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DAN 327A.01: Dance in Elementary Education

Kaila June Gidley

University of Montana, Missoula

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COURSE PURPOSE

This course offers elementary education majors the skills necessary to enhance human learning and literacy through dance. The Professional Educator Preparation Program Standards and Procedures 2001-2005, amended by the Montana Board of Public Education, July 19, 2000 (10.58.508) states: *Candidates for elementary teacher certification shall demonstrate the following knowledge and skills: (v) know, understand, and use – as appropriate to their own understanding and skills – the content, functions, and achievements of dance, music, theater, and the several visual arts as primary media for communication, inquiry, and insight among students.*

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To develop an understanding of the educational, artistic, physical and emotional benefits of kinesthetic learning for children.
- To expose students first-hand to Dance/Movement Vocabulary, Dance Making, Dance Sharing and Dance Inquiry in relation to elementary education.
- To train future educators to use dance within the academic school curriculum.
- To provide exposure to current literature, pedagogy and theories in the field of Dance Education.
- To develop classroom management strategies for guiding an active group of moving children.
- To utilize assessment techniques in dance & familiarize students with state/national standards & curriculum strategies for dance in the public schools.

ATTIRE

Street shoes are not allowed in the dance studios. Movement will be experienced with bare feet. Students should plan to wear clothes suitable for movement and may include: sweat pants, t-shirts, tanks, stretch pants, baggy pants, shorts, etc.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

The primary instructional method is participatory learning through movement. This is combined with lecture, discussion, written assignments and teaching projects.

MATERIALS

Available at The Bookstore at the University of Montana:

- [The Language of Movement: An Idea Book for Teachers](#) by Karen Kaufmann
- [Course Packet/DAN 327](#)

Students should bring these resources to every class as well as a notebook and pen.

COURSE CONTENT

1. Dance Education Theory, Research & Pedagogy

Multiple Intelligence theory, national and state agendas, benefits of a dance program, inclusion techniques, lesson design, classroom management techniques, structuring creative experiences, imagery, process vs. product, giving feedback.

2. Dance/Movement Vocabulary

Development of a dance/movement vocabulary (body, space, time, energy). Awareness of improvisation and dance technique. Use of image, idea, story, feeling and curriculum area or other themes as a basis for movement experiences.

3. Dance as a Teaching Tool

Use movement/dance to reinforce the curriculum. Increase understanding of cultural identity and diversity. Promote the ways dance can assist meaning-making. Stimulate critical thinking, research skills and new ways of communicating.

4. Dance Making/Dance Sharing

Create dance shapes, movements, studies and complete dances. Experience improvisation & choreography independently and in collaboration with others. Invite concepts of creative and critical thinking, imagination, risk-taking, making choices, kinesthetic memory, and rehearsal. Through dance sharing students will communicate through dance, experience performing, and develop ways to respond to dance. Students will become literate viewers of dance, through the movement vocabulary.

REQUIREMENTS & GRADING

Attendance

Students are expected to attend every class and arrive on time. One absence is excusable. Each additional absence will lower the grade 1/3 point (e.g. A to A-). When absent it is the students' responsibility to catch up by contacting another student in the class. All work must be turned in on time. **Late assignments will not be accepted.**

Participation (10 points)

Students will be graded on their active involvement physically, imaginatively and cognitively. This grade is based on students' involvement in the movement experiences and in class discussions. It is expected that students will participate to the fullest extent possible, maintain a curious, open attitude and be a contributing member of the class.

Personal Essay (5 points)

Students will type a one-page essay exploring the question: What do you do to take care of your body's needs? Do you exercise? Do you meditate? Do you take walks, hikes, swims in the river, or go out dancing? Do you sauna, actively recuperate, stretch or get body work like massage or reiki? Do you eat well or take nutritional supplements? How do you express yourself creatively? Is your body involved?

15 Movement Prompts (7 points)

Creative movement is taught through open-ended verbal directions that provide a framework to guide a participant's exploration and encourage experimentation. These are called movement prompts.

Attend a Dance Concert (8 points)

To better understand dance as a unique art form, attend one community dance concert. Write a list of movement elements you observed during the performance to hand in.

20 Movement Prompts: Centered around a Curricular Theme (10 points)

Choose a curricular theme and design 20 movement prompts that integrate movement to teach your chosen theme. Use the movement vocabulary and abstraction to encourage creative problem solving.

Midterm Assignment (20 points)

Each student will research and develop a lesson plan using movement prompts that integrate dance with a curricular area. Students will 'workshop' their lesson plans in peer learning groups. These lessons will then be revised and submitted for the mid-term grade - assessing knowledge realized through the first half of the session.

Group Teaching Project (20 points)

Each group will develop a new creative lesson and present it to the class. Lessons will be approximately 15 minutes long. All group members will design and execute the plan. Students will receive three grades: **1)** a 'Group' Grade (worth 8 points) on the soundness and clarity of the lesson design, **2)** an 'Individual' Grade (worth 8 points) based on how effectively it was taught, and **3)** a 'Self-Evaluation' Grade (worth 4 points) based on your perceptions of the group dynamics, collaboration and the role you played in the project. The three grades will be added together to yield the final grade for this project. Each group will turn in one lesson plan delineating each person's part in the project.

Honoring a Culture through Dance (20 points)

A group project to be presented during finals week which honors multiculturalism through dance education.