

DANC 180: African Dance

Fall/ Spring

2 units

Day: Friday

Time: 12:00am-1:50pm

Location: KDC 107

Instructor: S. Anindo Marshall

Office: (213) 740-9327

Office Hours: By Appointment Only

Contact Info: 818-970-6540

Email: sarahanm@usc.edu

Catalog Description

African Dance technique at the beginning/intermediate level: knowing, understanding, experiencing culture, emphasizing cultural traditions, community outreach and diversity; works through artistic process, practice, performance, and related activities, using dance, theatre and music work rooted in the African tradition and contemporary African aesthetics; focus on 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 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 interconnections, 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 when you are healthy and full participation in class exercises, as well as completion of all 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.

Non-attendance can be the basis for lowering the grade. Student athletes with approved Travel Request Letters, students who are ill and students who give advance notice of religious observation, may be excused; those students may be given alternative course work. Please email me when these cases arise.

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 2023.

If illnesses or family emergencies occur, that result in excessive absences, please communicate with the instructor at your earliest convenience.

Dance Reflection Paper:

Students are required to observe one dance concert during the semester. I will get the list and share it with you. 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. No baggy/ heavy sweatshirts. Dance pants, biker shorts, wrap around skirt - lapa (for the ladies/men) or slim fitting pants (for the men/ladies) are appropriate - leotards, tank tops, or T-shirts are acceptable. Hair should be worn off the face. Most of 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, class assignments, 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 Scale and Point Values:

- In-class participation: 15 pts.
- Class assignment(s): 30 pts
- Dance Reflection Paper: 30 pts.
- Final Exam: 25 pts.
- 100 PTS TOTAL

- A+ = 100 points
- A = 96-99 points
- A- = 91-95 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- = 61-63 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 Soli and Balanta dances. Introduction to Senegalese culture and history. Continued practice of accompanying vocalizations and songs.

Week 5 (and continuing throughout the semester): Continuing in studio practice in Soli and Balanta dances. Introduction to Senegalese 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.

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** - In class video viewing of African documentary. Write review of documentary and hand in a paper about **African History**. All students will continue to expand on dance techniques. **Fall Break start THURS 10/12**

Week 9: Continue studying Soli and Balanta, while expanding on dance techniques.

Week 10: Continued practice of Soli, Balanta.

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 December performance.

Week 13: **Rehearsal for Elective Experience Performance.**
Performance will at Kaufman's LPS Studio at 5:30pm

Week 14: **THANKSGIVING RECESS: 11/23-11/26**

Week 15: 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 Soli and Balanta.

FINAL EXAM - Friday December 8, 12:30 pm - 1pm

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 Soli and Balanta. 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, and/or in partners and in groups
- Light-touch hands-on corrections by the instructor
- Supporting different learning styles—visual, auditory, tactile/kinetic
- Acknowledging “multiple intelligence”—visual/spatial, verbal/linguistic, logical/mathematical, bodily/kinesthetic, musical/rhythmic, interpersonal/intrapersonal.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Integrity

The University of Southern California is foremost a learning community committed to fostering successful scholars and researchers dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Academic misconduct is in contrast to the university's mission to educate students through a broad array of first-rank academic, professional, and extracurricular programs and includes any act of dishonesty in the submission of academic work (either in draft or final form).

This course will follow the expectations for academic integrity as stated in the [USC Student Handbook](#). All students are expected to submit assignments that are original work and prepared specifically for the course/section in this academic term. You may not submit work written by others or “recycle” work prepared for other courses without obtaining written permission from the instructor(s). Students suspected of engaging in academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity.

Other violations of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication (e.g., falsifying data), knowingly assisting others in acts of

academic dishonesty, and any act that gains or is intended to gain an unfair academic advantage.

The impact of academic dishonesty is far-reaching and is considered a serious offense against the university and could result in outcomes such as failure on the assignment, failure in the course, suspension, or even expulsion from the university.

For more information about academic integrity see the [student handbook](#) or the [Office of Academic Integrity's website](#), and university policies on [Research and Scholarship Misconduct](#).

Policy for the use of AI Generators

AI - Not permitted

Since creating, analytical, and critical thinking skills are part of the learning outcomes of this course, all assignments should be prepared by the student working individually or in groups. Students may not have another person or entity complete any substantive portion of the assignment. Developing strong competencies in these areas will prepare you for a competitive workplace. Therefore, using AI-generated tools is prohibited in this course, will be identified as plagiarism, and will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity.

Health and Wellness at Kaufman - see last pages of Syllabus for more information

Health and Well Being is crucial to being a performing artist. We are committed at USC to assisting our students exceed their potential. If you have a wellness appointment (i.e. physician, physical therapy, psychology/counseling, dietetics, etc.) we ask that you attempt to schedule your appointments around class schedules. If your appointment time can only be scheduled during class time, this is an **excused** absence. Please inform me that you have a wellness appointment **prior** to the class and CC your advisor and/or Dr. Hentis to the email. You do not need to clarify the type of medical appointment.

Student Health & Wellness Appointments

Free and confidential mental health treatments are available for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. Students can make an appointment with a licensed clinical psychologist. Please see the student health website for more resources.

Counseling and Mental Health Services

Student Health Main: (213)740-9355 (WELL) on call 24/7

Free physical therapy consultations are available for BFA students only.

Students can make individual appointments for physical therapy with Dr. Marisa Hentis through the link tree or walk-in to the fitness zone and training room on the Mezzanine level of KDC. All other Kaufman students may also receive physical therapy services at Engermann Student Health. Please reach out to Dr. Hentis for more information.

Dr. Marisa Hentis: Physical Therapy

Email: Marisa.Hentis@med.usc.edu

Direct: 847-809-7256

Free nutritional and dietary consultations are available for students. Students can make individual appointments through MySHR

Michelle Katz, RD: Dietetics
Email: michelle.katz@med.usc.edu
Phone: (213) 740- 9355 (WELL)

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.

Dance majors in need are encouraged to contact their academic advisor, who can assist them with accessing these and other resources that may be available through USC Kaufman.

Names and Pronouns

In our classroom and at USC, every student has the right to be respected and referred to by their name and pronouns that correspond to their gender identity. Pronouns are words we use in place of names (e.g., he/she/they/ze), and for some people, they are an inherent piece of their identity. At any point through the course, please feel free to share with me if you would like me (and your classmates) to address you in a different way. I will not tolerate misgendering and disrespect of people's names and pronouns in our classroom.

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.

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).

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.

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 Required in Syllabus

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Academic Integrity:

The University of Southern California is a learning community committed to developing successful scholars and researchers dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the dissemination of ideas. Academic misconduct, which includes any act of dishonesty in the production or submission of academic work, compromises the integrity of the person who commits the act and can impugn the perceived integrity of the entire university community. It stands in opposition to the university's mission to research, educate, and contribute productively to our community and the world.

All students are expected to submit assignments that represent their own original work, and that have been prepared specifically for the course or section for which they have been submitted. You may not submit work written by others or "recycle" work prepared for other courses without obtaining written permission from the instructor(s).

Other violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication (e.g., falsifying data), collusion, knowingly assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty, and any act that gains or is intended to gain an unfair academic advantage.

The impact of academic dishonesty is far-reaching and is considered a serious offense against the university. All incidences of academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity and could result in outcomes such as failure on the assignment, failure in the course, suspension, or even expulsion from the university.

For more information about academic integrity see [the student handbook](#) or the [Office of Academic Integrity's website](#), and university policies on [Research and Scholarship Misconduct](#).

Please ask your instructor if you are unsure what constitutes unauthorized assistance on an exam or assignment, or what information requires citation and/or attribution.

Students and 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. You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at osasfrontdesk@usc.edu.

Support Systems:

[*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

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