

DAA 3108: CONTEMPORARY DANCE PRACTICE 3

FALL 2021 | MWF* | 10:40a-12:10p | Studio G10 / G6*



with: Xan Burley (pronouns: she/her)
email: xburley@arts.ufl.edu
virtual office hours: TBA + by appointment
office hours zoom link: on Canvas
lab fees: <http://aa.ufl.edu/policies/material-and-supply-fees/>



→ course introduction + description

WELCOME! I am so happy to dance with you and witness your artistry. This syllabus serves as a love letter and a living, fluid document dedicated to our time together. Some sections are scant because we will develop language together in our first class. Otherwise, please read through and note any questions you may have.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this class, I will offer physical practice, movement exploration, and complementary projects that will broaden your experience of/in contemporary dance. A typical class starts with a few minutes to check-in with each other. This time, though we are not “dancing” yet, is an important part of our work together. **As a valued member of our community, I ask that you please be on time to class to participate in this moment.**

Once we begin moving, we will activate our creative bodies through improvisation, warm-up and grounding exercises, choreographed phrase work, and repertory. In my class, I emphasize awareness of weight, employing momentum as a tool for both precise balance and fluid abandon. Through articulation and extension of the lower and upper body we will refine our capacity for efficient full-bodied movement. Phrase-work will occupy musical and rhythmic diversity, qualitative specificity, performance skill-building, and *your* creativity. *I am interested in cultivating your ability to identify the nuances of movement and choose how you engage with those intricacies.* We will enrich our understanding of dance practice through collaboration, deep listening, and rigor. In addition, I hope the invitation into the poetic practice of dance will lead to profound self-reflection, personal growth, and communal joy.

I will lead a movement practice and course of study influenced and informed by the following:

- My background working in modern/post-modern/contemporary dance, including artists, choreographers, and teachers that have impacted my dancing.
- My creative research as a choreographer in collaboration with my partner Alex Springer.
- My training in other forms of dance including improvisation, contact improvisation/partnering, and ballet, as well as my encounters with Hip Hop and West African.
- My expertise and my growing body of knowledge.
- **YOU! What you bring to our practice is essential and I will respond to your needs and interests to the best of my ability.**

THINGS TO KNOW:

*Fridays are area-wide master classes with faculty and guest artists. They will take place in Studios G10 and G6.

****COVID-19 NOTE:** From Aug 23—Sept 10, you may take class virtually if you feel safest doing so. After September 10th, SoTD faculty and administration will make an informed decision about how best to move forward with hybrid instruction if it is needed.

COMMUNICATION

We will use Canvas (<http://elearning.ufl.edu>) as our home-base for communicating, compiling assignments, and collaborating. Zoom links will also be listed there. In addition, please only use your [UFL.EDU](mailto:ufl.edu) for any email correspondence. Please be sure to **communicate** with me as the semester progresses. ***Knowing how you're doing in this class helps me support you!!!***

MEETINGS + OFFICE HOURS – I will schedule *at least* one individual meeting mid-semester with each of you to check in and discuss your progress in class. These meetings will be held outside of class time on Zoom (or in person, if possible). I love these meetings—they give me an opportunity to spend one-on-one time with you and talk about your individual growth, interests, and potential. In addition, my virtual office hours are a great way to touch base on anything you are processing in my class or otherwise. My office hours are **TBA and by appointment**. Please take advantage of those times and come e-visit me!

→ course objectives

In this course, we will:

- Learn about postmodern/contemporary dance and experience it personally.
- Develop our attention and curiosity.
- Utilize anatomical and kinesthetic awareness for the reliable execution of movement.
- Access **healthful** alignment, strength, flexibility, range of motion, balance, and use of space.
- Practice learning material quickly and thoroughly.
- Explore the expressive and qualitative range of movement.
- Collaborate with each other.
- Improvise, invent movement, and transform movement!

- Examine the role of dance in our current world and develop an informed view of the interaction of art and society in the 20/21st Century
- Give voice to your person/dancer/thinker/artist self!

As the facilitator of this course, I will:

- Share my expertise with you.
- Listen to and center your needs as an individual.
- Create opportunities for you to grow, improve, and be challenged.
- Ask you to be open to new and different ways of moving, thinking, and creating.
- Respect your values, expertise, and boundaries.
- Expand your knowledge of Contemporary Dance.

A typical class will include:

- ⇒ **IMPROVISATION** – developing comfort and dynamic range; sourcing the self and the community; tuning to the body.
- ⇒ **WARM-UP / CENTERING EXERCISES** – ongoing and follow-along warm-up sequences; exercises that prepare us for phrase material and repertory by building on elements of momentum, grounding, strength, balance, efficiency, expansion, and specificity.
- ⇒ **COLLABORATION / DISCUSSION** – opportunities to collaborate in small groups; time for reflection and discussion as a community
- ⇒ **PHRASEWORK / REPERTORY** – learning movement phrases from my creative research/repertory, as well as Varone repertory.

→ guiding principles + definitions

I believe that dance that is **contemporary**—of the “now” and the “new”—is a practice that builds on historical contexts to undergird current, relevant, and innovative methods of expressive embodiment. Contemporary dance is an evolving, fluid, and ever-shifting field and form. Contemporary Dance Practice is an invitation to explore the unknown and an opportunity to expand the field.

Practice, for me, is an ongoing state of being in which tremendous growth is possible. In service of fostering your and my own growth, I wish to emphasize that our *practice* is about *cultivation* rather than mastery. To that end, we will work with the rigor, creativity, playfulness, and attention to detail upon which meaningful development depends.

→ respectful learning environment + community agreements

We continue to navigate a complex and uncertain time. Each person is experiencing the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic differently and comfort levels vary. I ask that you **commit to a culture of care** as we work together. This means respecting our policies for health and safety as well as boundaries set by your peers. Please see the COVID-19 Appendix for more information.

In addition, and even more critical, is how we will practice care as we undo racism. Anti-racism is an ongoing process that I am committed to as a Contemporary dance artist, educator, and person. This will take shape in our class in different ways and I invite you to be open, vulnerable, and patient with me. I ask that you bring a **radical empathy** and hospitality to class—listening, supporting, and being compassionate is essential. Please come to me with any questions, concerns, or needs. You can find my personal undoing racism statement further on in the syllabus.

In order for us all to have a transformative, energetic, and generous experience, we will collectively *participate* in creating a respectful environment. A respectful learning environment is sustained by making community agreements. We will develop community agreements together as a class and they will occupy 3 categories: (1) participation; (2) presence; and (3) class culture.

- (1) **PARTICIPATION:** for this category, we will define and clarify what it means to participate in this class as an individual and a community focusing heavily on the integrity of your practice. I will evaluate and grade your participation based on this list.
- (2) **PRESENCE:** using the dance area “attendance policy” as a jumping off point, we will define and clarify what we expect of each other in terms of presence in this class. Together, we will decide upon our class “promise of presence” and you will be evaluated based on this definition.
- (3) **CLASS CULTURE:** this category will outline ways we can treat each other with kindness, respect, and support. How you uphold these agreements will be reflected in your grade.

THE 5 C's of Xan's Contemporary Class – values I uplift and center:
CURIOSITY | CONFIDENCE | CREATIVITY | COLLABORATION | COMMUNITY

→ course expectations + grading procedures

(1) GROWTH + DEVELOPMENT (30%)

The following areas are used by faculty to assess student progress throughout the semester. These are specific to Level 3 technique class:

⇒ **ARTISTRY**

- Musicality and Rhythm: student understands timing in movement and movement phrasing, demonstrates clarity of rhythmic patterning, demonstrates precise and appropriate response to musical stimulus
- Performance Quality: student executes movement with confidence, demonstrate the ability to explore dynamic range with distinct clarity.

⇒ **EMBODIMENT**

- Kinesthetic Awareness: students are able to integrate a high level of anatomical/kinesiological approaches to the body and movement practice, including the use of proprioception, spatial awareness, healthful alignment, and range of motion. In addition, students are able to use a basic vocabulary in musculoskeletal description of self and other bodies.
- Movement Execution: Students are able to safely and accurately execute movement of moderate to high complexity, paying attention to weight transfer and detail.
- Energy and Conditioning: Students are able to utilize and develop a high level of strength, flexibility, endurance, and muscular stabilization and support, as well as energetic modulation and groundedness.

⇒ **COMMUNICATION**

- Student demonstrates an ability to articulate ideas with clarity and express critical thought.
- Student demonstrates an ability to listen to themselves and others, with respect for differing opinions.

⇒ **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

- Student takes care of the space as outlined in handbook/syllabus;
- Students demonstrate commitment to a collaborative learning environment by expanding one's willingness to work with all classmates versus a select few as the course progresses;
- Student shows active engagement physically, including volunteering to show/demonstrate/lead;
- Student commits to individual and shared responsibility for class/group based work.

(2) OBSERVING COMMUNITY AGREEMENTS (30%)

You will be evaluated based on how well you observe and uphold the community agreements we develop in the three areas of **participation, presence, and class culture**.

(3) COMPLEMENTARY PROJECTS (30%)

Complementary projects will include readings, writing, and other types of assignments that I believe will complement your work as a movement practitioner. I want your input about what you believe could "complement" your movement practice so that I can devise projects that serve you and your growth. Examples of possible assignments include: reading literature written by dance scholars and artists, written responses to prompts, discussions on our Canvas discussion board, researching contemporary artists and presenting on your research, improvisations done outside of class and shared via video, devising warm-up material and sharing it with your colleagues, teaching a small portion of class, utilizing other skills and interests to make creative content, and more. Don't worry! I won't assign you all of those things! This is just a list of possible projects that we will do. Again, we'll collaboratively develop our projects together.

(4) EVENT ATTENDANCE (10%)

Your presence is required at the following events. If it is not a Zoom meeting, at which I will track who is there, you will provide proof of presence to me within one week after viewing the production by writing a brief paragraph reflection on the event. Required events are asterisked in the calendar of events.

(5) MYSTERY OFFERINGS (extra credit)

Throughout the semester, I may offer small assignments (readings, writing, viewings, etc.) that support our movement practice. These will depend on *you* and what our work together brings about. They will provide you the opportunity to gain extra credit in case you need it.

GRADING PROCEDURES: I want you to have a say in how you are evaluated. To that end, together we will define how the above components of technique practice will be graded. We will establish a system that supports your growth and creates a clear structure for self-evaluation and grading. As you can see, each component occupies a percentage of your grade. Within that percentage, together we will devise a way to value each component according to our needs as a community.

PERCENTAGES

Growth and Development	30%
Observing Community Agreements	30%
Complementary Projects	30%
Event Attendance	10%
TOTAL	100%

LETTER GRADES

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

[Link to the university grades and grading policies](#)

A note about deadlines: let's face it, deadlines are both a burden and a necessity. The best learning you can do is ongoing, it's a process that has no outcome or due date. That said, I assign deadlines so that I have enough time to provide feedback on each assignment. I space out deadlines so that you can spend time putting meaningful thought into the assignments. But...LIFE HAPPENS and you may be delayed in completing work. If you email me before a deadline to communicate an assignment's lateness, you will be granted an automatic **48-hour extension**. Further extensions will be decided on a case-by-case basis.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS—SPRING 2020:

Asterisked events are **required for your grade. You will provide proof of your attendance by writing a paragraph summary of the event with the exception of the Welcome Meeting, at which I will simply track your attendance.*

Aug 23	6:30-7:30p	Dance Area Welcome Meeting*
Aug 25	6:30-8:30p	Dance 2022 Faculty Auditions
Aug 26	6:30-8:30p	Fall 2021 BFA Showcase Auditions
Sept 27	6:30-8:30p	UnShowing #1*
Sept 28	11:15a-12:30p	SoTD Town Hall
Oct 4	6:30-8:30p	UnShowing #2*
Oct 7	5-6p	Public review of a chapter from Assistant Professor Dr. Rachel Carrico's manuscript
Oct 13	4-5p	BFA Showcase Production Meeting
Oct 15	9a-4p	BFA Program Audition
Nov 3	1:30-2:45p	SoTD Town Hall
Nov 3-6	7:30p	BFA Showcase*
Nov 7	1:30p + 7p	BFA Showcase*
Nov 8	6:30-8:30p	Dance Open Conversation
Dec 3 & 4	7:30p	Agbedidi*
Dec 5	2p	Agbedidi*
Dec 6	6:30-8:30p	Final UnShowing*

STATEMENT ON ANTI-RACISM AND INCLUSION

As a white dance artist and Assistant Professor of Contemporary Dance Practice, I am committed to working to undo racism, decolonize dance, and dismantle systems that oppress my students and peers based on race, class, gender, and ability. I will continue this work through self-education; holding space for critical dialogue with my students and peers; participating in opportunities to advance my knowledge; devising and implementing anti-racist pedagogy; and being held accountable by those around me with gratitude and humility. I will seek to employ and pay BIPOC, PGM, Brown, Latinx, LGBTQIAA+, disabled+ artists for their labor as collaborators, guest teachers, and speakers. I endeavor to take responsibility for—and action to understand and undo—my own perpetuation of white supremacy. I commit to this work so that I may respect and center the experiences of BIPOC and LGBTQIA communities and to cultivate healthful, equitable, and inclusive learning and creative environments.

ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

This statement is not my own, but is verbatim from a sample syllabus from a professor at Smith College, with relevant adaptations made for my class. The author is unknown, but their words spoke directly to my beliefs.

My take on accessibility starts with a simple statement. I trust you. You are a University of Florida student who has worked hard to be here. You are in this particular classroom because you have an upper-level interest in postmodern/contemporary dance, repertory, improvisation, and movement exploration. My goal is to create a classroom environment that communicates my trust and that allows each of us, myself included, to learn as much as possible and produce the best work we can by semester's end. To that end, I want to make my classroom, my office visits, our email exchanges and your experience of this course as accessible as possible. As I see it, communication between you and me is the key to achieving that goal. I also realize that my insight into what accessibility means is limited and therefore any statement I make will likely remain a work-in-progress for the duration of the semester.

CONTENT WARNING

In this course, we may cover content and materials that some might find difficult. It is important that in an artistic discipline course we do not shy away from engaging with materials that may be controversial or challenging. I encourage you to reach out to me if you are struggling with the course materials. In class, if you need to step away for a period of time as we are covering particular content, you may do so without penalty, but I ask that you remember that you are responsible for any information covered in your absence.

COLLEGE OF THE ARTS: MISSION STATEMENT

The University of Florida College of the Arts intends to be a transformative community, responding to and generating paradigmatic shifts in the arts and beyond. We do so by:

- ⇒ Embracing the complexity of our evolving human experience and seeking to empower our students and faculty to shape that experience fearlessly through critical study, creative practice, and provocation.
- ⇒ Collaborating effectively with the forces of change.
- ⇒ Preparing students to access and unsettle centers of power in a radically changing world.
- ⇒ Facilitating an arts education that will position emerging artists and researchers as catalysts for equity on local and global levels.

COLLEGE OF THE ARTS META-STRATEGY



THIS SYLLABUS AND COURSE CONTENT IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE

You will be notified in advance of important changes that could affect grading, assignments, etc.

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

→ covid-19 university health and safety measures

In response to COVID-19, the following practices are in place to maintain your learning environment, to enhance the safety of our in-classroom interactions, and to further the health and safety of ourselves, our neighbors, and our loved ones.

- If you are not vaccinated, get vaccinated. Vaccines are readily available at no cost and have been demonstrated to be safe and effective against the COVID-19 virus. Visit this link for details on where to get your shot, including options that do not require an appointment: <https://coronavirus.ufhealth.org/vaccinations/vaccine-availability/>. Students who receive the first dose of the vaccine somewhere off-campus and/or outside of Gainesville can still receive their second dose on campus.
- You are expected to wear approved face coverings at all times during class and within buildings even if you are vaccinated. Please continue to follow healthy habits, including best practices like frequent hand washing. Following these practices is our responsibility as Gators.
 - Sanitizing supplies are available in the classroom if you wish to wipe down your desks prior to sitting down and at the end of the class.
 - Hand sanitizing stations will be located in every classroom.
- 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.
 - Course materials will be provided to you with an excused absence, and you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up work.
 - If you are withheld from campus by the Department of Health through Screen, Test & Protect you are not permitted to use any on campus facilities. Students attempting to attend campus activities when withheld from campus will be referred to the Dean of Students Office.
- Continue to regularly visit coronavirus.UFHealth.org and coronavirus.ufl.edu for up-to-date information about COVID-19 and vaccination.

→ student 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 [U Matter, We Care website](#) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- *Counseling and Wellness Center:* [Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website](#) 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 [visit the Student Health Care Center website](#).
- *University Police Department:* [Visit UF Police Department website](#) 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; [Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website](#).
- *GatorWell Health Promotion Services:* For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the [GatorWell website](#) or call 352-273-4450.

ADDITIONAL MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES:

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

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.](#)

→ uf policies

COURSE EVALUATIONS:

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. [Click here for guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner.](#) 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 ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. [Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students here.](#)

UNIVERSITY POLICY ON ACCOMMODATING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center. [Click here to get started with the Disability Resource Center.](#) It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, 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 specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. [Click here to read the Honor Code.](#) 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 or TAs in this class.

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 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 Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

