

## **UF School of Theater and Dance**

### **DAA 1000 Fundamentals of Dance 2025**

#### **I. COURSE NUMBER AND TITLE: DAA 1000 Fundamentals of Dance**

Semester & Year: Fall 2025

Meeting Days and Times: MW 12:50 pm to 2:45 pm

Building and Room: O'Connell Center Dance Studio 2205

#### **II. INSTRUCTOR:**

Name: Christa J. Sylla

Email: [syllac@ufl.edu](mailto:syllac@ufl.edu)

Phone: 904-422-8754 (text preferable)

Office Hours: N/A

#### **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

- To provide a student with the history, basic techniques, and contemporary references relevant to accessing a basic understanding of Contemporary African and African Diasporic Dance Practices.
- Enhance the mind/body connection through the application of sound biomechanical principles as they relate to dance, such as practicing proper alignment, learning basic human anatomy and learning alternative approaches to movement study. This knowledge will be directly applied to the various styles of dance learned in class.
- Practice elements of performing and explore performance quality, discovering your own potential and personal style while developing your kinesthetic memory
- Experience, discuss and write about live dance performances

#### **CLASS DESCRIPTION:**

Practice and principles of fundamentals and stylistic characteristics common to dance styles from what is considered Africanist Aesthetics, such as West African, Central African, Afro-Contemporary, and Afro-Cuban, as well as commercial African Dance forms. (H) 3 credits

## **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 may 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.

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

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

### **JOURNALS:**

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 a diary, if you will, to connect your thoughts of the movement. I will not look at your journal. However, you are responsible for submitting 4” journal” entries (300-500 word typed, double-spaces, Times Roman font, size 12) to be evaluated for a total of 20 points (5 points per entry). **20 Points**

## **UF POLICIES**

Information on UF Policies can be found here: [UF Policies](#)

