Course Description:

The joy of working at this level is that we have the freedom and means to approach dance physically, intellectually, sensationally, energetically, and perhaps in more ways that we will discover together. This class is designed to be a laboratory – a place to experiment, a place where we will sometimes succeed and sometimes fail, and a place where we will learn something new about our moving selves.

Classes will feature diverse dance influences and eclectic interests, and will coalesce into one dynamic and challenging movement experience – sometimes quirky, sometimes athletic, and often fluid and groovy. We will employ a unique approach to warming the body and preparing both body and mind to dance. This class will emphasize a thorough exploration of breath and weight, impulse and sequencing, subtle body and anatomically informed awareness, as well as live and embodied presence in both improvisational and set material. We will ask you to make qualitative choices in your movement execution and to challenge your existing patterns of movement.

Objectives: Through in-class movement experiences, students will gain an understanding of

- somatic attention – connecting mind and body
- dynamic alignment
- vertical versus off-vertical
- body part relationships: head/tail, sit bones/heels, core/distal
- undercurve and overcurve
- body part initiation and sequential follow-through
- directing
- groundedness and receiving the floor
- spiral
- musical and breath-based phrasing
- energy, clarity, and intention

Course Requirements:

1. ATTENDANCE & ACTIVE PARTICIPATION (50% of Final Grade)

Attendance is essential to passing this course. Our modern dance lab is a studio-based class, and therefore your presence and active participation is critical to your understanding of the material and your growth as a dancer.

Policy: You are allowed 3 absences without penalty. Each following absence will result in a 5-percentage-point deduction from your final grade. If you are ill or injured, you may observe class with my approval twice and turn in observation notes for that day’s participation credit. One absence may be made up by attending a third performance and writing a 2-page reflection (attending two performances is already required).
Two tardies will equal 1 absence. Students who arrive more than 15 minutes late will not be allowed to participate and will be marked absent.

“Active Participation” connotes a special level of commitment to your growth as a dance artist. While “participation” may suggest that you merely show up and dance, “active participation” asks that you display a special willingness and readiness to grow on a daily basis.

2. JOURNAL (20% of Final Grade)

Every class will end with 10 minutes of journal writing. Each day’s journal entry should include a free-write response to your experience in the class and a final question. This is an opportunity to creatively process your growth, tendencies, challenges, and goals. Discoveries and questions may include observations about your growth as a technician and/or your emerging choreographic interests. Journals may feature report-style writing, poetic writing, pictures, or any other mode of expression that taps into your thinking creative self. Full credit will be given to those students whose journals demonstrate thoughtful insights and inquiries.

We will collect your journals twice during the semester to check in.

3. ONLINE DISCUSSION BOARD (10% of Final Grade)

To better process your experiences in our studio lab, you are required to post responses to questions about movement theory, aesthetic preferences, and contemporary practitioners on our Blackboard discussion board. We will announce on Monday when we have posted a topic question, reading, video, or quotation, and you must respond by the following Friday to earn your week’s point.

4. MIDTERM SELF-EVALUATION AND MEETING (10% of Final Grade)

In the middle of the semester, Gina will take appointments to meet with students one-on-one for 10-15 minutes. Prior to the meetings, I will hand out a self-evaluation form. At your meeting, we will discuss your self-evaluation of your work in this course so far, and I will look at your journal to assess the effort and thought you are putting into it.

5. CONCERT ATTENDANCE (10% of Final Grade)

In addition to participating in class, one of the best ways to broaden your understanding and appreciation for our art is to see live performance. This assignment will help you develop the observational skills and language to discuss dance beyond the classroom. You are required to attend two professional-level dance performances and to turn in a ticket stub with your name attached as proof of your attendance. See the list of pre-approved performances at the end of this syllabus.

Due: Last Friday of class

Additional Expectations:

You will be on time.
You will have a good attitude and open mind.
You will respect the space and your fellow dancers.
You will ask relevant questions but will not socialize or distract others from learning in class.
You will be properly dressed to dance in clothing that does not interfere with the observation of your body.
You will not wear dangling jewelry in class.
You will not chew gum or eat in the studio.
You will turn your cell phone off or to silent upon entering the studio.
It will behoove you to have a pair of kneepads handy.

Sexual Harassment

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 instructors.

Syllabus as Contract

This syllabus serves as a contract between student and professor. Read carefully as you will be held accountable for its contents.

Pre-approved Concerts for Concert Attendance Points

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date &amp; Time</th>
<th>Concert &amp; Location</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept 26-28</td>
<td>Compagnie Nacera Belaza (ArtPower)</td>
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<tr>
<td>8pm</td>
<td>White Box Live Arts (Point Loma)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 28-29</td>
<td>SDDT’s <em>Trolley Dances</em> (San Diego Dance Theater)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 5-6</td>
<td>Start Point: 1950 Main Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check web for times</td>
<td>San Diego, CA 92113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 4-5</td>
<td><em>San Diego Dances</em> (The PGK Dance Project)</td>
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<tr>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>Spanish Village at Balboa Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 9</td>
<td>Lucy Guerin (ArtPower)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8pm</td>
<td>UCSD’s Mandeville Auditorium</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 19</td>
<td>Sydney Dance Company (ArtPower)</td>
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<tr>
<td>8pm</td>
<td>UCSD’s Mandeville Auditorium</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 26 @ 8pm</td>
<td><em>Dracula</em> (California Ballet)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 27 @ 5:30pm</td>
<td>San Diego Civic Theatre</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 7-9</td>
<td><em>New Adventures</em> (ArtPower)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 pm</td>
<td>White Box Live Arts (Point Loma)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Dance is a little insanity that does us all a lot of good.”
-Edward Demby