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## **Intermediate Dance Composition & Production** **DANCE 3372A/B – 2016**

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Group creative movement exploration and problem solving using form and structure of movement to express ideas, images and/or feelings in the finished product of a dance composition.

Half course, 2 hour lecture, 2 hour lab.

#### **Prerequisites:**

1. Dance 3371 or permission of the Faculty
2. Familiarity with the elements of dance: time, space, motion, and shape
3. Understanding and experience using improvisation as a process
4. Ability to create a movement phrase
5. Experience creating a variety of compositions including theme and variation

#### **Course Content:**

Dance composition at this level concerns itself with the form, structure and considerations for group relationships. Approaches similar to those used in other art forms (i.e. theme and variation, abstraction, repetition of line, dramatic line) are applied to movement principles.

While the components are present in solo composition, they become more apparent in group work. Understanding these components (unity, variety, repetition, contrast, transition, sequence, climax, proportion, balance, harmony) will be used to help the student build and evaluate compositions. The artistic merit of the compositions will be analyzed as well.

#### **Class Organization:**

Introductory exploration of selected compositional problems from the following:

- Developing teaching materials
- Use of patterns (floor, spatial, direction, movement, step) in creating compositions
- The use of stage space, implications for design and proportion, effect of space on an audience
- Theme and variation by manipulation of a simple movement phrase with group relationship and design
- Duet and Trio - similar and oppositional structures, balance and counter-balance
- Building movement material and phrases based on movement quality and dynamics
- Abstraction of everyday movements, objects and shapes, literal events and ideas
- Other choreographic approaches and ideas

Further development of improvisation as a process or tool for discovery, creativity and expression.

Organization of the group choreographic assignments.

## **Expectations /Assignments:**

### ***1) Duet and Trio – 20%***

Each student will be responsible for choreographing a “duet” and a “trio”. The length of each will generally be 2 minutes (tempo and choice of movement material will affect this).

The choreographer will select their dancers and set the rehearsal times (approx. 1 to 3 hours). The choreographer must not be in the dance!

You should consider the following as you create your piece:

- how to create the visual relationship of the dancers
- how and where the dancers activate the stage space (consider spatial design) i.e. locomotor patterns should enhance the spatial design rather than emphasize steps and step patterns
- the proportion of motion to shape (pay attention to the use of shape - don't be afraid to hold a shape or allow some dancers to move while others stay in place)
- dancers could also support or counter balance another dancer
- the piece has a clear beginning and ending

### ***2) Small Group Composition – 30%***

Each student will be responsible for choreographing a group composition (three or more dancers).

- The length of the composition will generally fall between 2 to 4 minutes.
- The choreographer will select their dancers, set the rehearsal dates, and the day the composition will be presented in class. Each choreographer must hand in a list of their dancers including contact information (email and phone number for all dancers). (Dancers may be selected from outside of class.)

#### ***Part 1 (10%) – Organization and Thematic Material (Due ASAP)***

If the choreographer chooses to use music they must have it approved. They may select from the following, the title of the music and composer must be included:

- classical, pre-classical, impressionistic
- jazz (not fad), afro, percussion
- electronic, avant-garde, modern, mood

Based on the topic, the choreographer is responsible for providing the instructor with a written plan describing the material they have selected to build the movement material on (images, action words, relationships, etc.).

Based on the plan ideas, the choreographer must show the instructor the thematic material they have composed and be prepared to discuss and demonstrate how they think it could be used in creating the composition.

Choreographers are encouraged to check with the instructor if they have questions or concerns. Don't wait until the last minute.

#### ***Part 2 (20%) – Presentation of the Small Group Composition***

- The choreographer should be prepared to
  - Give a brief introduction to their composition
  - Show the work
  - Answer questions at the end of the performance

- Each choreographer will write a short evaluation of each of their dancers. (These evaluations are due no later than one class period following the presentation of the composition.)

### 3) *Participation as a Dancer – 20%*

- Given the number of students in the course, each student should be prepared to participate in 4 or 5 of the small group pieces. (Warning: set your obligations early so you can spread out your time.)
- Students should plan on rehearsal times outside the class time.
- Dancers - it is problematic if you do not show up. These obligations are extremely important.
- Each dancer will write a short evaluation of their choreographer. (Your name should be attached with a post-it note, so it can be removed when the instructor hands a batch to the choreographer.) (These evaluations are due no later than one class period following the presentation of the composition.)

Choreographers:

- It is important that you come prepared and ready to work.
- Let me know if a dancer does not show for rehearsal or if there are other problems.

### 4) *Class Work and Participation – 30%*

Because much of the course content is taught in the context of the choreographic assignments, and the choreographic assignments are of a group nature, class attendance is mandatory.

Each class member will have the opportunity to work in the role of choreographer and dancer. They will be evaluated according to their ability to function in both roles.

Students will be expected to participate in the evaluation process. This will provide an opportunity for the students to observe some of the various compositional problems listed.

Reference Textbooks:

- Ellfeldt, Lois. (1988). *Primer For Choreographers*.
- Humphrey, Doris. (1962). *The Art of Making Dances*.

Suggested Reading:

- Blom, Lynne Anne, & Chaplin, Tarin L. (1982). *The Intimate Act of Choreography*.
- Ellfeldt, Lois & Carnes, Edwin. (1971). *Dance Production Handbook or Later is Too Late*.
- Hayes, Elizabeth R. (1982). *Dance Composition and Production for the High Schools & Colleges*.
- Lockhart, Aileene, & Pease, Ester R. (1977). *Modern Dance: Building and Teaching Lessons*.

## **GRADING BREAKDOWN**

**20% - Composition Presented** (Duet or Trio)

**10% - Small Group Composition:** 1) the written intent, lists of dancers, music used and etc.

**20% - Small Group Composition:** 2) preparation for rehearsals, 3) actual finished product, and 4) dancer evaluations

**20% - Participation as a Dancer:** 1) participation in other compositions (duet, trio and small group pieces), (2) comments on your choreographers (what was learned in the rehearsal and creative process and summary comments on the strengths and weaknesses of the final product that was created), and (3) comments on your work from the choreographers

**30% - Class Work and Participation:** attendance, participation in the evaluation process, participation and input in classes other than the duet, trio, and small group compositions

**Important Information to Consider**

Students must turn their cell phones off during class. No pictures or videos can be taken without permission of the instructor and subject(s).

“Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you will be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary pre-requisites.”

“Plagiarism: Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).”

“All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (*link* “University Policy on Plagiarism: Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Office Policy in the Western Academic Calendar). *“Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. The University of Western Ontario uses software for plagiarism checking. Students may be required to submit their written work in electronic form for plagiarism checking.”*

University Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness: As of May 2008, the University has a new policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness, which states that *“in order to ensure fairness and consistency for all students, academic accommodation for work representing 10% or more of the student’s overall grade in the course shall be granted only in those cases where there is documentation indicating that the student was seriously affected by illness and could not reasonably be expected to meet his/her academic responsibilities. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the appropriate Dean’s office.”* Students with special learning needs or circumstances are asked to inform the instructor as soon as possible so that necessary accommodations can be made. This policy can be found at <https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm>

“Students that are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.”

University Code of Student Conduct: *“The University seeks to provide an environment of free and creative inquiry within which critical thinking, humane values, and practical skills are cultivated and sustained.”* The University Code of Student Conduct can be found at <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/board/code.pdf>

