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DANC 100A.01: Modern Dance I

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University of Montana, School of Theatre & Dance

Fall 2013: **Modern Dance I** 2 credits

70492 – DANC 100A – 01 T Th 12:40-2:00 pm PAR/TV 005

Instructor: **Heidi Jones Eggert**
Email: heidi.eggert@umontana.edu

Office: PAR/TV 186
Office hours: Wed 1:00-2:00
Thurs 9:00-11:00

“Dance is the hidden language of the soul.” – Martha Graham

Course Description

In this entry-level class to Contemporary Modern Dance, space, time and energy will be explored as elements of movement. There will be an underlying emphasis on alignment, strength, flexibility and kinesiology sound movement patterns. **In order to better understand and appreciate Modern Dance**, participants will not only have opportunities to experience, practice and perform modern dance, but to also play the roles of dance critics and historians, improvisational artists, choreographers and teachers.

Objectives

- To describe Modern Dance as a form of expression
- To increase awareness and confidence in the moving body by application of dance warm up, improvisation, technique and phrase work
- To find artistry in each body by recognizing natural musicality: breath, weight, gravity, momentum
- To create and develop unique movement sequences, collaboratively organizing that material into a dance
- To critically evaluate and objectively discuss dance performance (including technique and expression)
- To defend a broad appreciation of dance

Course Content

As an **emerging dancer** it is expected that by the completion of this course the student will be able to recognize and perform, to the best of their ability, the below mentioned elements of contemporary modern dance:

- Demonstration of Line and Form
- Dynamic Alignment
- Effective Body Patterning
- Spatial Awareness
- Rhythmic Accuracy
- Initiation and Follow-Through
- Strength, Flexibility and Endurance
- Professionalism, Etiquette and Performance Ability

Class Structure

Casual **in class assignments** in spontaneous composition and performance will take place on a semi-regular basis. These may be individual or in small groups. Class time will be dedicated to group choreography assignments. Please be respectful of your peers and recognize the importance of your consistent contribution.

Slightly more structured will be the **Mid-term assessment** and **Final projects/performances**. Mark your calendars for the following in class “performance dates.”

Mid-term assessment *Tuesday, October 29th (prep, Thurs, Oct 24th)*
Final performance *Thursday, December 5th (prep, Tues, Dec 3rd)*

→ These performances and all accompanying prep-work and self-evaluations will be graded.

** We will *not* meet during finals week

Class begins promptly at **12:40 pm**. Students arriving more than 10 minutes late will not be permitted to take class (for etiquette and safety purposes), and will instead observe and take notes. Class will end at **2:00 pm**. Students are required to remain in class until it concludes with the closing circle. Consistent tardiness or early departure from class will result in the lowering of one’s grade.

To **avoid injury**, please come to class prepared to move at the start of class. (If you know you need extra time/space to stay safe, arrive early.) Please notify the instructor of any injury (current or past) that may affect your full performance in class.

Should a student observe class, it is expected that the student watch the class and dutifully apply what is being taught and discussed to her/his own improvement in class. This **observation should result in a set of notes** that will be submitted to the instructor at the conclusion of the class observed. While observing class, students are required to be mindful and quiet as to not detract from the teaching and performance efficacy of the teacher, classmates and accompanist. More than two observations equal an absence.

*see "Expectations" for more on participation/attendance.

The **dress code** for the class is comfortable, but not too baggy; the attire should not restrict or hide your movement.

No jeans! Take into account that there is potential for any part of the body to be in contact with the floor, at any given time; and keeping the body warm for the beginning and end of class = bring extra clothing. Movement will be experienced with bare feet. It is also suggested that dancers own and bring kneepads to class. These can be ordered on line at: www.contactquarterly.com. **Please, no street shoes in the dance studios.**

Physical contact and touch will be used as teaching methods to correct alignment and suggest new patterns of movement. The teacher and fellow students will facilitate this. If you have any concerns with this style of teaching/learning please let the instructor know, as she will find alternative methods.

Performance Attendance & Written Response

Students are required to attend **four artistic events** during the semester. (plus *strongly encouraged* to attend dance events at large; in Missoula, at the Myrna Loy Center in Helena and at the Hamilton Center for the Performing Arts.)

Performances marked with * are required.

Of the *other performances* listed, select 1 to see and respond to, (totaling 4 events over the course of the semester)

- * **Dancers on Location**, October 12-13 (Sat-Sun) noon, Mansfield Library Mall, free
- **Momix - Botanica**, November 8 (Fri), 8:00PM, Hamilton PAC,
- * **Dance Studio Works**, November 15-16 (Fri-Sat), 6:30 & 8:30 each night, Open Space, \$5 one show, or \$8 both shows. Tickets at the door
- **Headwaters Dance Company Annual Gala Concert**, Nov 21-23, MCT Center for the Performing Arts
- * **Dance Up Close**, Dec 3-7 (Tues-Sat), 7:30 PM, Masquer Theatre, \$6 Required Student (\$9 Gen Adm)
- Any **Theatre** production, **Music** concert or **Gallery** exhibit

The instructor will provide detailed guidelines for written critique(s), and "alternative response(s)." Students will need to give specific examples in their writing, so it is recommended that she/he take notes either during or immediately following each event. The student's grade will be lowered by one-third of a letter grade for each assignment that is not submitted. Tickets for performances in the PAR/TV Center are on sale in the Box Office in the Lobby of the PAR/TV Center.

Expectations: Attendance and Grading Policy

Attendance is important in any field, but vital in the field of dance. Learning to dance requires that your body do it. You will not gain in flexibility, and strength, or in your ability to pick up movement or generate your own movement by hearing about what happened from a classmate, or reading a book. In other words, there is no way to make up the material you miss. **STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO BE IN EVERY CLASS.** However, knowing that unpredictable circumstances may arise, students are granted one permissible absence. Students may also make up one absence by participating in (if appropriate) or watching, *and* writing a one-page observation of another dance class. **AFTER A STUDENT HAS USED HER/HIS SINGLE ABSENCE AND ONE MAKEUP, THE STUDENT WILL BE DOCKED ONE-THIRD OF A GRADE FOR EVERY ABSENCE FOLLOWING.** (for more details see Moodle: UM Dance Program - Injury Policy)

Grading: Dance is different from many other fields in that a student's work is not as quantifiable as it is in some other subjects, such as history or math. For this reason grading is not assigned a point breakdown. To earn an "A" a student must:

- Show signs of aptitude for dance technique and musicality
- Have an energetic, attentive attitude
- Progress over the semester
- And of course, fulfill all attendance, critique and self-assessment requirements.

Students may receive an "incomplete" (I) only if there are exceptional circumstances, which have been discussed with the instructor.

Odds and Ends

- **Additional assignments *may* be scheduled throughout the semester at the discretion of the instructor.**
- If at any point you feel further discussion would aid your development, please schedule a meeting with the instructor.
- No street shoes, food or drinks in the studio, with the exception of water. No gum in class.
- If you are sick or injured please talk to the instructor as soon possible before class. This includes any pre-existing conditions/injuries that should be shared.
- If you get injured during class get my attention immediately!
- Restrooms / locker rooms are located just across the hall.
- **Locker rentals are required for all students in the dance classes.** We recommend that you do not leave personal belongings unattended in the dressing rooms or hallways, as thefts unfortunately occur. Backpacks and personal belongings are not allowed in dance studios, with the exception of water bottles. Lockers must be rented for \$7/semester, or \$13/two semesters. For details, see the Dance Program administrative assistant, PARTV 199 (door across from women's dressing room, then up the stairs.)
- All students enrolled in classes who are not Theatre & Dance majors are highly encouraged to sign up as C/NC. PLEASE NOTE, HOWEVER, in order to receive Expressive Arts credit, a student must enroll for a traditional grade and the grade received must be a C or higher.
- **Academic Misconduct and the Student Conduct Code:** All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at http://life.umt.edu/vpsa/student_conduct.php.
- ** All Theatre & Dance students must have an in-depth knowledge of the practices and procedures outlined in the School of Theatre & Dance *Student Handbook*. The *Handbook* is available online at <http://www.umt.edu/theatredance/about/handbook>.
- There is inherent risk involved in many Theatre & Dance classes as they are very physical in nature. Please proceed through class, shop time, or rehearsal with caution. Always be mindful of your personal safety and the safety of others. Students participating in class/shop/rehearsal/performance do so at their own risk.
- Due to safety considerations, at **no** point during a student's time spent in class or serving on a production (in any capacity) should non-enrolled persons be guests of that student **without my consent**. Presence of such unauthorized persons in a class, shop, or any backstage/off-stage area will negatively affect a student's grade.
- The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students (DSS). If you think you may have a disability adversely affecting your academic performance, and you have not already registered with DSS, please contact DSS in Lommasson 154. I will work with you and DSS to provide an appropriate accommodation.