

USC Kaufman

Glorya Kaufman School of Dance

DANC 280g: Introduction to Dance as an Art Form

Section 22463R

Units: 4

Term: Spring 2025

Day: M/W

Time: 10:00-11:40 AM

Location: KDC 235

Instructor: Patrick Corbin

Office: KDC 229

Office Hours: M/W 12-1 PM

Contact Info: pcorbin@usc.edu

Catalog 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 Description

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 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:

[USC Computing Center Laptop Loaner Program](#).

USC Technology Support Links [Zoom information for students](#), [Brightspace help for students](#), [Software available to USC Campus](#).

Required Materials:

- 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.
- 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, YouTubeing, 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.

Optional/Supplementary Materials:

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.

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 February 5, March 15, & April 16**). 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 April 28.**

Participation:

The instructor will take note of your participation in class discussions ever class meeting. Each day without participation will be a deduction of ½ percentage point from your participation score.

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 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: Wednesday March 5 10:00AM

Final: Monday May 12 8:00-10:00 AM

Grading Breakdown:

Assessment Tool (assignments)	Points	% of Grade
Attendance and Participation	100	15%
Performance Analysis	100	20%
Text Analysis	100	20%
Ethnographic Analysis	100	20%
Mid-Term	100	10%
Final Exam	100	15%
Creative Response	100	5%
TOTAL	700	100%

Grading Scale:

Course final grades will be determined using the following scale.

Letter grade	Corresponding numerical point range
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

Assignment Submission Policy

Assignments will be submitted through TurnItIn and in class.

Assignment Rubrics

Assignment Rubrics are posted with the assignments on Brightspace.

Grading Timeline:

Grades will be submitted one week after the due date of any given assignment.

Late work:

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

Grading Dispute Note:

I want to make sure that your grades reflect your performance. If you feel there is an error in the grading, please let me know. To dispute a grade, you must request a review by email no sooner than one week and no later than two weeks from the date the grade was published on Brightspace. In the email you must identify yourself and the assignment you are questioning. You must provide a specific argument for the grade change, identifying the row(s) in the rubric where you feel you were mis-scored.

Attendance

Students should communicate with instructors before, or up to 48 hours after, any missed classes.

- Excused absences are determined by the number of class sessions per week (for a class that meets twice per week, two absences will be excused for the semester).
- 1 percentage point deducted from the total course grade for each unexcused absence.

Community Agreements

We will make our community agreements on Day 1

Policy on the use of AI Generators:

<https://academicsenate.usc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2023/02/CIS-Generative-AI-Guidelines-20230214.pdf>

<https://libguides.usc.edu/generative-AI/scholarship-research>
<https://academicsenate.usc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2023/02/CIS-Generative-AI-Guidelines-20230214.pdf>

Course Content Distribution and Synchronous Session Recordings Policies

USC has policies that prohibit recording and distribution of any synchronous and asynchronous course content outside of the learning environment.

Recording a university class without the express permission of the instructor and announcement to the class, or unless conducted pursuant to an Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) accommodation. Recording can inhibit free discussion in the future, and thus infringe on the academic freedom of other students as well as the instructor. ([Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook](#), page 13).

Distribution or use of notes, recordings, exams, or other intellectual property, based on university classes or lectures without the express permission of the instructor for purposes other than individual or group study. This includes but is not limited to providing materials for distribution by services publishing course materials. This restriction on unauthorized use also applies to all information, which had been distributed to students or in any way had been displayed for use in relationship to the

class, whether obtained in class, via email, on the internet, or via any other media. ([Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook](#), page 13).

Course Schedule:

	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings/Preparation	Deliverables
Week 1 M 1/13 W 1/15	Course Intro; What is Art? What is Dance? Locating Dance Historically, Culturally, Aesthetically; Intro to Choreographic Analysis	M 1/13 - The Philosophy of Dance - What is Art and or What is Beauty Issue 108 Philosophy Now W 1/15 - O'Shea, p. 1-15	M 1/13 - Create definitions of art and dance using AI as an experiment. Community agreements. W 1/15 - Practicing Choreographic Analysis
Week 2 M 1/20 W 1/22	M 1/20 Martin Luther King's Birthday Holiday Ethnographic Approaches	No Class W 1/22 - Bull p. 269-288	W 1/22 - In-Class Activity: Practicing Ethnographic Analysis
Week 3 M 1/27 W 1/29	Perspectives on Practice	M 1/27 - Sheets-Johnstone, p. 1-9 - Graham, p. 120-125 W 1/29 - Forsythe, p. 1-2 - Burrows, p. 1-10	
Week 4 M 2/3 W 2/5	Dance & Writing	M 2/3 - Guest, p. 1-14 - Groff, p. 27-30 - Weickmann p. 53-64 W 2/5 - Brandenhoff, p. 62-63 - Kurihara, p. 10-28 - Hay, p. 1-18	In-Class Activity: Exploring Indeterminate Scores W 2/5 Analysis Paper #1 Due
Week 5 M 2/10 W 2/12	Dance & Music	M 2/10 - DeFrantz, p. 3-18 W 2/12 - Perloff, p. 19-35 - Coulter, p. 63-84	
Week 6 M 2/17 W 2/19	M 2/17 President's Day Holiday W 2/19 Dance and the Visual Arts, Architecture	W 2/19 - Spivey, p. 11-18 - Copeland, p. 27-43	
Week 7 M 2/24 W 2/26	Site Specificity/ Dance and Religious Expression	M 2/24 - Kloetzel, p. 133-144 W 2/26 - Lerman, p. 39-43	In-class activity: Exploring site specificity
Week 8 M 3/3 W 3/5	Politics and Activism	M 3/3 - Foster, p. 395-412 W 3/5 - Gere, p. 3-38	W 3/15 Analysis Paper #2 Due
Week 9 M 3/10 W 3/12	M 3/10 Mid-term Review W 3/12 Mid-term	M 3/10 Mid-term Review W 3/12 Mid-term	M 3/10 Mid-term Review W 3/12 Mid-term
Spring Break	Spring Break	Spring Break	Spring Break
Week 10 M 3/24 W 3/26	Dancing Identity	M 3/24 - Hyland, p. 67-82 W 3/26 - Chatterjea, p. 180-193	

Week 11 M 3/31 W 4/2	Dancing Identity	M 3/31 - Fisher, p. 146-153 W 4/2 - Juhasz, p. 54-83	In-class activity: Exploring <i>Nutcrackers</i>
Week 12 M 4/7 W 4/9	(Dis)Abilities/ Globalization	M 4/7 - Sobchack, p. 55-66 W 4/9 - Appadurai, p. 27-47	
Week 13 M 4/14 W 4/16	Dance on the (Small) Screen	M 4/14 - Jackson, p. 1-24	W 4/16 Analysis Paper #3 Due
Week 14 M 4/21 W 4/23	Dance and Competition	M 4/21 - Weisbrod, p. 1-16	Course Evals!
Week 15 M 4/28 W 4/30	Course Evals! W 4/30 Wrap up & Final Review		M 4/28 Creative Response Due in Class Course Evals! W 4/30 Wrap up & Final Review
FINAL Monday, May 12 8-10 AM	Monday, May 12 8-10 AM	Monday, May 12 8-10 AM	Monday, May 12 8-10 AM

Health and Wellness at Kaufman

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)

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.

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).

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

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.