



## DANC 180: African Dance

Fall/ Spring

2 units

Day: Friday

Time: 10:00am-11:50am

Location: Online

Instructor: S. Anindo Marshall

Office: (213) 740-9327

Office Hours: By Appointment Only

Contact Info - cell: 818-970-6540

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### Catalog Description

African Dance technique at the beginning/intermediate level. The course is a way of knowing, understanding, and experiencing culture, emphasizing cultural traditions, community outreach and diversity.

The course works through artistic process, practice, performance, and related activities, using dance, theater, and music work rooted in the African tradition and contemporary African aesthetics. The focus will be West and Central African traditional dance and music.

### Full Course Description

This course will look at African cultural traditions, their evolution, development, with focus on rhythm, songs, and culture as well as dance choreography traditionally performed for rites of passage, courtship, and other cultural occasions. African dance is distinctive and is characterized by total body articulation and simultaneous emphasis on various parts of the body as it moves in time to the music. In Africa, dance forms are an important part of ritual ceremonies that mark the experiences of one's life, teach social values and offer praise, depict stories and re-enact histories of the community, communicate with ancestors, and work therapeutically to heal the sick. Dance plays an important part in ceremonial rituals and rites of passage. Students will learn traditions related to specific ethnic groups and regions of West and Central Africa and learn dance forms that have an important part of ritual ceremonies that mark the experiences of one's life, teach social values and offer praise, depict stories and re-enact histories of the community, communicate with ancestors, and work therapeutically to heal the sick. They will learn that African dance plays an important part in ceremonial rituals and rites of passage. Students will learn African history as it relates to the dances. They will also look at the influences African dance has had on Western dance and music.

### Learning Objectives

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

#### Student Learning Outcomes:

- To acquaint oneself with African dance traditions 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 African dance and its impact on cultures of the Western Hemisphere (and the globe).
- Identify music choices that lend to the vocalization and physicality of African based dance practices.
- Demonstrate understanding of the inter-connection, difference, and diversity of a global society; recognize similarities and differences in manifestations of North American culture impacted by “trans-cultural” patterns similar to that of Africa.

### 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 African 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 4)	9/11/2020
2 (WEEK 7)	10/2/2020
3 (WEEK 10)	10/23/2020

#### Dance Reflection Paper:

Students are required to observe one dance concert online (e.g. - You Tube), 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, however because we are not at Kaufman, please wear tennis shoes when outside or on a rough surface. The torso needs to be visible; no baggy/ heavy sweatshirts. Dance pants, capris, wrap around skirt - lapa (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 dance wear 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 Breakdown

42% Participation.

17% Mid-term exam includes lesson progress since beginning of semester.

11% Journal

7% Dance Review

23% Final Exam includes lesson progress since Mid Term.

A+ = 100 points, A = 95-99 points, A- = 91-94 B+ = 88-90 points, B = 85-87 points, B- = 81-84 C+ = 78-80 points, C = 75-77 points, C- = 71-74 D+ = 67-70 points, D = 64-66 points, D- = 61-63 points, F = 60 or below

### COURSE CONTENT

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

Week 2 (and continuing throughout the semester): Basic African dance footwork and rhythms. Beginning understanding of drum accompaniment with African dances.

Week 3 (and continuing throughout the semester): Studio work in Guinea based dance practices. Introduction and lecture including practice of accompanying songs and vocalizations from Guinea and Senegal.

Week 4 (and continuing throughout the semester): In studio practice in Sorsornet - a dance by the Baga tribe that comes from the upper coastal region of Guinea and Adizogbo - a Ghanaian war dance from the Ewe tribe, Southeastern part of Ghana . Introduction to Senegalese and Ghanaian culture and history. Continued practice of accompanying vocalizations and songs.

Week 5 (and continuing throughout the semester): Continuing in studio practice in Sorsornet and Adizogbo dances. Introduction to Senegalese and Ghanaian culture and history. Continued practice of accompanying vocalizations and songs. Skirts needed.

Week 6 (and continuing throughout the semester): African History hand out and discussion. Introduce Congolese dance and footwork and Afro-dance.

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: MID-TERM - Friday October 9<sup>th</sup>. In class video viewing of African documentary. Write review of documentary and hand in a paper about African History. Journal entries including class assessments. All students will continue to expand on dance techniques.

Week 9: Continue studying Congolese dance and footwork and Afro-dance, while expanding on dance techniques.

Week 10: Continued practice of Sorsornet, Adizogbo and Congolese dance and Afro-dance.

Week 11: Review of basic African rhythms and dance (and continuing throughout the semester) Literature will be handed out.

Week 12: Understanding African movement. We will continue to review rhythms and dances. Rehearse the African piece for November performance.

Week 13: Review rhythms we worked on throughout the semester. 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 Sorsornet and Adizogbo and the Congolese dance, Afro-dance.

FINAL EXAM - The final exam will be an in-class presentation of all elements learned. Final exam will include movement assessment, rhythm and include a short history/ vocabulary written portion - based on Sorsornet and Adizogbo and Congolese dance, Afro-dance. Dance reflection paper due on the day of final exam.

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

## METHODS & PROCEDURES

In teaching, the instructor will utilize:

- Physical demonstrations by the teacher
- Improvisations & explorations individually
- 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](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.

## COURSE-SPECIFIC POLICIES, GRADING TIMELINE, LATE WORK AND TECHNOLOGY

### ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION

All assignments should be emailed.

### GRADING TIMELINE

All assignments will be graded within two weeks of submission.

### LATE WORK

Late homework will not be accepted for credit unless advance arrangements have been made with instructor or unless exceptional circumstances occur. If pre-approved by instructor, you may email homework or assignments to the instructor.

### TECHNOLOGY IN THE CLASSROOM

In respect for our guests and one another, students are asked to refrain from texting, checking email, surfing, engaging in social media and doing schoolwork from other courses during class time.

## DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT OF ASSIGNMENTS

### In-Class Work

Evidenced by daily presence in class. As this is an embodied studio course, regular attendance and active participation in the course are mandatory. If you are healthy, you are expected to be in class and engaged.

### SYNCHRONOUS PARTICIPATION:

In general, students should plan to attend every synchronous session for the classes in which they are enrolled, irrespective of when it occurs in their time zone. For this course, the weekly synchronous ZOOM sessions will be:  
Friday 8:00a-10:00am. (9:00am - 11:50am)

### USC SHIBBOLETH LOG-IN

Students are expected to be signed-in to their USC account prior to the start of each Zoom class session to ensure a safe and smooth experience for all students.

### TIME ZONE ACCOMMODATIONS

USC considers the hours from 7:00am to 10:00pm, in the local time zone for each student, as reasonable times for students to attend synchronous sessions or engage in synchronous learning activities or assessments. Should students be unable to attend synchronous sessions they are expected to watch the ZOOM RECORDING and turn in an ALTERNATIVE ASSIGNMENT to receive that week's participation points.

Students who are unable to participate in real time should contact me to make alternative arrangements.

USC's Nine International Offices: Support for international students is also available through USC's offices in Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong and South China, Taiwan, South Korea, India, UK and Europe, Brazil, and Mexico. Additional details and contact information can be found at <https://global.usc.edu/global-presence/international-offices/>.

#### RECORDING ONLINE CLASSES

For the Fall 2020 semester, USC policy requires that all classes conducted online be recorded for asynchronous viewing with transcriptions made available.

#### "CAMERA-ON" POLICY

For this course, students are expected to have their cameras on during synchronous online sessions. Students facing challenging situations (internet connectivity, illness, home environments, etc.) are encouraged to use a virtual background, which will eliminate most privacy concerns, and earphones or headsets to improve audio quality. Please contact your professor directly for additional accommodations.

#### NETIQUETTE & PARTICIPATION:

Participation includes being attentive and focused; actively participating in physical exercises, discussions, breakout rooms, and group activities; asking thoughtful questions; coming to class fully prepared; and exercising personal responsibility and consideration of others at all times. Texting/Chatting during ZOOM class sessions via cell phone and/or other private message apps will be considered highly disrespectful.

#### EXCUSED ABSENCES:

As a general rule, absences will not be excused. Under extraordinary circumstances (i.e. prolonged contagious illness, injury, family emergency, etc.), some absences may potentially be excused. In such instances, students are expected to communicate via email with the instructor and affected instructors on the same day of missed class.

#### TARDINESS:

Tardiness is not tolerated.

#### CONTAGIOUS ILLNESS:

Students with contagious illnesses are required to stay away from the studio until they are no longer contagious. It is the student's responsibility to email the technique faculty if class will be missed due to illness.

#### INJURIES:

Students with serious injuries that require sitting out of class for more than three (3) days should follow the guidelines outlined in the Student Injury Plan. If you need to sit down during class, it is your responsibility to tell your instructor.



## HOLIDAYS THIS SEMESTER:

There will be no classes on Monday, September 7, Labor Day

## REQUIRED READINGS AND SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Readings or videos may be assigned relating to specific choreographers and forms studied.

## TECHNOLOGICAL PROFICIENCY AND HARDWARE/SOFTWARE REQUIRED

Students will need an electronic device with access to Zoom and Blackboard for this course. They are asked to familiarize themselves with these two interfaces. Please see the links below for technology support.

## USC TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT LINKS

[Zoom information for students](#)

[Blackboard help for students](#)

[Software available to USC Campus](#)

## USC TECHNOLOGY RENTAL PROGRAM

We realize that attending classes online and completing coursework remotely requires access to technology that not all students possess. If you need resources to successfully participate in your classes, such as a laptop or internet hotspot, you may be eligible for the university's equipment rental program. To apply, please [submit an application](#). The Student Basic Needs team will contact all applicants in early August and distribute equipment to eligible applicants prior to the start of the fall semester.

## Required Readings

Short readings or videos (on YouTube or Blackboard) will be assigned.

## ADDITIONAL POLICIES

### Class Conduct

Phones will not be allowed and should not be visible during class. Texting or internet engagement during class time will result in lowering of your class grade. Your attention during class time is greatly appreciated, and also required.

### Equity, Diversity & Inclusion at USC Kaufman

This class takes place at a university committed to equity for all students, where diversity and inclusion are considered critical to the academic environment. In this classroom, free speech is respected, and civil discourse is expected, with a safe learning environment the priority. We will endeavor to use language that is respectful—sometimes being inquisitive and creative, because language changes all the time—particularly when it comes to differences in age, ethnicity, gender identity or expression, race or socioeconomic

status. If you have a preferred gender pronoun that is not being used, please advise the professor.

### Statement on Physical Contact

As an embodied art form, dancing is a physical and an emotional act. In the process of studying dance, students often experience physical contact with their instructors and peers. Faculty members may use touch to provide proprioceptive and kinesthetic feedback to students; they may use touch to correct alignment, improve technique, and promote healthier movement practices. In some classes, particularly those involving partnering, students' will experience physical contact with their peers. As developing artists experimenting with modes of expression, students may also experience a variety of emotions in the classroom. As such, it is imperative that the studio-classroom be a safe, inclusive, and respectful space for all students and faculty. Open and honest communication and respectful and considerate interactions are always expected and are a fundamental requirement of studying in the USC Kaufman School of Dance. Unless otherwise articulated to a faculty member or peer, consent