, 2019

**ALL BFA** majors and BA majors new to the program as of August 2018 are required to attend an end-of- year conference (Jury) April 25/26 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.

## Course Policies

**Reporting Sexual Violence/ Title IX Matters** Sexual violence includes nonconsensual sexual contact and nonconsensual sexual intercourse (which is any type of sexual contact without your explicit consent, including rape), dating violence, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, domestic violence, and stalking. You may reach out for confidential help (see contact info below) or report an incident for investigation.

If you choose to write or speak about an incident of sexual violence and disclose that this violence occurred while you were a UF student, the instructor is obligated to report the incident to the Title IX Deputy Coordinator for Students. The purpose of this report is to provide a safe and nondiscriminatory environment for all students. The Deputy Coordinator or his or her designee will contact you to let you know about the resources, accommodations, and support services at UF and possibilities for holding the perpetrator accountable. If you do not want the Title IX Coordinator notified, instead of disclosing this information to your instructor, you can speak confidentially with the individuals listed below. They can connect you with support services and discuss options for holding the perpetrator accountable.

### ADA Statement

**Students with disabilities:** If there is a student who requires accommodations because of any disability, you must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean's Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation. Please feel free to discuss this issue with me, in private, if you need more information.

### Campus Closure Statement

**Course interruption due to adverse conditions:** In case of any adverse condition or situation which could interrupt the schedule of classes, each student is asked to access the UF homepage information about the status of the campus and class meetings. In addition, please refer to your email for announcements and other important information. You are responsible for accessing this information.

### Academic Integrity Statement

**Academic integrity:** Cheating, plagiarism, copying and any other behavior that is contrary to University standards of behavior will not be tolerated. Students caught violating any aspect of the University of Florida's Academic Integrity Policy will be penalized in all cases. Penalty ranges from "0" on an assignment to "F" for the course without regard to a student's accumulated points. Students may also face expulsion. It is the student's responsibility to become familiar with the policies of the university regarding academic integrity and to avoid violating such policies.

### Class Disruption Statement

**Disruption policy:** Every student has the right to a comfortable learning environment where the open and honest exchange of ideas may freely occur. Each student is expected to do his or her part to ensure that the classroom (and anywhere else the class may meet) remains conducive to learning. This includes respectful and courteous treatment of all in the classroom. According to the terms of the University of Florida Disruption Policy, the professor will take immediate action when inappropriate behavior occurs.

**West African Dance Daily Schedule**  
**MW 4-6pm**

**Spring, 2019**

**Note: Daily schedule is subject to change.**

Jan 7

Pre-class activities:

**Read the following article:** Hanna, J. L. (1973). *African dance: The continuity of change*. *Yearbook of the International Folk Music Council*, 5, 165-174.

Jan 9 Pre-class activities:

**View the *Les Ballet Africains* video on YouTube (<https://youtu.be/qHZPzNMhP4>). Take notes on things you saw, things that were interesting and/or confusing to you. Bring these notes to class on January 14<sup>th</sup> for a discussion.**

Jan 14 First in -person class; review syllabus; (BRAIN DANCE), learning to respond to the drums; Discuss semester goals.

Jan 16 Dress-out class: Introduction to Makru African Dance from Guinea  
**Journal assignment: Write out your goals for the semester**

Jan 21 NO CLASS MLK HOLIDAY

Jan 23 Dress-out class: Makru (BODY)  
(Traditional attire expected during this class)

Jan 28-30 Dress-out classes: Makru (MOVEMENT)

*Informal journal prompt: How is your body feeling after these past few weeks of classes?*

Feb 4-6 Dress-out classes: **Master Class with Guest Artist**

Feb. 11-13 Dress-out classes: Makru (TIME)

*Informal journal prompts: In what ways are you being challenged? What are your strengths and weaknesses so far? In what ways would you like to improve? What has most caught your attention?*

Feb. 18-20 Dress-out class: Makru (SPACE)

Feb. 25 Dress-out class: Makru (FORCE)

Feb 27 Dress-out class: Makru and First Graded Bantaba Solo (5 points)

Mar. 4-6 NO CLASS SPRING BREAK

March 11 Dress-out class: Introduction to Balanta from Senegal (BODY)

March 13 Dress-out class: Balanta (TIME)

Mar. 18-20 Dress-out class: Balanta (MOVEMENT)

*Informal Journal prompt: How is your perception of West African dance changing?*

Mar. 25-27 Dress-out class: Balanta (SPACE)

April 1 Dress-out class: Balanta (FORCE)

April 3 Dress-out class: Balanta and Second Graded Bantaba Solo (5 points)

*Informal Journal prompt: How is did you feel after this second solo? Any different from the first?*

Apr.8-10 Dress-out classes: Makru and Balanta (Work on choreography)

Apr.15-17 Dress-out classes: Makru and Balanta; Prepare for final exam Choreography

Apr. 22 Dress-out class; Prepare for final exam Choreography Assignment

**Final self-evaluation and journal due on April 22<sup>nd</sup>**

Apr. 24 Final class and presentation of choreography

**5 PART LESSON PLAN FOR EACH DRESS OUT CLASS**

**I. Warm up 20 minutes**  
(Braindance)

**II. Explore the Concept 10 minutes**  
(Improvisation)

**III. Developing Skills 30 minutes**  
(Technique with a concept)

**IV. Creating/Choreography 45 minutes**  
(Students create based upon the concept)

**V. Cool Down/Reflection 15 minutes**

**PARTICIPATION RUBRIC**  
 Spring 2019

The following rubric sets out the criteria upon which you will be evaluated for your class participation. It is based on the following qualities: Punctuality, Engagement, Preparedness, and Involvement

| <b>2 points earned by</b>  | <b>1 point deducted for any of the following:</b>  |
|--|--|
| Arrives early or on time, proactively preparing for class  | Arrives late or leaves early without excuse, does not prepare for class<br>Note: 2 points deducted per class for more than 2 unexcused absences. If you are not in attendance, you cannot earn points  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Engaged in class with peers (group work), discussion, presentations and movement activities</li> <li>*Proactively displays leadership qualities (helping and encouraging others)</li> <li>*Proactively ready to try new things with 110% enthusiasm</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Never or only when prompted, engages with peers (group work), discussion, presentations and movement activities</li> <li>*Lacking in display of leadership qualities</li> <li>*Lacking in enthusiasm or willingness to try</li> </ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Proactively prepared for class and ready to move (See “Dress” section of syllabus).</li> <li>*Proactively exhibits classroom etiquette</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Does not come dressed to move in class, forgets accessories such as shoes, or chews gum</li> <li>*Disregards classroom etiquette</li> </ul>  |
| Never caught using electronic devices before or during class   | Caught using electronic devices in class   |



Spring 2019

| <b>5 points</b>   | <b>4 points</b>   | <b>3 points</b>   | <b>2 points</b>  | <b>1 point</b>  |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| *Comes out and completes at least 3 solid movements from the dance. | *Comes out and completes at least 3 movements based upon the dance. | *Comes out and completed at least 2 movements based upon the dance. | *Comes out and completes at least 1 movement based upon the dance. | * Comes out but completes no movements based on the dance (0 points if doesn't come out). |
| *Dances with full confidence.                                       | * Dances with confidence.   | * Dances with some confidence.                                      | *Dances with a little confidence.                                  | * Dances with no confidence.  |

### **Leading Class Warm-up/Cool Down**

It is the responsibility of each student to lead class warm-up or cool down with the accompaniment of the live musicians. We will start each class with a warm-up and students will watch the professor lead warm-up using a combination of dance moves and stretches and using the drums to

set the pace and alert us to change movements. Students will sign-up to lead warm-up once during the semester. This activity is intended to boost student confidence in their ability to lead, to feel comfortable with the West African movements and to understand the rhythm and timing of West African Dance. In particular the ability to listen for and respond appropriately to drum breaks.

**LEADING CLASS WARM-UP RUBRIC**  
Spring 2019

| <b>5 points</b>  | <b>4 points</b>  | <b>3 points</b>  | <b>2 points</b>  | <b>1 point</b>  |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| *Conducts an effective warm-up stretching all major muscle groups.         | *Conducts an effective warm-up stretching almost all major muscle groups.      | *Conducts a semi-effective warm-up stretching some major muscles               | *Conducts an ineffective warm-up stretching few major muscles groups.        | *Conducts an ineffective warm-up stretching few major muscles groups.       |
| *Utilizes at least 3 West African fast movements to get the heart rate up. | *Utilizes at least 2 West African fast movements to get the heart rate up.     | *Utilizes at least 1 West African fast movement to get the heart rate up.      | *Utilizes 0 West African fast movements to get the heart rate up.            | *Utilizes 0 West African fast movements to get the heart rate up.           |
| *Dances on the correct timing.   | *Dances mostly on the correct timing.  | *Dances somewhat on the correct timing.  | *Does not dance on the correct timing.                                       | *Does not dance on the correct timing.                                      |
| *Follows the drummer and responds to their breaks to change movements.     | *Follows the drummer and responds to most of their breaks to change movements. | *Follows the drummer and responds to some of their breaks to change movements. | *Rarely follows the drummer or responds to their breaks to change movements. | *Never follows the drummer or responds to their breaks to change movements. |
| *Leads with full confidence.   | * Leads with confidence.   | * Leads with some confidence.  | * Leads with little confidence   | * Leads with no confidence  |