

F2023 DANC 311: DANCE COMPOSITION I

MW 4pm-5:50pm, PAC #136

CONTACT INFORMATION

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides a challenging laboratory setting to investigate, evaluate, and problem-solve as student choreographers, collaborators, dance analysts, and writers. Students will be encouraged to embody various manipulations of movement and composition by learning and using a variety of choreographic tools.

COURSE OVERVIEW

The focus is the research, creative process, and implementation toward original choreographic work.

Student work is expected to reflect originality and progression in artistry by:

- exhibiting risk-taking beyond personal familiarity or comfort-zones,
- developing artistic cohesiveness and integrity through movement.

Within a safe yet challenging environment, the process will include:

- generating subject material,
- investigating its possibilities,
- clarifying intention,
- collaborating on group studies,
- giving and receiving feedback,
- reflecting on the experience,
- applying feedback to the working process,
- gaining understanding and confidence about creative work,
- articulating experiences through written self-assessments.

COURSE OBJECTIVE

Students will be provided with opportunities to:

- **create and present** original dance works of quality and substance,
- **analyze** the full potential of a work under the guidance of the faculty mentor,
- **collaborate** with other choreographers, creating a shared and supportive experience of creative work,
- **participate** in the process of giving, receiving, and incorporating feedback from peers and the faculty,
- **articulate** the experience through critically evaluating in writing personal development through the creative process,
- **practice** professionalism (self-responsibility, positive and inquisitive attitude, versatility, awareness, respect toward others, and investigation of individual strengths and weaknesses).

COURSE OUTCOME

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to cultivate and demonstrate:

- a personal ownership of creative work by understanding the application of movement possibilities through such choreographic tools:
 - **qualitative elements of movement** (swing, sustained, darting, percussive, and vibratory),
 - **choreographic elements of BEAST** (body, energy, action, space, shape, and time),
 - **choreographic devices** (a specific way of manipulating movement through directive, alteration, and segmentation strategies).
- the ability to create more complex movement sequences toward a cohesive intention,
- movement with a sensitivity to performance and full-bodied commitment,
- an improved ability in using the body choreographically as an instrument of artistic expression,
- a clearer sense of musicality through time and qualitative dynamics,

- consistent exploration and growth toward collaboration and organization,
- the importance of self-discipline and self-motivation in the continual effort to improve individual performance and enhanced satisfaction in dance as a performing art form.

ASSIGNMENTS/PROJECTS/GRADING/EVALUATION

(60%) – Produce, film, and submit 3 choreographic works:

- See class schedule below for details and deadlines.
- In addition to class exploration, go to the following link for a creative process checklist and reference. Use this link for all 3 projects: [Elements of Dance Creating and Critiquing - https://www.cyndance.org/new-pageelements-of-dance-critiquin](https://www.cyndance.org/new-pageelements-of-dance-critiquin)
- A class forum is provided, where you will post videos of each project, ask questions, receive feedback, and converse about ideas.
 - Class Forum requirements:
 - Film each project and post it on this class forum:
 - Include with your video:
 - The title of the work,
 - Written Reflection question #1 (see below):
 - Additionally, ask questions for specific notes – example: At 1:32 to 1:56 minutes of the video, 'X' structural format was the most difficult for me because... What are suggestions for how you would do it differently?

(20%) – Submit 3 Written Reflections:

- See class schedule below for details and deadlines.
- Writing your reflection can take approximately 90 minutes to complete. Your reflection should be about questioning, in a positive way, what you have done creatively, why you did it, and then, an analysis on whether there is a better or more efficient way of doing it in the future. For full credit, each answer needs to demonstrate reflections that are mindful, articulate, and descriptive.
- Each of the 4 questions require a 250-word minimum reflection.
- The Written Reflection (4 questions) requires a minimum of 3 references (Works Cited) to also be submitted.
- Go to this link to complete the 4 questions/Works Cited and submit the form: <https://forms.office.com/r/5bp030U08h>
 - The questions are also below. However, when the time comes to submit them, please go to the link to fill out the form and submit.
 1. Describe how you proceeded to create your project as well as the sense of intention and/or trajectory you took to create your work.
 2. Analyze the research, creative process, and gained knowledge that the project served in terms of your growth as a choreographer.
 3. Interpret the feedback given to you from your peers and faculty and how it served you.
 4. Evaluate the outcome of the project, a rating of your overall practice, and how these results may affect future approaches to dance-making.

(20%) – Give Peer Feedback

- See class schedule below for details and deadlines.
- You will post peer feedback for each of the 3 projects at the class forum.
- Forum requirements:
 - Under each choreographer's posting, view the video, write feedback, and answer any questions choreographers may have.
 - You can include any experiences while working with the choreographer if you feel it can add to their growth.
 - **Feedback Guidelines:** Included in the feedback, you include elements of description, analysis, interpretation, and evaluation. All specific requirements for this feedback can be accessed on this link: <https://www.cyndance.org/critique-essay-format>

- **Feedback Rubric:** Go to the following link for a critique writing rubric to assure your feedback will get you the best grade: <https://www.cyndance.org/critique-writing-rubric>

NOTE: This is a shared Rubric, so please eliminate the last two elements regarding MLA Format.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Mon., Aug. 28 Wed., Aug.30	<p>First Class – Review Syllabus, discuss plans for the semester, and create a collage.</p> <p>Explore Qualitative Elements of Movement</p> <p>Explore swing, sustained, darting, percussive, and vibratory</p>
Mon., Sept. 4	<p>Explore Qualitative Elements of Movement</p> <p>Explore describing words through movement (-ing and -ly words)</p>
Wed., Sept. 6	<p>Discuss Choreographic Elements of BEAST</p> <p>Explore Body:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasis: Which body parts can be accentuated? • Pathway: Where can movement begin and end in a single action? • Pattern: Can there be a movement repetition or a sense of design? • Shape: What body shapes can be created?
Mon., Sept. 11	<p>Discuss Choreographic Elements of BEAST</p> <p>Explore Energy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional-based: underlines emotional-based motion. • Attack: sharp or smooth movement • Weight: bound or released from gravity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strength: push, impacted, horizontal • Lightness: resisting downward, initiating upward
Wed., Sept. 13	<p>Discuss Choreographic Elements of BEAST</p> <p>Continue Exploring Energy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resiliency: rebound, even up and down • Flow: free, bound, balanced, and/or neutral • Quality: flowing, tight, loose, sharp, swinging, swaying, suspended, collapsed, smooth, etc.
Mon., Sept. 18	<p>Discuss Choreographic Elements of BEAST</p> <p>Explore Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical-based: emphasizes all bodily motion • Locomotor (traveling): slide, walk, hop, run, skip, leap, roll, crawl, gallop/ chassé, turns, etc. • Non-Locomotor (axial or in place): stretch, bend, rise, fall, swing, rock, tip, shake, suspend, etc.
Wed., Sept. 20	<p>Discuss Choreographic Elements of BEAST</p> <p>Explore Space:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Size: large, small, wide and/or narrow movement • Levels: high, middle and/or low levels of movement • Place: within personal space (kinesphere) to the full use of the space • Direction: stage directions (DS, UP, SR, SL, CS, etc.)
Mon., Sept. 25	<p>Discuss Choreographic Elements of BEAST</p> <p>Continue Exploring Space:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation: facing on stage in relation to front or the audience (forward, backward, side left/right, diagonal) • Pathway: the path or floor pattern <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lines: forward to backward, side to side, diagonal, squares, zigzag • Circular: circles, scallops, round, and squiggles

- Wed., Sept. 27 **Discuss Choreographic Elements of BEAST**
Continue Exploring Space:
- Relationship: the general relationship
 - Between dancers: beside, over, under, connected, alone, in front, behind, side
 - Between dancers **and the audience**: presentational or being observed (with the fourth wall)
- Mon., Oct. 2 **Discuss Choreographic Elements of BEAST**
Explore Time:
- Tempo (speed): how fast or slow the movement is done.
 - Timing:
 - metered: pulse, tempo, accent, rhythmic pattern,
 - free rhythm: open, sensed, improvisational, cued within the dancers,
 - clock time: real time such as seconds.
- Wed., Oct. 4 **Discuss Choreographic Elements of BEAST**
Continue Exploring Time:
- **Time Relationships:**
 - unison: dancers moving together with the same movement,
 - canon: dancers moving at different times with the same movement,
 - counterpoint: dancers moving at the same time with the different movement.
- Mon., Oct. 9 **Work on Project I: BEAST**
- Wed., Oct. 11 **(1) Trio Project I: BEAST Submission** – due by class time
- Project demonstrates a sense of direction and intention with a precise focus on the elements of BEAST.
- (2) Project I: BEAST Written Self-Assessment Submission** – due by class time.
- Mon., Oct. 16 **(1) Trio Project I: BEAST Peer Feedback Submission** – due by class time.
(2) Discuss Choreographic Devices
Explore Movement Motif: A movement or gesture that can be elaborated upon or developed in a variety of ways in the process of choreographing.
- Wed., Oct. 18 **Discuss Choreographic Devices**
Explore Directives:
- Accumulation: A choreographic device where new movement is added to existing movements in a successive manner. It generally begins with move 1, then 1 + 2, then 1 + 2 + 3.
 - Inversion: The movement phrase would be executed as if looking in a mirror or doing the other side.
- Mon., Oct. 23 **Discuss Choreographic Devices**
Continue Exploring Directives:
- Reversal: The performance of the movements of a motif or sequence in reverse order (but not in a backwards direction). For example, 8,7,6,5,4,3,2,1
 - Retrograde: The movement phrase is performed backwards, as if rewinding a video.
- Wed., Oct. 25 **Discuss Choreographic Devices**
Explore Alteration:
- Fragmentation: A choreographic device where a movement sequence is broken into parts and these parts are reordered.
 - Embellishment: A choreographic device where detail is added to the original movement sequence.

- Mon., Oct. 30 **Discuss Choreographic Devices**
Continue Exploring Alteration:
- Distortion: Altering the movement or gesture's shape, intent, or meaning.
 - Augmentation: A choreographic device where movements are made larger in space or time.
- Wed., Nov. 1 **Discuss Choreographic Devices**
Continue Exploring Alteration:
- Instrumentation: A choreographic device where a movement performed by a body part(s) is transferred to another body part(s).
 - Insertion: a choreographic device where an entirely new movement is added to a movement motif.
- Mon., Nov. 6 **Discuss Choreographic Devices**
Explore Segmentation:
- Binary: Two-part structure - An A section and B section.
 - Ternary: Three-part structure - An A section, B section, A section (or) C section.
- Wed., Nov. 8 **Discuss Choreographic Devices**
Continue Exploring Segmentation:
- Theme and Variation: An A section followed by a variation on the A section.
 - Complimentary & Contrasting - Choosing similar and/or contrasting movements side-by-side or within a section based on the elements of dance (BEAST: body, energy, action, space, and time).
- Mon., Nov. 13 **Discuss Choreographic Devices**
Continue Exploring Segmentation:
- Peak: A piece is organized to purposely build to reach a high point, meeting the audience's expectation.
- Wed., Nov. 15 Work on Project II: Choreographic Devices
- Mon., Nov. 20 **(1) Trio Project II: Choreographic Devices Submission** – due by class time
Project II demonstrates a sense of a frame (a beginning, middle and end), direction, and intention with a precise focus on three or more devices and at least one from each group: Directive, Alteration, and Segmentation.
(2) Project II: Choreographic Devices Written Self-Assessment Submission – due by class time.
- Wed., Nov. 22 **Holiday!**
- Mon., Nov. 27 time. **(1) Trio Project II: Choreographic Devices Peer Feedback Submission** – due by class time.
(2) Work on Solo Project III: Reveal Yourself
It is a solo project for you to create a choreographic study about yourself using your collage as your guide. It is an opportunity to explore who you are: your feelings, your hopes, your celebrations, your sorrows, your experiences, etc.
Instructions:
- Choreograph a solo on yourself.
 - Use your collage from the first day of class as your guide, motivation, and inspiration for creating.
 - Use all of the exercises from this semester to assist in creating original movement and framing the solo.
 - The solo must be no less than 4 minutes in length.
 - Choose a title for your work.
 - Choose a costume for your work.

- Create a sound score for your work, either recorded or live.

Outcome: The focus is the research, creative process, and implementation toward an original work that will be evaluated. This work is expected to reflect measurable advancement in artistry by exhibiting risk-taking beyond personal familiarity or comfort-zone as well as artistic cohesiveness and integrity.

Wed., Nov. 29

Work on Project III - Solo

Mon., Dec 4

Solo Project III: Reveal Yourself Submission – due by class time.

Wed., Dec 6

(1) Solo Project III: Reveal Yourself Peer Feedback Submission – due by class time.

(2) Project III: Solo Written Self-Assessment Submission – due by class time.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

- Students are allowed TWO (2) unexcused absence for the semester. Each additional unexcused absence will lower the final letter grade by one (1) grade-point as implemented by the Department of Theatre and Dance Attendance Policy.
- Qualified excused absences include: religious holidays (advanced notice is required); family emergencies (contact instructor ASAP by e-mail if traveling out of town; factual documentation of the emergency is required upon return); serious illness or medical emergencies (factual documentation/doctor's note is required upon return); a university sponsored event such as band trips, sports team events, school conferences, etc. (advance notice is required and documentation signed by the school coordinator is required). Students must provide appropriate documentation for any additional University-sanctioned event for it to be excused.
- Students are responsible for missed work due to excused absences. Make-up work is permissible ONLY for excused absences, and it is the responsibility of the student to contact the instructor.

TEXTS/COURSE MATERIALS

No text is required for this course. All written materials for this course are within this syllabus.

BASIC RULES & REGULATIONS

No gum, food, or beverages are permitted in the dance studios/theatres, except water in an enclosed container. Turn off/mute and pack away your cell phone, iWatch, and any other electronic devices before class begins. Discussing topic-related observations are welcomed in class but unrelated side conversations are discouraged.

SUNY POTSDAM POLICIES & RESOURCES

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