Joe Alter  
ENS -200, 594-1692  
jalter@mail.sdsu.edu  
Office Hours: T/Th, 1-2 pm  
Or by appointment  
M210  

COURSE OUTLINE: DANCE 255: DANCE IMPROVISATION I  
Embodied Inquiry  

Course Description:  
This class is concerned with the identification of individual movement traits and with the development of movement vocabularies. I am interested in intensifying a person’s particular movement inquiry and proposing processes that maximize the range of movement options available in any given moment. Dance Improvisation I will focus primarily on individual forms of improvisation. Improvisational methodologies and problem solving techniques will be investigated rigorously.  

Objectives:  
At the successful completion of the course the student will understand, apply, and embody:  

- A unified field of attention, or “mindful awareness”  
- Awareness/Sensing  
- Gravity/Light (Fluids/Bones/Internal Structures)  
- Doing/Allowing (Directed/non-directed vs. controlled/non controlled)  
- Holds: space/body  
- Whole/Part Leading/Sequencing  
- Planes/Axis’  
- Imagining Lines (Point/Point Line) External/Internal  
- Extrusions (lines and planes)  
- Matching  
- Folding  
- Bridging  
- Collapsing  
- Dropping  
- Approaches/Torsions  
- Angle and Surface  
- Transporting Lines  
- Curves/Dropping Curves  
- Avoidance (Lines/Volumes)  
- Knotting Exercise  
- Trajectory/Transposition  
- Diminution/Augmentation  
- The concept of movement impulse and the ability to follow an impulse to a conclusion  
- The concept and execution of distal and proximal “part leading”  
- Maintain a commitment to learning and correction by observing carefully, listening actively, and assessing your progress and improvement as assigned
• Maintain a sense of personal responsibility for learning by completing assignment on time and with thoroughness and clarity.

Teaching Strategies:

To enable student achievement of the learning goals, I will
• Demonstrate, explain, analyze, and lead explorations of movement exercises and combinations designed specifically to develop the skills required for achievement of learning goals;
• Observe your daily work in class and (a) orally assess your achievement of learning goals, and (b) make recommendations for improvement in achieving learning goals;
• Provide opportunities for individual appointments in which we may discuss your learning efforts;
• Provide opportunities for you to assess your progress toward the actual achievement of the learning goals;
• not every student will receive individual feedback during each class, but all students will receive individual feedback regularly throughout the course of the semester. Please remember-the way feedback is received has a direct relation to further attention: if the student demonstrates an aversion to feedback the odds of gaining further feedback are somewhat lessened.

Grading and Evaluation:
Grading in this course is based, in part, on the visual evaluation of the student, using as the benchmark the student’s abilities upon entering the class and the student’s progress throughout the semester. A student is not graded in relation to their classmates but in relation to their individual progress. Further, grading includes the successful completion of the following:

The fundamental and ongoing assignments in this class are to:
• Attend to movement material presented, as well as to explanations and analyses of its specific components;
• Listen carefully to and apply all corrections and recommendations for improvement that I provide in class;
• Learn the movement material as quickly as you can through observation and practice;
• Perform the movement material as accurately as possible each time you are called upon to do so;
• Reflect in writing as assigned on your progress toward and actual achievement of the learning goals;

Technique Journal:
The student will keep a Journal of corrections, observations, and evaluations of work done in the studio and information from the assigned text. This is neither a diary nor a summary of class but a method by which the student can mark progress, identify tendencies, and develop a critical
and objective analysis of the content of the course and progress in relation to it. The student should refer to relevant information from the text when appropriate.

**Technical Vocabulary:**
Specific terms for improvisational methodologies will be used during the course of the class, a hand out will be prepared.

**Grading:**
I will assess your progress toward and your actual achievement of the learning goals through:

- Daily oral feedback to you and/or others on work done in class;
- Written mid-term and final evaluations
- Oral and/or written feedback of the accuracies and inaccuracies I perceive in your written self-assessments.

Your achievement in mastering the learning goals to the degree appropriate for this course will provide the primary basis for calculating your final letter grade. Your attendance record, your record in turning in the written assignments will be additional factors in calculating your final letter grade.

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm exam</td>
<td>35</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>35</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vocabulary Exam</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technique Journal</td>
<td>10</td>
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**Attendance Policy:**
Attendance is expected in every class. There are only 2 allowed absences for the entire semester, regardless of the reason. The relationship between attendance and your final letter grade is as follows: 1/2 of a letter grade will be deducted for each absence incurred over the two maximum absences allowed for this class. IE: If your grade is a "B" at the end of the semester, but you have a total of 3 absences, your final grade will be a "B-".

- A tardy arrival or early departure over 10 minutes will equate to 1/2 absence. Accruing two of these will equal one absence. If you arrive more than 10 minutes late, you are required to sit-out and take notes for safety reasons, and this counts as your one allowed observation day. If you are less than 10 minutes late, please quietly join the back of the class and begin working immediately, with as little distraction as possible. Three tardies less than 10 minutes is equivalent to one absence. If you are tardy (within 10 minutes of the start of class) two times or less, your grade is not affected; however, timely class arrival is strongly encouraged, and is critical to your safe participation, technical development, and professionalism.
- Students may not make up class in another instructor technique class.
• Observations: In the case of temporary injury or non-contagious illness, students are expected to observe class. During observation, take notes, type them (1-2 pages) and submit them to me in the next class meeting. If I do not receive your notes by the next class meeting, the observation counts as an absence. Notes should go beyond just listing what the combinations were. Pay attention to what the students are doing in relation to the instructor’s feedback. Make correlations between what you see, what you hear, and what you personally experience when you are physically participating in the class. How does observing class further enrich your kinesthetic and cognitive understanding of modern dance?

• Situations such as serious illness, long-term injury, or family emergencies may be dealt with on an individual basis. In some cases, students will be given an Incomplete to be made up within the next semester. In other cases, I may recommend withdrawal from the course.

Additional Requirements and Information:

Attire:
I do not like to dictate attire: clothing that is acceptable will allow full range of motion and must not interfere with my observation of your body, allowing me to properly correct and guide you. Long hair should be securely fastened.

Class Conduct:
Please be respectful of your fellow classmates, the instructor, and our art by being attentive and following studio etiquette at all times during class (if there are any questions as to the components of studio etiquette, please see me privately). I encourage you to ask relevant questions during class, but will not tolerate excessive chatting, socializing, or other distracting behavior. Class time needs to be reserved for refining and improving our craft and our bodies as artistic instruments. For your own safety and enjoyment of this class, no eating or gum-chewing is allowed in the studio. Please turn off or silence all cellular phones and other electronic devices. I strongly encourage you to bring a re-closable water bottle to class, and keep it accessible on the sidelines of the studio.

Expectations of you as a Student:
In addition to maintaining the above outlined expectations, I also request the following:

• To actively participate in class, work on corrections, practice and apply concepts and theories in combinations. Always strive to reach new capacities and discoveries!

• To ask questions if anything is unclear.

• To keep an open mind toward working the body in a new way while drawing upon previous knowledge of and experiences in dance.

Expectations of me as your Instructor:

• To also maintain the above guidelines while sharing with you my knowledge and experiences of modern as clearly as possible.

• To be prepared for class and to provide you with clear and respectful feedback in the form of verbal and manual corrections.

• To be available for you to approach me with any questions or concerns you might have regarding any aspects of this course, my teaching, or your progress.
Sexual harassment:

This is important: There are occasions when the most efficient means of giving a correction is to touch the student. If you are uncomfortable receiving corrections in this manner please see the instructor. I will always ask before giving a correction. It is vital to the learning environment that the students feel safe, secure and respected.

Questions are encouraged!! Communication with the teacher is important and desirable.