

THE 6905 Individual Directed Study – Dance Improvisation

Class time: Friday, 10:30a-12p

Location: Studio G11 at the School of Theatre and Dance

Academic term: Fall 2024

Office hours: M/W 1-2pm in Rm 232 at SoTD

Student:

Natalia Guerrero, natalia.guerrero@ufl.edu

Instructor:

Xan Burley

email: xburley@arts.ufl.edu

phone: (352-273-0500)

office: room 232 / Nadine McGuire Theatre and Dance Pavilion

office hours: M/W, 1-2pm

Description

This individual study in the practice of improvisation in dance/movement provides a unique and tightly-focused exploration of the form for application in my specific creative practice, which is centered in performance art. The techniques and skills in this course build upon the scaffolding of my research in devised theatre, traditional dance, and socially engaged art.

(An elective individual study course to investigate a topical area of study beyond regularly offered courses. Coursework is conducted based on a proposal and the plan is developed by the student with the faculty supervisor.)

Prerequisites

Permission of faculty supervisor

Readings

- Contact Quarterly; articles TBD
- *The Moment of Movement: Dance Improvisation*, edited by Lynne Anne Blom and L. Tarin Chaplin; chapters TBD
- *My Body, the Buddhist* by Deborah Hay, chapters TBD
- *Free Play: Improvisation in Life and Art* by Stephen Nachmanovitch; chapters TBD
- *Composing While Dancing: An Improviser's Companion* by Melinda Buckwalter; chapters TBD
- *Feelings Are Facts* by Yvonne Rainer; chapters TBD

- Wray, S. Ama, 'Embodiology: A Hybrid Neo-African Improvisation-as-Performance Practice Distinguished by Dynamic Rhythm', in Vida L. Middelw (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Improvisation in Dance*, Oxford Handbooks (2019; online edn, Oxford Academic, 14 Mar. 2019), <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199396986.013.36>, accessed 21 Aug. 2024.
- [PAJ: A Journal of Performance Art](<https://direct.mit.edu/pajj>)
- [Moving Body](<https://movingbody.bg/en/moving-body-festival-2023-english/>)
- [Jacob's Pillow archives](<https://archives.jacobspillow.org/>)
- Video content, to be assigned
- OTHERS TBD

Objectives

- learn the fundamentals of improvisation in a dance practice
- experiment with incorporating performance, dance, and movement into my artistic practice
- gain a better understanding of the definitions and history of movement, dance, play, ritual, performance as pertains to my artistic practice
- learn documentation practices for improvisation for archival purposes, personal use in creative development, and for making art films and derived works that stem from the improvisation
- walk through the development of a piece that uses improvisation in the brainstorming, devising, rehearsal, performance, reflection stages
- learn about solo, partner, group improvisation and the best practices for effective devising as well as boundaries, consent, and safety in improvisation contexts

Required textbooks & fees

No required texts or fees for this course

Course Expectations

- regular practice:
 - improvising/dancing/moving in studio sessions with Xan and independently
 - documented improvising/dancing/moving independently outside of studio sessions
- reflections on and integration of reading/watching canonical and contemporary sources as well as local performances/rehearsals
 - Attend and write on:
 - A performance at the Phillips Center (\$12 student tix available)

- A happening of your selection (performance, exhibition, protest, rally, other organized event, etc.)
- [Doug Varone and Dancers at Santa Fe Fine Arts Hall, Nov 1 @ 8pm]
- *Agbedidi*, Nov 21-24
- a performance/activation/intervention
 - UnShowing, Dec 4 @ 6:30pm
 - Others TBD
- final reflective essay
 - discuss concepts of dance improvisation
 - discuss integration of concepts with research
 - cite examples of studio session work
 - cite readings and video content
 - reflect upon the resulting performance(s)

Assignment	Number to be completed	Points	Total Points	Due Date	Details and Grading Criteria
Regular practice	NA	35	35	NA	
Engaged discussion on sources	NA	15	15	NA	
Reflections on performances	4	5	20	2 weeks after	200-300 words
Performance/Activation/Intervention	1	15	15	Wed, Dec 4	5-10 minutes
Final reflective essay	1	15	15	Fri, Dec 13	500-700 words
TOTAL			100		

Course calendar

Shared on google drive, updated regularly

Grading Procedures

More information on UF grading policy may be found at:

[UF Graduate Catalog](#)

[Grades and Grading Policies](#)

Grading Scale

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

Attendance Policy

Attendance is required in studio sessions once a week, unless otherwise excused by the instructor. Absences can be made-up on other days of the week as per the student's and instructor's schedule.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies. [Click here to read the university attendance policies.](#)

Students Requiring Accommodations

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.

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. 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 <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

University Honesty Policy

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. 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.

Student Privacy

There are federal laws protecting your privacy with regards to grades earned in courses and on individual assignments. For more information, please see the Notification to Students of FERPA Rights.

COVID Issues

In response to COVID-19, the following recommendations 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 and have been demonstrated to be safe and effective against the COVID-19 virus. Visit ONE.UF for screening/testing and vaccination opportunities.
- If you are sick, stay home. 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 to be evaluated.
- 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.

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 Policy on Course Syllabi 3 UF, Academic Affairs, August 5th, 2021 Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care:

If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352 392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Counseling and Wellness Center: counseling.ufl.edu/cwc, and 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS)

Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

University Police Department at 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies), or police.ufl.edu.

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](#).

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.