

## **DNCE 131 BEGINNING MODERN DANCE**

(3 CREDITS | CRN: 62244 | TR 10.00am – 11:15am)

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  
TELEPHONE: 808-489-1831  
EMAIL: durranta@hawaii.edu  
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 modern dance technique. May be repeated up to 9 credits.

This course is about developing modern dance technique giving students the opportunity to gain a solid foundation of skills in this style of dance. Students will take part in regular technique classes in order to develop the skills required to dance in a modern style. Students will gain the underpinning knowledge of the skills needed to progress in the performance of modern dance. They must be aware of their technical ability in order to evaluate their progress and improve. This course introduces the essentials of modern technique; it will develop strength, flexibility, stamina, and coordination.

### STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

- Correctly define modern dance terminology
- Demonstrate kinesthetic proficiency in modern dance technique through performance
- Demonstrate conceptual understanding of contemporary modern dance technique

### COURSE CONTENT

All classes will follow a similar structure, with exercises, phrases, sequences, combinations and studies taught over a number of weeks to enable students to develop physical skills, increase movement memory and challenge their abilities. If students have not had any dance or movement training before starting this unit, they will need to

develop basic skills in the first few weeks, for example, establishing correct posture, alignment, distribution of weight, correct positioning of the feet and arms. During the course exercises will increase in complexity giving students the opportunity to develop their skills further. This unit will provide students with a solid foundation in technique and the opportunity to experience the ways in which dancers are committed to regular technique class, training and evaluation in order to maintain their artistic 'tools' or bodies. It is important to allow students to build up their knowledge of contemporary dance over the course of the unit allowing time for corrections, evaluations and target setting to come into effect. Students also need to understand the disciplined way in which a technique class works and demonstrate an improved and developed technique over the course of the unit.

Tutors might like to introduce a variety of styles to enable learners to have a broader understanding of contemporary dance and its many influences. As is often the case the tutor may deliver a class that 'borrows' from a whole host of contemporary dance styles that could be appropriate as long as all the unit outcomes are addressed.

## 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 contemporary dance 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 Annotated Bibliography:** View and respond to three dances on video/DVD.
- D. **Creative Final Performance:** Students create their own dances, solos or collaborations of up to 3 students.
- 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

## 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.

### **Course Timeline/Content**

*Week 1: Introductions, Syllabus, Learning Styles, Safety, Alignment, Preparing to Dance*

*Week 2: **The Body**- anatomical actions, movement patterns, parts, initiations, sequencing*

*Week 3: **Action**- axial and locomotor movements, accessing space, spatial pathways*

*Week 4: **Space**- size, level, place, direction, orientation, relationships, pathways*

*Week 5: **Shapes/Shaping**- curved, angled, compact, expansive, rising/sinking, spreading/enclosing, advancing/retreating, positive and negative space in shapes*

*Week 6: **Efforts and Time**- weight, time, flow, space*

*Week 7: **Focus***

*Week 8: **Music**, Mid-Term*

*Week 9: Working with all of the *elements of dance* in personal composition*

*Week 10, Week 11, Week 12, Week 13: Refining technique*

*Week 14, Week 15, 11/29, 12/1: Work on final choreographic projects*

*Week 16: Final showings and Portfolios, any outstanding assignments due*

### **Dance Movement Material to be Covered**

Parallel position

5 (or 6) positions of the feet

Plié demi plie and relevé in all positions

grand plie: 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>

### **Placement**

Pelvis in relation to the legs and spine

Ribcage/head

Shoulders/arms

Knees/ankles

### **Foot articulation**

Metatarsal, stretched foot

Tendu

Degage

Pas de cheval

Leg/hip articulation

Inward and outward rotation; abduction and adduction; extension and hyperextension; circumduction

Rond de jambe

Leg swings

Grande battements

Torso articulation

Sequencing head to tail and tail to head

Head and tail move together towards one another simultaneously

Isolations: ribs, hips, shoulders

Actions

Weight shift

Swing

Rebound

Suspension

Undercurve

Overcurve

Spatial Directions

Vertical Dimension—up/down

Sagittal Dimension—forward/backward

Horizontal Dimension—side/side

Planes

Vertical Plane—up/down AND side/side

Sagittal Plane—forward/backward AND up/down

Horizontal Plane—side/side AND forward/backward

Locomotor Steps

Walk/run

Jump—two feet to two feet

Hop—one foot to the same foot

Leap—one foot to the other

Skip—step, hop

Gallop (chasse)

Triplet

Directions/pathways in space

Forward

Side

Back

Diagonals

Circles

Movement qualities/flows

Light/Limp

Strong/Heavy

Bound

Free

Quick

Sustained  
Smooth  
Percussive  
Float/glide; flick/dab; punch/slash

Music

Meters: 2/4; 3/4; 4/4; introduction to odd meters  
Tempo: varied speed

## 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.