

DANCE 230

Ballet

TTH 10:35 – 11:50

Dance Studio, Misciagna Family Center

Instructor: Caitlin Osborne
Office: 135 Misciagna Family Center
Office Hours: Tuesday/Thursday 9:30-10:30am
and by appointment

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CANVAS website: <https://psu.instructure.com/>

Introduction

Beginning a course in ballet takes you to a new world. Your body shapes itself into unnatural postures. You speak in a new language. In this course, we focus on fundamental principles, regardless of past experience. Every dancer can benefit from this work, whether building from scratch or refining the technique acquired over years of study. Much of what you get out of this class depends on what you put in. The instructor is a guide – here to help you become self-sufficient as a dancer. Technique class provides the tools for improvement, but the dancer must provide the energy, focus, and determination to make them work.

Also, students should keep in mind that this is an academic class, with similar structure and expectations to any other course work. When in doubt, ask yourself – what would you do in any other class?

A note about class level, credit load, and course numbering

DANCE 230 is a mixed level class. It is expected that the class will contain dancers with a variety of experience, including no experience at all. It is essential in this atmosphere to focus on your own work rather than comparing yourself to others. It is also essential to treat your peers with respect and attention regardless of your own experience. The course is designed so that EVERYONE can have a successful experience.

DANCE 230 is a general arts class, carrying 1.5 credits. General arts means that the course covers wider themes than a straight technique class; 1.5 credits reflects that the class should take a minimum of 60 hours over the course of the semester. Neither of these designations means the class is an “easy A” or that you should expect to have no outside work.

Course Outcomes

Each student will:

WORK SMART: Develop cognitive and kinesthetic understanding of basic principles and techniques of ballet technique including alignment, coordination, flexibility, dynamic, rhythm, and performance.

WORK INDEPENDENT: Develop cognitive and kinesthetic understanding of his or her own body, learning to process information internally, without use of the “outside eye” (mirror or instructor). Use knowledge to improve through self-study.

ASSESS IT: Assess personal performance, execution, and progress, through self-evaluation.

EXPRESS IT: Develop a working vocabulary of classical ballet terminology.

Course Content

Course consists of three areas of study, each developed across several types of assignments:

1. Kinesthetic: Students will develop their “moving body” through technique exercises which include alignment, flexibility, coordination, and strengthening as well as mastery of rhythm and

- movement quality. Assessment is based on class participation and movement exams. (Approximately 60% of total grade)
2. **Observational:** Students will develop their ability to accurately and helpfully critique themselves and others. Students will explore the performing arts as audience members at a variety of events. Assessment will be based on class participation (discussion/feedback), and self-assessments, and attendance at performing arts events. (Approximately 25% of total grade)
 3. **Conceptual:** Students will develop a vocabulary to explain the aesthetic aspects of ballet movement. Assessment is based on quizzes. (Approximately 15% of total grade)

Required Course Materials

Clothing: Moveable, form-fitting pants and shirt, ballet shoes

Tickets: Ivyside Dance Ensemble (\$5); some student choice events are ticketed, many are free of charge

Dates and Deadlines (subject to change):

August 27 – Drop Ends

August 28 – Add Ends

August 30 – Auditions, Ivyside Dance Ensemble

September 21 – Quiz 1

September 28 – Exam 1

October 20 – Exam and Quiz 2

November 10/11, 7:30 PM – Dance Program Concert

November 14 – Quiz 2

November 16 – Exam 3

December 7 – Quiz 3

See CANVAS for a full calendar of assignments and due dates

Assignment Descriptions, Expectations, and Grading Policy:

Grading Overview: See CANVAS to check your grades.

This is a beginning level class, but grades are not based on effort alone. Participation and a good attitude are important but results and progress are just as important. You are graded on your progress and your achievements. In other words:

A = SUPERIOR

B = EXCELLENT

C = AVERAGE

D = POOR

F=FAILING

“A” grades are reserved for students who demonstrate both superior effort and superior results. To earn a “B” you will need to work outside of class and come prepared. Being satisfied with your current abilities—even if you are very capable, will earn you a “C.” You are not being graded in reference to anyone else in class.

Grade Evaluation

30% participation

30% movement exams

20% quizzes

20% practice quizzes/self-assessments

Grading scale:

94-100 = A 84-86 = B 70-76 = C

90-93 = A- 80-83 = B- 60-69 = D

87-89 = B+ 77-79 = C+ 59 – below = F

Class participation:

Grades are recorded every two weeks.

For superior results in class participation:

1. Come to class. Yes, every class.
2. Work between classes, putting in at least one hour a week in practice and review.
3. Ask questions. Answer questions.

4. Work diligently, consistently, and intelligently
5. Take corrections, both those given to you and to other.
6. Wear appropriate clothing and follow all guidelines for class etiquette.

Evening Dance Performance (part of participation):

On November 10 or 11, at 7:30 PM, students will attend the dance program final performance at the Misciagna Family Center for the Arts. This performance is mandatory, and attendance is part of participation grade.

Supplemental Events (part of participation):

Students may choose from a variety of campus and university events to attend. Events accrue different amounts of points. Students are expected to accrue 50 points, but may accrue up to 50 ADDITIONAL points as extra credit.

Movement Exams – September 28 and November 16:

Students will execute combinations previously taught in class. Grade is based on the student's performance, including accuracy of execution, musicality, and personal progress. Movement exams will be videotaped.

In-class Quizzes - September 21, November 14, December 7:

Quizzes 1 and 2 address the vocabulary of classical ballet, concepts of movement and physiology, and historical and stylistic material, as taught in class. Quiz 3 covers the history of ballet.

Self-Assessments – October 5 and November 28:

After each movement exam, students will complete a brief self-assessment, based on video of their exam and submitted on CANVAS. Students will critique their performance, give themselves a grade, and set goals for future work.

Practice quizzes:

Prior to each in class quiz, students will take a self-test for preparation. Homework will be completed and submitted online, through CANVAS.

Classroom Policies and Useful Information:

Absences:

Don't miss class, because it is not possible to "make up" participation. If you miss more than 2 classes during the semester, whether excused or unexcused, your participation grade will begin to suffer. If you too ill to dance, you may participate by observing and taking notes which you will submit to the instructor.

Excused absences are limited to illness, injury, family emergency, religious observance, and extracurricular activities sponsored by the university. If you have excusable health, family, or other issues that preclude regular participation, please talk to the instructor before drop/add ends so that you may make an informed decision about how these absences may affect your grade.

Unexcused absences include: family vacations, leaving early for break, non-emergency medical appointments, advisory appointments, extracurricular events, and any other conflicts not explicitly listed in university policy.

If you miss class, whether excused or unexcused, you should plan to get the material from another student outside of regular class time, or from the instructor during office hours.

Attire:

Acceptable: tights and leotard, jazz/yoga pants or shorts and fitted shirt, or other dance attire. Ballet shoes.

Unacceptable: baggy t-shirts, sweatshirts, sweat pants, or any pants that cover feet and ankles. Loose jewelry is not permitted. Long hair must be pulled back from the face and secured.

Etiquette:

THERE IS NO GUM CHEWING IN CLASS. Cell phones should be off. Be prepared to take notes at every class by bringing your notebook and a pencil or pen, plus any readings. Always leave outdoor shoes and any wet outerwear on the rugs by the door. NO STREET SHOES ON THE DANCE FLOOR AT ANY TIME.

******I will not use valuable class time to enforce these policies. Breaches of etiquette, inappropriate attire, chronic tardiness, etc., will lead directly to docked grades.******

Polite classroom behavior includes 1) limited talking while class is in progress, 2) attention to fellow class members, 3) assisting with setting/striking the barres.

Communication:

1. Course materials will be posted on CANVAS. You may view this syllabus and any other handouts there.
2. Communication from the instructor will be handled by email through the CANVAS system. Please forward your CANVAS email to the account you will check regularly, and manage your notification settings so that you will not miss any announcements or assignments.
3. Should class be cancelled, information will be posted on the Course Cancellations page on the PSU Altoona website. An email will also be sent to students.
4. I am happy to discuss any issues or concerns in person during office hours or by appointment. Please be aware that the minutes immediately before and after class are not an appropriate time for these discussions.

Deadlines and Extensions

Do you need an extension? You need to ask! I will usually grant extensions when students request them **BEFORE** the deadline. After the deadline, work is late, and unacceptable.

Make-ups

If you need to miss an exam or quiz due to excused illness or other event, follow these guidelines:

1. Text, email or call the instructor **BEFORE** the absence occurs and explain the problem.
2. Meet with the instructor to arrange a time and date for completing the assignment.

To make up participation due to an excused illness or other event, follow these guidelines:

1. Text, email or call the instructor **BEFORE** the absence occurs and explain the problem.
2. For two or fewer absences, points may be recouped through participation in extra events.
3. For three or more absences, an alternative assignment will be provided.

NOTE: I am not required to provide make-up assignments to students who fail to inform me adequately about their absences. You must contact me directly and in advance of the absence. Exceptions are only in cases of actual physical incapacitation. You have my number. Use it.

Academic Integrity:

Cases of academic dishonesty – cheating, plagiarism, fraud, etc. – will be dealt with harshly. Consequences may include receiving a failing grade on an exam, essay, or in the course; in more serious consequences, academic dishonesty may result in permanent expulsion from the University. For more details, see *The Student Guide to University Policies and Rules*.

Note to Students with Disabilities:

Penn State welcomes students with disabilities into its educational programs. If you have a disability-related need for modifications or reasonable accommodations in this course, contact the Health & Wellness Center, Disability Services, located at the Sheetz Family Health Center. For more information call (814) 949-5540 or visit the Disability Services Web site at www.altoona.psu.edu/healthwellness. Instructors should be notified as early in the semester as possible regarding the need for modifications or reasonable accommodations.