

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Dance Theory I-IV orients students to the field of dance as an academic discipline, profession, and art form. To this end, this course arms students with information and processes of inquiry so as to facilitate their own decision making as they proceed in the field of dance. Topics to be covered may include: an introduction to dance as an art form; dance history; dance as a product of culture; the relationship of dance technique to the overall field: repertory, dance in entertainment-jazz, musical theater, hip hop, ballroom; applied kinesiology as it relates to the efficiency of movement; career preparation; dance production; labanotation; and strategies for effective learning, professional engagement, and longevity in the discipline. Through extensive viewing of video and live dance performance and subsequent writings and discussions, students learn to identify, describe, analyze, and interpret choreographic practices, characteristics of performers, different uses of production elements, and the aesthetic, political, social, and cultural contexts that characterize the state of the art today.

Beginning, Intermediate, or Advanced Jazz combines techniques of classical ballet and modern dance with the current forms of popular dance. Jazz also has its own movement vocabulary ranging from the isolation of certain body parts to the movement of the entire body with the accents of musical rhythms. Although jazz dance can take on many different characteristics, it is usually divided into two styles: percussive and lyrical. Jazz dance can be patterned in either of these styles or a combination of both. The course provides a basic understanding of contemporary jazz techniques. The student is required to develop a variety of dance skills, both technical and rhythmical. Emphasis is on the importance of energy, rhythmical accuracy, and style. Each level of jazz is a continuation of the previous level and increases in difficulty.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- Each dancer is expected to attend and participate in every class. It is the responsibility of the student to arrange for any make up work, both written and skills.
- Written assignments will be in the form of a specific assignment or a journal.
- It is expected that every dancer will dress according to the Dance Department Dress Code (Black sweats, shorts, leotard and/or tank) and that hair be worn off the face and neck. For the safety of the dancers, no jewelry is worn during class.
- There will be a skills test or formative assessment approximately every other week; participation grades will be given weekly; an improvement grade is given at the end of each six weeks.
- If a student cannot participate in class due to an illness or an injury, ***a note, e-mail, or a phone call that day is required! After one week of non-participation, a student must have a note from a physician.***
- If a student cannot participate in class, he/she must complete an observation assignment to be turned in at the end of class that day.

EVALUATION

Participation:	40%
Participation grades will be given weekly on effort, approach, and daily work	
Skill:	40%
Skill mastery grades will be given every other week in the form of a skills test or formative assessment	
Improvement:	20%
Effort, approach, daily work	

COURSE SCHEDULE

First Six Weeks: The students will

- Experience “boot camp” to strengthen the core, upper body, and lower extremities
- Understand the concepts required in stretching
- Experience fundamentals of jazz dance performance through the use of imagery.
- Study the history surrounding the original intent of the style of jazz studied.
- Discover and develop performance skills that include both technique and performance quality in jazz dance.
- Understand and appreciate the skills that are specific to jazz.
- Master dance techniques and skills required of jazz technique including isolation of each body part.
- Experience the concept of syncopation through movement phrasing.

Second Six Weeks: Instruction in jazz dance technique is designed to prepare the dancer for the professional world of musical theater, on or off Broadway and the entertainment arena. Students will be expected to demonstrate both the technical and theoretical principles of jazz dance including: proper body alignment, a variety of jazz styles, and rhythmical accuracy. Each level of instruction builds upon the traditional and non-traditional jazz dance vocabulary. Expectations for student performance increase with each level of jazz dance increasing with the complexity of jazz combinations. These courses provide an opportunity for students with concentrated jazz dance training to choose a career in the entertainment, music video, or musical theater venues and/or dance in a university or conservatory program.

Analysis of assigned performances or rehearsals

Third Six Weeks: Continuation of the concepts and skills introduced in the First and Second Six Weeks increasing in skill level and preparing students for a final semester exam