DANC 280g: Introduction to Dance as an Art Form
Section: 22479R

Fall 2019
4 units
Time: M/W, 10-11:40am
Location: KDC 235

Instructor: Sarah Fried-Gintis, PhD
Office: KDC 235
Office Hours: Thursdays 1-3 and by appointment
Contact: sfried@usc.edu; (213) 821-6979

Catalogue Description
Gateway to the minor in dance. An interdisciplinary overview of dance relating to the aesthetic and art in various subjects. Applications of the elements of dance studies, art criticism, and viewing productions to explore topic such as architecture, photography, poetry, technology, cinematic arts, sports, medicine, and more.

Course Overview
In this interdisciplinary overview of Western dance forms, students will study the origins and evolution of classical and contemporary dance forms, explore emerging topics in the field of dance studies, and develop a methodological approach to analyzing dance in a range of contexts. Emphasis is placed on systematic analyses of dance as both art and artifact based on historical, material, personal, and aesthetic perspectives. Students will learn to analyze content, context, and meaning through various lenses, and will apply this framework to the analysis of a variety of dance genres. Through critical engagement with course readings and live and recorded performances, as well as group discussions, students will advance critical reading, writing and analytic skills. In a final paper, utilizing the methodology learned, students will provide a critical analysis of a live or recorded performance of their choosing that integrates secondary source literature, personal observation and reflection, and primary source research. Students will also work in groups to prepare a final oral presentation on the intersection of their individual project’s research topics.

Learning Objectives
In this course, students will:
- Develop critical reasoning and analytic skills, adopting varying approaches to viewing, critiquing and appreciating Western dance performances;
- engage with the theoretical, historical and aesthetic underpinnings of significant dance works;
- understand dance as both an artistic product and a historical artifact worthy of rigorous study;
- explore the creative aspects of dance and how they relate to major historic and artistic trends;
- learn to read and interpret actively and analytically, to think critically and creatively, and to synthesize these practices;
- develop proficient research, writing, and speaking skills, with emphasis on integration of personal reflection and insight with research to formulate a persuasive argument;
- understand dance in relationship to other scholastic and artistic disciplines;
- identify significant dance artists and genres and be able to historicize/contextualize them accurately;
- become active participants in the dance world by attending live dance performances during the semester;
- learn to appreciate dance as both a participant and viewer and reflect on the relationship between audience and performer;
- examine relevant theoretical trends in the field of Dance Studies;
- make connections between their own personal history and the larger history of the discipline;
- collaborate with peers in presenting, analyzing, comparing and contrasting dance works.
The primary objective of the course is to develop a methodological means to viewing and understanding dance. The course is divided into two “acts.” Prior to the midterm, readings focus on understanding dance as an embodiment and representation of cultural, historical, ethnographic, and racial values (among others) in a given moment in time by examining a different genre of dance each week. Emphasis is placed on viewing dance as an artifact created through choreography, composition, production, and representation. After the midterm, readings examine dance through a series of specific lenses – focusing on gender and sexuality, social activism, and disability.

**Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required**
Students will be required to view media outside of class for discussion and other assignments. Access to readings and submission of papers will be through Blackboard.

**Required Textbook**
There is no required textbook for this course. Instead, for the cost of a textbook, students are expected to purchase at least one (1) ticket to a professional dance performance in the greater Los Angeles area and to participate in one dance activity during the course of the semester.

**Required Readings (Subject to Change)**
These scholarly articles, websites and other excerpted materials are readily available through Project Muse, JSTOR and other online e-databases accessible from the USC Libraries’ Website. All articles will also be posted on the course website before the first day of class.

- Forsythe, William, 2009. “Choreographic Objects.” Synchronous Objects for One Flat Thing, reproduced. Ohio State University and the Forsythe Company. Online: [https://synchronousobjects.osu.edu/content.html#/TheDance](https://synchronousobjects.osu.edu/content.html#/TheDance)


**Description and Assessment of Assignments (Subject to Change)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm (Open Book)</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>October 14, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper Proposal (1 - 2 Pages)</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>October 21, 019</td>
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<tr>
<td>1st Response Paper (2-3 Pages)</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>November 13, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>2nd Response Paper (2-3 pages)</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>November 25, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oral Presentation</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam (FINAL Paper Due)</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>December 16, 2019</td>
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A+ 100 points  B+ 87-89 points  C+ 77-79 pts.  D+ 66-69 points
A  95-99 points B 84-86 points  C 74-76 pts.  D = 62-65 points
A- 90-94 points B- 80-83 points  C- 70-73 pts.  D- 60-61 point
F  60 or below

**Students pursing a Pass/Fall grade must receive a 70% or above.**

**Readings and Viewings:**
All course readings are available for download through online databases accessible from the USC Libraries’ Website. While most of these articles will also be posted on Blackboard, students should become familiar with online databases, particularly in preparation for your research paper.

Readings will serve as valuable resources, but as dance remains deeply rooted in embodied practices, watching and experiencing through in-class activities and videos is critical. Accordingly, visual media will often serve as vital primary materials for the course and, like lectures and reading materials, may be the basis of questions on exams. Students are encouraged to engage with additional media in conjunction with their readings.

Students will have approximately 50-100 pages of reading assignments each week depending on the nature and complexity of the source, and/or directed research or equivalent video viewing each week. Students should
complete the assigned readings or viewings prior to the week for which it is listed.

The majority of course viewing will occur in class, which requires students to regularly attend and participate in class discussions.

Attendance and Participation:
To succeed in this class, students must be present, prepared, and ready to engage with course material. Viewing, discussion, and class activities figure greatly. Participation and preparation will be evaluated regularly with in-class exercises.

Active participation includes adhering to standard classroom etiquette: no sleeping, private discussion, or distracting use of technology. Students are expected to engage fully in group discussions and activities, to ask thoughtful questions, to be considerate, sensitive, and open-minded classmates, to come to class fully prepared, and to exercise personal responsibility and consideration of others at all times.

Mid-Term and Final Exam:
All exams are take in in-class and are open-book (notes, reading, and slides must be handwritten or typed and printed out; laptops are not permitted). Students are required to be in class for each of the class exams, no requests for extensions or rescheduling will be granted.

Mid-Term: In-class and Open Book, October 14, 2019
Final: December 16, 2019

Written Assignments:
Written assignments will be submitted via Blackboard by midnight (end of the day) on the due date. Students are not permitted to share documents with the grader or instructor via communal drives such as Google. No extensions will be granted. All assignments must be properly footnoted with complete bibliographies.

**Note: All papers will be typed in Times New Roman, 12-point font, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins, default character spacing, and proper citations.

Dance Analysis Paper (By November 13)
Students will write a short paper (2-3 pages) reflecting on the content and format of a live dance performance on or off campus. More information to be provided.

**Recommended Performances in the Los Angeles area include (but are not limited to):**

- September 21, 2019: California Step Association Interactive Dance Performance (Hyde Park Miriam Mathews Branch Library)
- September 26-28, 2019: BODYTRAFFIC at the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts –
- September 28, 2019: Laguna Dance Festival (Orange County); Performances by Parsons Dance, RUBBERBANDance, Ballet West
- October 24-27, 2019: Glorga Kaufman Presents Dance at the Music Center: Mariinsky Ballet (formerly Kirov Ballet)
- November 1, 2019: Visions & Voices, Merce Cunningham Mini Event, KDC Courtyard
- Kaufman BFA Student Works in Progress Showing, KDC 101
- November 11, 2019: Visions & Voices: Black Grace

Dance Analysis Paper (By November 25)
Students will write a short paper (2-3 pages) reflecting on their experience dancing or participating in a dance class – whether in a class or social setting. Papers will use descriptive language to describe the physical embodied experience of dancing, paying attention to context, intentionality, experience, and setting. Experiences may come from participating in a regularly scheduled dance class, a master class, workshops, cyphers, or social dances, or
from being an active member of an audience where there is strong audience-performer interaction. More information to be provided.

Recommended Avenues for Involvement include but are not limited to:

- Any dance class in any genre
- Any master class in any genre
- USC Dance Organizations
- Engagement in “Street dance” or cyphers
- Attendance to Site Specific Works
- Cumbia at the Music Center (8/30)

**Paper Proposal (October 21)**

1-2 pages identifying the performance under analysis, 3-5 supplemental secondary sources, and 3-5 questions of intended inquiry. An argument and analysis is not expected at this stage of development, but the proposal should show engagement in the appropriate literature. Final papers that deviate significantly from the paper proposal will be penalized heavily (20pts). The final paper should demonstrate a natural progression in research and analysis since the proposal. Students will attach the proposal and provided comments with the final paper.

**Final Research Paper (December 16)**

8-10 pages, properly formatted and footnoted and with a full bibliography. Using at least 3 scholarly sources (in addition to any chosen popular sources) and applying the methodology and concepts of the course, students will analyze a LIVE or RECORDED performance of their choice. The paper will demonstrate critical engagement with the subject matter (i.e. evidence of original thinking) as well as careful engagement with, and thoughtful integrations of, scholarly sources. It will demonstrate ample research and preparation, be organized, polished, and proofread.

**Group Presentation (due dates TBA)**

Students will work in groups of 3-5 students and will present commonalities and differences in the findings of their final papers. This project requires 5-10 hours of outside collaboration and is intended to demonstrate thoughtful analysis of different artistic objects. Groups will meet in advance of the presentation date to discuss paper topics, uncover points of connection and difference, and craft a presentation that brings all participants’ work into dialogue with each other. PowerPoint, Prezi, or other visual media is expected. Final grades on group presentations will be based on a combination of evaluation by self, group collaborators, class colleagues, and faculty member. Presentations are expected to be 15-20 minutes and to be followed by 10-15 minutes of group-facilitated peer discussion.

**Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems**

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 Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” [policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b](http://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b). 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](http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct).

**SUPPORT SYSTEMS:**

- **Student Counseling Services (SCS)** – (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call
  - Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. [engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling](http://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling)

- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline** – 1 (800) 273-8255
  - Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. [www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

- **Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP)**
  - (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call
  - Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. [engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp](http://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp)

- **Sexual Assault Resource Center**
For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: sarc.usc.edu

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance – (213) 740-5086
Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. equity.usc.edu

Bias Assessment Response and Support
Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support

The Office of Disability Services and Programs
Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. dsp.usc.edu

Student Support and Advocacy – (213) 821-4710
Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa

Diversity at USC
Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. diversity.usc.edu

USC Emergency Information
Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible. emergency.usc.edu

USC Department of Public Safety
UPC: (213) 740-4321 – HSC: (323) 442-1000 24-hour emergency or to report a crime.
Provides overall safety to USC community. dps.usc.edu

COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1  August 26 & 28
Introduction: Dance as a Primary Source, Analyzing Dance, and Dance Appreciation

ACT 1: CONTEXT

WEEK 2  September 2 (NO CLASS) & September 4
Early Dance and Ballet: Dance and Historical Embodiment
- Hamilton, Trenton. The History of Western Dance, edited by Kathy Campbell, Rosen Publishing Group, 2015. (pp. 1-35)

WEEK 3  September 9 & 11
Waltz: Dance and Cultural Embodiment
WEEK 4  September 16 & 18  
Salomes and Minstrel Men: Dance and the Colonial/Imperial Eye 

WEEK 5  September 23 & 25  
Tap and Jazz: Ethnography and Race 

WEEK 6  September 30 & October 2  
Contemporary Dance: Intentionality 

WEEK 7  October 7 & 9  
Choreography and Composition: Graham and Forsythe 

WEEK 8  October 14 & 16  
Production Values and Site Specificity  
MIDTERM 

ACT II  

WEEK 9  October 21 & 23  
Dance and Gender and Sexuality

**WEEK 10**  
**October 28 & 30**  
Dance and Social Activism  

**WEEK 11**  
**November 4 & 6**  
Choreography and Disability  
- Additional Reading TBD.

**WEEK 12**  
**November 11 & 13**  
Dance and Globalization  

**WEEK 13**  
**November 18 & 20**  
Dance and New Media  

**WEEK 14**  
**November 25 & 27 (NO CLASS on 11/27 - Happy Thanksgiving!)**  
*Oral Presentations*

**WEEK 15**  
**December 2 & 4**  
*Oral Presentations*

**FINAL EXAM**  
Monday, December 16  
8-10am  
*FINAL PAPER DUE*