

# Beginning Dance and Movement, LE

HPW\*230\*01 / THTR\*230\*01

Tues/Thur

10:00 – 11:15am

HWAC STUDIO

Fall 2012

**Ashley Mott**

amott@westminstercollege.edu

Office hours by appointment

---

*This syllabus is subject to change.*

## Course Description

This class is an introduction to basic elements of movement and dance. It explores body alignment, core support, weight, momentum, movement quality, connectivity and more in relation to time, space, and energy. The class is structured as a series of dance sequences and designed to carry over into every day practice.

Students are challenged to learn and improve dance and movement skills by progressing through a series of warm-up exercises, locomotor movement phrases, choreographic combinations, creative improvisations, and short composition assignments. These exercises and activities are designed to help students understand and integrate a variety of movement concepts.

This class aims to increase appreciation for dance as an artistic medium. Elements of dance to be studied include, but are not limited to: energy qualities, balance, alignment, stability vs. mobility, range of motion, coordination, spinal articulation, core connectivity, locomotor and axial movements, performance quality, group awareness, spatial awareness, expressivity, musicality, improvisation and dance composition. The students will be asked to explore their identities not only as dancers, but also as choreographers, audience members, students, and performers. Students will also be introduced to concepts of nutrition, body composition, body types, anatomy, and kinesiology as they relate to maintaining healthy bodies-- to support their dancing and promote life-long wellness.

## Course Goals

This class is a foundation course, which means there's a lot to learn and master. By the end of the semester, you will –

- Increase body awareness
- Improve balance, strength, coordination, flexibility, movement memorization, and spatial awareness
- Learn the basic principles of dance, including an understanding of time, space, energy, locomotor and axial movement, improvisation, composition, and musicality
- Develop creative problem-solving and critical-thinking skills through movement
- Explore and develop your own personal movement vocabulary
- Increase awareness of dance in our community
- Improve skills for viewing and discussing dance critically and analytically
- Gain a basic understanding of integrative and collaborative multi-media arts
- Learn basic dance vocabulary
- Understand foundational concepts of anatomy, kinesiology, and physical wellness as they relate to dance

We'll accomplish these goals through practice and discussion in class, individual and group work, outside readings, formal and informal written assignments, exams, live concert attendance, filmed progress evaluation, inter-disciplinary collaboration, and informal performance (in-class showings). Student learning will be assessed based on commitment to active in-class participation, effort, and exploration, and also via traditional evaluation methods such as quality and accuracy of work on assignments and tests. This is a graded course for liberal education credit, and students should expect academic homework and standards.

## Pre-requisites

There is no course pre-requisite or prior dance experience expected. An open mind, a willingness to try new things, and respect for others' contributions and differences *are* required. Be prepared to challenge your comfort zone and take (physically safe) risks.

## Materials

There is currently not a required text for this course. Throughout the term, you will be given handouts with information and images to support in-class activities and lessons. Please bring a 3-ring binder to class each day so you may collect these materials and refer to them throughout the semester (they will also be useful as review for the written exams). You will also need to keep a journal throughout the course (format of your choosing).

### Supplies:

- 3-ring binder
- Notebook/Journal
- Water bottle (recommended)

If you are interested in expanding your dance knowledge and experience in this course, I do strongly recommend a supplemental text. It is *The Dancer Prepares* by James Penrod and Janice Gudde Plastino.

## Grading

Your grade is determined by the number of points you earn by attending and participating in class and completing exercises, quizzes, assignments, and projects.

Assignment	Points possible
Class attendance, preparation, and participation	30%
Midterm written exam	5%
Midterm movement exam & self-assessment	10%
Live concert attendance and analysis paper	10%
Journals (3 submissions – 5% each)	15%
Inter-disciplinary / multi-media project	10%
Final movement exam & self-assessment	10%
Final written exam	10%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

The points you earn are converted into a percentage that determines your final grade:

<b>A:</b> 100–93%	<b>B:</b> 86–83%	<b>C:</b> 76–73%	<b>D:</b> 66–63%
<b>A-:</b> 92–90%	<b>B-:</b> 82–80%	<b>C-:</b> 72–70%	<b>D-:</b> 62–60%
<b>B+:</b> 89–87%	<b>C+:</b> 79–77%	<b>D+:</b> 69–67%	<b>F:</b> 59%–below

## College-Wide Learning Goals

*Creative and reflective capacities* is the college-wide learning goal most clearly addressed by this course. We will, however, be working toward many of the college-wide learning goals through various assignments.

Under each assignment category that follows, I have listed which of the college-wide learning goals (CWLG) the assignment addresses. They are referenced as follows:

- 1 – *Critical, analytical, and integrative thinking*
- 2 – *Creative and reflective capacities*
- 3 – *Leadership, collaboration, and teamwork*
- 4 – *Writing and other communication skills*
- 5 – *Global consciousness, social responsibility, and ethical awareness*

# Assignments

## Class attendance, preparation, and participation

CWLG: 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5

Class attendance is important: We practice, learn, and discuss dance during our class time. Please come regularly and be prepared to start on time. Please do not leave early.

To make the most of our class time, you need to come to class prepared. This means that you are dressed and ready to begin by the start time, and you have necessary materials (binder, paper, writing tools and a water bottle). You also need to *actively* participate in class by working hard, trying your best, and showing a respectful attitude toward yourself, other dancers, and the instructor. Please try to remain open to new movement, music, and ideas.

By attending class, arriving on time and prepared, staying the entire time, and participating in class, you will earn 5 points per class, which will be converted into 30% of your overall grade in the class. If you are underprepared or not fully participating, you may not earn full points. You are allowed ONE observation day during the semester, but you need to see me and fill out an observation form to receive credit. If you are absent, you will receive a '0' for participation. *Participation points for missed classes cannot be made up.*

*Please note the following expectations regarding dress and decorum*

- Comfortable, safe, movable “I can do anything in this” clothing
  - no tight pants, jeans, or restrictive clothing
  - avoid excessively baggy or loose over-dress, as it interferes with my ability to see your alignment (and therefore by ability to help you prevent injuries)
  - dance or yoga-type clothing is encouraged; any workout clothing is acceptable
- Bare feet
- Long hair should be pulled back, off the face and neck
- Please do not chew gum during class
- Notify me IMMEDIATELY of any injury or emergency. We do have a first aid kit and need to attend to any and all injuries promptly for the safety of everyone involved.

## Journals

CWLG: 1, 2,, 4, and 5

Once a week, you will need to write an entry in your class journal. The purpose of the journals is to create a forum for you to reflect on your learning, make goals, record class information, and recognize your process. Journals will be collected three times during the semester (approximately every 4 – 5 weeks). I will give you more information on journals in a separate document.

## Movement Exams

CWLG: 1, 2, 3 & 4

We will have a practical midterm and final. These movement exams will be a combination of exercises learned and practiced in class and your composition or collaborative choreographic efforts. Exams will be video-taped, and you will be expected to watch and self-evaluate them. Video is an invaluable tool for helping dancers see themselves, recognize strengths and weaknesses, and make goals for improvement.

## Written Exams

CWLG: 1, 2, & 4

Written tests—a midterm and final—are comprehensive reviews; they are based on readings, class discussions, and lessons. We will have a review before the exams. You may have the opportunity to earn bonus points on these tests.

## Live concert attendance and analysis paper

CWLG: 1, 2, 4, and 5

For this course, you will be required to see one professional or university-level dance concert and write an analysis paper on it. The purposes of this assignment are to improve your ability to critically analyze dance performance and choreography, improve your skills for discussing dance, and build your aptitudes as an educated audience member. **\*\*Your live performance paper is due within ONE WEEK of when you see a live performance, and NO LATER THAN Nov. 29!** You must turn this paper in as a hardcopy to me in class, with the rubric and a ticket stub attached. I STRONGLY RECOMMEND including this paper in your e-portfolio. MUCH More information will be provided later.

## Inter-disciplinary / multi-media project

CWLG: 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5

In an effort to help you understand how dance relates to other art forms, the growing field of 'dance for the camera,' and the importance of inter-disciplinary collaboration in successful art production, you will be involved in creating an original project. For this course, we have an exciting opportunity to collaborate with students in the film production class, and I will also encourage you to consider involving other art forms in your project. MUCH more information will be provided later.

## Class Policies

### Attendance and decorum

You need to come to class; dance is a performance art that requires your physical body, so that physical body must be present and engaged. Full participation points are given for full, *active* participation and preparation. Please do not chew gum in this class – it is distracting, changes your movement, and can even prove dangerous.

### Late work

Late work is not accepted. All assignments must be turned in on the due date to receive credit. **If you are absent the day a hardcopy assignment is due (such as journals or paper), you are still responsible for the assignment.** You should email it to me as an attachment in .doc or .pdf format, or paste it into the body of the email by the due date/time.

### Electronics

Please avoid use of cell phones, laptop computers, and other electronic devices in class. They split your attention, distract others, and change your movement; they are not necessary for note-taking due to the nature of class work. If you have an emergency which requires you to have access to your phone during class, discuss it with me before class.

### Academic honesty

You are expected to be honest in all your work. If you copy another person's work, share your work with another person to copy, or in any way try to take credit for work you didn't do (plagiarism), you will receive a zero grade on the assigned work and may receive a failing grade for the entire class or disciplinary action from the College. *Please refer to the Academic Catalog or the Student Handbook for the College's statement on academic honesty.*

### Student athletes

Please be sure to let me know if you are a student athlete and anticipate missing class due to your athletic travel schedule. This will also need to be verified via a coach's or athletic department letter.

### ADA policy

If you have a disability for which you will need accommodations in this class, please let me know or have the Disabilities Services program contact me as soon as possible. You will be required to provide documentation of your disability to the Disabilities Services programs in the START Center in Carleson Hall at 801.832.2280. All disability information will remain confidential.