

UF School of Theater and Dance

DAA 2341 Contemporary African & African Diasporic Dance Practices 1

Fall 2021

TR 3:00 – 4:55pm

Nadine McGuire - G6

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(Email Policy: Use ONLY your UFL.EDU email account for e-mail correspondence related to class)

Office: McCarty C, Room 306

Office Hours: Wednesday and Friday 3:00-5:00pm

Office Phone: (352) 273-0500

Course Description:

A performance-based course aimed at developing the understanding of various styles of dance within the African & African Diasporic realm as a technique and an art form. The course is an immersion into performance and culture that focuses on the development and exploration of traditional West African dance techniques. Level 1 techniques in Contemporary African and African Diasporic dance is designed to deepen the practice of the aesthetics of neo-traditional and contemporary west African dances from Guinea west Africa. This course will advance the knowledge and appreciation of movements, music, and culture of the dances learned. Students will develop their efficient use of grounded, relaxed, heavy-weighted movement, isolation, and undulation while acquiring facility in a movement language that is intrinsically tied to its music and culture. We focus on integrating these concepts with movement aesthetics, combinations, and listening and internalizing rhythmic patterns. Students will read, watch, and respond to articles and videos. We will have visiting guest artists introduce us to their lived cultural experiences to help us create historic linkages to contemporary uses of west African dances.

Class will begin with a basic warm up geared towards releasing the weight of the body by stretching, opening the hip joints, rolling down the spine, shoulder and neck rotations, and isolations of the pelvis and upper thoracic cavity. Movements will be learned alongside rhythm, song and cultural history. You will be expected to participate fully, be present in the moment, and proceed with each exercise until you find better movement efficiency, execution, synchronicity, strength, stamina, confident projection, and individual expressivity. During seminar portions of the class students are expected to arrive having read and watched material, ready to contribute to class discussions.

Course Objectives:

Retention: Students can remember phrases of moderate length, attending to shape, space and timing.

Quality: Students can demonstrate attention to movement quality and artistry after numerous repetitions

Musicality: Students can understand timing in movement phrase, including introductory elements of polyrhythmic material

Energy: Students can reproduce appropriate level and quality of energy within movement phrases with extended repetitions

UF Level I Dance Technique Learning Outcomes:

Upon the successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate clear rhythmic timing in movement and movement phrasing
- Perform movement with confidence
- Demonstrate a foundational level of anatomical/kinesiological awareness
- Safely and accurately replicate movement of simple to moderate complexity
- Display foundational level of strength, flexibility, endurance, muscular stabilization, and support

West African Dance Practices Learning Outcomes:

- Develop a deeper appreciation of dance techniques, music and culture from Guinea, west Africa,
- Implement aesthetics, movements, transitions, and combinations of dances learned
- Implement corrections from feedback
- Grasp and retain movement sequences
- Synchronize movements with drums and other dancers
- Commit to your learning process and development through self-correction
- Understand and deepen relationship to your body through weight release and grounding
- Understand rhythm, polyrhythm, and other musical concepts as they relate to dances taught
- Learn about the contexts, culture and history of dances learned
- Develop greater aesthetic and cultural awareness and understanding through music, and dance
- Deepen self-awareness and community building practices
- Artistry Embodiment Communication Citizenship

Dance Attendance Policy:

- 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.
- 4 unexcused absences may result in automatic failure of the course
- Requirements / opportunities to make up missed material is up to the instructor's

discretion.

Course Requirements and Assignments:

- Participate in physical practice and course work
- Submit practice video clips with self-assessment, comments and questions
- Watch and respond to video performances
- Mid semester self-assessment
- Mid semester combination
- Final project presentation

Attendance & Participation: Students are encouraged to attend classes in person whenever possible. There will be an option to attend via Zoom until September 10th. Participations will include reading, watching videos, class discussion and movement practice. Contact the instructor via email about classes you know you will miss or whenever you unexpectedly cannot attend or participate fully. If you are unable to participate or need to modify your participation in dance practice classes, communicate with the instructor and write a 300-word document outlining or describing your observations. ***Reference participation rubric below.** (50 points)

Submit Practice Videos: Students are expected to practice outside of class 1-2 hours per week and to submit practice videos every other week. Students must submit Self-Assessment Comments and Questions as part of their practice videos. These can be recorded after the practice video clip or added to the comments when submitting the video in the Canvas assignment. Practicing with a partner is encouraged. Due every other Monday starting 8/30. (35 points)

Mid Quarter Self-Assessment: You will conduct a mid-quarter self-assessment that candidly reflects on your technique, participation, and learning in this course and demonstrates awareness of your strengths and areas you would like to focus on improving. A template will be provided in Canvas. Due Monday, October 18. (5 points)

Mid Quarter Combination: You will submit a video of yourself performing the full combination of one of the dances learned in class. Due Monday, October 18. (5 points)

Response to Video Performances: Choose one or two performance videos and write a response documenting your reflections. Make sure to describe, analyze and relate your reflections and observations to what we have learned and discussed collectively in class. (300-word double spaced Time Roman 12 sized font.) Due Monday, November 1. (5 points)

Final Presentation Performance: Using movement vocabulary from this quarter's practice classes we will work individually and collaboratively to create a final performance presentation. We can decide whether our presentations will be video projects or in person performances. You will perform movement combinations as a group and as solos or duets. Due Tuesday, December 7.

Reflective statement: Submit a 300-word double spaced Time Roman 12 sized font document responding to your experience and learning in the class as a whole. Due Thursday, December 9.

Grading:

Attendance and Participation - **60 points**

Submit Practice Videos & Self-assessment/Comments/Questions - **21 points**

(Due Every Other Monday starting 8/30)

Mid-Quarter Combination - **3 points** *(Due 10/18)*

Mid-Quarter Self-Assessment - **3 points** *(Due 10/18)*

Written Performance Response - **3 points** *(Due 11/1)*

Final Project Presentation - **5 points** *(Due 12/7)*

Final Reflection - **5 points** *(Due 12/9)*

TOTAL - **100 points**

A 93-100 points

A- 90-92

B+ 86- 89

B 83- 85 points

B- 80- 82

C+ 77- 79

C 73- 76 points

C- 70- 72

D+ 67- 69

D 63- 66 points

D- 60- 62

E 59 and below

***Participation Grading Rubric:**

Exemplary 60-56 points

- Student is on time, present, and participates fully in movements being taught. Exemplary execution of each movement. Displays good to excellent retention of movement combinations. Displays consistent commitment to practicing. Easily implements correction and feedback. Consistently contributes to a collaborative, supportive, and respectful environment. Demonstrates ability to bring individual creativity to their solo movement explorations. Active contribution to class discussions reflects deep engagement with course material.

Proficient 55-49points

- Student is on time, present, and participates in movements being taught and execute each movement to the best of their ability. Displays good retention of movement combinations. Displays commitment to practicing. Implements correction and feedback. Contributes to a collaborative, supportive, and respectful environment. Demonstrates some ability to bring individual creativity to their solo movement explorations. Contribution to class discussions reflect engagement with course material.

Developing 48-41 points

- Student is mostly on time, present, and participates in movements being taught and efforts to execute each movement to the best of their ability. Displays some retention of movement

combinations. Displays some commitment to practicing. Implementation of correction and feedback show some progress. Doesn't actively work collaboratively, or supportively. Developing ability to bring individual creativity to their solo movement explorations. Doesn't actively contribute to class discussions but displays retention of course material.

Unacceptable <40 points

- Student is late, not present, and participating in class fully for more than a third of the classes. Does not retain movement combinations. Has no commitment to practicing or implementing corrections and feedback. Doesn't work collaboratively or supportively. Does not bring individual creativity to their solo movement explorations. Doesn't retain course material or contribute to class discussion.

COURSE POLICIES

ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION:

We will adhere to the Dance Program attendance policy.

- Mindful participation in each class meeting is the only way to meet the objectives of this course.
- Attendance is mandatory past September 10 2021.
- Enter the classroom present, alert, and ready to contribute to the progress of every second of the class.
- 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 2020-2021 Student Handbook (can be accessed on SoTD website).

Medical Withdrawal: A student with medical documentation may apply to UF for Medical Withdrawal. 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.

UF's physical and mental health resources: Please consult the following sites for <http://shcc.ufl.edu/> (Student Health Care Center) <http://shcc.ufl.edu/forms-records/excuse-notes/> (excuse note policy) <http://dso.ufl.edu/> (Dean of Students)

Attendance Policy:

- Students can have two absences with no documentation, without penalty.
- All undocumented absences are unexcused. 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.)
 - If the third absence is unexcused, it will reduce your grade one-letter grade (i.e., from B to C)
 - On the third absence, excused or unexcused, a meeting is required with the instructor and/or area faculty to assess the student's continued participation in the course.
 - Each subsequent unexcused absence lowers your grade by half letter grade (i.e., from C to C-).

- Requirements/opportunities to make up missed material are 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.

- After five unexcused absences the student may not return to class and result in automatic failure of the course.

- 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 submit a written/creative 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.

Participation:

Attendance does not equal participation. Participation involves being present. The goal of class sessions is to challenge and support your development as a dance artist, and to co-create a learning community where individual experiences and voices are respected and supported, and each person is a collaborator in advancing the learning and development of the whole group. Ways to be present and participate fully include timeliness and preparation for class; removing potential distractions, such as cell phones and other devices; active listening; careful, on-point contributions to discussions; attending to fellow students' work, and offering relevant feedback and critical support; and paying attention to the dynamics of the room, and responding accordingly. At the college level, students are expected to take responsibility for behaving in a demeanor corresponding to the professional field. Specific responsibilities are aimed toward deepening individual and collective artistic development.

Observation:

When you observe class due to injury or illness, you must hand in an observation paper for that day at the end of class, or you will be marked absent. The subject of your observation will be determined by the instructor at the beginning of class.

DRESS POLICY:

Wear comfortable clothes that allow free/full range of movement but still keep the alignment of the body visible. It is recommended that you wear "soft" pants (no jeans or the like; no shorts). For safety reasons, do not wear eyeglasses or large jewelry. Socks are discouraged and may be worn only for protective purposes and with prior approval from the instructor. Since your body temperature will change throughout class, it is recommended you wear and/or bring layers of clothing. It is recommended you have water available to drink during the class; please bring it in a closeable water bottle. Food is not permitted in the studio. Eating and chewing gum are not permitted in class.

IMPORTANT DATES:

Wednesday, August 25

6:30pm-8:30pm Faculty Audition

Thursday, August 26

6:30pm-8:30pm BFA Seniors Audition

Tuesday, September 28

11:15am - 12:30pm Townhall

Monday, October 4

6:30 - 8:00pm Open Conversation

Friday, October 8

9:00am – 4:00pm BFA Program Audition

Friday, October 29 & Saturday October, 30

All day Young Dancers Workshop

Wednesday, November 3

1:30 - 2:45pm Townhall Meeting

Wednesday, November 3 through Sunday, November 7

7:00pm BFA Showcase

Monday, November 8

6:30 - 8:00pm Open Conversation

Friday, December 3 through Sunday, December 5

7:00pm Agbedidi

Monday, December 6

6:30 pm Unshowing

UF POLICIES

UNIVERSITY POLICY ON ACCOMMODATING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: Students requesting accommodation for disabilities must first register with the Dean of Students Office (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. You must submit this documentation prior to submitting assignments or taking the quizzes or exams. Accommodations are not retroactive, therefore, students should contact the office as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations.

UNIVERSITY POLICY ON ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT: Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students should be sure that they understand the UF Student Honor Code at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/students.php>.

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

[<http://teach.ufl.edu/docs/NetiquetteGuideforOnlineCourses.pdf>

GETTING HELP:

If applicable: For issues with technical difficulties for E-learning in Sakai, please contact the UF Help Desk at:

- Learning-support@ufl.edu
- (352) 392-HELP - select option 2 • <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>

Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues MUST be accompanied by the ticket number received from LSS when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You MUST e-mail your instructor within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request a make-up.

Other resources are available at <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/getting-help> for:

- Counseling and Wellness resources
- Disability resources
- Resources for handling student concerns and complaints
- Library Help Desk support

COVID-19 Precautions

UF has increased in-person class offerings for the Fall 2021 semester and The School of Theatre + Dance (SoTD) welcomes more students back to campus. At the same time, COVID-19 cases are surging because of the new delta variant and the large numbers of people who are unvaccinated, setting new local and state records for hospitalizations. As a result, our methods for realizing classroom activities and productions will continue to look different. Below is a list of practices that the school is implementing to safely connect. The practices align with UF's Fall 2021 plan (<https://coronavirus.ufl.edu/>) and they will evolve as our community needs to shift in response to the virus.

- All people inside of UF facilities are expected to wear masks in community spaces in buildings, including common areas in our office suites, when we are not in our individual offices or workspaces, even if you are vaccinated.
- Your ONE.UF account must show a "Cleared for Campus" status in order to attend in-person. I will check my roster before each class meeting.
- Until Sept 10, this course will be offered in a synchronous hybrid modality (simultaneously on Zoom and in person). You may attend via Zoom as much or as little as you want/need to until that date. After September 10th, we will reassess the need for this. Students, Faculty, and Staff are trusted to foster healthy SoTD class and creative environments through adherence to the following guidelines:
 - If you are not vaccinated, get vaccinated. If possible, students should aim to be fully vaccinated but if unable, should strive to have at least one shot of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine no later than August 22. 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. Students who receive the first dose of the vaccine wherever they are currently can still receive their second dose on campus.
 - Students are welcome to use hand sanitizer or wash hands at the top of each class, rehearsal or production activity in shared spaces.
 - Stay home and seek medical help for COVID-19 symptoms or exposure (persistent cough, fever 100.4+, new loss of taste or smell, muscle pain/headaches, shortness of breath, sore throat, chills, diarrhea, or feeling generally ill). The culture of hiding illness or the "show must go on" mentality must be avoided.
 - Participate in UF Health's Screen, Test, and Protect initiative by completing health screening questionnaires and by scheduling testing when prompted through One.UF.edu. Additional testing information is available at: <https://coronavirus.ufhealth>.

- Wipes and sanitation supplies will be available to sanitize individual props, costumes, chairs, ballet barres, music stands, tables, individual projects etc.
- Dispose of personal trash in appropriate bags/containers.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

*This schedule is subject to change

<p><u>Week 1</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Intro to syllabus & community - Warm-up - Rhythm improv - Fundamental techniques & aesthetics 	<p><u>Week 2</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Warm-up - Rhythm improv - Fundamental techniques & aesthetics - Learn movement vocabulary (Kassa) - Submit practice video #1 	<p><u>Week 3</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Warm-up - Learn movement vocabulary (Kassa) - Guest Artist (11/9) 	<p><u>Week 4</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Warm-up - Readings and responses - Learn movement vocabulary (Sinte) - Submit practice video #2
<p><u>Week 5</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Warm-up - Learn movement vocabulary (Sinte) 	<p><u>Week 6</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seminar & discussions - Peer learning - Review Kassa & Sinte - Submit practice video #3 	<p><u>Week 7</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Midterm Assessment due - Submit midterm combination video - Learn movement vocabulary (Soli/Mendjani) 	<p><u>Week 8</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Watch videos and relate to readings. - Learn movement vocabulary (Soli/Mendjani) - Submit practice video #4
<p><u>Week 9</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learn movement vocabulary (Soli/Mendjani) - Submit Midterm Self- Assessment and Combination Video 	<p><u>Week 10</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guest Artist (TBA) - Performance Review due. - Submit practice video #5 	<p><u>Week 11</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Submit Video Performance Response - Guest Artist (TBA) 	<p><u>Week 12</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review All dances learned - Submit practice video #6 - NO CLASS (11/11)
<p><u>Week 13</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review All dances learned 	<p><u>Week 14</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working classroom. - Work on final presentations. - Submit practice video #7 - NO CLASS (11/25) 	<p><u>Week 15</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working Class room. - Finalize final presentations 	<p><u>Week 16</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Present final presentations (12/7) - Submit reflective statement (12/9)

