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DANC 591.01: ST - Graduate Dance Studies

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University of Montana School of Theatre & Dance
DANC: 591 (1-3cr) Graduate Dance Studies

Instructor: Professor Nicole Bradley Browning
Contact Information: nicole.bradleybrowning@umontana.edu
Office Hours: *as posted*
Office: PARTV 185

Course Description:

Graduate Dance Studies support students pursuing the MFA degree in Theatre. MFA candidates require an expanded curriculum including the history, theory and practice of dance forms spanning time and geography from social dance forms, concert dance forms to global dance forms. Students study movement forms to enhance one's capacity of fully expressing one's identity (and a character's identity) through movement and the body. In studio courses, practical execution in the form to master dance technique is treated as an invaluable component of research and writing through the body. Students develop a shared critical vocabulary for interpreting, reading and writing about dance. Practical classes are grounded in movement exploration and creative process experiences and supported with historical, cultural and theoretical reading and research.

Course Objectives:

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- 1. Express themselves, practice and perform the style of dance in which this course is grounded (ranging from ballet, contemporary modern dance, jazz, urban dance forms, tap, musical theatre, dances of the African Diaspora, improvisation, contact improvisation, ballroom, swing, Argentine tango, Capoeira).** Using the movement vocabulary learned throughout the course students are able to express themselves using the fundamentals from the dance style in culminating dances and/or original choreographed work that demonstrates the learned material and illustrates the student's creative voice. Students have the option to perform these works either in class, or for the public in the Studio Works Concert.
- 2. Understand the genres and/or forms that have shaped the medium.** Students will demonstrate knowledge of these dance forms using terminology, history, and culture through class discussion, readings/video work, improvisation and movement analysis. Students will be able to identify and perform each of the movement forms offered, discuss the historical context, history and meanings of each form, explain how each form relates to its appropriate musical genres and analyze the political, cultural and social context of each form.
- 3. Critique the quality of their own work and that of others.** The Dance Program values critique as part of the learning goals of all dance students. All students who study the diverse offerings through Graduate Studies in Dance courses are required to attend dance concerts and write critiques about

the quality of the work they are seeing. In addition, students are involved in class critiques for which they critique their own work and the work of their peers according to a constructive critical response process provided by the instructor. Students also attend and are invited to participate in a Formal Dance Critique conducted by a guest critic from the Missoula community.

Course Requirements:

READING and FILM ASSIGNMENTS:

Students are expected to attend class having completed all viewing and reading necessary to be a part of discussion and learning process. Always be prepared to answer and ask questions about the material. Participation is KEY. Assignments will be posted through Moodle.

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS/REFLECTIONS:

Writing assignments will invite the student to reflect critically on the readings, media, lectures and movement classes. There will be a dance critique due following Dance Concert Attendance. Following your attendance to one of the required dance concerts of your choice, write a critique that describes how the movement identity of the dancers performing supports their ability to be able to translate choreography effectively and professionally. (One-page single spaced (minimum) 12 pt font and written at the level of an MFA candidate. **Due 1 week following performance of your choice.** There will be a reflection paper due at the end of the semester. (One-page single spaced (minimum), 12pt font.

Grading:

The grading policy will be as follows:

- Class discussion= 20%
- Writing Assignments= 15%
- Reflection paper= 10%
- Class participation= 55%

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/vpsa/policies/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/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/>.