

The Dance Experience

Prof. Edward (Ted) Warburton
Associate Professor of Dance
Theater Arts Department
University of California, Santa Cruz
1156 High Street, Office A-218
Santa Cruz, CA 95064
Tel: 831.459.4542; E-mail: tedw@ucsc.edu
Homepage: <http://people.ucsc.edu/~tedw>
Office Hours: TBA

COURSE DESCRIPTION

THEA 31c (2 credits), *The Dance Experience* introduces dance as a universal activity and unique art form. It is open to anyone interested in dance. This course focuses on learning in, through, and about dance in the context of history, social customs, and culture. Together, we will dance, look at dance works, and read about dance.

The primary goal of this course is to introduce students to the aesthetic sensibilities inherent in moving through space and time with intention. The course is based on the notion that dance embodies a way of moving, thinking, feeling, and being in the world that is unique to this art form. The course objectives are to

- ✓ Know fundamentals and basic approaches to movement training;
- ✓ Understand core dance concepts such as the use of action, effort, shape, space, time;
- ✓ Develop basic dance skills through technique, improvisation, and composition;
- ✓ Learn about artistic-theatrical, traditional, and social-recreational dance forms;
- ✓ Appreciate historical traditions and cross-cultural influences on contemporary dance.

Requirements

- Consistent attendance. Your prompt arrival and full completion of all class sessions.
- Open attitude. A demonstrated willingness to learn and try new ideas and forms.
- Manifest effort. Assignments handed in on time (nothing will be accepted after final day of instruction).

Outline. The class will include:

- Body training: Each class will begin with basic exercises designed to get you moving efficiently and expressively;
- Dancing: Key ideas and historical trends will be explored through dancing different forms – from ritual to social to theatrical dance – along with movement studies that emphasize skills such as core support, movement intention, and rhythmic ability;
- Dance-making: Movement exploration, improvisation, and composition of dances for performance.

Meeting times. Tuesdays & Thursdays 6-7:30pm in the Experimental Theater, Theater Arts Center.

Readings and Viewings. Selected readings and dance film viewings will be distributed in class.

Assignments. You are responsible for completing four (4) assignments: self-assessment, outside dance class, cultural project, and final dance performance (schedule provided in class).

Grading. Course credit will depend upon attendance & attitude and manifest effort (30%), plus satisfactory self-assessment (10%), outside dance class (10%), cultural project (20%), and final performance (30%).

What does passion have to do with dance? Everything. – Pina Bausch

ASSIGNMENTS

Attendance & Attitude. THEA 31c is primarily about *engaged, active participation* in the dance class. I designed the course work and assignments so that you have multiple opportunities to perform, respond to, and reflect on dance. Your grade will thus be affected by your attendances: absences, late arrivals, or early exits are noted. A consistent attitude, energy, focus, and openness to new ideas will be the basis for your growth and development.

Self-assessment. You are required to produce one (1) self-assessment of your expectations, learning and skill development in dance. Self-assessment (or self-appraisal, self-evaluation) plays a central role in artistic practice. Typical self-appraisal questions – i.e., what did I learn, what risks did I take, and what will I change – reflect the highest level of assessment, *self-examination*, because they require you to judge personal strengths and weaknesses.

Cultural Project. For the cultural project, students will work in groups of 2-3 to describe a contemporary cultural dance practice. Using audio/visual materials, you will describe the origin, development and current state of the form. This assignment requires a (no more than) five (5) minute *dancelogue*: an audio report on, and interpretation of, the meaning and importance of dance in contemporary life.

Outside dance class. You are responsible for taking one (1) single class in the Santa Cruz – or your home – community in a style of dance (not aerobics, martial arts or yoga). **This class should support your research for the cultural project.** You will hand in a description and signed receipt from the instructor. This should include what kind of dance class, taught by whom, where, date and time. Have the instructor sign his/her name on this receipt. Then write two (2) sentences about your reactions to the class. Submit the receipt plus reactions stapled together.

Final dance performance. The final performance will include various dances learned over the course of the session as well as personal dance compositions (short solo or group dance). This performance is an opportunity to embody your knowledge about dance and demonstrate your ability to move clearly and expressively.

A final word about assignments

Do the work on time. I designed the class so that you actively use the ideas and skills we learn in class. *Failure to participate in the final dance performance will result an incomplete in the course.*

ATTENDANCE

Absences. Policy permits one (1) absence per summer quarter in dance classes that meet two (2) times per week. For each unexcused absence thereafter, you will be docked two (2) points from your final grade. After three (3) unexcused absences, I reserve the right to assign a failing grade and write an unsatisfactory performance evaluation.

Attending but not participating. If you are well enough to attend but cannot participate (due to injury or non-infectious illness), please notify the instructor before class. You may receive attendance credit by watching the full class and submitting a descriptive report of the proceedings. This “observation” paper should address what you discovered by watching class and how you will apply these discoveries to your work. You may exercise this option only **once**.

Tardiness. Excessively (or habitually) late students may be required to observe class and will be considered absent. Early departures from class are allowed only in the event of emergency or the instructor has been notified prior to the class session.

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

In this course, you will be recognized for your passion and commitment. Here's how it works:

I. Attendance, participation, and completed assignments comprise 90 percent of grade. You will receive full-credit for attending class and completing every assignment. That is, as long as you miss no more than one (1) class and do all the work assigned, you will receive an excellent grade (A-).

II. Manifest effort (10 percent). Your sweat and hard work are worth more than 'something' to me. You will gain additional recognition in grading if you a) **take no shortcuts** by showing up for every class session and b) **light the fire in your eyes** demonstrating a passionate commitment by coming to every class prepared and on time.

*100 = A+ (exceptional); 99-91 = A (superior); 90 = A- (excellent)
89-85 = B+ (strong); 84-80 = B (very good); 79-75 = B- (good, above average);
74-70 = C+ (average); 69-65 = C (uneven); 64-60 = C- (poor) ... don't ask.*

DRESS

Dress for class in a way that does not hinder your movement or my ability to see clearly your body alignment. Leotard and tights, knit pants or other clothes that allow for full range of motion are good options. No jeans please. You may also need to adjust your hair so that you can lie comfortably on your back. Remove all wrist and neck jewelry. **You are expected to dance barefoot.** You may bring water to class, but it must be in a plastic bottle with cap. No gum or eating in class. Turn off your cell phone:)

INJURIES AND HEALTH ISSUES: NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENT

Students are advised not to participate in class with an illness or injury. You must inform me of any recent injury or health issues that may affect your class work. A written health clearance may be requested before a return to class participation is permitted. Please supply your own ice for a pre-existing injury. If you will miss three or more classes due to an injury or illness, you must provide a written statement that details your personal plan for treatment (including a physician's report), and a timeline for your return to full class participation. Your grade may be affected depending on the nature and extent of illness or injury.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR SPECIAL NEEDS AND RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

Students who require special physical or cognitive accommodations must contact the office handling special needs within the first two weeks of the beginning of classes or the dates of the academic requirement for which the accommodation is sought. Religious beliefs will be accommodated according to University policy as long as sufficient notification is given to the instructor.

IMPORTANT DATES

SCHEDULE

Day 1	Syllabus and Expectations; Lesson on Place; Lecture on Origins; Ritual dance
Day 2	Lesson on Pathway; Lecture on Traditional forms; Secular dance
Day 3	Lesson on Relationship; Lecture on Court and Contra; Folk dance
Day 4	Lesson on Direction; Lecture on 19 th Century Artistic; Ballet dance
Day 5	Lesson on Size/Level; Lecture on 20 th Century Theatrical; Jazz dance √ Self-assessment due
Day 6	Lesson on Rhythm/Speed; Lecture on 20 th Century Social; Ballroom dance
Day 7	Lesson on Shape; Lecture on 20 th Century Artistic; Modern dance
Day 8	Lesson on Effort Qualities I; Lecture on Contemporary Artistic; Dance-making
Day 9	Lesson on Effort Qualities II; REVIEW; Composition task
Day 10	Final Performance √ Cultural project & outside dance class due √ Dance composition due

Selected Readings

Cooper Albright, A. and Gere, D. (eds.) (2003). *Taken by surprise: a dance improvisation reader*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press.

Ehrenreich, Barbara (2006). *Dancing in the streets: A history of collective joy*. New York: Holt.

McNeill, William H. (1995). *Keeping together in time: Dance and drill in human history*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Garfinkel, Yosef (2003). *Dancing at the dawn of agriculture*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

Hackney, P. (2002). *Making connections: Total body integration through Bartenieff Fundamentals*. London, England: Routledge.

Reynolds, N. and McCormick, M. (2003). *No fixed points: Dance in the Twentieth Century*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

A few nearby places to dance in Santa Cruz

International Academy of Dance, 320 Encinal Street (near Costco), Santa Cruz, CA 95060
(831.438.7548; web.me.com/iadance)

Motion Pacific, Loudon Nelson Center, 301 Center Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060 (831.457.1616;
www.motionpacific.com)

Palomar Ballroom, 1344 Pacific Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA 95060 (831.426.1221;
www.palomarballroom.com)