

Beginning Ballet (3 credits)

CRN: 63527

Class Meets: MW 2:30pm - 3:45pm

Email: durranta@hawaii.edu

Office Hours: M 9am -10am & 4pm – 5pm

W 9am -10am & 1pm – 2pm

Lecturer: Alex Durrant

Location: Palanakila 224

Office: 138 Hala Palanakila

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 Course 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

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.

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, 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.

Course Assignments

- A. **Reflection Journal/Portfolio:** Students will be required to keep and evaluative log of their practical activities. Students are required to identify their strengths and weaknesses in reference to defined balletic practical activity so that they can develop their technical skills. For tutors to gain an insight into how learners intend to do this, they need to be encouraged to self-evaluate their progress and performances. Instructor will provide prompts for short entries each class period and occasional more in-depth check-ins, such as at mid-term. Course *handouts* and *assignments* are also collected here to form an ongoing portfolio of work.
- 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 5 (five) 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. **No incomplete grades will be given in technique class.**

Grading Criteria:

A.	Progress in technique		40%
	technical skills	(20%)	
	performance skills	(20%)	
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.

Dress Code Policy

Students will dance in ballet shoes with clothing that allows the tutor to assess the line of the body. No baggy dance clothing, ankles must be visible. Large or potentially dangerous jewelry and watches are not permitted. Hair needs to be confined and out of the face. Students may consider purchasing kneepads to reduce the potential for irritation when performing movement combinations with floor work. Maintaining proper personal hygiene is a daily class expectation.

METHOD OF INSTRUCTION

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.

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