

USC Kaufman

Glorya Kaufman School of Dance

DANC 180/200L: African Dance

Section: 22393

Units: 2

Term: Spring 2025

Day: Fridays

Time: 12:00pm-1:50pm

Location: KDC 107

Instructor: Professor S. Anindo Marshall

Office - Email: sarahanm@usc.edu

Office Hours: Appointment by email only

Contact: Expected to reply within 48 hours

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.

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 Assessments 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 Spring Semester 2025.

Only 3 permitted absences per semester. If you miss more than the 3 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 11:59pm on the following dates:

Journal Number	Due Date
1 (WEEK 4)	2/3/2025
2 (WEEK 8)	3/3/2025
3 (WEEK 12)	3/31/2025

Late work

Each day of late submission will take three points off those allotted for each assignment.

Assignment Submission

Methods of submission - email:sarahanm@usc.edu

Dance Reflection Paper:

Students are required to observe one dance concert 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, Comfortable fitting clothes, that will allow movement. Dance pants, capris, wrap around skirt - lapas or pants 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.

Assessment Tool (assignments)	Points	% of Grade
In-class participation	15 pts	15%
Dance Performance Journal	30 pts	30%
Dance Reflection Paper	25 pts	25%
Final Exam	30 pts	30%
TOTAL	100pts	100%

Grading Scale

Course final grades will be determined using the following scale.

Note: there is no A+ available at USC

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

COURSE SCHEDULE

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 Dundunmba - the word "dunumba" or "doundumba" describes a type of dance that is popular in Upper Guinea in the Kankan, Siguiri and Kouroussa regions, but its roots are to be found in Hamanah, a canton of the prefecture of Kouroussa. It is also called "the Dance of the Strong Men". The names of its various rhythms, of which there are a good twenty, are taken from their places of origin, from the names of the people they portray or to whom they are dedicated, from the characteristics of their structure or from the way the performers appear during the dance. (Decide on Sunu, Kuku or Dundunmba)

Week 5 (and continuing throughout the semester): Continuing in studio practice in Dundunmba. Continued practice of accompanying vocalizations and songs. Lapas needed.

Week 6 (and continuing throughout the semester): **African History** hand out and discussion. Introduce Adzogbo a war dance from Ghana.

Week 7 (and continuing throughout the semester): Understanding the significance of the Ghana 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 Ghana.

Week 8 In class video viewing of African documentary. Write review of documentary and hand in a paper about Slave Trade In Ghana. Journal entries including class assessments. All students will continue to expand on dance techniques.

Week 9 Continue studying the dances and footwork, while expanding on dance techniques.

Week 10 Continued practice of Dundunmba, and Adizogbo.

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 2nd performance.

Week 13 Review and continue studying all the rhythms. Focus on the performance piece. All students will continue to expand on solos and expression.

Week 14 Review and continue studying all the rhythms. Focus on the performance piece. All students will continue to expand on solos, cleaning and perfecting them.

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 Dundunmba, and Adizogbo.

FINAL EXAM - May 5 - 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm.

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 Dundunmba, and Adizogbo. 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.

KSOD Policies Required in Syllabus

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

Physical and Mental well being is crucial to being a performing artist. We are committed at USC Kaufman to assisting our students exceed their potential. If you have a medical 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 medical appointment *prior* to the class. 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 Dr. Kelly Greco through [MySHR](#) (select Kaufman under location). Appointments are available on site in KDC on Tuesdays from 1:00 – 5:00 pm or via Zoom throughout the week. Students can also contact Dr. Greco by phone or email. Visit the [student health website](#) for more resources.

Dr. Kelly Greco: Counseling and Mental Health Services

Email: Kelly.Greco@med.usc.edu

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

Direct: 213-740-9788

Free physical therapy consultations are available for students. Students can make individual appointments for physical therapy with Dr. Marisa Hentis through [MySHR](#) or walk-in to the fitness zone and training room on the mezzanine level of KDC.

Dr. Marisa Hentis: Physical Therapy

Email: Marisa.Hentis@med.usc.edu

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

Optional policy about calling people IN to the conversation about racial justice, as opposed to calling people out. 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

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 can review the

technology resources from the [Student Basic Needs Resource Guide](#). The guide includes links to the USC ITS loaner laptop program, USC Computing Centers, the Emergency Broadband Benefit Program, and the Affordable Connectivity Program.

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 Fridays, 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/](https://global.usc.edu/global-presence/international-offices/).

Recording Online Classes

For the Fall 2022 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 and 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 is considered highly disrespectful.

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.

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 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 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 [Research and Scholarship Misconduct](#).

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
studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling

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

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call
suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press "0" after hours – 24/7 on call
studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX (EEO-TIX) - (213) 740-5086
eeotix.usc.edu

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
usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report

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.usc.edu

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) 821-4710
campussupport.usc.edu

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
diversity.usc.edu

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
dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu

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) 442-120 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu

Non-emergency assistance or information.

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

ombuds.usc.edu

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) 442-3340 or otfp@med.usc.edu

chan.usc.edu/otfp

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

FINAL NOTE: It is often necessary for the instructor to place his/her hands on a student in order to better facilitate the learning process and to illustrate proper alignment. If a student should have an aversion to this practice please notify the professor prior to the start of classes.