

DANC 231
Improvisation and Composition IV: Advanced
Spring 2021
2 units
Day: Mon (Sec. 224438); Wed (Sec. 224439)
Time: 12-1:50 pm
Location: Online
Instructor: Jennifer Lott
Office: 224
Office Hours: by appointment
Email: lottj@usc.edu
Tel: 646-884-2694

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. This course is the fourth in a series on improvisation and composition in the first two years of the BFA Dance degree. 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

Part of the core curriculum, the syllabus builds essential tools for well-rounded, creative practice of dance. The class work is designed to:

1. Prepare students for the creative processes of dancing, dance-making and performance
2. Expose students to a variety of improvisation and compositional methods through practice, readings and written work
3. Practice digital archiving & online presentation of dance assignments & creative work
4. Engage in collaborative creative process with a composer in accordance with specific given parameters/tasks. Parameters might include but are not limited to deadlines, duration, number of people, space, structure, style.
5. Give feedback using specific protocols.
6. Incorporate/evaluate feedback from peers and faculty

Recommended Prep: Extensive training various dance forms.

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

Periodic viewing assignments will be assigned; links will be posted on Blackboard. Course texts may include but are not limited to the following:

Burrows, J. (2010). *A Choreographer's Handbook (1st ed.)*. Routledge.
<https://doi-org.libproxy2.usc.edu/10.4324/9780203852163>

Buckwalter, Melinda. *Composing While Dancing : an Improviser's Companion*. University of Wisconsin Press, 2010.

Bogart, Anne, and Tina Landau. *The Viewpoints Book: a Practical Guide to Viewpoints and Composition*. Theatre Communications Group, 2005.

Improvisation Technologies CD-ROM, William Forsythe

Bremser, M., & Sanders, L. (Eds.). (1999). *Fifty Contemporary Choreographers (1st ed.)*. Routledge.

Bayles, David, and Ted Orland. *Art & Fear : Observations on the Perils (and Rewards) of Artmaking*, Image Continuum Press, 2010. *ProQuest Ebook Central*,
<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/socal/detail.action?docID=684160>

Description and Assessment of Assignments

Due WEEK 2: 1-2 min study: 1-2 minute solo. Include at least one intentional element of design. Will be shared in class, Week 2.

Due WEEK 6: 1-2 page Statement of Intent for CCC & Vision Board: We will discuss further and I will provide examples in class. Due Via Turnitin, under "Assignments" in Blackboard course website.

Due WEEK 8: Composer–Choreographer Collaboration: Show/Share & Feedback: Composers will join our class for a showing of all works-in-process & peer/faculty feedback.

Due Week 13: Pre-recorded elements of your Composer/Choreographer Projects should be turned in to your Google Drive Folder no later than 5pm on Thursday, April 15. If your presentation will be live, please turn in a recording of a test run. These will be presented April 20/21

FINAL: Friday, May 7, 11-1: Submit written "Semester Reflection & Statement of Intent for Future Research: 3 ideas" via Turnitin by 11am. Prepare to share briefly in class.

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. EG: Communication, listening to peers in classroom setting, expressing creative and analytical ideas to peers, mentors and teachers in class; Creative process problem-solving and contributions 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); exploration of kinesphere; real-time composition skills.

40% Embodied sharing/presentation

- Dancing your influences study; Due Week 2
- Check-ins with faculty
- Composer–Choreographer Collaboration: Show/Share & Feedback; Due Week 8
- “Open Studio” Week 12
- Composer/Choreographer Project; Due Week 13

30% Written Assignments (each worth 15%)

- 1-2 page Statement of Intent for CCC/Vision Board (15%)
- FINAL EXAM: Semester Reflection & Statement of Intent for Future Research: 3 ideas

Attendance

In order to participate fully in this course, students are expected to be in class, on time and present. It is the student’s responsibility to notify the instructor in advance if a class will be missed.

Assignment Submission

All assignments will be submitted via Blackboard Journals and Turnitin.

Grading Timeline

All assignments will be graded within two weeks of submission.

Late Work

Late submission policies are listed under each assignment description. If you miss submitting work due to an unavoidable emergency, please notify the instructor by email ASAP and discuss the situation with the instructor during office hours.

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.

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings and Homework	Assignment Dates

Week 1	Improvisation Influences; Music & Dance	“Dancing your influences” - 1-2 min movement study READ/WATCH: “Music & Dance” folder under “Content”	
Week 2	Improv/Share Discuss: Guiding Principle, Vision Board, Statement of Intent	READ: Burrows, 180-203	DUE: Dancing your influences <i>present in class</i>
Week 3	Improv/CCC breakouts Check-in with Prof Lott Possible guest: Spencer Saccoman	READ/WATCH: TBA	
Week 4	Improv/CCC breakouts	READ/WATCH: TBA	
Week 5	Victor Quijada	READ/WATCH: TBA	option to share WIP
Week 6	Victor Quijada/Marjani Forte Saunders	READ/WATCH: TBA	DUE: CCC Statement of Intent & Vision Board option to share WIP
Week 7	Marjani Forte-Saunders	READ/WATCH: TBA	option to share WIP
Week 8	CCC sharing with composers		Be prepared to share your work!

Week 9	Doug Varone		option to share WIP
Week 10	Doug Varone		option to share WIP
Week 11	CCC breakouts		
Week 12	CCC sharing/open studio		Be prepared to share your work!
Week 13	CCC breakouts		CCC Projects DUE: Thursday, 4/15 @ 5pm
Week 14	Micaela Taylor	*CCC Shows: Tuesday, April 20 & Wednesday, April 21*	*CCC Shows: Tuesday, April 20 & Wednesday, April 21*
Week 15	Wrap		
FINAL	***FINAL: Friday, May 7, 11am-1pm***		

KSOD Policies Required in Syllabus

Names and Pronouns

Please enter your preferred name and pronoun in your Zoom profile using the rename feature or you can request to enter this permanently by emailing consult@usc.edu.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

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.

“Call-In” Agreement

We as Kaufman faculty support conversations surrounding racial justice and encourage fostering a culture of calling people IN to the conversation as opposed to calling people out.

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 to discipline-specific and appropriate touching is assumed. Students always have the right to revoke that consent and should express any discomfort they feel in the classroom to the faculty instructor or Vice Dean immediately. USC Kaufman seeks to nurture compassionate artists who respect the dignity, humanity, and personal embodied experience of all individuals.

Emergency Plan

In the event of a university-wide emergency, guidance and directions will be shared by Campus Emergency Operations in all available outlets, including the website and TrojanAlerts. Students are encouraged to maintain close contact with all available communications avenues for updates to university operations. USC Kaufman will abide by all university protocols and recommendations. If the Kaufman Dance Center is not available when classes resume, students can receive updates from the school's Departmental Operations Center (DOC) on Ramo Lawn (between the Thornton School of Music and Norris Cinema, close to the Bing Theatre).

USC Policies

RECORDING ONLINE CLASSES

For the Spring 2021 semester, USC policy requires that all classes conducted online be recorded for asynchronous viewing with transcriptions made available.

“CAMERA-ON” POLICY

As this is an embodied 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 at their discretion, which will eliminate most privacy concerns, and earphones or headsets to improve audio quality. We strive to be compassionate to all students’ circumstances, and if you need additional accommodations, please contact your professor directly.

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. Extraneous texting, internet or social media engagement during class time will result in lowering of your class grade. Your attention during class time is greatly appreciated, and also required.

VIDEO & SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Any footage captured during the course of a class (defined as lecture, technique, rehearsal or performance) may not be reposted on any social media channels (outside of Blackboard), now or in the future, without prior written approval from the professor. This includes Zoom video and audio recordings, as well as screenshots from Zoom. Violations of this provision may be referred to Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards.

TECHNOLOGICAL PROFICIENCY & 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](#).

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 session will be **Monday (Sec 22438) or Wednesday (Sec 22439) from 12:00PM-1:50PM Pacific Time.**

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 recorded Zoom session and any related PowerPoint presentations (both will be posted to Blackboard once done live) and complete the assignments for each week.

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/>.

RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS POLICIES

University policy grants students excused absences for observance of religious holy days. You must inform the professor at least one full week in advance to request such an excused absence. You will be given an opportunity to make up missed work if necessary.

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 Part B, Section 11, "Behavior Violating University Standards" 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>.

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

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

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

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