



**DANC 280g: Introduction to
Dance as an Art Form
Section 22463R**

Fall 2023

4 units

Day: M/W

Time: 4-5:40 p.m.

Location: THH 210

Instructor: Patrick Corbin

Office: KDC 229

Office Hours: By appointment

Contact: pcorbin@usc.edu

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 dance forms, students will study the origins and evolution of classical and contemporary dance, explore emerging topics in the field of dance studies, and apply elements of art criticism to viewing dance productions. Through substantive analysis of course readings and live and recorded performances, students will advance critical reading, writing and analytic skills.

Students will examine dance within a range of contexts, including visual arts and architecture, literature, music, cinematic arts, technology, and other fields. In a final paper, students will undertake research and offer original comments on a topic of their choosing, using current secondary source readings and scholarship to situate the topic within a broader historical context. Students will also work in groups to prepare a final oral presentation on the intersection of the group's research topics.

Learning Objectives

In this course, students will:

- Develop critical reasoning and analytic skills, adopting varying approaches to viewing, critiquing and appreciating theatrical dance performances
- Engage with the theoretical, historical and aesthetic underpinnings of significant dance works
- Examine relevant theoretical trends in the field of Dance Studies
- Learn to read and interpret actively and analytically, to think critically and creatively
- Develop proficient research, writing, and speaking skills, learning how to incorporate observation and personal experience into a persuasive term paper and oral presentation
- Explore the creative aspects of dance and how they relate to major artistic trends
- Understand dance in relationship to other scholastic and artistic disciplines
- Identify significant dance artists and be able to historicize/contextualize their contributions
- Embody certain historical trends within the academic and/or studio classroom
- Become active participants by attending live dance performances during the semester
- Make connections between their own personal history and the larger history of the discipline

Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required

Students will be required to view media outside of class for discussion and other assignments.

Required Readings

- Appadurai, Arjun. 1996. *Modernity At Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. U. of Minnesota Press.
- Brandenhoff, Peter. 2010. "Ballet Pantomime: The Art of 'Acting Out' Onstage." *Dance Spirit* May/June 2010: 62-63
- Bull, Cynthia Jean Cohen. 2003. "Sense, Meaning, and Perception in Three Dance Cultures." In *Meaning in Motion: New Cultural Studies of Dance*, ed. by Jane Desmond. Duke University Press.
- Burrows, Jonathan. 2010. *A Choreographer's Handbook*. Routledge.
- Chatterjee, Ananya. 2004. *Butting Out: Reading Resistive Choreographies Through Works by Jawole Willa Jo Zollar and Chandralekha*. Wesleyan University Press.
- Copeland, Roger. 1983. "Postmodern Dance Postmodern Architecture Postmodernism." *Performing Arts Journal*, 7 (1): 27-43.
- Coulter, Todd. 2014. "Paul Taylor's Meticulous Musicality: A Choreomusical Investigation." *Dance Chronicle*, 37 (1): 63-84.
- DeFrantz, Thomas. 2004. *Dancing Revelations: Alvin Ailey's Embodiment of African American Culture*. Oxford University Press.
- Fisher, Jennifer. 2004. "'Arabian Coffee' in the Land of the Sweets." *Dance Research Journal*, 35/36 (2/1): 146-163
- Forsythe, William, 2009. "Choreographic Objects." *Synchronous Objects for One Flat Thing*, reproduced. Ohio State University and the Forsythe Company.
- Foster, Susan Leigh. 2003. "Choreographies of Protest." *Theatre Journal*, 55 (3): 395-412
- Gere, David. 2004. *How to Make Dances in an Epidemic: Tracking Choreography in the Age of AIDS*. University of Wisconsin Press.
- Graham, Martha. 1998. "I Am a Dancer." In *The Routledge Dance Studies Reader*, ed. by Alexandra Carter and Janet O'Shea. Routledge.
- Groff, Ed. 1995. "Laban Movement Analysis: Charting the Ineffable Domain of Human Movement." *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance*, 66 (2): 27-30.
- Guest, Ann Hutchinson. 1984. *Dance Notation: The Process of Recording Movement on Paper*. Dance Books.
- Hay, Deborah. 2010. "No Time to Fly." Score for dance. Deborah Hay.
- Hyland, Nicola. "Beyoncé's Response (eh?): Feeling the Ihi of Spontaneous Haka Performance in Aotearoa/New Zealand." *TDR: The Drama Review*, 59 (1): 67-82.
- Jackson, Naomi. 2016. "Rhizomatic Revolution?: Popular Dancing, YouTube, and Exchange in Screendance." In *The Oxford Handbook of Screendance Studies* (Douglas Rosenberg, ed.). Oxford.
- Juhasz, Suzanne. 2008. "Queer Swans: Those Fabulous Avians in the Swan Lakes of Les Ballets Trockadero and Matthew Bourne." *Dance Chronicle*, 31 (1): 54-83.
- Kurihara, Nanako. 2000. "Hijikata Tatsumi: The Words of Butoh." *TDR: The Drama Review*, 44 (1): 10-28.
- Lerman, Liz. 2008. "The Spiritual Connection: Ruminations and Curiosities from a Dance Artist." *Journal of Dance Education*, 8 (2): 39-43.
- O'Shea, Janet. 1998. "Roots/Routes of Dance Studies." In *The Routledge Dance Studies Reader*, ed. by Alexandra Carter and Janet O'Shea. Routledge.
- Perloff, Marjorie. 2012. "Difference and Discipline: The Cage/Cunningham Aesthetic Revisited." *Contemporary Music Review*, 31 (1): 19-35.
- Sheets-Johnstone, Maxine. 2015. *The Phenomenology of Dance*. Temple University Press
- Sobchack, Vivian. 2005. "'Choreography for One, Two, and Three Legs' (A Phenomenological Meditation in Movement)." *Topoi*, 24:55-66.
- Spivey, Virginia B. 2009. "The Minimal Presence of Simone Forti." *Woman's Art Journal*, 30 (1): 11-18.
- Weickmann, Dorion. 2007. "Choreography and Narrative: The *Ballet d'action* of the 18th Century." In *The Cambridge Companion to Ballet*, ed. by Marion Kant. Cambridge.
- Weisbrod, Alexis. 2016. "Defining Dance, Creating Commodity: The Rhetoric of *So You Think You Can Dance*." In *The Oxford Handbook of Dance & the Popular Screen*, ed. by Melissa Blanco Borelli. Oxford.

Description and Assessment of Assignments

Readings and Viewings:

Students should complete the assigned reading or viewing before the class for which it is listed. The majority of course readings are readily available through online databases accessible from the USC Libraries' Website. While most of these articles will also be posted on Blackboard, I encourage you to become familiar with these resources, particularly in preparation for your research paper.

Readings will serve as valuable resources, but as dance remains deeply rooted in embodied practice, watching and experiencing through in-class activities and videos will also inform our approach. 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.

Attendance and Participation:

2 excused absences are allowed for this class. 1 total percentage point will be deducted for each additional absence.

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 food or drink, no sleeping, and no private discussion. 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.

Mid-Term and Final Exam:

In-class and open book (notes, reading, and slides must be handwritten or typed and printed out – no laptops allowed). 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, October 4

Final: December 6, 4:30-6:30 p.m.

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 instructor via communal drives such as Google. No extensions will be granted; see rubrics for more information, including late submission policy.

Students will complete **3 short papers** (each approximately **3 pages in length**), in the order of their choosing (**due dates September 20, October 18, & November 15**). Each analysis paper will be oriented around a clear, debatable claim (i.e. a strong thesis statement). Full rubrics for each assignment will be distributed separately, but in brief, they include:

Performance Analysis Paper

Students are to attend a dance performance of their choice, occurring on campus or off, and undertake a thorough choreographic analysis. This will involve a detailed analysis of various performance components, as well as some discussion of interrelationships between elements. The goal is to move from description to interpretation.

Text Analysis Paper

Students are to address at least 2 assigned readings, with optional inclusion of outside sources. The paper is intended to demonstrate the student's engagement with the course materials as well as evidence original thinking.

Ethnographic/Auto-Ethnographic Analysis Paper

Students are to observe or participate in some dance event that is NOT a formal performance (i.e. class, rehearsal, club meeting, nightlife event, family gathering, etc.) and reflect on how movement practices enact and sustain specific cultures and cultural values.

Creative Response:

Students will undertake an individual, or team, project that creatively engages with core concepts, methods, and media explored in the course. The response can take many forms, including but not limited to: a podcast, a zine, a memoir, an open letter, a series of poems, a visual art object, a song, a choreographic work, a short film, a website or other digital project. To be combined with a 300-word statement of intent. **Due November 27.**

Grading Rubric/Scale

Attendance and Participation	10%
Performance Analysis	20%
Text Analysis	20%
Ethnographic Analysis	20%
Mid-Term	10%
Final Exam	15%
Creative Response	5%
Total	100%

A+ = 100 points

B+ = 87-89 points

C+ = 77-79 points

D+= 66-69 points

A = 95-99 points

B = 84-86 points

C = 74-76 points

D = 62-65 points

A- = 90-94 points

B- = 80-83 points

C- = 70-73 points

D- = 60-61 points

F = 60 or below

Schedule

	Topic	Readings	Due Dates	In-Class Activities
Week 1 August 21 & 23	Course Intro; What is Art? What is Dance? Locating Dance Historically, Culturally, Aesthetically; Intro to Choreographic Analysis	8.21 - The Philosophy of Dance - What is Art and or What is Beauty Issue 108 Philosophy Now 8.23- O'Shea, p. 1-15		8.21 Create definitions of art and dance. 8.23 Practicing Choreographic Analysis
Week 2 August 28 & 30	Ethnographic Approaches	- Bull p. 269-288		In-Class Activity: Practicing Ethnographic Analysis
Week 3 Sept 4 & 6	Perspectives on Practice	9.4 - Sheets-Johnstone, p. 1-9 - Graham, p. 120-125 9.6 - Forsythe, p. 1-2 - Burrows, p. 1-10		

Week 4 Sept 11 & 13	Dance & Writing	9.11 - Guest, p. 1-14 - Groff, p. 27-30 9.13 - Weickmann p. 53-64 - Brandenhoff, p. 62-63		
Week 5 Sept 18 & 20	Dance & Writing / Dance & Music	9.18 - Kurihara, p. 10-28 - Hay, p. 1-18 9.20 - DeFrantz, p. 3-18	First Analysis Paper Due: 9.20	In-Class Activity: Exploring Indeterminate Scores
Week 6 Sept 25 & 27	Dance and Music	9.25 - Perloff, p. 19-35 9.27 - Coulter, p. 63-84		
Week 7 October 2 & 4	Review Midterm	10.2 Midterm Review 10.4 In Class Midterm		
Week 8 October 9 & 11	Dance and the Visual Arts, Architecture	10.9 - Spivey, p. 11-18 10.11 - Copeland, p. 27-43		
Week 9 October 16 & 18	Site Specificity/ Dance and Religious Expression	10.16 - Kloetzel, p. 133-144 10.18 - Lerman, p. 39-43	Second Analysis Paper Due: 10.18	In-class activity: Exploring site specificity
Week 10 October 23 & 25	Politics and Activism	10.23 - Foster, p. 395-412 10.25 - Gere, p. 3-38		
Week 11 October 30 Nov 1	Dancing Identity	10.30 - Hyland, p. 67-82 11.1 - Chatterjea, p. 180-193		
Week 12 November 6 & 8	Dancing Identity	11.6 - Fisher, p. 146-153 11.8 - Juhasz, p. 54-83		In-class activity: Exploring <i>Nutcrackers</i>
Week 13 November 13 & 15	(Dis)Abilities/ Globalization	11.13 - Sobchack, p. 55-66 11.15 - Appadurai, p. 27-47	Third Analysis Paper Due: 11.15	
Week 14 November 20 & 22	Dance on the (Small) Screen/ Dance and Competition	11.20 - Jackson, p. 1-24 11.22 - Weisbrod, p. 1-16		

Week 15 November 27 & 29	Creative Response Discussion, Wrap-up and Review		Creative Response Due In Class: 11.27	Final Exam Review: 11.29
Final Exam	December 6 4:30-6:30 p.m.	December 6 4:30-6:30 p.m.	December 6 4:30-6:30 p.m.	December 6 4:30-6:30 p.m.

Emergency Preparedness

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).

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

Course Notes

All Slides and readings are available on Blackboard.

AI Use

I expect you to use AI (e.g., ChatGPT and image generation tools) in this class. Learning to use AI is an emerging skill, and I welcome the opportunity to meet with you to provide guidance with these tools during office hours or after class. Keep in mind the following:

- AI tools are permitted to help you brainstorm topics or revise work you have already written.
- If you provide minimum-effort prompts, you will get low-quality results. You will need to refine your prompts to get good outcomes. This will take work.
- Proceed with caution when using AI tools and do not assume the information provided is accurate or trustworthy. If it gives you a number or fact, assume it is incorrect unless you either know the correct answer or can verify its accuracy with another source. You will be responsible for any errors or omissions provided by the tool. It works best for topics you understand.
- AI is a tool, but one that you need to acknowledge using. Please include a paragraph at the end of any assignment that uses AI explaining how (and why) you used AI and indicate/specify the prompts you used to obtain the results what prompts you used to get the results. Failure to do so is a violation of academic integrity policies.

Be thoughtful about when AI is useful. Consider its appropriateness for each assignment or circumstance. [The use of AI tools requires attribution. You are expected to clearly attribute any material generated by the tool used.](#)

[How do I cite generative AI in MLA style?](#)

KSOD Policies Required in Syllabus

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

Health and Wellbeing is crucial to being a performing artist. We are committed at USC Kaufman 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 the course coordinator 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

Direct: 213-740-9788

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 Engemann 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)