

Modern Dance I Syllabus – William Paterson University

COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the end of the course, each student should be able to:

- Identify, describe, and demonstrate movement vocabulary of elements and skills in contemporary dance.
- Apply basic choreographic principles, processes, and structures in studio practices.
- Experience and understand dance as a way to communicate meaning and emotion.
- Apply and demonstrate critical thinking in dance.
- Understand connections between dance and healthy living.
- Understand connections between dance and culture, and begin to develop a personal aesthetic.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completion of the course, the student will be able to:

- Correctly perform movement phrases and sequences in class, compatible with the student's own technical level (using rubrics for studio observation, self assessment, and peer assessment).
- Demonstrate improvement in skeletal alignment, body-part articulation, flexibility, agility, balance, rhythmic acuity and coordination in dance technique.
- Use dance vocabulary and anatomical terms in oral and written form (class discussion, written responses, and final exam).
- Demonstrate critical thinking in analyzing own work and the work of others (class discussion, peer assessment, and final exam).
- Work effectively with others when using improvisation and problem solving (group work in studio for daily grade).
- Understand choreographic processes, structures, and compositional forms, and apply that knowledge in choreography (group work in studio for grade).
- Create a short dance study based on aesthetic standards, using technical skills and choreographic principles (final project).
- Maintain a portfolio of journals, handouts, and other course materials.

CLASS ELEMENTS and METHODOLOGY

Our in-class practice through demonstration, analysis, performance/presentation, journaling, and self and peer evaluations will engage students with the movement content, the cultural and historic practice of modern dance, and their personal agency within this expressive form, to offer a holistic and anatomically grounded introduction to modern dance.

CLASS ATTIRE and STUDIO RULES

Traditional dance attire or fitness wear is required. Bare feet, ballet slippers or other dance footwear is allowed. Long hair should be secured and no hats, gum, or large jewelry is allowed. Cell phones turned off and put away throughout the whole class. No food or drink in the gym other than water. Gym equipment is not to be touched unless it is being used as part of the course work under the direction of the instructor.

ATTENDANCE

This is an *experiential* class and as we will be addressing material that relates directly to your next assignment, and will be building on the class before, make up classes are not allowed.

You will be allowed 2 absences throughout the semester. On the **3rd absence, your final grade will be lower by one letter grade. More than 5 absences of any kind will result in a failing grade.** *BONUS: 3% points will be added to your final grade if you have a 100% attendance rate.

Also, tardiness is disruptive and attendance will be taken at the beginning of class. Any late individuals will lose participation/professionalism points and *habitual tardiness* (being late to more than 5 classes) will be converted to an unexcused absence.

ASSIGNMENT POLICY

You will be provided with written or verbal directions concerning each assignment. The instructor is responsible for providing these directions well ahead of the due date; you are responsible for following the instructions and seeking clarification, when needed.

All assignment due dates will be provided on the course schedule. You are responsible for reading the calendar, noting due dates, and planning accordingly.

- Late assignments are designated as late if the assignment is not turned in on the due date/time or emailed to me before the due date/time (if there is an issue). NO EXCEPTIONS.
- 'Late' assignments turned in within one week (by the end of the next class period) will be accepted and a 10% deduction will be applied. 'Late' assignments submitted past the 1-week mark will receive an additional deduction of 5% *per day*. **You will receive (0) points for the assignment if it has not been submitted before the end of the class period, 2-weeks after the due date.**

GRADING SCALE

The instructor of this course has decided to use the plus/minus system for grading students' performances. Course grades will be assigned based upon the following criteria:

94% - 100% = A	84% - 86.9% = B	74% - 79.9% = C
90% - 93.9% = A-	80% - 83.9% = B-	68% - 73.9% = D
87% - 89.9% = B+	77% - 79.9% = C+	< 67% = F

ASSESSMENT and GRADING

Assessment Breakdown:
30% Attendance and Participation
45% Written Work and Research
25% Final Choreographic Project, Performance, and Paper

Attendance and Participation

Participating in a dance course is at its core a physical and social activity. As such, it is important for you to respect your classmates, instructor, and your own body by arriving punctually – allowing time for your body to properly warm up and engaging and contributing to the exploration of dance. Throughout the semester, you will be evaluated on your active participation in discussions, improvisation, and choreography (ie. on *being present, on task, an active contributor to the positive learning environmental through leadership and cooperation, and on the quality of problem solving in improvisation and choreography*). You will receive a formative Midterm Evaluation on their work up to that point in class.

Written Work and Research

- **Weekly Journal Portfolio (40%)**

You will respond to the weekly journal prompts:

Written Journals (observations, reflections etc. should be a **minimum of 250 words, typed (double spaced, 12 point font)** and will be assessed on the *quality of writing; depth of thought and response to the given weekly prompt; proper formatting, spelling and use of grammar; and the ability to articulately support their ideas by using specific examples from their readings, personal research, or experiences in class*. As with all late assignments, late submissions (without a medical note/emergency) will receive a grade deduction, and any submission over 2 week late will receive a 0 for that journal.

Dance Research/ Movement Journals (movement creation, exploration, and phrases) will be presented and discussed in the journal prompt for that week and the phrases (shared in the following class) should reflect the specific elements addressed in the prompt and meet all minimum requirements specified.

- **Report on Modern Dance Pioneers (20%)**

Research a modern dance pioneer or choreographer and analyze their contribution and style as it impacted the development of modern dance. Present a brief oral report to the class and hard copy to the instructor. Full details will be found on Blackboard. (see list of pioneers and choreographers at the end of the syllabus)

- **Responding to Art Reflection (20%)**

You are required to visit University Galleries (see details below) or another museum that has been approved by the instructor. Select a piece of visual, sculptural, textile, etc. piece that resonates with you. Write a reflective paper addressing what it means to you and your thoughts for choreography. Full details for the reflection will be found on Blackboard.

University Galleries

Ben Shahn Center for the Visual Arts
William Paterson University
300 Pompton Road
Wayne, NJ 07470
(973) 720-2654

Gallery Hours

During the Fall semester:
See website below for details on times and exhibitions.

- **Midterm Evaluation (10%)**
You will engage in an in-class peer evaluation based off of the rubric that will be provided on Blackboard.
- **Terminology Quizzes (10%)**
Two quizzes will be scheduled throughout the semester to assess understanding of dance terminology and movement fundamentals used in class as well as Laban's Movement Analysis as it applies to use of space, time, and weight. This material will be discussed and experienced in class prior to the scheduled quizzes.

Final Choreographic Project, Performance, and Paper

Choreography/ in-studio performance will be between 2 - 5 minutes depending on the number of performers. Further criteria for both the choreography and the related paper will be discussed in class and posted to Blackboard.

SUGGESTED READINGS

- Banes, S. (1987). *Terpsichore in sneakers: Post-modern dance*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press.
- H'Doubler, M. (1957). *Dance, a creative art experience*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Hawkins, E. (1992). *The body is a clear place*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton Book Company.
- Humphrey, D. (1987). *The art of making dances*. Hightstown, NJ: Princeton Book Company.
- Legg, J. (2011). *Introduction to modern dance techniques*. Hightstown, NJ: Princeton Book Company.
- Studd, K., & Cox, L. (2013). *Everybody is a body*. Indianapolis, IN: Dog Ear Publishing.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY AND PLAGERISM

All students are advised that William Paterson University has policies and procedures in place to handle instances of academic dishonesty on the part of students. In cases where you are found to engage in dishonest behavior in any shape or form (e.g., in writing papers, taking exams, etc.) published University Policies will be followed.

“Academic dishonesty” is an intentional act of deception in one (or more) of the following areas:

- Cheating** - use or attempted use of unauthorized materials, information, or study aids.
- Fabrication** - falsification or invention of any information.
- Assisting** - helping another commit an act of academic dishonesty.
- Tampering** - altering or interfering with evaluation instruments and documents.
- Plagiarism** - representing the words or ideas of an other person as one's own.

The penalty for acts of academic dishonesty ranges from a grade of "F" for the assignment or test to expulsion from the course, academic major, or college. Violations of academic dishonesty in this class will be dealt with in accordance with University policy. If the nature of academic dishonesty is unclear to you, please contact your instructor or consult with the chair of the Kinesiology department.

SEMESTER TIMELINE

Date	Topic	Notes/Due Dates
Sept 7	Welcome/Introduction and Movement	
Sept 14	Modern Foundations	<i>Journal 1 Due</i>
Sept 21	Modern Foundations	<i>Journal 2 Due</i>
Sept 28	Modern Foundations	<i>Journal 3 Due</i>
Oct 5	Modern Explorations/ Oral Report (Modern Pioneer) Group 1	Modern Report Due
Oct 12	Modern Explorations/ Oral Report (Modern Pioneer) Group 2	Modern Report Due
Oct 19	Quiz 1 in class	<i>Journal 4 Due</i>
Oct 26	In-Class Midterm Evaluation	<i>Journal 5 Due</i>
Nov 2	Movement Practice	<i>Journal 6 Due</i>
Nov 9	Movement Development	Responding to Art Reflection Due
Nov 16	Quiz 2 in class	<i>Journal 7 Due</i>
Nov 23	Thanksgiving – NO CLASS	
Nov 30	Practice and Preparation for Final Projects/Performance	
Dec 7	Practice and Preparation for Final Projects/Performance	
Dec 14	Final Presentations	Finals Due (paper/performance)
Dec 21	Finals Exam Week – NO CLASS	

Schedule is subject to change throughout the semester

Modern Pioneers and Choreographers

Isadora Duncan	Ruth St. Dennis	Ted Shawn	Martha Graham	Doris Humphrey	Charles Weidman
Loie Fuller	Katherine Dunham	Hanya Holm	Erick Hawkins	José Limón	Anna Sokolow
Merce Cunningham	Paul Taylor	Mark Morris	Alvin Ailey	Lester Horton	Alwin Nikolais
Roudolph van Laban	Jennifer Muller	Ohad Naharin	Yvonne Rancier	Trisha Brown	Pina Bausch
Emile Jaques-Dalcroze	Garth Fagan	Donald McKayle	Bill T. Jones	Lucinda Childs	Pilobolus