UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS EL PASO  
DANCE AND THEATER DEPARTMENT  
SPRING SEMESTER 2020  

Intermediate Contemporary  
DANC 3346/26492 combined with  
Contemporary Foundations DANC  
2346/23472  

Instructor: Valeria Y. Gonzalez  
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* Individual meetings upon request.  
Meeting times: Monday-Thursday 9:00am – 10:20am  
Studio: 452  

Course Description:  

This class will provide the dancers a variety of contemporary dance techniques, and an introduction to dance theater through a structure of exercises, combinations, choreography, improvisational methods and weekly discussions. The students will learn a variety of movement phrase material with an emphasis on the alignment of the body. The instructor will create a safe environment and a process-oriented course for the dancers to engage in new ways of thinking, moving and relating to the body and the space. The dancers will build stamina, strengthen their techniques and gain self-awareness. In addition, this course aims to allow the students to think, and speak critically about dance. Every week the dancers will be challenged with new questions to investigate and will be encouraged to discuss them in the group.  

Course Objectives:  

● To strengthen and enhance the dancers technique.  
● To understand the correct body alignment in contemporary dance.  
● To develop modern and contemporary dance vocabulary.  
● To create and articulate their own artistic statement.  
● To explore new improvisational methods.  
● To engage in new ways of thinking, moving and relating to the body and the space.  
● To learn and retain movement phrase material.  
● To gain a deeper insight into the contemporary dance and dance theater world.  
● To build stamina.
Requirements:

- A new journal - write down your thoughts, ideas and memories from each day.
- Attendance is crucial. (read below “Attendance First” new policy.)
- Assignments are due every Monday.
- PHONE FREE ENVIRONMENT (including i-watch): Please refrain from using cell phones unless the professor requests you to complete an activity on one of these devices during the class period.
- Bring your bottle of water. (suggested)
  - I suggest wearing comfortable clothing layers, since we will be doing floorwork.

Attendance, Punctuality, and Participation: This class requires a significant amount of commitment to the process. Therefore, your attendance and punctuality are crucial. You are entitled to two absences if you are Contemporary Foundations, and four if you are in Intermediate Contemporary for which no justification is needed. However, for any absences beyond those two a point will be subtracted from your final score. The same will apply after three tardy arrivals. (after 9:15 is considered a tardy.)

Grading:

50% Discussions/Assignments/Attendance– Be fully present and active in the process.

10% final solo

20% Phrase Material/performance quality development

10% Artistic Statement + final journal presentation

Extra points- TBA

Notes:

- All rights regarding this syllabus, items and dates are susceptible to change by the creator/instructor.
- Because of the nature of this class, subjects like race, gender, identity and other will come up throughout the semester.
Week 2 1/27-1/31

Introduce movement material + new phrase

· Technique class.
· Learn movement phrase material.
· Discuss: gravity.

Assignment: tba

Week 3 2/03- 2/07

Alignment + Balance

· Technique class.
· Repeat movement phrase material.
· Discuss: correct alignment vs. wrong alignment.

Week 4 and week 5 2/10-2/14 and 2/17-2/21

Adagio + Engines of the body

· Technique class.
· Repeat movement phrase material + learn adagio.
· Discuss the weight of the body/ weight of the bones.
· Repeat movement phrase material.
· Discuss: correct alignment vs. wrong alignment.
· Recognize other engines in the body.
· Ignition.

Assignment for 2/18: Bring your journal and be prepared to discuss what you have learned, including specific terms, and ideas that were developed in our class.

Week 6 - 2/24-2/28

The Art of Stillness
· Contemporary technique class.
· Gentle dances.
· Dive deeper into the meditative components of dance.

Assignment: tba

Week 7 3/2-3/6

Flexibility and Strength
· Focusing in adagio.
· Modern/flow/yoga inspired class.
· Improving flexibility with new methods.

Week 8 3/9-3/13 NO CLASS ON THE 11th AND 12th.

Flexibility and Strength
· Focusing in adagio.
· Modern/flow/yoga inspired class.
· Improving flexibility with new methods.

Week 9 3/16- 3/20

SPRING BREAK

Week 10 3/23-3/27

Deconstructing Ballet forms + Geometry
· Contemporary dance technique classes.
· Explore different movement qualities.
· Explore “The mechanics of the spine.”
· Discussion: Architecture in the body

Assignment: Look up on the Internet William Forsythe, and be prepared to discuss about his technique in class.
Week 11 3/30-4/3

Rhythmic Intentions + Stamina

- Body becoming a melody: What mood and feeling does the tempo generates.
- Discuss conceptual qualities of movement and how they relate to music.
- Use voice as a limb/Learn and repeat movement phrase material.

Assignment: Create the beginning of your final solo. (1min)

Week 12 4/6-4/10

Anatomical Awareness

- Technique class
- Movement material.
- Discuss: anatomical methods.

Assignment for week 5: create a 30 second “anatomical” solo. (names)

Week 13 4/13-4/17

Collective Consciousness: Becoming the other body

- Contemporary dance technique classes.
- Introduce the idea of being ONE collective body. (Durational improvisation)
- Introduce Concept: Body as a brain.
- Connecting to others.
- Contact improvisation.

Assignment: What is your artistic statement? Write a draft of your own artistic statement. Be prepared to discuss the next class. *see below for details*

Week 14 4/20-4/24

Gates of hell: Dance and Fear

- Contemporary dance technique classes.
· Explore: animalistic senses and awareness.
· Find freedom in the uncomfortable.”
· Acting exercises.

Week 15  4/27-5/1

Partnering methods
· Learn partnering methods.
· Workshop duets and trios.
· Learn new movement material.

Assignment: Find 2 contemporary/modern dance choreographers on the internet (that you find interesting and compelling) and send to my email short paragraph describing why you chose them.

Week 16  5/4-5/8 and 5/11-5/15

Text and Dance: The effects
· Voice exercises.
· Workshop text and movement.
· Workshop monologues.

Assignment: Read and choose your monologue. (Details TBA)

Week 17  5/18-5/22

Transitions, Transitions, Transitions! - + Quiz
· Contemporary dance technique classes.
· Finding relationships between state, stage, subject, style, concept or place.
· Discuss solo transitions.
· Phrase material quiz. (tba)

Week 18  5/25/5/29

Students work on their solo/ Finalize Statements +Solos
· Contemporary dance technique classes.
· One on one discussions/ and final solos open to guests.
**The Artistic Statement**

The question “How do you relate to the world as an artist?” “What is your dance like?”, “Who are you?” Is the thrust of your work dramatic? Abstract? Does it find ancestry in a particular dance style? Do you feel a cultural or ethnic connection in the work? Which social or ethical issues are meaningful to you, and could they pertain to your statement?

**“Attendance First” Absence Policy**

To succeed in any course, but especially a dance course where students can often only learn by experiential participation, a student must first and above all be present. Therefore, the Attendance First Absence Policy of the UTEP Dance Program prioritizes class attendance and participation at the top of the grading process. Technique/Theory/Creative Classes that meet twice or three times a week. In a course that meets twice a week, a student is allowed a maximum of 4 absences in an entire semester, 2 of which require no justification and result in no penalty. A student may use these absences based on personal necessity. The 3rd and 4th absences will result in a drop of 1/2 letter each in the student’s overall grade. At the 5th absence, regardless of the student’s current course standing or grade, the student automatically fails the course.

For courses that meet three times a week, the allowance is 3 absences without penalty. The course grade is reduced by 1/2 letter each for the 4th, 5th, and 6th absences, and the student automatically fails at the 7th absence. Technique classes meeting 4 and 5 times a week.

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. The 6th, 7th, and 8th absences result in the lowering of the overall course grade by 1/2 letter. At the 9th 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.

**Extra Opportunities:** Shows, and ACDA- Attend Into The Beautiful North and one of the following: UDT shows, Latinx festival (free), Monsters (limited seating availability), ACDA guest night (very limited seating availability) For dates and ticket prices please refer to our website: https://www.utep.edu/liberalarts/theatre-dance/ Island Trap NEA Events Guest Artists events Staging the Daffy Dame
Please refer to the calendar or the Facebook page, or regular emails/flyers from Box Office for details on these events.

**Link to ACDA website:**

**Resources:** Students are encouraged to speak with professionals from UTEP’s Counseling and Psychological Services on a walk-in basis from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday in Union Building West, Room 202. In addition, the Miners Talk Crisis Line at 915-747-5302 is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The University Counseling Center is located at 202 Union West, (915) 747-5302, for walk-in appointments, workshops, career and study skill. For more information, visit https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/counsel/.

**The Center for Accommodation and Support Services:** 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, or visit their office located in UTEP Union East, Room 106. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/cass/

**Writing Center:** The University Writing Center is located in the UTEP library room 227 for drop-in tutoring and assistance with your writing assignments and final papers. For more information, visit https://www.utep.edu/uwc/.

**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