

## **Agbedidi DANCE ENSEMBLE**

**DAA 4685 section 187R/U 1 CREDIT Tuesday/Thursday 5:10 – 7:05pm McGuire/Constans G-6**

**Instructor: Rujeko Dumbutshena**

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**Email Policy: Only your UFL.EDU email account for e-mail correspondence related to class**

**Office: Constans, Room 231**

**Office Hours: Tues & Thurs 1:00pm – 3:00pm and Mon & Wed 9:30am-11:30am**

**Office Phone: (352) 291-294-9123**

**Communication:** Do not hesitate to contact me. You may call or email. I prefer emails. I will reply within 24 hours. I am available during office hours or make an appointment. If that does not work for your schedule, please email, or text me and I will set up an in person, call, or zoom meeting.

**Drop/Add: Wed. 8/24 – Tues. 8/30 at 11:59pm**

### **LINKS:**

#### **Dance Headquarters:**

[https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/414947/modules#module\\_1363582](https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/414947/modules#module_1363582)

**Course:** <https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/462710>

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

- To explore Africanist aesthetics while expanding the dancer's expressive and qualitative range of movement and performance in a cultural dance technique.
- To develop rhythmic comprehension, musicality, dynamics, clarity and articulation in time and space.
- To expose the student to fresh approaches to the creative processes involved in contemporary African and African Diasporic dance choreography.
- To provide the student with experiences that reinforce their discipline and strengthen their sense of responsibility to self and others within a pre-professional creative environment.
- To relate the student's work in technique class to a rehearsal situation.
- To gain experience and develop an understanding of how to work in an ensemble. • To empower the person/dancer/ thinker/choreographer in each student.

### **CLASS DESCRIPTION:**

This course is designed to develop technical range and performance skills in neo traditional and contemporary African and African Diasporic dance practices through the study and production of dance repertoire to be performed in the annual 2022 Agbedidi production. Students will experience educational training opportunities about rehearsal and performance processes within an ensemble model.

## COURSE POLICIES

### **ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION:**

We will adhere to the Dance Program attendance policy. However, you are expected to treat this rehearsal process as preparation and practice for working as a professional in the field, where it is expected you attend all rehearsals.

- 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 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. **32 Points**

**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.

**ASSIGNMENTS****JOURNALS:**

Due 9/1, 9/29, 10/3 & 12/6

It is important for you to have a notebook or journal for documentation of your progress in the dance ensemble project and to jot down notes and feedback from the instructor. Bring your syllabus, journal and writing utensil with you to every class. This is your personal book. Use it as for reflection and documentation of the movement. I will not look at your journal. However, you are responsible for submitting 4 journal entries (200-300s written or typed) to be evaluated for a total of 20 points (5 points per entry). **20 Points**

**CONTRACT TRACKING:**

Each week students will need to track their ability to uphold the terms of the contract and can self-reflect and evaluate as the semester progresses. This assignment is posted on the Canvas page. (3 Points each week) **48 Points**

## **EVALUATION**

1. Submit weekly **contract. 48 points** (3 points per week or 0.5 for each item)

2. **Attendance 32 points**

(1 point per class)

3. **Journal submission 20 points**

(4 collective dates for 5 points each)

TOTAL

**100 points**

## **GRADING SCALE**

A 94-100 points

A- 90-93

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

## **IMPORTANT DATES**

### **AUGUST**

24 W – First day of classes + *Cabaret* Auditions, 5:30-11pm

25 R – SoTD Convocation, 4-5p

25 R – Dance Production auditions (*Agbedidi* + *Dance 2023* concerts), 6:30-8:30pm

25 R + 26 F – *Cabaret* Callback Auditions

26 F – Dance Area Welcome Meeting (w/improvisation) 10:40a-12:10p

26 F - Dance Area Meeting 1pm-2:30pm

29 M – BFA Showcase Auditions, 6:30-8pm

### **SEPTEMBER**

2 F - Coordinators Meeting 1-2pm

5 M – no classes for Labor Day

18 SU and/or 25 SU – Dance Wellness Screening

23 F - Dance Area Meeting 1pm-2:30pm

26 M – BFA Showcase UnShowing, 6:30-8pm

### **OCTOBER**

1 UF HealthStreet Night of Dance (Bo Diddley Plaza, downtown Gainesville), 4-6 pm

11 T - SoTD Town Hall Meeting 1-2:15pm

17 M – Dance Area Open Conversation, 6:30-8:30pm

21 F thru 30 SU – *Cabaret* Performances  
27 - [BodyVox @ UFPA](#), 7:30 pm  
28 F – Friday master class with Health and Safety Committee orientation for Load-in / Strike  
28 F - Coordinators Meeting 1-2pm  
28 F + 29 SA – Young Dancers Workshop

## NOVEMBER

2 W thru 6 SU – Fall BFA Showcase Performances  
4 F - Dance Area Meeting 1pm-2:30pm  
7 M – no classes for post-performance day of rest  
11 F – no classes for Veterans' Day  
14 M – Open UnShowing #3?  
18 F - Dance Area Retreat 1pm-4pm  
23 W thru 27 SU – no classes for Thanksgiving  
28 M – Final UnShowing

## DECEMBER

1 Th - [Chicago @ UFPA](#), 7:30 pm  
2 F thru 4 SU – *Agbedidi*  
2 F – BA Senior Project Showcase / Symposium, 10:40a-12:10p  
5 M - no classes for post-performance day of rest  
5 M - 6 T - CRA's  
6 T – Final UnShowing and Senior Circle, 6:30-8:30pm  
7 W – last day of classes – Senior Circle during technique time?

## 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 AY 2022-23**

- The faculty, staff, and Director of the School of Theatre and Dance urge our students to become vaccinated if they have not already done so. The vaccine is free, readily available, safe, and effective. As a point of comparison, Actors Equity Association and the Broadway League are requiring vaccination for all cast, crew, and audience members.
- Visit this link for details on where to get your shot, including options that do not require an appointment: <https://coronavirus.uflhealth.org/vaccinations-2/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.
- UF has made clear its expectation that all students be masked inside our buildings, even if you are vaccinated. While being masked may change the look and feel of classwork, rehearsals, production activities, and performances, SoTD chooses to prioritize the health and safety of our community. Sanitizing supplies are available in classrooms and hand sanitizing stations are situated throughout our building.
- UF has eliminated social distancing protocols. This means that as we return to regular operations, classes, rehearsals, and performances will require students to work in close proximity to others. Note that special care will be taken regarding moments of theatrical intimacy (including notices of anticipated intimacy in audition notices). For non-intimate moments of physical proximity (dancing close to each other, a handshake in a scene, working in a tech booth, a costume fitting, etc.), students are expected to perform stage blocking, choreographic requirements, and/or production activities in classes, rehearsals, and performances.
- Any students who are absent from class for reasons related to illness, inclusive of COVID, should not attend rehearsals or performances. 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](mailto: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 SCHEDULE:

*\*This schedule is subject to change*

<b>Week 1</b> - Intro to syllabus & community - Create ensemble warm-up - Rhythm improv	<b>Week 2</b> - Fundamental techniques & aesthetics - Rhythm improv - Learn movement phrase 1&2 - Submit journal entry 1 (9/1)	<b>Week 3</b> - Rhythm improv - Learn movement phrase 3&4 - Revisit phrases 1&2	<b>Week 4</b> - Rhythm improv - Learn movement phrase 5&6 - Rehearse phrase/section 1,2,3,4
<b>Week 5</b> - Alana guest artist, spoken word - Learn movement phrase 7&8 - Rehearse section 1,2,3,4,5&6	<b>Week 6</b> - Rehearse section 1,2,3,4,5,6,7 & 8 - Submit journal entry #2 (9/29)	<b>Week 7</b> - Rehearse all sections - Begin casting - Begin staging	<b>Week 8</b> - Rehearse all sections - Finalize casting & staging
<b>Week 9</b> - Rehearse staged sections	<b>Week 10</b> - Walk through #1 - Fittings Begin	<b>Week 11</b> - Freeze show - Walk through #2 - Run through #1 - Submit journal entry #3 (10/3)	<b>Week 12</b> - Run through #2 - Run through #3
<b>Week 13</b> - SPACING in theatre	<b>Week 14</b> - 9/21 Crew Orientation & Crew watch 6pm call (Theatre) - 9/22 Final rehearsal G6	<b>Week 15</b> Mon 28 – Tech 1 Tues 29 – Tech 2 Wed 30 – Dress 1 Thurs 1 – Dress 2 Fri 2 – Show 7pm Sat – 3 Show 7pm Sun – 4 Show 2pm	<b>Week 16</b> - Submit journal entry #4 (12/6) - Class gathering

## Contract

Our goal is to create a small performing ensemble designed to develop technical range and performance skills through the study and production of neo traditional and contemporary African and African Diasporic dance repertory within the company experience.

As a member of FIRST YEAR DANCE ENSEMBLE, I am willing and able to commit to the following ensemble policies and conditions:

I, \_\_\_\_\_ will do my utmost to fulfill my commitment to this project. I will approach my participation as a job in which communication with my peers, directors, and collaborators is of the utmost importance. I will approach the job with an openness and: Be energetic and enthusiastic, be available and approachable, give information freely, be humorous, be fair, display interest, be decisive, be humble, be patient and calm, be tough, and make the most of this creative process of learning.

I will commit to participating in and contributing to a professional dance ensemble mindset\*  
I will show up for EVERY scheduled rehearsal and performance on time and prepared to work\*\*  
I will care for my body (my instrument), prepare for performance, and perform choreographic work\*\*\*

I will bring my syllabus, a notebook, and writing utensil(s) to every class. I will enter the studio dressed appropriately and ready to dance\*\*\*\*

I will pay attention and focus on the physical and/or creative tasks at hand with a positive and inquisitive attitude and a genuine desire to investigate ideas and exercises\*\*\*\*\*

I will allow and create opportunities for others to speak and respond to class discussions by volunteering your own experiences, discoveries, and ideas\*\*\*\*\*

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Ensemble Policies and Conditions

- **The Ensemble Mindset\***: By the end of the course, students will be able to demonstrate ability to participate in and contribute to a professional dance company/ensemble. The course trains each student to work and practice as a part of a cohort of peers and as a professional in the field. This requires each student to come to class with the mindset that they are a part of an ensemble (something bigger than themselves). While working towards individual refinement in artistry and technique, each student is expected to contribute with a good attitude, full dancing,

and work ethic that contributes to the company overall. This course encourages relating with challenges as opportunities, and failure as a chance to learn; embraces all feedback as an opportunity to improve; values purposeful effort over perfection; takes creative risks rather than staying small, safe, or the same; faces obstacles by experimenting and problem-solving rather than giving up; actively believing that abilities, intelligence, and talent are not innate or fixed, but instead are developed through effort, learning, and perseverance; and approaches work and life as a journey of continual learning and growth.

- **The Rehearsal Process\*\***: By the end of the course, students will be able to actively engage in the rehearsal process by embodying new movement, refining their technique, and honing their approaches as a dance artist. A supportive and focused work environment in the studio is of the utmost importance for the success of each dancer and the choreographic work. Professionalism ranges from showing up to each rehearsal on time and prepared to work; to demonstrating support and respect towards other students both in and out of rehearsal; to making use of time in rehearsal by reviewing material and keeping the body warm when not dancing; to being fully present during the rehearsal process. Students are expected to create space for a meaningful and productive choreographic process; learn how to contribute appropriately to an artist's work; and become a dancer that is physically, mentally, and emotionally prepared for performance. Presence, collaboration, and mindful effort are tools learned and practiced for professional training.

- **The Performance\*\*\***: By the end of this course, students will demonstrate the ability to care for their body (their instrument), prepare for performance, and perform choreographic work. Each student is expected to care for their mind/body outside of rehearsal by participating in consistent technique classes, reviewing choreography, bringing awareness and developing healthy practices around nutrition and sleeping habits, and participating in other wellbeing practice that is necessary for each individual to achieve peak performance and readiness in time for the Faculty Dance Concert. These habits will contribute to a student's success and sustainability in the professional field of dance.

- **Thorough Preparation for Class\*\*\*\***: Bring to every class: your syllabus, a notebook, and writing utensil(s); take individual measures necessary for you to understand course concepts and movement material; complete and submit written journal assignments by the time they are due; and dress appropriately for class.

● **Attentiveness and Focus\*\*\*\***: Paying attention and focusing on the physical and/or creative task at hand; a positive and inquisitive attitude; genuine investigation of ideas and exercises; active observation and documentation; ask questions when you do not understand material or need assistance in your practice; respond to and support classmates' questions and requests for assistance. (Note: If you do not feel well or are experiencing an illness, listen to your body to determine how it is best for you to participate in class. If you are ill with something contagious, please take measures to prevent other people's exposure. If you aren't feeling well but are not contagious, you are encouraged to come to class and participate physically to degrees that are appropriate for your state of health or conduct an observation.)

● **Active Listening and Focused Speaking** Allow and create opportunities for others to speak; take notes and write questions to document and respond to class discussions; volunteer your own experiences, discoveries, and ideas; ground your comments in class activities, discussions, performances, and texts; thoughtfully support fellow students' comments; respectfully provide differing or divergent perspectives on fellow students' comments; formulate relevant questions; connect experiences and ideas to other studies and subjects