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DANC 115A.01: Introduction to Jazz Dance

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Introduction to Jazz Dance
University of Montana, School of Theatre & Dance
DANC115A-01 70034 Fall 2017 2 Credits
Mondays/Wednesdays 3:30-4:50 pm, PAR-TV 005

Instructor: Joy French, joy.french@umontana.edu - Office hours: by appointment

Course Objectives

DANC 115 is designed for the beginning jazz dancer. Fundamental skills and concepts of jazz dance will be explored through technique & improvisation. Specifically, this semester we will be looking at:

- **Syncopation**
 - exploring rhythmic range within the body in relation to the music
 - looking at the African roots of Jazz dance
- **Line & Extension**
 - investigating with the dynamic edge of our physical kinesphere
 - borrowing vocabulary from Ballet and discussing its influence
- **Grounded/Weighted versus Light**
 - shifting energetic qualities
 - understanding how/where these occur in the body
- **Spatiality**
 - understanding where you are in space in relation to studio, other dancers, and your own kinesphere
- **Polycentric & Polyrhythmic**
 - exploring body patterns with multiple centers and rhythms
- **Performance & Personal Expression**
 - developing our performance qualities
 - discovering individual personality and style within the form
- **Strengthening:** this will be a continual cultivation during the course of the semester

Attire:

Please wear comfortable clothes that allow for freedom of movement. (No jeans or tight pants, please. If you have a question about movement-appropriate clothing, please ask Joy.) You may need CLEAN shoes that allow turning. Jazz shoes/boots can be purchased on-line or at local dance studios.) You may also opt to dance with bare feet if it is comfortable for you.

Important Details to note:

- **We WILL be meeting during FINALS week.** Jazz I final will be held on **Mon. December 18 at 1:10-3:10pm in 005**
- If at any point you feel further discussion would aid your development, please schedule a meeting with Joy.
- 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 the instructor's attention immediately!
- Restrooms / locker rooms are located across the hall.
- **NO food or drinks** (except water in closed bottles) are permitted in the dance studios or theatres.
- **NO street shoes** are allowed in the dance studio at any time, even carried in-hand. Anyone entering the studio must remove their street shoes BEFORE entering and leave them outside the studio. The only shoes permitted in studios are those that have been purchased for the exclusive use of dance in dance studios (with the exclusion of tap shoes, hard-shoe clogs, and flamenco shoes. These should never be worn on Marley floors).
- Individuals concerned about theft should rent a locker for their shoes and other belongings.
 - NOTE: Locker rentals are available for any student. The School of Theatre & Dance recommends that students do not leave personal belongings unattended in the dressing rooms, hallways, dance studios, or theatres as thefts frequently occur. Lockers may be rented for \$10/one semester or \$15/ two semesters through Administrative Associate IV Sharon Collins (sharon1.collins@umontana.edu; PARTV 194).

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://www.umt.edu/vpesa/Dean%20of%20Students/default.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/umarts/theatredance/About/handbook.php>.

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.

From the EO/AA Office:

Students with disabilities may request reasonable modifications by contacting me. The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students (DSS). "Reasonable" means the University permits no fundamental alterations of academic standards or retroactive modifications. For more information, please consult <http://life.umt.edu/dss/>.

DANCE TECHNIQUE CLASS REQUIREMENTS

Fall Semester 2017

Many Dance Technique courses satisfy the Expressive Arts Credit. To receive an Arts Credit, the student must enroll in the course for a traditional grade and receive a C or higher. Note: **September 21** - Last day to change grade option to audit, submit override forms, add courses with electronic override, change variable credit, change grade options, or drop classes in CyberBear.

In dance, often our “texts” are the body itself, as opposed to books. Thus we will be attending four dance events this fall to witness these “texts” in action.

ATTENDANCE IS REQUIRED* AT THE FOLLOWING:

- A. *UM Dancers on Location, UM Dance Department*
 - Friday September 15 @ 5pm, Sunday Sept 17 @ noon
 - meet at the UM Mansfield Mall
 - Free!
- B. *Dance Up Close, UM Dance Department*
 - Friday Nov 10 @ 7:30pm, Saturday Nov 11 @ 2pm & 7:30pm
 - Masquer Theatre
 - Tickets available at the UMArts Box Office in the PARTV Lobby
- C. *Kinetoscope, Bare Bait Dance*
 - Friday Dec 1 @ 8pm, Saturday Dec 2 @ 8pm, Sunday Dec 3 @ 2pm & 8p
 - The Roxy Theater
 - \$15 student price, tickets available at www.barebaitdance.org
- D. *Fall Studio Works, UM Dance Department*
 - Friday Dec 8 @ 6:30pm & 8:30pm
 - Open Space Theatre (PARTV 005)
 - \$5 at the door

This comes to a grand total of less \$50 for the semester. Think of this like your book for the class! **Your instructor will require a written critique, quiz, or something else of their own choosing as an assignment after every performance.**

*If a student is unable to attend one of the concerts and wishes to make it up, he/she can write a 10 page historical paper and class presentation focusing on an important time in the history of dance (in the genre of the class).

ATTENDANCE AND GRADE POLICY–DANCE TECHNIQUE

Attendance is important in any field, but vital in the field of dance. Learning to dance requires that your body do it. You won't 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.**

So, I EXPECT YOU TO BE IN EVERY CLASS. However, knowing that unpredictable circumstances can arise, we are giving you **two absences**. You may also **make up one class**. You can do this by participating in another section of a similar level and style of class that you're taking. Make up classes must be approved by instructor.

AFTER YOU HAVE USED YOUR 2 ABSENCES AND 1 MAKEUP, YOU WILL BE DOCKED ONE-THIRD OF A GRADE FOR EVERY ABSENCE FOLLOWING.

Tardiness will be noted as well: every 3 “lates” equals 1 absence.

note: It is not my responsibility to follow up with you if you come into class late. If you miss attendance being called, it is your responsibility to come up to me at the end of class and ask to be counted as present but late. If you fail to do this, you will likely be counted as absent and it will count towards your total absences.

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 we do not have a point breakdown, but rather general guidelines.

To receive an “A” you must:

- show signs of aptitude for dance technique, and musicality
- have an energetic, attentive attitude
- progress over the semester
- be at the top level of the class
- and, of course, fulfill the attendance, critique and exam requirements

You will receive an “F” if your absences and lack of critiques add up (or subtract) to an “F.”

Your grade will be lowered by one-third of a point for each critique you do not hand in (e.g., if you start with a B, your grade will drop to a B-, then C+ and you will receive a “C+”).

You may receive an “incomplete” (I) only if you have exceptional circumstances, *which you have discussed with the instructor.*