



**DANC 185B: Hip Hop Dance
Section 22436**

Fall 2016

4 units

Day: M/W

Time: 4:30-5:50pm

Location: KDC 236

Instructor: E. Moncell Durden

Office: KDC 227

Office Hours: To be scheduled by email

Contact Info: durden@usc.edu

Catalog Description

A dynamic multi-dimensional training experience which focuses on enhancing and furthering the knowledge of Hip-Hop dance lineage, culture, history, movement technique and music theory. This program will prepare you for teaching, instructing and educating students by providing teachers with an understanding of the cultural context in Hip-Hop history, theory, technique and practice exercises in the forms and the social dances that created those forms. After completing Hip Hop Level A, the participants familiar with the idea of "Ciphering", "Cipher Building" and the circulation of "Cipher Knowledge". From this foundation we transition onto stronger phrases, combos, routines, etc. We'll experience collective interaction/partnering, individual work, floor work, freestyle and improvisation.

Full Course Description

This course is divided into four, 4week sessions. This concentration develops a higher level of proficiency in each form. The first 4 weeks will focus on Locking: a dynamic dance form that employs jumps, high kicks, dives, ground work and precise movement phrasing. The second four weeks focus on Hip Hop freestyle (*blending those forms associated with hip hop*) ground movement and choreography. The third 4week session will focus on House dance, which is a hybrid of multiple forms under the Hip Hop umbrella. The fourth week will focus on interactional flow of the forms learned. Students will learn choreography, create Improvography (*movement repertorie and choreography build from one's own freestyle*) Out of class experience will consist of going to open house dance practices, Groove Night open practice for all forms of "street" dance, viewing related dance footage, video self assessments, keep a journal and learning repertorie from each form.

Course Overview

This Hip Hop B course, introduces the *BEATS*, a movement training system (Body, Emotion, Aesthetics, Time, Space) grounded in rhythmic theories that guide dancers in becoming visually harmonious and building a vast repertoire for self expression. Participants learn muscle control, vocabulary, terminology, technique, movement theory, character building, and body alignment related to various community/Hip Hop dances, dance forms and dance styles. The course is designed to strengthen intellection, physical, vision and auditory acuity. *How?* By exploring body language, mechanics, spiritual modes and rhythmic flow present in African American/Afro-diasporic social popular dance practices. In the cipher (circle) we will literally move through processes that allow for an embodied exploration of the corrugated spaces of Afro-diasporic dance practices on the vertical and horizontal planes of the dance floor. As we "move" through the genealogy of Afro-diasporic and regional African American dance we will shine light upon Hip Hop dance aesthetics, stemming from Black expressive cultural practices, "secu-spiritual" and philosophical belief systems and Afro-diasporic knowledge production, circulation and

preservation. Special attention will be placed on the improvisational principles of “freestyling” + collective individuality at various degrees depending on level. In an effort to facilitate a more complete understanding of the overall dance cultures, *BEATS* links these dance vocabularies and practices with African American musical movements and genres like Blues, Jazz, Swing, New Jack Swing, Rock, Soul, Funk, House, Techno and Hip Hop within geological, historical and cultural contexts. In addition to focusing on what’s most appropriate in training the human body, this movement system includes the mental, emotional and spiritual aspects of the movements.

Learning Objectives

- Demonstrate physical proficiency relevant in the above stated forms
- Explore rhythmic flow between body and music as well as ground movements, techniques and transitions.
- Identify and apply appropriate forms of dance to specific music
- Learn how to communicate thoughts and feelings in a way that gives them a vastly more powerful repertoire for self-expression.
- Gain a contextual/historical intelligence of social dance and what role this plays in terms of placement in society.
- Explore improvisation and its correlation with the musical scale, time, space, weight, levels, direction, flow, and emotion.
- Increase overall strength flexibility and health, identify and practice safe and sequential conditioning techniques, daily health practices (diet, rest, relaxation) follow correct therapy for rehabilitating injury.
- Experience first-hand its rhythms, moods, dynamics, creative expression and improvisation.

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

Glass, Barbara. *African American Dance: An Illustrated History*. McFarland & Company, 2007. Additional short readings, film and videos may be assigned relating to topics covered in class.

Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required

Students will be required to view media outside of class for discussion and other assignments.

Required Articles (subject to change)

Durden, E. Moncell. *Hip Hop Dance in Context in Jazz Dance: A History of the Roots and Branches*, University of Florida Press. 2014

DeFrantz, Thomas. *The black beat made visible: Hip hop dance and body power of the presence of the body* pp. 6481). Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press. 2004

Osumare, Halifu. *The Dance Archaeology of Rennie Harris: Hip Hop or Postmodern? In Ballroom, Boogie, Shimmy Sham, Shake: A Social and Popular Dance Reader*, ed. Julie Malnig Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 261-281.

Online Reading

The Rise and Fall of Hip Hop Dance: *How the B-Boy and B-Girl Became Choreographed Count-By-The-Numbers Dancers*

<https://medium.com/@sdq0218/where-d-the-dancers-go-or-cholly-atkins-ain-t-choreograph-yo-steps-why-you-dance-like-that-d9ab609f59f6#.rwfchfdwg>

Assigned Films

Will view the following films, among others, if schedule allows.

Wreckin’ Shop 1992, directed by Diane Martel, (24 min) <https://youtu.be/zUAuCQN-AJl>

Paris is Burning 1990, directed by Jennie Livingston, (71 min)
Everything Remains Raw, directed by E. Moncell Durden (60 min)
Check Your body at the Door, directed by Sally Sommers, (60min)
Breakin' and enterin' West Coast Hip Hop Documentary (84 min)
Far East Coast in Da House: Street Dance in Japan (32 min)

Recommended Additional Resources (not required)

Jeff Chang, Can't Stop, Won't Stop: A History of the Hip Hop Generation, St. Martins Press, 2005
Readings:

Readings and Viewings: Students should complete the assigned reading or viewing before the class for which it is listed. Nonetheless, please bear in mind that, as dance is a predominately non-verbal form of human expression, watching, experiencing and embodying different dance forms through in-class activities and videos will also constitute primary and textual exposure to the material. Accordingly, visual media shown in class represent vital primary texts for the course and, like lectures and reading materials, will be the basis of questions on quizzes and exams. Students are encouraged to engage with additional media in conjunction with their readings.

Topical Outline

This class will meet twice per week and will be composed of
Warm-up (covers Isolation and strengthening exercises)
Cyclical and across the floor exercises
Locomotive exercises and combinations
Featured combinations that synergize fundamental concepts of kinesiology and rhythmic flow
Cool down (Best practices)

Attendance: Viewing, discussion, and in-class activities factor greatly in this course, so regular attendance is required. For this course, participation includes being attentive and focused (ie: NOT texting or surfing the internet); actively participating in discussions, master classes, and group activities; asking thoughtful questions; coming to class fully prepared; and exercising personal responsibility and consideration of others at all times. If you have more than four unexcused absences, your grade for this class will reflect that fact. Chronic tardiness may be recorded as an absence.

Units of Study:

Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required

Students will be required to view media outside of class for discussion and other assignments.

NOTE: At the instructor's discretion, this syllabus is subject to change.

This course syllabus represents a proposed plan for the semester. The main intention for this syllabus is to outline a plan to engage in the course material thoroughly. Therefore we will follow the syllabus diligently but not rigidly. I may use my discretion to extend out examination and / or discourse around a particular topic. Which might involve adding, subtracting and /or interchanging specific assignments. I will be respectfully transparent and alert you of any changes to subject matter related to this course. Nevertheless, any changes will not result in a significant increase in the course reading materials and, mostly, will comprise of additional visual and / or audio material to enhance class content.

Classroom Conduct/Safety

Honesty – please be honest with yourself, classmates and the instructor about physical ailments, family emergencies, etc.

Students who are ill/injured are expected to attend class and participate by observing and taking notes.

Respect – please respect yourself, classmates, work space and instructor at all times.

Cell phones (and/or other electronic devices) – should be turned off or placed on silent mode (unless otherwise

instructed).

Attire - We will make use of the studio floor. Wear comfortable, loose, non-restrictive clothing in which you can move freely in all classes. This includes appropriate attire for movement *and* shoes (sneakers/tennis shoes). Please Do Not Wear Your Street Shoes in the studio. Have another pair just for class. (I do not recommend jazz shoes, flat bottom shoes are best) Absolutely no denim jeans! Please come dressed to move for every class! e.g.; sweat pants, tights, t-shirts, and or other dance appeal. Be prepared to remove jewelry and watches. And lastly: no gum chewing or eating.

We will be screening a few films in this course. Students who fall asleep during screenings will be considered absent for the class.

Food and Drinks – please, no food and drink in the studio except water.

Enjoy yourself but know that this class should be taken seriously.

Openness and willingness to try new things (e.g. leave attitudes that hinder openness to the principles of the course outside of the class such as frustration with pace of the class, dislike of movement style, lethargy). Intellectual curiosity (in this course means fostering and developing an individual understanding and use of technique and how it is used to communicate and develop nuance and articulation within movement phrases). Ability to accept and work with feedback.

Evaluation of the student's individual rate of technical progress over the semester. In other words, your attitude, how you approach the material, the relevance and thoughtfulness of your contributions (question and /or comments) are all part of participation (see participation below). Additionally, you will be penalized if your participation detracts from overall objectives of the class and or group(s).

Attendance/ Class Participation

The evaluation of your work in this class will be based on the quality of participation and the degree of involvement in all class movement and discussion sessions and any assignments. In addition, your evaluation will include the individual progress made in all content areas of the course, including but not limited to: Knowledge of material, ability to apply corrections, execution of set combinations, degree of improvement as well as:

Your punctuality and class attendance

The consistency of participation in all class activities

The conceptual clarity, and degree of involvement in any creative projects

The thoughtfulness you have toward others and the learning environment

Knowledge of forms and dance techniques

Experiences missed in class cannot be made up. Because of this, Absences may justify some grade reduction. TWO absences are permitted before the student's final grade is affected. *Note that two absences equals missing a week of class.* Upon the third absence, the student's final grade will be affected. Students failing a course due to attendance should consult with an academic advisor to discuss options.

Lateness/Tardiness – A student is considered late after 15 minutes. 2 tardies = 1 absence. For significant lateness, the instructor may consider the tardiness as an absence for the day.

Attendance – The instructor will take attendance. It is each student's responsibility to inform the instructor if they are late to class.

The attendance and lateness policies are enforced as of the first day of classes for all registered students. If registered during the first week of the add/drop period, the student is responsible for any missed assignments and coursework.

Students unable to engage in the physical practice for any reason, attendance is still required. In this case students will be required to observe class and take notes. These notes should contain a critique of the class noting specific principles, techniques, and concepts that were covered in class that day. Notes are due at the conclusion of class

(notes will be returned at next class). Continued observation days will deduct two (2) points from your attendance points.

Class Participation

For this course maintain appropriate participation in class activities (i.e: NOT texting, or surfing the internet, no taking selfies, and not practicing techniques or combinations from other dance class); actively participating in all movement exercises, making comments during discussions and willingness to share views and ideas.

Participation:

Verbal – participating in class discussions

Kinesthetic – Warm-up, Across/ Center Floor, Combinations, and Cipher Sessions.

Auditory – listening to music, instructor and peers

Positive, fully prepared, and ready for physical involvement in all movement experiences. Concentration and alertness in class, and exercising personal responsibility and consideration of other and the learning environment.

Assignments

DANCE REVIEW: Attending a USC Kaufman Performance (To be determined):

Students will write a personal reflection paper (3-5-pages, typed, double-spaced and proof-read) offering original comments on the content and form of a live dance performance given by USC Kaufman BFA Students. Ticket stub and/or program must be stapled to your paper.

Video and Dance Journals (all videos should be time-lined)

Class journals are a tool for your writing assignments as well as an assessment to track your personal growth. Journals should reflect your experience of the class, including but not limited to: forms, techniques, discussions on social-cultural and aesthetic values, theory, commercialization, pre' and post ideologies.

SAMPLE OF WEEKLY VIDEO JOURNAL ENTRIES:

WHEN ASSIGNED via Blackboard and Email, students will review the following material and other additional clips assigned & write a summary for EACH entry:

ASSESSMENT:

Self-evaluation/ journals - involvement in dance is a process that is both developmental and cumulative. It relies on individual motivation and effort. Self-awareness and self-evaluation are both important facets of this process. By using personal journals, goal statements, self-critiques and other similar tools, students are able to participate in their own evaluation.

Movement demonstration - is a very simple and "content-appropriate method in which students show movement they have learned and / or created.

Writing and movement assignments are to assess students knowledge in a variety of dance content areas. This includes but is not limited to: dance vocabulary, dance technique, choreographic principles, historical and cultural contexts, critical analysis and aesthetic understanding.

First Assessment Video:

Video tape yourself after the first week of classes, and then every 4 weeks. In the first video mention your goals for this class. Clearly articulate your general intent for taking this class, and then narrowly define some specific objectives you have determined for yourself. Demonstrate what you have learn in that first week. (Each video should demonstrate the movement and or exercises covered in those past 4 weeks

Midterm Assessment Video and Cipher:

Make a video demonstrating movement you've learned throughout the course. Write about your experience in class, what you thought about your dancing, and any ideas on the material covered in class, assess your personal growth. (Are you reaching your goals you set in the beginning of the semester? do you deem you are working your top level? Why? Why not? What do you know that you did not know? What are you able to do now, that you struggled with in the beginning? (Please do not hesitate to comment on your interactions with the teacher)

Final Assessment Video:

Make of a video during our en-class review practice sessions and ciphers. Write a 1page paper on your growth at this point. Did you reach your goals? what did you over come? Include your over all thoughts of the course.

All assignments are due at the time specified. Exceptions for late assignments are as follows: illness (with a doctor’s excuse) or serious family emergency.

Criteria for Written Work

Conceptual understanding of the materials
Correct Spelling and Grammar

Rubric

Work must be submitted in Times New Roman 12 pt, double-spaced

The margins cannot exceed 1.5 inches

Heading:

Top Left Hand corner of first page

Full Name

DANC 185 Hip Hop Dance

Fall 2016

Instructor: E. Moncell Durden

Date

Title should be centered on the following line (e.g. Dance Critique)

Do not double space the heading

Your last name should be at that top of each page

Please go to Blackboard to view detailed descriptions of the following:

- Reading materials
- Assigned films and clips
- Movement Midterm
- Final Exam

Criteria for Grading

There are a total of 100 points for the semester. Students earn the 100 points based on the four P’s Presence, Participation, Performance and Progress. Unexcused absences are penalized by a 10point deduction each occurrence. The Mid-Term and Final exam requires individual and collective participation.

TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS = 100

Letter Grade Requirements:

	Attendance/Participation	=15 points
Film Reflection Paper	=10 points	
Off campus experiences	=15 points	
Film Reflection Paper	=20 points	
Mid-Term assessment	=20 points	
Final Movement Presentation	=20 points	

Grading Scale:	100pts – 90pts	= A’s (A+, A, A-)
	89pts – 80pts	= B’s...
	79pts – 70pts	= C’s...
	69pts – 60pts	= D’s...
	under 60pts	= F

COURSE SCHEDULE (subject to change)

	Daily Activities	Movements	Videos	Reading/Journals
Week 1 - 4	Locking: Vocabulary, Technique, terminology Movement principles	Lockers handshake And other signature performance pieces	Soul Train Johnny Carson Carol Burnett Show Dick Van Dyke Show	
Week 5 - 8	Hip Hop technique, vocabulary, groove movement principles, terminology	Hip Hop freestyle and Choreography, Freestyle/improve Ground movements	Wreckin shop Soul Brothers Mop Top Family Groovaloos Groove Night	Hip hop dance formations and the jazz continuum
Week 9 – 12	House Dance: Vocabulary, technique, terminology, Movement principles	Lofting, ground exercises, foot work, somatic flow	Ejoe Wilson, Brian Green, Serial Steppers Open House CYBATD	Come into my House. Do you remember House
Week 13 - 15	Review, practice and cipher sessions			Various performances
Week 16	Finals			

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Section 11, Behavior Violating University Standards <https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the Office of Equity and Diversity <http://equity.usc.edu> or to the Department of Public Safety <http://adminopsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety>. This is important for the safety of the whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. The Center for Women and Men <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage <http://sarc.usc.edu> describes reporting options and other resources.

Support Systems

A number of USC’s schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the American Language Institute <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. The Office of Disability Services and Programs

http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, USC Emergency Information <http://emergency.usc.edu> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

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.

FINAL NOTE: It is often necessary for the instructor to place his/her hands on a student in order to better facilitate the learning process and to illustrate proper alignment. If a student should have an aversion to this practice please notify the professor prior to the start of classes.