

## **DNCE 121 BEGINNING BALLET**

(3 CREDITS | CRN: 62242 | MW 11:30am – 12:45pm)

INSTRUCTOR: Alex Durrant  
OFFICE: Hale Palanakila 138  
OFFICE HOURS: M & W 10.30am – 11.30am & 2.30pm – 3.30 pm  
T 9am – 10am  
Or by appointment  
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EFFECTIVE DATE: Spring 2018

### **WINDWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE MISSION STATEMENT**

Windward Community College offers innovative programs in the arts and sciences and opportunities to gain knowledge and understanding of Hawai'i and its unique heritage. With a special commitment to support the access and educational needs of Native Hawaiians, we provide O'ahu's Ko'olau region and beyond with liberal arts, career and lifelong learning in a supportive and challenging environment — inspiring students to excellence.

### **CATALOG DESCRIPTION**

Introduction to ballet technique. May be repeated up to 9 credits.

This unit introduces the essentials of ballet technique, developing strength and suppleness and exploring how dancers move. Working in class will improve fitness levels and coordination so that learners can experiment with movement combinations and learn sequences of choreography.

### **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Upon completion of the course, the student will be able to:

- Correctly define ballet terminology
- Execute proper ballet technique
- Perform ballet routines

### **COURSE CONTENT**

Most of the learning for this unit will take place in the studio. Ballet classes have a clear and ordered structure, and learners must have the chance to find out through experience how classes work. Class should enable learners to appreciate the need for a thorough warm-up, explore the nature of the class repertoire of exercises and understand how these build up strength, stamina and suppleness. Ballet class develops all the skills a dancer needs to create and dance choreographed ballets. The structure of the class should be appreciated as learners pursue this basic grounding for all the dancing that

will follow. The slow build-up from barre, through adage to petit and grand allegro builds skills and coordination as well as appreciation for the shape and line of ballet movement. All classes should follow this format so that when they tackle more creative dancing, learners are already warmed up both physically and mentally. The French words used to describe movement, directions and speed are essential learning for all dancers, even those not pursuing ballet in their further dance training. Tutors should use the correct French terms at all times in class, so this becomes a natural mode of communication. Self-criticism is a way of life for dancers and all learners will need to carry out their own evaluations; dancers have to accept this and use it as a way of progressing. Discussions between tutor and learners should focus on learners skills and potential for development. Whilst the tutor may choreograph simple dance combinations, learners should be encouraged to develop their own ideas, although the choreographic process is not taught here in this unit. Sections of choreography from ballet works are good challenges for learners to master.

## COURSE TASKS

- A. **Reflection:** Students will be required to book and attend at least 3 one to one sessions with their teacher throughout the semester to discuss their progress. This will not simply consist of tutor feedback but will be a two-way discussion. Students are required to identify their strengths and weaknesses in reference to defined balletic practical activity so that they can develop their technical skills. The teacher and student will work together to achieve the goals set in these sessions.
- B. **Complete a variety of in-class activities** Students will be assessed on their participation in practical class activities. The classes may build on movement vocabulary in a number of ways, eg adding on to, quicker, more demanding as well as having new movement phrases and exercises. The development of balletic technique is integral to this unit and students need to be given opportunities to prepare, learn, develop and rehearse set movement sequences. Students are encouraged to demonstrate independence in their learning and may also lead other students in exercises, sequences and set studies.
- C. **Dance Appreciation/Written Critique:** View and respond to 3 excerpts of classical dance, these may be found as recorded performances or live if the opportunity arises.
- D. **Creative Final Performance:** Students will be taught, memorize and perform excerpts of balletic repertoire testing balletic vocabulary, these may be group pieces or solos. It should be noted that expression, commitment and effort are every bit as important as technical accuracy for grading purposes.
- E. **Class Observation Log:** If you must observe class due to injury or illness, please use a "Class Observation Form" to guide your written observations in your journal (collected at the regular times).

### Grading

Each student will be evaluated at the level in which they have enrolled. Grades will be based upon attendance, enthusiastic class participation, technical and performance improvement, written and oral assignments, and a growing sense of professional behavior appropriate to studio work and the level of the student.

**Grading Criteria:**

A.	Progress in technique technical skills performance skills (20%)	40%
B.	Attitude and concentration	50%
C.	Written Assignments	10%

*The attendance policy will be adhered to, and will affect the result of the above grading procedure. If a student is injured and unable to participate, they may attentively watch class and submit notes taken on class materials to the instructor (using the “Class Observation Form” provided). If a student is unable to take more than 6 classes due to injury, they will be advised to drop the course.*

*The professor will amend the syllabus as may be appropriate. Students will be made aware of any changes to assignments or grading policies.*

#### *Grades Available*

A = 90 or above | B = 80-89 | C = 70-79 | D = 60-69 | F = 59 or below

*CR/NC Option:* You must have the official CR/NC form signed by the instructor. You must receive a C or higher to receive credit for the course.

### LEARNING RESOURCES

*No Required Text:* Handouts made available by Instructor

*Course Web:* [laulima.hawaii.edu](http://laulima.hawaii.edu) (log in using your UH username and password)

### COURSE POLICIES

#### *In General:*

#### **Attendance Policies**

Students are expected to arrive on time, ready to dance, and stay for the entire class session. Latecomers may not join in the class without permission from the instructor; instead, they will actively participate by watching the class, taking notes, and being responsible for class subject matter and assignments.

**DANCE PROGRAM ATTENDANCE POLICY:** *More than 3 absences will significantly lower the grade. After 4 absences, each absence will lower the grade by a full letter. Three “tardies” equal an absence. Medically excused absences will be dealt with on an individual basis.*

#### **Active Participation Expectations**

Students must be eager to both think and sweat at the same time. An alert body and mind are expected. Students are expected to actively participate in each class unless medically unable. Active participation is shaped by a particular mindset: motivated, open-minded, supportive, exploratory, and patient. This class will challenge your Learning Edge:

“Your Learning Edge is the balance between taking risks and taking care of yourself, the boundary of your discovery zone and your comfort zone. In your comfort zone, you don’t learn anything. When you take risks and move beyond where you are comfortable, you enter a discovery zone where this opportunity to learn. Learning happens by creating new experiences and failures in your discovery zone, and then reflecting upon and evaluating them in your comfort zone. You will not learn anything by spending all your time in either zone, and the dance back and forth is what I call your Learning Edge.” (Morgan Rich)

## Health Statement

Please notify the instructor if there are any particular physical concerns that affect your ability to dance. An *Acknowledgment of Risk/Medical Consent Form* must be completed and submitted to the instructor on the first day of class.

There is only one way you can do badly in this class – fail to show up. If you don't come to class you aren't just letting yourself down you are letting your classmates down too. If you miss even one class session, you may be excluded from further training, as you are now a safety liability.

## Helpful Resources:

I encourage you to ask me questions about the class and to ask for clarification at any time. Please ask for help even though you are not sure you need it.

One of the best resources on campus is the **TRiO Student Support Services (SSS)** office, which provides tutoring and a range of other opportunities to eligible students. The contact number for TRiO SSS is 235-7487.

## Studio Etiquette:

Our studio space is sacred. To that end, you must leave your other worries and life preoccupations at the door. Do not bring them in this place where we will work carefully to create fights for the stage.

- Smartphones and the constant invasion of the virtual world upon all aspects of our life are my nemesis and most hated foe. Our class will be a cellphone-free zone – **you will turn off your phones and put them with your belongings in a cubby hole as you arrive and take touch them again only when class is concluded.** Fear not. I promise your texts and facebook notifications will be waiting for you one hour and fifteen minutes later.
- No food or drink (other than water) can be consumed in the studio.No food or drink (other than water) can be consumed in the studio.
- Respect one another at all times. Any disrespect of your classmates will not be tolerated and result in your ejection from class for the day (which will then count as an absence, effecting your grade). The work we do is collaborative, if any of us feel uncomfortable; none of us can achieve excellence.
- Be aware of your body's limitations. Sometimes I will ask you to do strenuous physical activity, if you suffer from palpitations, consumption, or tennis elbow, I need to know.

## Emails:

Communicating with students is my top priority. If I have not responded to your message in twenty-four hours, please email me again.

Please email me from one address only. This will help me to sort and manage my emails effectively.

Please check your hawaii.edu account on a regular basis. I will send email announcements to that account only. Instructions on forwarding your hawaii.edu account are here: [http://windward.hawaii.edu/technology/Forwarding\\_UH\\_GMail.pdf](http://windward.hawaii.edu/technology/Forwarding_UH_GMail.pdf).

Please write grammatically correct emails, using complete words and full sentences (no shorthand, such as “where r u now”). Start with a greeting (Aloha Bob, Dear Mr. Smith, or Hi Lance), and end with a signature (Thank you, Sincerely, or just your name). Get in the habit of writing professionally. This will benefit you greatly in life.

If you have any problems or last minute emergencies, email me or leave a voice mail on my \ phone.

## DISABILITIES ACCOMMODATION STATEMENT

*If you have a physical, sensory, health, cognitive, or mental health disability that could limit your ability to fully participate in this class, you are encouraged to contact the Disability Specialist Counselor to discuss reasonable accommodations that will help you succeed in this class. Ann Lemke can be reached at 235-7448, [lemke@hawaii.edu](mailto:lemke@hawaii.edu), or you may stop by Hale ‘Akoakoa 213 for more information.*

Please Note: This course takes a tactile teaching approach. Tactile teaching involves hands-on correction by the instructor, and is a valuable teaching aid in assisting the student in understanding aspects of proper alignment, placement and movement concepts during class. Physical contact may range from simple touch to correct alignment to relaxation massage. Students may also be asked to experiment with exercises that involve weight exchange. If this makes you uncomfortable, please notify the professor and appropriate modifications will be made.

### **Technical Balletic Material to be Covered**

#### **Be able to use physical and interpretive classical ballet techniques**

**Classical ballet class:** barre eg warm-up, the development of strength, flexibility, stamina; development of turn-out; posture; emplacement; foot positions; pointe and demi-pointe work; head; ports de bras; hands; classical body alignment

**Centre practice:** transference of skills from the barre eg balance, emplacement, adage, petit allegro, grand allegro, petit batterie, pirouettes, ports de bras, petit and grand jeté, use of head, use of épaulement; travelling, classical body alignment

**Interpretation:** vocabulary; response to choreography: response to music/accompaniment: stylistic quality; accurate reproduction of choreography; lyricism; spatial awareness; timing; focus and projection; expression and dynamics, emotional quality; bodyline; clarity

**Review:** accepting direction; response to evaluation by self and tutor; setting targets for further work

#### **Develop skills in order to present a classical ballet role**

**Style:** taught enchaînements eg utilising all aspects of technique class, allegro and adage, traditional and modern ballet

**Repertoire:** range of ballet roles eg taken from historical periods, movements, the work of choreographers, star roles Rehearsal of the role: learning and reproducing; movement memory; physical and stylistic interpretation; repetition; taking direction

**Performance:** demonstration of a classical role eg reproduction from choreography or notation; interpretation of a classical role eg from tutor-led choreography, directly from

professional repertoire, from video/film, from notation

Students will know and be able to execute the following upon completion of this course:

### **5 positions of the feet**

#### **Barre Exercises**

pliés (demi and grande)

tendu

dégagé

pas de cheval

rond de jambe à terre (en dedans, en dehors)

frappé

fondue

coupe

(sur le) cou-de pied

passe/retirée

piqué

arabesque

attitude

elevé, relevé, soussus

développé, enveloppe

grand battements

#### **Directions of Movement**

en avant

en arrière

en dedans

en dehors

#### **Patterns of movement**

en croix

en cloche

à terre

en l'air

#### **Positions of Leg Movement**

#### **Port de Bras**

fifth en bas (low)

fifth en avant / the gateway (forward)

fifth en haut (high)

second

#### **Center Work**

adagio

balancé

tombé

#### **Basic Connecting Steps (all involve plie)**

temps lié

chassé à terre, chassé en l'air

pas de bourré (dessous)

pas de basque

### **Simple Petite Allegro (small jumps)**

temps levé (sauté) in 1st, 5<sup>th</sup>  
changement de pieds  
sauté échappé  
soubresaut  
pas de chat  
glissade  
jeté dessus  
assemblé  
sissone

### **Turning Techniques**

detourné/fouetté à terre  
pas de bourré en tournant  
soutenu en tournant  
spotting  
chaîné turns  
piqué turns  
pirouette (en dehors, en dedans)

### **Positions in Relation to the Stage**

upstage  
downstage  
stage right  
stage left  
en face, de face  
de côté

### **8 Positions of the Body**

croise devant  
à la quatrième devant  
efface (devant)  
à la seconde  
croise derrière  
écarte  
épaule  
à la quatrième derrière

### **7 Basic Movements of Ballet**

plier  
relever  
entendre  
glisser  
tourner  
sauté  
élancer

## COURSE POLICIES CONTRACT

I have read through and reviewed the above Course Policies and the entire THEA 221 syllabus. By signing this document, I acknowledge not only that I understand the policies and requirements of this course, but also that I understand the consequences of not following these policies.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

## QUESTIONNAIRE

Preferred Name \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Phone \_\_\_\_\_

1. What do you hope this course will teach you? What are your goals in this class?

2. How can I help you meet these goals?

3. What do you intend to do to meet them?

4. What grade would you be satisfied with in this course? Why?

5. What else would you like me to know about you?

PLEASE WRITE SOMETHING YOU LEARNED TODAY BELOW.