

**Advanced Composition****Section:** 22495D**Units:** 2**Term:** Fall 2021**Day:** Monday, Wednesday**Time:** 9:00am-10:20am**Location:** KDC 220**Instructor:** Alison D'Amato**Office:** KDC 224**Office Hours:** By appointment.**Contact:** adamato@usc.edu**Catalog Description**

Explore a variety of compositional forms and methods to develop a personalized choreographic approach.

**Course Description**

*In "The Undercommons," Fred Moten proposed a score for the classroom in the university: "What's totally interesting me is to just not call the class to order...How hard it would be, on a consistent basis, not to issue the call to order— but also to recognize how important it would be, how interesting it might be, what new kinds of things might emerge out of the capacity to refuse to issue the call to order. In recognizing all kinds of other sh\*\* that could happen, see what happens when you refuse at that moment to become an instrument of governance, seeing how a certain kind of discomfort will occur." (Bakke and Peterson, eds., p. 62)*

This class is devoted to fostering your autonomy – your radical individuality – as a creator. To do this, we begin by defining the boundaries of our classroom community, by dancing and skill-building together. Course materials will take the instructor's expertise as a starting point but will be adapted to meet the needs of each student's radical individuality, and their specific, varied interests in embodied performance. Through informal movement meditations, compositional studies, polished works, reflective writing, and dialogue, we will grow our practice(s) together. Alongside this work, we will practice giving and receiving constructive feedback that is both verbal and dancerly in nature.

**Learning Objectives:**

- Students will participate actively in a creative community through sharing and contextualizing creative work, and offering articulate, constructive feedback
- Students will hone a polished statement placing their creative practice in a wider context of scholarly, cultural, and/or political context
- Students will build thoughtfully designed sequences that prepare themselves and others for the demands of their creative practice
- Students will construct fully realized performance projects to be presented publicly

**Prerequisite(s):**

DANC 231

## Course Policies

**Materials:** Recommended readings are provided for self-directed study. We will reference these in our discussion sessions (one reading required per research module), and they will provide useful examples for the “Creative Context” paper. Most of these readings are readily available through online databases accessible from the USC Libraries’ website; while they will also be posted on Blackboard, I encourage you to become familiar with library resources.

**Community Expectations:** Students should be present, prepared, and ready to engage with each other and the course material. Class participation figures greatly. Active participation includes adhering to standard classroom etiquette: no food or drink, no sleeping, no internet browsing, etc. Students are expected to engage fully in group discussions and activities, to ask thoughtful questions, to come to class fully prepared, and to exercise personal responsibility and consideration of others at all times.

**Names and Pronouns:** Students are entitled to be addressed by the correct names and pronouns, even if these differ from the ones under which they are enrolled. As a class, we will do our utmost to refer to each other respectfully at all times. Students are entitled to request new modes of address at any point.

**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.

**Religious Holy Days Policies:** University policy grants students excused absences for observance of religious holy days. Please 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.

## Description and Assessment of Assignments

**Participation in Sharing/Dance-backs/Discussion Sessions:** All students will receive full credit for participation in these sessions unless notified in writing (via email, feedback provided) by the professor. Expected preparation for discussion sessions includes familiarity with at one course reading per research module. In the event of absence, discuss possibilities for asynchronous participation with the Professor.

**“Creativity in Context” Paper:** Students will produce 3 or more pages of writing that places their creative practice in a wider context of scholarly, cultural, and/or political context. The scope of each student’s engagement in outside sources will be determined in consultation with the Professor. This may mean citing scholarly sources, process-derived writing by other artists, critical reviews, social media output, etc. The writing itself may take any form but must clearly delineate a specific field of research within which each student makes an intervention. Full rubric to be distributed separately. **Draft due 2/10, Final paper due 4/21.**

“Preparation to Move” Assignment: Each student will develop an approximately 15-minute warmup sequence designed to prepare themselves or other for the demands of their performance project. Full rubric to be distributed separately.

Performance Project: Each student will develop a substantive performance work to be performed publicly and assessed at *either* the Advanced Comp showings or the Sr. Project Capstone Festival. Works will also be shared in-class at the culmination of each research module. The scope of each project will be determined in consultation with the Professor. Full rubric to be distributed separately.

### Grading Breakdown

Assignment	% of Grade
Sharing/Dance-back/Discussion Session Participation	20
“Creativity in Context” Paper Draft	10
“Creativity in Context” Final Paper	25
Preparation to Move	20
Performance Project	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

### Grading Scale

Course final grades will be determined using the following scale:

A	95-100	C	73-76
A-	90-94	C-	70-72
B+	87-89	D+	67-69
B	83-86	D	63-66
B-	80-82	D-	60-62
C+	77-79	F	59 and below

### Assignment Rubrics

All assignment rubrics are posted on Blackboard under Assignments.

### Grading Timeline

Assignment grades will be posted to Grade Center two weeks after submission.

## Research Module Flow

Each class meeting will open with a brief (approx. 10 minute) “directed research” practice, building toward your shared prep sequence. The purpose is to embolden each student’s sense of autonomy in readying the body (self!) to dance. We will move together in silence (although headphones are permitted!), doing whatever it is we need to arrive in the moment. From there, we move into a relatively set sequence for each Research Module, with the following flow:

Day One (M): Warm-up and/or ensemble-building exercises

Day Two (W): Additional Exercises and/or Supervised working periods

Day Three (M): Supervised working periods and/or Sharing and Dance-backs

Day Four (W): Sharing/Discussion Session

## Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

### **WEEKS 1-2:**

Course Intro

Performance Project Intentions/Agreements

Making Together, i.e. strategies for ensemble-building (Viewpoints, Choreographic Improvisation, Authentic Movement, etc.)

### **WEEK 3-4: RESEARCH MODULE 1**

Preparation for “Creativity in Context”

### **WEEK 5-6: RESEARCH MODULE 2**

Culminates in Mid-point Sharing

“Creativity in Context” Paper Draft Due 2/10

### **WEEK 7-8: RESEARCH MODULE 3**

\*(2/21-2/23): Senior Project Capstone Festival\*

### **WEEK 9:**

Guest Mentorship, TBD

### **WEEK 10 (3/22 and 23 @7:30pm): ADVANCED COMP SHOWING in LPS**

### **WEEK 11-12: RESEARCH MODULE 4**

\*(2/21-2/23): Senior Project Presentations\*

### **WEEK 13-14: RESEARCH MODULE 5**

Final Assessment of Performance Projects, and “Preparation to Move” assignments

“Creativity in Context” Papers due 4/21

### **WEEK 15:**

Course Wrap-Up

### **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.

### **Music Rights Agreements**

The University of Southern California maintains blanket licensing agreements for music with the following organizations: American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP), Broadcast Music, Inc. (BMI), Society of European Stage Authors and Composers (SESAC), and Global Music Rights (GMR). This gives the University, and its affiliate organizations, the ability to play music in specific situations ON THE CAMPUS without paying royalties to the artist. These situations include live performance, background and house music in performing arts spaces and hospitality venues, on the student radio station, and on the USC.edu domain. When choosing music for student choreography and performance, it is important to remember to stick within the repertory of these rights granting organizations or within the public domain (see below). Please be aware, that though USC does pay for these licensing, it ONLY covers live performance and the other criteria listed above when on the campus and usage by USC and its affiliates. This DOES NOT protect the student when posting their work on websites that monetize content, including social media and YouTube, or for use for self-promotion and public facing content. This is considered out of the bounds of the agreement and would require the student to enter into an agreement with the artist and their representation. In order to check if a piece of music you would like to use is within the grounds of the USC agreements, please refer to the online catalogs that the rights granting organizations provide:

ASCAP: <https://www.ascap.com/repertory>

BMI: <https://repertoire.bmi.com>

SESAC: <https://www.sesac.com/#!/repertory/search>

GMR: <https://globalmusicrights.com/search>

Additionally, should you have any questions or need help to determine if a piece of music falls within the bounds of these agreements, please feel free to reach out to the Kaufman Production Coordinator ([saccoman@usc.edu](mailto:saccoman@usc.edu)).

### **Public Domain**

In the United States, artists or their trusts/organizations hold copyrights on work created for the life of the author plus seventy years. Beyond this, the creator's repertoire is considered in the public domain and does not require licensure to use. For example, some bodies of work that fall within the public domain are: the choreography of Marius Petipa, the music of Camille Saint-Saens, and the operas of Giuseppe Verdi. Please be aware that though this does mean the work itself is in the public domain, it may not specifically mean that the performance and/or recording is as well. If there is a band/orchestra/performer listed, (this may not always be the case) please make sure that they and/or their repertoire are represented by one of the rights granting organizations listed above. Again, should you have questions or need assistance, please feel free to reach out to the Production Coordinator.

### **University Support Systems and General Info**

#### **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).

### **Disability Accommodations**

USC welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter disability-related barriers. Once a student has completed the OSAS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and accommodations are determined to be reasonable and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be available to generate for each course. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at [osas.usc.edu](https://osas.usc.edu). You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at [osasfrontdesk@usc.edu](mailto:osasfrontdesk@usc.edu).

### **Student Basic Needs**

USC Student Basic Needs provides support to students facing food insecurity, housing insecurity and financial insecurity. While their Trojan Food Pantry is temporarily closed, the department distributes grocery bags to students who do not have a meal plan; they also partner with World Central Kitchen to provide free restaurant-prepared meals. They also connect students to suitable housing or shelter in Los Angeles. Finally, they work with USC Financial Aid to provide one-time supplemental funding for students in sudden financial distress due to unforeseen circumstances. Visit <https://studentbasicneeds.usc.edu/> for more information.

### **[Counseling and Mental Health](#)** - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

### **[988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline](#)** - 988 for both calls and text messages – 24/7 on call

The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States. The Lifeline is comprised of a national network of over 200 local crisis centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices. The new, shorter phone number makes it easier for people to remember and access mental health crisis services (though the previous 1 (800) 273-8255 number will continue to function indefinitely) and represents a continued commitment to those in crisis.

### **[Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services \(RSVP\)](#)** - (213) 740-9355(WELL)

24/7 on call; Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender- and power-based harm (including sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking).

### **[Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX \(EEO-TIX\)](#)** - (213) 740-5086

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

### **[Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment](#)** - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

### **[The Office of Student Accessibility Services \(OSAS\)](#)** - (213) 740-0776

OSAS ensures equal access for students with disabilities through providing academic accommodations and auxiliary aids in accordance with federal laws and university policy.

### **[USC Campus Support and Intervention](#)** - (213) 740-0411

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

### **[Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#)** - (213) 740-2101

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

[USC Emergency](#) - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

[USC Department of Public Safety](#) - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-1200 – 24/7 on call

Non-emergency assistance or information.

[Office of the Ombuds](#) - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC)

A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.

[Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice](#) - (323) 442-2850 or [otfp@med.usc.edu](mailto:otfp@med.usc.edu)

Confidential Lifestyle Redesign services for USC students to support health promoting habits and routines that enhance quality of life and academic performance.