

**DANC 2345 – Contemporary I**  
**CRN 15541**  
**Fall 2018**

TR 9:00 – 10:20 AM

FOX M201

**Instructor:** Sandra Paola López Ramírez

**Office:** FOX M211 **Office Hours:** TR 12:00 – 1:20 PM or by appointment.

**Email:** splopezramirez@utep.edu

*This syllabus is subject to change, I will notify you promptly if and when it does.*

**Course Description:**

Contemporary Dance is a broad dance style that borrows from various techniques from different time periods and cultures. This class will introduce basic contemporary dance techniques as well as dance-making and improvisation practices. Through exercises, combinations and explorations we will work on strengthening the body, increasing flexibility, fostering musicality, enhancing our body awareness and developing performance presence.

**Dress code:**

In order to increase your ease, promote safe movement and aid my ability to make corrections, you are required to wear clothes that 'hug' your body and have bare feet. I need to see your body **clearly**, specifically your knees, pelvis and spine to instruct proper alignment. Even though you are not required to wear tights and leotards, you **DO** need to make sure that you comply with the specifications above. You will **NOT** be allowed to take class in baggy or oversized clothes, with dangly jewelry or gum. **This is for YOUR safety.** If you are unsure if what you have to wear is acceptable, please check with me the first week of class.

**Course Objectives:**

- √ To begin developing body awareness
- √ To enhance skills of movement initiation and motivation
- √ To improve muscular strength, flexibility, and elasticity
- √ To improve dance presence and performance quality
- √ To develop modern and contemporary dance vocabulary
- √ To expand our conception of aesthetics in dance
- √ To understand basic history of this dance form and its socio-political implications

**Late-work Policy:** I do NOT accept late work. Please plan ahead and give yourself plenty of time to turn in assignments on time. If something extraordinary comes up that will prevent you from turning in an assignment (accident, death in the family, severe illness, etc.) you must let me know (if at all possible) **BEFORE the due date** to request an extension.

**Attendance Policy:** You have two (2) absences permitted during the course of the semester without penalty. After that, **your grade will be lowered 1/2 a letter grade for each day missed.** Keep in mind that coming to class late or leaving early will be considered as 1/2 an absence. **Be advised that the only absences that are excused are UTEP sponsored events.**

***Students missing more than six classes should drop the course. Please make sure you are aware of the course drop deadline, dropping the class is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY!***

*NOTE:* In certain extreme circumstances, I will allow you to make up absences. If you want to do this, please schedule an appointment with me to discuss it further.

### **Criteria for Grading**

**Effort (200 points):** Each day, I will take into consideration your class participation, attitude, attire, and energy. Please be advised that this is *in addition* to the department's attendance policy. If you are not present, you can't get effort points.

**Midterm Movement Exam (100 points):** This will entail performing exercises and/or a class combination. You will perform these in small groups and I will give you a breakdown of the points before the exam. Exam date: **October 18<sup>th</sup>**

**Documentary responses (60 points, 30 points each)** You will be assigned two documentaries on a dance culture, style or choreographer. For each one, you will write a short reflection following the guidelines at the end of this syllabus. Due dates: **October 16<sup>th</sup>** and **November 15<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Performance Response (50 points):**

You are required to see the fall dance show from the Department of Theater and Dance at UTEP and create a response by following the guidelines at the end of this syllabus. All extra shows, including the Dinner Theatre, or the greater El Paso/ Juarez community will be counted as extra credit. Due date: **November 8<sup>th</sup>**

#### PLEASE NOTE FOR ALL REQUIRED SHOWS AND EXTRA CREDIT SHOWS AT UTEP:

You are **required** to sign an attendance sheet at the end of the performance you attend. If you do not sign this sheet at the end of the performance **you will not get credit for attendance, your response will not be accepted, and you will receive a 0 for the assignment.** The house manager will have the sign out sheet available at the end of each performance.

#### SUBJECT MATTER:

The performing arts have a power to stir strong emotions, or possibly touch on subjects you might not feel comfortable seeing on stage. If you have concerns about viewing or discussing specific subjects, please see me as soon as possible to discuss possible accommodations. As I will respect your individual right to choose what shows you want

to see, I expect all our discussions—including any that may occur outside of class—to be conducted in a respectful and professional manner.

**Final Creative Dance Project (100 points):** You will work in groups of 3 or 4 to create a 3 to 5-minute dance. Guidelines will be handed out with group assignments by October 25<sup>th</sup>. Performance date: **December 7<sup>th</sup>**

Total points possible: 510

A = 100-90% (510-459)

B = 89-80% (458-408)

C = 79-70% (407-357)

D = 69-60% (356-306)

F = 59% and below (305<)

**Remember that the number of absences you have may lower your final grade!!!**

**EXTRA CREDIT:** You can get up to 25 points of extra credit by attending extra events or performances that relate to our subject matter. Each extra credit event is 5 points unless otherwise noted. **To get credit you MUST do the following:**

- Get prior approval from your instructor on the event you want to attend.
- Turn in proof of attendance (e.g. ticket stub, program)
- If the show is from the UTEP Department of Theater and Dance, sign the sheet at the end of the event.
- Turn in all proof of extra credit **before December 7<sup>th</sup>**.

**Important Dates:**

Thursday 9/20 – Instructor out of town. Guest teacher TBD

Tuesday 9/25 – Instructor out of town. Guest teacher TBD

Thursday 9/27 – Instructor out of town. Guest teacher TBD

Thursday 10/11 – Instructor out of town. Midterm practice

Tuesday 10/16 – **Documentary reflection #1 DUE** (info available on Blackboard)

Thursday 10/18 – **Midterm Movement Exam**

Thursday 10/25 – Guidelines and group assignments for final project handed out

Thursday 11/8 – **Performance response DUE**

Tuesday 11/15 – **Documentary reflection #2 DUE** (info available on Blackboard)

Thursday 11/22 – THANKSGIVING BREAK \*\*NO CLASS\*\*

Thursday 12/6 – **Final Creative Dance Projects performances**

Friday 12/7 – Last day to turn in Extra Credit

**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/copy\\_plag.php](http://libraryweb.utep.edu/research/copy_plag.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, 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).

**Technology Problems:**

Technology problems are NOT an excuse for work that is late or missing. Students need to complete assignments for this course well before the due date to allow time for dealing with technology problems. Contact IT for technological problems and remember that Atlas lab in the UGLC or LACIT in the Liberal Arts building provide assistance with using Blackboard.

**University Writing Center:**

Located in the library room 227, UTEP's University Writing Center (UWC) offers free tutoring assistance in writing for all UTEP students. The tutors are undergraduate and graduate students who can help with all parts of a writing assignment, including prewriting, organizing, revising, and editing. They can also help you understand any writing assignment and will work with you to aid you in comprehending difficult material.

## Documentary Response Guidelines

You will be assigned 2 documentaries in the semester and you will write a **2-page** reflection responding to the questions below. Respond the questions **thoughtfully and thoroughly** in at least **2 paragraphs each**. (each question is worth 10 points for a total of 30 for the response):

1. **What** did you find interesting or surprising about this documentary and **why** did that particular fact or piece of information grab your attention?
2. **What** connections can you make between the material you learned and your previous knowledge about movement and/or dance?
3. **How** does this documentary impact, change or enhance your understanding of dance and its role in society?

Documentary information will be available on blackboard at least 2 weeks before the response is due. Your responses need to be **typed** in 12 pt. font with one-inch margins all around, printed and handed out **at the beginning of class on October 16<sup>th</sup> and November 15<sup>th</sup>**.

## Performance Response Guidelines

**Due date:** November 8th

**Tickets:**

Adults: \$18

UTEP students & children: \$12

Military, Non-UTEP Students, Alumni, Seniors, Groups (10+): \$15

EXCEPT WHERE NOTED BELOW

**\*\*REMEMBER TO KEEP YOUR TICKET STUB!!!\*\***  
**You'll be required to turn it in with your response**

**Performance Dates:**

November 1\*, 2, 3 @ 7:30p.m.

November 4 @ 2:30p.m.

\*\$10 ALL TICKETS

**Guidelines:**

It is very important for me that you take the time to interpret and respond **thoughtfully** to the dance events you watch. If you don't know where to start, asking yourself the questions below AFTER you watch the performance might be helpful. Please DO NOT take notes during the show as that distracts you from being fully present in the experience.

1. What stayed with you after the dances ended?
2. Think about the movement, music, costumes and/or lighting... what drew you?
3. What colors, images, bodies grabbed your attention? (this can be either in a "positive" or "negative" way)
4. How did the experience make you feel?
5. What did you notice?
6. What kind of impact did the environment have on your experience?
7. How did you interpret what you saw?

For the assignment, I want to you respond in an unconventional and/or artistic way. Here are some ideas:

- A poem or script
- A drawing, collage, etc.
- A short dance/movement piece
- A song
- A short video
- A short story
- A website
- A cake or recipe

*NOTE: **DO NOT** take pictures and/or videotape during the performance for your response. If you do so, this will result in a 0 for the assignment.*

This assignment is worth **50 points** and it will be divided as follows:

**Effort and thoughtfulness in your work (15 points):** I don't grade you on how "good" the artistic quality of your response is, but I will grade the time and effort you put into it. For example: smudged stick figures drawn in pencil in a ripped notebook page does not show as much effort as a neat drawing or sketch done on a paper board.

**Clear connections and thorough exposition (25 points):** You will share your work with the rest of the class and will be expected to draw clear connections from your object/response to the performance. How do the medium, colors, texture, flavors, images you chose, reflect your experience watching the performance?

**Proof of Attendance (10 points):** Turn in your signed ticket stub on the due date.

## **REMEMBER:**

You are **required** to sign the attendance sheet at the end of the performance you attend. If you do not sign this sheet at the end of the performance **you will not get credit for attendance, and you will receive a 0 for the assignment.** The house manager will have the sign out sheet available at the end of each performance.