

## **Intermediate Ballet / Ballet Foundations II**

DANC 2342

**Spring 2020**

**Instructor: Dr. Melissa Melpignano**

E-mail: [mmelpignano@utep.edu](mailto:mmelpignano@utep.edu)

Class meets: Monday to Thursday, 12.00-1:20 pm in Fox Fine Arts M201  
plus Friday 12-1:20 pm in Fox Fine Arts A452

Office hours: Tuesday 10.30-11.30 AM in Fox Fine Arts Center – Music M211  
or by appointment

Always sign-up for a time slot at <https://drmelissamelpignano.youcanbook.me>

*“I fear not the man who has practiced 10,000 kicks once, but I fear the man who has practiced one kick 10,000 times.” — Bruce Lee*

### **Course description**

Drawing from different ballet traditions and with a body-positive approach in order to serve the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century performance artist, this class offers the tools to strengthen the performative quality as well as the technical versatility of the students.

Students are expected to develop and perform a deep understanding of the technical and artistic principles of ballet technique, mechanics, and aesthetics, working on specificity, musicality, stamina, nuanced movement quality, effective use of energy, among others. This also entails an ability to quickly learn complex combinations, familiarity with ballet vocabulary, autonomy in responding to the instructors’ feedback, responsibility in taking care of the body (proper warm-up, conditioning, stretching, etc.). Peer-work is also highly regarded in this class, being collegiality and support two necessary elements in performance life.

Readings and videos will be periodically assigned and discussed in class and/or on Blackboard, in order to increase the cultural and performative awareness of the students. Materials and discussions will be announced and posted on Blackboard.

### **Learning Goals**

- Confident alignment, core stability, ongoing development of the turn-out.
- Confident performance of fundamental principles such as lengthening, grounding, spiraling, *ballon*, speed, and control.
- Rigor in execution (memory, musicality, precision in technique, energy, and performance quality, efficient breathing)

- Demonstrated kinesthetic awareness (an awareness of how one's own musculature and skeletal structure work in relation to one's own body and other bodies in space).
- Solid and confident knowledge of ballet positions, terms, and concepts.
- Demonstrated work ethics (punctuality, participation, collegiality, commitment to the work)

### **Mandatory Performances (2 total)**

- *American College Dance Association (ACDA) conference event, An evening with guest artists:* Guest artists Lux Boreal, a dynamic Tijuana-based contemporary dance company known for complex and stunning dances, and solo artist Gesel Mason, creator of BOUNDARIES: Dancing the Visions of Contemporary Black Choreographers.

Saturday, March 14, 7 PM

Fox Fine Arts Center, Wise Family Theatre

\$20

- *Into the Beautiful North*

April 24 through May 3 (check the

Fox Fine Arts Center, Wise Family Theatre

\$12 UTEP Students

→ Get tickets in person at the UTEP Department of Theatre and Dance Box Office, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, Fox Fine Arts.

### **Course Policies**

- Respectful and non-intrusive touch of body parts to offer feedback on alignment or form is part of the teaching pedagogy in several studio practices. However, if students do not feel comfortable with touch, they are encouraged to communicate it to the instructor, who will find alternative ways to give feedback.

- Students are expected to be in the studio and ready to begin class on time. If you are tardy, please send an email to the instructor explaining the reason for being late, and, once you arrive, wait at the studio door for permission to enter. Joining while an exercise is performed is not allowed.

- Long hair must be pulled away from the face and secured in order to avoid distractions while moving.

- No street shoes are allowed on the studio floor, no food or beverages (except bottled water) are allowed in the studios.

- Appropriate dance/fitness attire is required to participate in the class, as well as soft ballet shoes (socks are allowed only for exercises at the barre). Please use this website as a reference:

[https://www.discountdance.com/dancewear/style\\_S0621L\\_html?pid=4887&shop=Style&rfilter=Category%23Shoes&SID=1335625486](https://www.discountdance.com/dancewear/style_S0621L_html?pid=4887&shop=Style&rfilter=Category%23Shoes&SID=1335625486)

UTEP students with valid ID have a discount in the following dance stores in El Paso: *Dance Designs* (central) and *Distractions* (inside Champion Dance Studios - far eastside).

- Jewelry must be kept to a minimum, and only small pieces that do not dangle are allowed.

## Grading

- Active participation, attendance to class and to mandatory shows, commitment, progress, peer-work, and work ethic **35**

- “Ballet exploration” journal (Mid-term submission: in class Monday, March 9;  
Final submission: in class Tuesday, May 5) (12+13) **25**

An actual paper notebook where, with at least one entry per week, you self-reflect on your practice, self-assess your progress, elaborate original and personal thoughts on ballet practice (writing, drawing, collaging, etc.—all welcome).

- Final class (Tuesday, May 5, 2020) **30**

Open to friends, family, and invited faculty; it is the chance to show your progress and the hard work you put into the class, perform your idea of ballet, and demonstrate mastery of the acquired technical skills (in particular the four core principles of the course) according in line with your potential and the course’s learning goals.

- In-class discussions about readings and videos **10**

## GRADING SCALE

A = 90 +

B = 80 – 89

C = 70 – 79

D = 65 – 69

F = < 65

## University and Departmental Policies

*Academic Dishonesty.* Any form of academic dishonesty: cheating, plagiarizing, or taking a test for another student is considered a very serious matter at UTEP. Our library webpage provides good information on what UTEP considers Academic Dishonesty and what steps the university takes in such cases. Please review this information at:

<http://libraryweb.utep.edu/research/plagiarism.php>.

*Copyright and Fair Use.* The University requires all members of its community to follow copyright and fair use requirements. You are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. The University will neither protect nor defend you nor assume any responsibility for student violations of fair use laws. Violations of copyright laws could subject

you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies.

*ADA:* The Americans with Disabilities Act requires that reasonable accommodations be provided for students with physical, sensory, cognitive, systemic, learning, and psychiatric disabilities. If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, please contact The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148, or by email to [cass@utep.edu](mailto:cass@utep.edu), or visit their office located in UTEP Union East, Room 106. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at [www.sa.utep.edu/cass](http://www.sa.utep.edu/cass).

*ABSENCE/LATENESS/PARTICIPATION POLICY.* For courses that meet four and five times a week, the maximum allowance for an entire semester is 8 absences. Five result in no penalty and require no justification. *Each* of the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> absences result in the lowering of the overall course grade by ½ letter. At the 9<sup>th</sup> absence, the student fails the course regardless of course average.

Exceptions:

- In the event of international bridge closures, exceptions may be made and make-up course work assigned.
- In case of an injury or extended illness, it is the student's responsibility to meet with his or her instructor to discuss possible solutions for course continuation or to consider dropping the class.
- In the event of highly unusual or extenuating circumstances, a student may petition the course instructor and department chair for permission to continue in a course.

In case of injury, a student who is able to be present in the studio may observe class and complete alternative and equivalent assignments to be negotiated with the instructor.

### **On-Campus Sources of Student support**

- Center for Accommodations and Support Services <https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/cass/>
- Student Success Helpdesk [https://www.utep.edu/advising/student\\_resources/student-success-helpdesk.html](https://www.utep.edu/advising/student_resources/student-success-helpdesk.html)
- Miner Learning Center <https://www.utep.edu/mlc/>
- University Writing Center <https://www.utep.edu/uwc/>
- Counseling and Psychological Services <https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/counsel/>
- Equal Opportunity Office, Anti-Sexual Harassment and Anti-Sexual Violence Sources <https://www.utep.edu/eoaa/resolving-complaints/sexual-harassment-guide.html>