

**DANC 184a, Section 22411: Jazz Dance**

**Fall/ Spring**

**2-2 units**

**Day: M/W**

**Time: 11:30a-12:50p**

**Location: AHF B20**

**Instructor: Saleemah E. Knight**

**Office: STO 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor**

**Office Hours: To be scheduled by email**

**Contact Info: saleemah@usc.edu**

**Catalog Description**

Beginning techniques and practice of Jazz Dance. Duplicates credit in former **THTR 184a**.

**Full Course Description**

This course is designed to explore Jazz Dance fundamentals at an introductory level; with a focus on Jazz music as well as music spirited in the Jazz genre. The history of Jazz Dance finds its roots in both African and European cultures, ranging from African American vernacular dance, to the Caribbean and Latin America (Rumba, Salsa, Tango, Capoeira, etc.). Jazz is also reflected in social dance, ballroom, musical theater, film, television, and music video formats. European influences also incorporate Ballet and Modern Dance. Improvisation is paramount to Jazz Dance, where the artist has the ability to build their own identity and encourage multiple interpretations, based on polyrhythms and poly-centric movement, while technique building exercises maintain form and codified movement specific to the genre. This class will explore traditional and contemporary ideas of Jazz Dance movement vocabulary and will be informed by iconic choreographers, musicians, and recording artists from the Jazz Dance continuum.

**Learning Objectives**

This technique class is a non-majors course. It provides the foundation for learning the basics of Jazz Dance movement vocabulary and historical contexts. This course aims to:

- Develop dance vocabulary (terminology and movement).
- Promote knowledge and awareness of safe performance techniques.
- Promote an introductory understanding of the theories, contexts and history of Jazz Dance.
- Develop awareness of musicality
- Understand foundational elements of improvisation and codified Jazz Dance technique at a basic level.

**Prerequisite(s):** N/A

**Recommended Preparation:** N/A

**Course Notes**

This class is reserved for the non-majors and can be repeated in the spring semester

## Description of Assignments and Course Participation

### In-class Participation:

- Turn off or silence cell phones.
- Listen and remain attentive during class.
- Engage in in-class discussions regarding movement practice and historical context.
- Any injuries that prohibit class participation must be reported to the instructor.
- Remain respectful and attentive while others are speaking/demonstrating in class.
- No gum, food, or drinks will be allowed in the studio.
- If you cannot participate in class due to an injury you must quietly take notes on the combinations, ideas, and concepts discussed in class. These notes must be turned in to the instructor at the end of the class period. In some cases, it may also be appropriate to record combinations on electronic devices; the purpose is solely for your at-home practice. Videos of course material are not permitted to be posted on the Internet.
- If you must leave the classroom before the end of class, please let the instructor know beforehand.

### Attendance:

Attendance and full participation in class exercises, as well as completion of all journal entry assignments and the dance reflection paper, are paramount for a passing grade. Students will be expected to practice outside of class in order to progress at an appropriate pace.

The class also has a required final exam. Attendance at the final exam is crucial to receiving a passing grade in the course. The exam will be given on the date as published in the USC schedule of classes for fall semester 2014.

Only 3 permitted absences per semester. If you miss more than the 3 excused absences, the final grade will be lowered by 1/3 of the grade for each additional absence. Please email the instructor (if mentally and physically able) to notify of your absence. If illnesses or family emergencies occur, that result in excessive absences, please communicate with the instructor at your earliest convenience. Three tardy or more are equal to one absence. Attendance, participation and journal entries are paramount to passing the course.

### Journal:

Students are required to keep a Jazz journal. The journal should be one page in length, double-spaced and submitted bi-weekly via Blackboard. The journal entries should highlight progress as well as strengths and weaknesses. Students should also be able to recap the main points of each week's lesson, using vocabulary/vernacular from the Jazz Dance genre to explain exercises. Students can use the attached supplemental vocabulary/ in class practice list to help with identifying elements of each exercise. At times, students will also be asked to view videos online via the Blackboard portal. The video viewing will be based on class discussions and directed learning. Correct spelling of terms is paramount. The journal is due Thursday of every other week and should reflect both the Monday and Wednesday class from the prior 2 weeks. Journals should be written in proper MLA format. Instructions on MLA formatting can be found at:

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>.

### Journal Due Dates:

Journal Number	Due Date
1 (WEEK 2)	Sept. 2, 2015
2 (WEEK 4)	Sept. 16, 2015
3 (WEEK 6)	Sept. 30, 2015
4 (WEEK 8)	Oct. 14, 2015
5 (WEEK 10)	Oct. 28, 2015
6 (WEEK 12)	Nov. 11, 2015
7 (WEEK 14)	Nov. 25, 2015

### Dance Reflection Paper:

Students are required to observe one dance concert during the semester. A 2-page, double spaced, written paper is due on the day of the final, in which students are required to write their observation of the entire show, including any technical elements that they recognize from class being translated to the performance stage in reference to specific pieces. Students are also encouraged to engage all of their senses while observing the work (i.e. what was the mood of the piece?, how many dancers were in the piece?, were any sounds incorporated into the movement?, did it appear to travel in any particular way?, costuming?, multimedia?). Any conflicts should be brought to the instructor's attention at-least one month prior to the date of the concert. Dance reflection papers should be written in proper MLA format. Instructions on MLA formatting can be found at:

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>.

Your choice of attending:

- Mid-Term informal studio showing in PED 207: **Oct 19-23, 2015**
- End of semester showcase in Bing Theatre: **Dec 2-4, 2015**

### Proper Attire for Technique Class:

Students are required to have soft, thin-soled jazz shoes. The torso needs to be visible; no baggy/ heavy sweatshirts. Jazz pants, Jazz capris, or slim fitting pants are appropriate. Hair should be worn off the face. These items can be purchased online or at neighborhood dance wear supply stores. For online purchase at Discount Dance Supply, enter code "Tp50752" and receive an additional discount on purchased items. Students arriving to class in incorrect attire will be asked to sit-out and take notes but will be expected to engage in course dialogue.

## **Grading Breakdown**

### Grading:

- Grades are based on an average of the assessments given by the instructor, completion of the assigned dance reflection paper, journal entries, plus subjective in-class qualities like *effort, progress, attitude, and attendance*. Dance etiquette should be observed while in and around the studio, and will affect grades as well.

### Grading Scale and Point Values:

- In-class participation: 32pts
- Attendance: 32pts
- Dance Performance Journal: 16pts
- Dance Reflection Paper: 5pts

- Final Exam: 15pts
- 100 PTS TOTAL
  
- A+ = 100 points
- A = 96-99 points
- A- = 91-95 points
- B+ = 88-90 points
- B = 85-87 points
- B- = 81-84 points
- C+ = 78-80 points
- C = 75-77 points
- C- = 71-74 points
- D+ = 67-70 points
- D- = 61-63 points
- F = 60 or below

## COURSE CONTENT

- Weeks 1-4 (and continuing throughout the quarter):

Students will approach stretching exercises that aid in preparation for movement execution. Including the following ideas: isolations, body orientation in parallel, grounded movements, weight transfer, port de bra, tracking and knee alignment over the toes, sequential movement/ muscle firing, sitz-bone/tail bone connection, and building flexibility and mobility in the ligaments and joints.

- Weeks 5-8 (and continuing throughout the quarter):

Students will demonstrate Jazz progressions (across the floor). Jazz progressions acquaint the student with the necessity to travel and use the full breadth of movement in locomotion and projection through space.

- Weeks 9-12 (and continuing throughout the quarter):

Weeks Students will demonstrate a "center Jazz barre" to establish a sense of balance and control, stemming from the core at an introductory level. The barre incorporates both parallel and turned out positions, which may include: tendu, relevé, passe, rond de jambe, weight transfer, plié, and preparation for Jazz pirouettes.

- Weeks 13-15:

The students will demonstrate a choreographed combination based on the fundamentals of Jazz dance technique acquired throughout the course. Promotes retention of information, attention to style, details, and movement refinement. Also incorporates improvisation techniques, stage presence, and story telling.

- Week 16:

**Final Exam: Wednesday, December 9th, 11a-1p, AHF B20**

The final exam will be an in-class presentation of all elements practiced throughout the quarter (stretching exercises, progressions, "center jazz barre", and the choreographed combination).

**Note:** All of the above will be taught to classical Jazz Music as well as music from popular artists that are spirited in the Jazz Dance genre, highlighting the attributes of syncopation, tempo change, and room for improvisation.

## STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

- At the end of the semester each student should be able to demonstrate a basic level proficiency in isolating the body parts including: the head, hips, torso, shoulders and legs.
- At the end of the of the semester each student should be able to demonstrate an introductory level proficiency of basic Jazz steps including: placement of the parallel position, the use of Jazz port de bras, locomotion whilst maintaining the use of the demi-plié, syncopated rhythms, a single pirouette en dehors en plié and relevé, basic ideas of weight change (pas de bourrées, pas de bourrées en tournant, ball changes, and pivot turns).
- At the end of the semester each student should be able to approach a basic level proficiency in improvisation and understanding syncopation and musicality.

## METHODS & PROCEDURES

In teaching, the instructor will utilize:

- Physical demonstrations by the teacher
- Improvisations & explorations individually, and/or in partners and in groups
- Light-touch hands-on corrections by the instructor
- Supporting different learning styles—visual, auditory, tactile/kinetic
- Acknowledging “multiple intelligences”—visual/spatial, verbal/linguistic, logical/mathematical, bodily/kinesthetic, musical/rhythmic, interpersonal/intrapersonal.

**Statement for Students with Disabilities** Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Website and contact information for DSP: [http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home\\_index.html](http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html), (213) 740-0776 (Phone), (213) 740-6948 (TDD only), (213) 740-8216 (FAX) [ability@usc.edu](mailto:ability@usc.edu).

**Statement on Academic Integrity** USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one’s own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another’s work as one’s own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. SCampus, the Student Guidebook, ([www.usc.edu/scampus](http://www.usc.edu/scampus) or <http://scampus.usc.edu>) contains the University Student Conduct Code (see University Governance, Section 11.00), while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A.

**Emergency Preparedness/Course Continuity in a Crisis** In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies.

## **Supplemental Vocabulary/ In-class Practice List:**

### STRETCHING EXERCISES:

1. Isolations of the ribcage and head.
2. Port de bra (carriage of the arm).
3. Plié in turned out and parallel positions.
4. Flatback, contraction and arch (pertaining to the back and the core).
5. First, second, and fourth position parallel.
6. First, second, and fourth position turned out.
7. Sitz bone, tailbone connection (head-tail connection).
8. Squaring off the hips.
9. Parallel lunges finding a 90-degree angle with the knees in alignment with the big toe.
10. Twisting from the core
11. Hamstring stretches

### CENTER AND JAZZ BARRE WORK:

1. Relevés and pliés.
2. Activation of the core. Keeping the hip flexors and abdominals on the same plane in order to find balance, heaviness, and neutrality in the pelvis.
3. Rond de jambe a terre and en l'air (45 degrees in turn out or parallel). Rotation vs. stabilization of the hip joint during ronde jambe.
4. Heavy pelvis and weight into the floor.
5. Pas de bourrée and weight change.
6. Fourth position parallel preparation for pirouettes.
7. Second position port de bra.
8. Introduction to Matt Mattox techniques of isolation.
9. Use of contraction

PROGRESSIONS (ACROSS THE FLOOR):

1. Pas de bourrée/ Pas de bourée en tournant
2. Pivot turns
3. Ball change
4. Battements (kicks)
5. Hitch Kicks
6. Pirouettes (single or double)
7. Direction change
8. Spotting
9. Jazz square
10. Six-step combo
11. Step hop
12. Chasse (pron: shashay)
13. Jazz runs
14. Jazz hands
15. Jeté (forward, tour, single/ double stag)
16. Hip projections
17. Samba step
18. Grounded movement