

DAA 2381

West African Dance Forms/Styles

(Performance)

Meeting Days – Mondays and Wednesdays

Fall 2019

Professor Jason K. Aryeh

Studio G-06

Office Hours: Tuesday – Thursday (1pm -3pm)

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course is an immersion into performance as a way of knowing, understanding, and experiencing culture, emphasizing cultural traditions, community outreach and diversity.

Performance and Culture: Transformations in West African Music and Dance: West African dance forms or styles are strong, virile and vital with the feeling of dynamic thrust and resistance. They are exceeding controlled, having the power to project the gentle wind or the raging storm. Ranging from the walk and all variations, the techniques of the West African dance embrace the leap, the hop, the skip, the jumps, falls of all descriptions and turns which balance the dancer at the most precarious angles with the ground. But more than any combination of steps, West African dance movements have urgency. The dancer has direction and purpose. The purpose is to communicate. This is why he can assume the proportion of an ant or giant. For the dancer and his people, celebrating the life of the community more than that of the individuals or couples, the Dance is Life!

The course will analyze;

- (a) How these many genres hybridized when crossing geographical, social and cultural boundaries within the context of West African dance forms/styles.
- (b) What is gained and lost learning West African Dance style?
- (c) How people from their ethnicities interpret music and dances they perform, that are not ethnically their own?
- (d) How are these dances used in constructing West African/Diaspora identities?

OBJECTIVES

- To cross the boundaries of music, dance, theatre, and culture in the creation of theatrical work exploring cultural traditions.
- To broaden your understanding of the social significance of performance in today's society through involvement in community outreach.
- To strive for an ever-growing proficiency in the repertory presented, emphasizing professionalism and performance.
- To search for an internal discipline, motivating you to challenge your limits, both physical and psychological, and to motivate others to do the same.
- To open yourself to creating a community of artists and audience members dedicated to cultural sharing.

Attire for Studio Work

Dancers work in comfortable clothing that allows the teacher/choreographer to be able to view their alignment while dancing. Blue jeans can generate bruises in the area of the lower spine due to the location of belt loops. T-shirts and stretch pants or "African pants or rappers" permit freedom of movement. Please remove your socks once we start dancing to ensure safety while moving. Due to the slippery nature of the studio floor, it is important to have a firm grasp of the floor to avoid a slip and/or fall. When dancing, it is imperative to be comfortable, and therefore it is best to come prepared. Everyone is expected to participate in class.

Gum chewing, baseball caps, watches and jewelry are NOT allowed in this dance class for safety reasons.

VI. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND POLICIES: Expectations:

Student will

- Attend classes regularly, be on time and ready to work for the entire class period.
- Maintain a professional working attitude.
- Participate in all in class activities, engaging fully both mentally and physically.
- Strive to improve individual progress by demonstrating increased strength, flexibility and an increased awareness of body alignment, timing and spatial pathways.
- Observe dance class etiquette (cell phone use, dress code, lateness policy etc...)
- Strive to apply given corrections and concepts to movement.

Assignments:

You are required to see **two** shows (The BFA Showcase and one other show of your choice). 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 you attending an assigned event, it is your

responsibility to inform Professor Jason Aryeh as soon as possible before the event in order for a substitute event to be assigned. This course follows University Honor Code.

Performance Assignments:

1. World Music Fest

October 25th at 7pm at Bo Didley Plaza (TBD if Possible)

2. Agbedidi

November 22nd -23rd at 7:30pm and 24th at 2pm in Constans Theater. You will also need to be available for all the following tech and dress rehearsals for this concert from November 15th through November 21st:

Nov 15th 6:30pm - 10:30pm

Nov 17th 7:00pm - 11pm

Nov 18th 7:00pm - 11pm

Nov 19th 7:30pm - 11pm

Nov 20th 7:30pm - 11pm

Nov 21st 7:30pm - 11pm

• Check calendar below for performance dates

Exams: Midterm Exam is spread over two days - TBD

Final exam is also spread over two days - TBD

Presentations: N/A

Attendance:

- Participation is the only way to meet the objectives of this course.
- **Attendance is MANDATORY!**
- You must be present for all scheduled classes, plus required concerts, auditions, and/or events.

- **Each unexcused absence will result in a loss of points.**
- It is your responsibility to know your schedule.
- Check your UF email & the dance studio bulletin boards.
- INCOMPLETES WILL NOT BE GIVEN WITHOUT MEDICAL

DOCUMENTATION. If approved, CFA Incomplete Contract must be signed by the Director, Instructor, and Student.

Tardy Policy: You are late after role has been taken/class has begun.

- Points will be deducted for being late or leaving early for any reason.
- There will be a 5 minute grace period.
- 3 tardies for regular class meetings equal 1 unexcused absence.
- Excused absences (those that can be documented) may be made-up in the following manner:
 - Non-Majors: Approved Performance Event/Written Assignment
 - Majors: Additional hours for Community in Motion Resources
 - <http://www.shcc.ufl.edu/excuse.shtml> (Infirmery)
 - <http://dso.ufl.edu/> (Dean of Students)
 - If unable to dance, with instructor permission, you may 'actively' observe one time for full credit.

- You will complete an observation paper due at the end of class.

Check with instructor for instructions.

- You may not receive credit for attendance if you arrive ten minutes into the scheduled class time.
- You may not use this time for napping or "study hall," otherwise it will be considered an absence.
- Injury/Illness: Please refer to the Injury and Illness Policy in the SOTD Handbook.

• UF approved religious days are excused and do not need to be made-up (travel time not included). Student is still responsible for material covered during their absence.

- All make-up assignments for excused absences to be completed **by the last day of classes this semester.**

Make-up Policy

*Students may complete no more than two (2) make-up classes by completing production hours. Production hours mean working backstage, front of house or in the scene shop for 3 hours per class missed or 6 hours maximum. All make-ups must receive prior approval. Please note that a make-up class only helps to maintain a student's grade in this course (i.e. to avoid grade being lowered from A to a B) but will not affect the total number of absences.

Production hours may also be completed for extra credit and are worth 1 point per hour worked with a maximum of six hours credited.

Injuries are special cases. If an injury occurs see/contact me immediately regarding absences, make-ups or possible withdrawal from the class. If you disappear without discussing your situation you will receive an F for this course. It is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor. A little discussion can save you a lot of grief!

Late assignments: Unless otherwise indicated, all homework assignments are due in class on the date listed on the syllabus. An essay received after the due date is late. A late assignment is penalized one full letter grade for each calendar day that it is late; assignments later than two calendar days are not accepted at all and earn an F.

The studio will be open at least 10 minutes prior to the start of class. Do not wait to be invited in. Use the extra time to warm up and prepare yourself for class.

Note: Class roll will be taken promptly at the scheduled class start time. A student who arrives after roll has already been taken will be marked late.

- The student may arrive late or observe twice (2 times) without penalty.
- Each additional late arrival will be equal to half an absence (or 2 lates = 1 absence).
- Leaving class early is also counted the same as arriving late to class.
- A student may be asked to observe class and take notes if they arrive 15 minutes late or more. This is up to the instructor's discretion. The student may not read, do homework for another course or sleep when observing. A student may be asked to leave the studio and will be marked absent if this occurs.
- Unless otherwise indicated, all homework assignments are due on the date listed on the syllabus. No late assignments are accepted unless a specific extension has been granted. Participation, Class Decorum: Students are expected to attend class each day with the required reading and/or writing assignments completed. No cell phones or electronic devices of any kind should make a sound during class.

Studio Rules of Conduct:

In effort to keep our dance space a peaceful, safe and clean environment for our students we ask that you observe the following:

- No gum- this is also for safety reasons since we don't want dancers choking.
- No talking, food or quick pick-me-ups during class. However you may keep water bottles inside the studio for hydration provided they have caps to prevent spills.
- Turn off all cell phones before entering the studio. Please make this a habit. All phone calls must take place outside of the studio and NEVER during class time. If you have an emergency situation you should inform the instructor prior to the start of class. Ringing cell phones, texting etc...Are disruptive to classroom activity. Please be responsible.

Final Course Grade:

Your final grade is determined by your performance on a number of different tasks:

Agbedidi Performance	50%
Community Outreach	10%
Dance Concert Attendance	15%
Attendance/Participation	25%
TOTAL	100%

Letter grades translate to percentages as follows:

Grades

95 – 100	A
90 – 94	A-
87 – 89	B+
84 – 86	B
80 – 83	B-
77 – 79	C+
74 – 76	C
70 – 73	C-
65 – 69	D+
60 – 64	D
59 and below	F

Semester Calendar:

Welcome meeting

August 20th, 2019 at 6:30pm in G6

Faculty Works Audition

August 21st, 2019 at 6:30pm in G6

BFA Showcase Dancer Audition

August 22nd, 2019 at 6:30pm in G6

Audition for BFA Program

October 11th, 2019 (All Day)

Unshowings

1 – September 9th, 2019 at 6:30pm in G6

2/Adjudication – October 14th, 2019 at 6:30pm in G6

3/ Final – December 2nd, 2019 at 6:30pm in G6

B.F.A Showcase

October 18th – Load in for BFA Showcase

October 19th – 22nd – Tech and Dress Rehearsals

October 23rd -26TH at 7pm and 27th Program A at 1pm and Program B at 3pm – BFA Showcase Performances (strike following last performance)

World Music Fest

October 25th at 7pm at Bo Didley Plaza

Young Dancers Workshop of Northern Central Florida

November 1st and 2nd, 2019 from 7:30am to 12:30pm (master classes)

November 1st, 2019 at 8pm (performance at Santa Fe College)

Agbedidi

November 22nd -23rd at 7:30pm and 24th at 2pm in Constans Theater

UF Performing Arts Center Dance Events

Black Label Movement

October 11th at 7:30pm

Dance Alive National Ballet

Anna Karenina

October 24th at 7:30pm

October 25th at 7:30pm