

DAA 2621: Dance Improvisation

Fall 2025 | Section 1621 + 162U

Tues / Thurs | G011 | 12:50 PM – 2:45 PM

Location | G011

Instructor of Record: Onye Ozuzu (she/her)

Email: oozuzu@arts.ufl.edu

Office Location: Room 205, Nadine McGuire Theatre + Dance Pavilion

Office Hours: T/R 9:00–10:00 AM or by appointment

Course Links

- **Syllabi:** arts.ufl.edu/syllabi
 - **Lab Fees:** aa.ufl.edu/policies/material-and-supply-fees
 - **Canvas (E-Learning):** elearning.ufl.edu
 - **Email Policy:** Use **only** your ufl.edu account for course-related emails.
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This Course syllabus was generated in discussion with and inspired by the materials of Alex Springer, Xan Burley, Darrell Jones, Paige Cunningham-Calderella.

***it is a plan, subject to change*

Course Description

From the UF Catalog:

Introduces dance improvisation as an art form, a personal practice, and a process for creating choreography through movement exploration, readings, and observations. Credits: 2.

Prerequisite: Dance Major.

Instructor Focus:

This course introduces dance improvisation as an art form, a personal practice, and a process for creating choreography through movement exploration, observations, discussions, and readings. Each student will be charged with developing and extending their movement capacities, engaging with methods, approaches, invitations, and strategies designed to cultivate the ability to move with intention, clarity and impact—in the moment. We will tune our attention to body, community, space, rhythm, and other stimuli, recognizing that skill as an improviser lies not only in what you do, but when, where, with/for whom and how you do it—drawing upon your experience, imagination, and perceptual awareness. Historical contexts, as well as current frameworks, will inform our work.

This class will offer tools for choreographic research, movement invention, artistic process, technical growth, and self-analysis. Class sessions will include movement research, skill development, and improvisational scores designed to expand our capacity to dance as soloists, and in relationship to others. Students are expected to approach the work with curiosity, patience, creativity, respect, and a willingness to take risks. Improvisation can unlock new possibilities in movement and connection, and it may require navigating discomfort as part of the evolution. Ultimately, this practice offers a profound opportunity to connect with dancing and to community in creative and generative ways.

A particular component of this course will draw from my work with **The Technology of the Circle (TOC)**, an improvisational performance score and collaborative methodology developed over nearly two decades. TOC is grounded in a wide range of artistic, cultural, and methodological sources including Capoeira, jazz, Viewpoints, breakdance, House Dance cyphers, Aikido, salsa, butoh, and contact improvisation—forms that hold within them wisdom about collective movement, communication, and transformation. Using TOC as a framework, we will explore how improvisation can function as both an artistic practice and a relational technology, deepening our engagement with performance through shared motion, embodied listening, and the building of collective performance capacity.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Learn and experience dance improvisation as both personal and collective practice.
 2. Develop skill and comfort in improvising across a variety of organizing frameworks
 3. Identify and deepen capacity to improvise using personal movement vocabularies.
 4. Work to connect personal vocabularies to the vocabularies of others.
 5. Cultivate attention, curiosity, and responsiveness.
 6. Apply improvisation to dance technique, choreography, and performance.
 7. Collaborate and contribute to collective processes.
 8. Analyze and evaluate improvisational practices verbally, in writing, and through movement.
 9. Be familiar with improvisation in numerous historical and cultural contexts, particularly in African diaspora and Western concert dance traditions.
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Required & Recommended Materials

Required: All readings/viewings (TBA, available on Canvas). A journal for on-going note-taking and assigned writing

Recommended: Knee pads, water bottle, notebook, device for accessing digital materials.

Studio Procedures

- **Attire:** Clothing that allows free movement; long pants, longs sleeves, and knee pads recommended. Avoid jewelry that poses risk.
 - **Water & Food:** Bring water; eat before/after class (no food or gum in class).
 - **Device Policy:** Studio time is screen-free unless devices are part of classwork. Notify instructor if you must be reachable.
 - **Punctuality:** Arrive on time and stay for the full class. Chronic tardiness or early departure will require a meeting.
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Attendance Policy

- **Allowed:** 2 absences (no documentation required).
 - **On 3rd absence:** Meeting required with instructor/area faculty; if unexcused, results in -5% final grade deduction.
 - **Subsequent unexcused absences:** Additional -5% per absence.
 - **Excused absences** require documentation and include illness (with official doctor's note), family emergencies, curricular requirements, military service, severe weather, official university activities, or court obligations.
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Grading

- **Practice, Participation, and Evolution:** 50%
 - **Presentations, Assignments, and Responses:** 50%
- Total:** 100%

Letter Grades:

A = 95–100 | A– = 90–94
B+ = 87–89 | B = 83–86 | B– = 80–82
C+ = 77–79 | C = 73–76 | C– = 70–72
D+ = 67–69 | D = 63–66 | F = below 63

Course Schedule (*subject to change*)

Weeks	Focus & Activities	Readings/Viewings
1–2	Introduction to TOC, Greeting Score, Satellite Score	TBA on Canvas
3–4	Elliptical Score, Pathways, Building Ensembles	TBA
5–6	To Touch Score, Listening, Response, Contact	TBA
7–8	Improvisation & Cultural Contexts, Rhythm, Space	TBA

Weeks	Focus & Activities	Readings/Viewings
9–10	Midterm Presentations & Feedback	TBA
11–12	Story-Telling, Call and Response, Jazz	TBA
13–14	Compositional Strategies & Score Creation	TBA
15	Final Performance & Reflection	TBA

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. Students can complete evaluations in three ways:
 1. The email they receive from GatorEvals,
 2. Their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or
 3. The central portal at <https://my-ufl.bluera.com/>
 - a. Guidance on how to provide constructive feedback is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.
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- **Academic Misconduct / Honor Code:** SCCR Honor & Conduct Code | [Academic Integrity @ UF \(CTE\)](#)
- **Accommodations:** [Disability Resource Center – Get Started](#)
- **In-Class Recording Policy:** Recording permitted only for specific purposes; publishing or recording non-lecture content is prohibited. See UF policy documents.

Academic Resources

- **E-learning Tech Support:** 352-392-4357 | helpdesk@ufl.edu
- **Career Connections Center:** career.ufl.edu
- **Library Support:** [Ask a Librarian](#); [Library Support Services for Undergrads](#)
- **Teaching Center (CTE):** teach.ufl.edu
- **Writing Studio:** writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio
- **Student Complaints:** SCCR Honor & Conduct Code
- **Distance Learning Complaints:** (Refer to SCCR or academic department; no direct URL found)

Health & Wellness Resources

- **U Matter, We Care:** umatter@ufl.edu | 352-392-1575
- **Counseling & Wellness Center:** counseling.ufl.edu
- **Student Health Care Center:** shcc.ufl.edu
- **University Police Department:** police.ufl.edu | 352-392-1111 / 911
- **UF Health ER / Trauma Center:** 352-733-0111 | 1515 SW Archer Road
- **GatorWell Health Promotion Services:** gatorwell.ufsa.ufl.edu

