**DANC 231 Improvisation and Composition IV: Advanced**



**Spring 2019**

**2 units**

**Day: T, TH**

**Time: 3:30-4:50 pm**

**Location: USC Glorya Kaufman International Dance Center**

**Instructor: Thomas McManus**

**Office: 227**

**Office Hours: TBD**

**Email: mcmanust@usc.edu**

**Tel: 213-821-8841**

**Catalogue Description**

A deepening of the improvisational and compositional skills that prepare students for the creative processes of dancing, dance-making and performance.

**Full Course Description**

A deepening of the improvisational and compositional skills that prepare students for the creative processes of dancing, dance-making and performance. Based in physical research, this course will also consider improvisation and composition as a topic in readings and written work, involve individualized digital archiving of dance assignments, and lays the foundation for discovery in the form.

**Learning Objectives**

This course is the fourth in a series on improvisation and composition in the first two years of the BFA Dance degree. Part of the core curriculum, the syllabus builds essential tools for a well-rounded, progressive dance studies. The class work is designed to:

* Prepare students for the creative processes of dancing, dance-making and performance
* Research improvisation and composition in readings and written work
* Begin digital archiving of dance assignments

**Recommended Prep:** Extensive Ballet Training

**Required Readings and Supplementary Materials**

*A Choreographer’s Handbook*. Jonathan Burrows. Routledge, 2010.

*Improvisation Technologies CD-ROM, William Forsythe*

Strange Tools, Alva Noe, Hill and Wang 2015

**Description and Assessment of Assignments**

Additional insight and perspectives into physical research in course will be assessed and analyzed through the following written and compositional assignments:

* Essay: What Improvisational/Compositional elements will I work with in the future (3-5 pages) Due: Week 6
* Composer–Choreographer Collaboration Assignment Due Week 10
* Final Dance Composition Assignment Due Week 15

**Grading Breakdown**

30% Class Readings, Assignments and Participation

* Be physically and mentally attentive during class time
* Contribute thoughtfully to creative research. EG: Applying and furthering concepts presented in class in self-directed improvisation and composition exercises and assignments.
* Complete reading and video assignments and be prepared for discussion
* Develop collaborative skills. ED: Demonstrate developing communication skills; learning how to listen to peers in classroom setting, willingness to learn how to effectually express creative and analytical ideas to peers, mentors and teachers in class; learning effective strategies for creative process problem-solving and contributing to creative collaboration.
* Apply and demonstrate comprehension of concepts and theories presented. EG: Demonstrate development of a 360 degree view of an approach to the body (as opposed to a solely ‘frontal’ mirror view); exploring and expanding an understanding of the dancers’ kinesphere; developing real-time composition skills.

30% Danced Test

- Composer–Choreographer Collaboration Assignment Due Week10

40% Essays and Assignments1.

- 1 Essay: What Improvisational/Compositional elements will I work with in the future (3-5 pages) Due: Week 6 (20% of grade)

- 2. Final Exam. Due Week 15 (20% of grade)

**Assignment Submission Policy**

Due WEEK 6: Essay: What Improvisational/Compositional elements will I work with in the future

Due WEEK 10: Composer–Choreographer Collaboration Assignment

Due WEEK 15:Final Dance Composition Assignment

**Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown**

Course topics are taught in a seven, two-week modules that impart a comprehensive introduction to improvisation and composition studies at a University level.

WEEK 1: William Forsythe

WEEK 2: William Forsythe

WEEK 3: Azure Barton

WEEK 4: Azure Barton

WEEK 5: Composer–Choreographer Collaboration

WEEK 6: Composer–Choreographer Collaboration

WEEK 7: Victor Quijada Rubberband method

WEEK 8: Victor Quijada Rubberband method

WEEK 9: Composer–Choreographer Collaboration

WEEK Spring Break

WEEK 10: Performance Composer–Choreographer Collaboration

WEEK 11: Barak Marshall

WEEK 12: Structured Improvisation

WEEK 13: Structured Improvistion

WEEK 14: Building Phrases

WEEK 15: Class Showings, Final Assignment

WEEK 16: Final, Tuesday May 7, 2-4pm

* **Grading Breakdown**
* A = 95-100 points
* A- = 91-94 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 = 61­-66 points
* F = 60 or below

**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>, (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.