

DANC 186: Afro-Cuban Dance

Fall/ Spring

2 units

Day: M/W

Time: 10:30am-11:50am

Location: KDC 107

Instructor: S. Anindo Marshall

Office: (213) 740-9327

Office Hours: 10:30am – 12N (M/W)

Contact Info: 818-970-6540

Catalog Description

An introduction to Afro Cuban Dance techniques, basic drum rhythms, and musicality, with an understanding of cultural practices and vocalizations. Afro Cuban Dance examines the traditions related to specific ethnic groups in Latin Europe and West Africa, and the influences of Rumba and Salsa Dance on the form.

Full Course Description

This course will look at Afro-Cuban cultural traditions, their evolution, development, and “creo-lization”. The formation of Cuban Dance and music idioms—as opposed to European or African—is a byproduct of the process of cultural synthesis common in the Western hemisphere. In many ways, parallels can be drawn between the development of Cuban culture, “American” culture and popular culture. Cuba nonetheless, retains a unique position in the Western Hemisphere. Students will learn traditions related to specific ethnic groups (e.g. Yoruba, Fon) and/or regions of West Africa (e.g. the Congo, the Calabar region). They will look at the Latin influences of Rumba and Salsa Dance within the form and utilize vocalization skills. Students will also identify important musicians, recording artists and composers that have contributed to the genre.

Learning Objectives

This technique class is a non-majors course. It provides the foundation for learning the basics of Afro Cuban 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 Afro Cuban based dance practices.
- Develop awareness of musicality
- Develop awareness of vocalization
- Understand the importance of community in Afro Cuban based dance practices.

Student Learning Outcomes:

- To acquaint oneself with African diaspora dance traditions of Cuba through studio practice, reading, and performance viewing.
- Develop understanding of global patterns and processes and their potential impact on society; Students will acquire knowledge about the African diaspora and its impact on cultures of the Western Hemisphere (and the globe).
- Identify music choices that lend to the vocalization and physicality of Afro Cuban based dance practices.
- Demonstrate understanding of the interconnectedness, difference, and diversity of a global society; recognize similarities and differences in manifestations of North American culture impacted by “transcultural” patterns similar to that of Cuba.

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.
- Wearing appropriate attire to all classes (as described within the syllabus)

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 2016.

Only 4 permitted absences per semester. If you miss more than the 4 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 journal. The journal should be three pages in length (one for each week), double-spaced and submitted every three weeks via email to the instructor of record. 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 (from the previous journal up to that point), using vocabulary/vernacular from the Afro Cuban Dance genre to explain exercises. Students can use their class notes as reference toward journal entries. At times, students may 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, as directed in class, is paramount. The journal is due every 3 weeks via email and should reflect all classes from the prior 3 weeks. The journals are worth 4 points each, one point for being turned in on time and one point for each well-written page. 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/>.

All journal entries are due at 5pm on the following dates:

Journal Number	Due Date
1 (WEEK 3)	September 7, 2016
2 (WEEK 6)	September 28, 2016
3 (WEEK 9)	October 19, 2016
4 (WEEK 12)	November 9, 2016

Dance Reflection Paper:

Students are required to observe one dance concert during the semester (preferably dance forms stemming from the African tradition: Afro Cuban, Jazz, Hip Hop). 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 and are due on the day of the final exam (. Instructions on MLA formatting can be found at:

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

A list of appropriate performances for the dance reflection paper will be provided by the course instructor.

Proper Attire for Technique Class:

Students are required to dance barefoot. The torso needs to be visible; no baggy/ heavy sweatshirts. Dance pants, capris, long flowing skirts (for the ladies) or slim fitting pants (for the men) are appropriate. Hair should be worn off the face. These items can be purchased online, at neighborhood dancewear supply stores or at athletic apparel stores. 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:

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: 15 pts.
- Dance Performance Journal: 30 pts
- Dance Reflection Paper: 25 pts.
- Final Exam: 30 pts.
- 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

Week 1: Introduction to the dance studio, classroom etiquette, and attire (skirts for ladies throughout the semester). Introduction to class warm-up and basic singing exercises. Basic understanding of the origins of Afro Cuban based movement, foot patterning and rhythms.

Overview of course syllabus and schedule.

Week 2 (and continuing throughout the semester): Basic Afro Cuban dance footwork and rhythms. Beginning understanding of drum accompaniment with Afro Cuban dances. Women should have skirts by week 3.

Week 3 (and continuing throughout the semester): Studio work in Yoruba based dance practices. Introduction and lecture including practice of accompanying songs and vocalizations from Nigeria and Benin. Ladies will need skirts for this portion of the course and over the next few weeks.

Week 4 (and continuing throughout the semester): In studio practice in Orisha (Yemaya) based dances. Introduction to Orisha culture and history. Continued practice of accompanying vocalizations and songs. Skirts needed.

Week 5 (and continuing throughout the semester): In studio practice in Orisha (Yemaya) based dances. Introduction to Orisha culture and history. Continued practice of accompanying vocalizations and songs. Skirts needed.

Week 6 (and continuing throughout the semester): Yemaya hand out and discussion. Dances and footwork, including songs. Skirts needed.

Week 7 (and continuing throughout the semester): Understanding the significance of the Congo as a Western hub of Africa toward the U.S. during the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. In class reading or video viewing on the history of the Congolese.

Week 8: In class video viewing of the documentary; **Ifa-Orisa, Yoruba tradition in Cuba and the New World with Jean Jerome Baudry and Beth Peart Weekes**. Ladies will need skirts. All students will continue to expand on dance techniques.

Week 9: In class video viewing of the documentary; **Yoruba Pilgrimage Documentary Osun Osogbo, Nigeria Yoruba religious & Culture English subtitles**. Ladies will need skirts. All students will continue to expand on dance techniques.

Week 10: Continued practice of Yemaya, Palo and Bembe. Introduce Makuta. Skirts needed. Midterm will journal entries – Documentary reviews and class assessments.

Week 11: Review of basic Afro Cuban rhythms and dance (and continuing throughout the semester) hand out on Lucumi – Church of The Orishas.: Skirts needed.

Week 12: Understanding Rhumba movement. Ladies will need skirts. All students will continue to review rhythms. Rehearse the Afro Cuban piece for December performance.

Week 13: Studio work: we will continue to rehearse rhythms, songs and dances.

Week 14: Makuta and Abakua dances of Congo, Nigeria and Cuba. Understanding the connections between the two forms and their unique rhythmic patterning. All students will continue to expand on drum techniques.

Week 15: Review of clave rhythms practiced throughout the semester – Wawancó and 6/8, Palo, Bembe, Makuta and Orisha (Yemaya) dance forms and historical roots. Skirts needed. Dancers will only be tested on the last 6 weeks material for the final exam (weeks 9-14). Final exam will include movement assessment, rhythm, songs and include a short history/ vocabulary written portion – based on Yemaya and Orisha.

FINAL EXAM. The final exam will be an in-class presentation of all elements learned weeks 9-14. Final exam will include movement assessment, rhythm and include a short history/ vocabulary written portion - based on Yemaya and Orisha. Dance reflection paper due on the day of final exam. Skirts needed.

Note: All of the above will be taught to music spirited in the Afro Cuban Dance tradition based on each individual form.

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 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.