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DAN 100A.01: Modern Dance I

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Fall 2005 Syllabus

Welcome! Prepare yourself for a fun, physical and informative semester!!

In this course you will learn the fundamentals of Modern Dance. You will use the skills learned in class to perform combinations given during class. The some combinations will be difficult to work your brain and others simpler to practice basics and work you physically. There will rarely be homework given, rather you are expected to attend every class, work hard, show that you understand the information given, and exhibit improvement over the semester. I am very interested in maintaining a positive atmosphere before, during and after class. I expect you to respect me as an instructor, your fellow dancers and most of all, yourself! I believe in maintaining a positive connection between the mind and body and negativity in any form will not be tolerated.

Below I have listed some of the goals that I wish for you to achieve with this class.

- Be aware of the many forms of Modern dance, i.e. Horton, Graham, Taylor, Ailey, Contemporary
- Learn and execute fundamental modern technique form those various forms
- Condition, strengthen and stretch the all essential parts of the body needed for dance movement
- Condition, strengthen and stretch the mind to understand modern dance
- Learn and understand the history of modern dance so that you may educate others of its true origins
- Develop musicality, rhythm and individual expression
- Develop mental and physical coordination
- Learn and explore the concept of improvisation and creating movement that is unique to you

In class, we will write two things on a 3x5 card. First - what dance instruction you have had and where? Second - what are your personal goals for the class. What are you hoping to accomplish by taking this class? We will review them at mid-semester and begin a new card for further impressions on your own success and the class in general. We will review them one final time at the end of the semester. At that point you will complete one last card rating your personal success and what you felt where your strengths were and where you felt most challenged. These cards and your thoughtful responses will be considered a part of your grade.

All students will be required to choreograph and/or perform a dance piece. If you choreograph a piece, you must appear in the piece. You must use at least 5 people in the piece and those people are chosen by you. You may also choose to only dance in a piece that someone else choreographs. These dances will be performed in an informal showing the last two classes of the semester. Music must be recorded. These dances will be a considered as part of your grade.

General course requirements state that you must see three dance productions in this semester and write critiques on them. There are many options of shows to see and I will do my best to keep you informed of all shows times and dates. However, it is your responsibility to be aware of performances on and off campus. Papers must be a minimum of one page, but no longer than two. Papers are due one week after you attend a performance. Every day after that, 1/3 of a grade will be deducted. Be sure to date your papers as I will be checking them as they are turned in. If you see a show on Saturday or Sunday, please turn that paper in the Friday before that next weekend. Papers may be turned in to me at class time, or to my box. I have listed a few things that you should be thinking about as you watch. Take notes during the show, as you will need to site specific examples.

- Which pieces in the show did you feel strongly about and why? Did you like it, dislike it, were you confused, so on...
- Choreography- what was the theme of each piece or movement idea? What was the style of each piece and how did it work with the theme? What was it about the movement or the way it progressed that made you feel the way you did?
- Review the performers themselves, i.e. their expression, technique and performance
- Give your view on the theatrical elements of the performance, i.e. lighting, sound, costumes, sets and music and how those elements contributed, or hindered the performance

There will be a few classes that are devoted to watching videos of performances and movies. We will have time for discussion after the viewing. The intent is to expose you to new forms that you may have not seen and to create a forum for discussing the history of modern dance and the innovators of this exciting form. These classes are required to attend and your participation in discussions is encouraged.

Dress Code - Please do not wear half tops or shorts without tights on. No midriffs and no bare legs. Wear tight fitting clothes that I can see your body in so that I may train you properly. Shoes are not mandatory. No street are allowed in the studios.

Finally, the most important requirement of all...Have fun! Sweat! Get in shape! Enjoy the time to focus on your mind and body! And realize that by embracing the world of dance, you are making your life and the lives of others around you more beautiful!