

**DNC 330: Dance Concepts**  
**LAC Tier 2: Creative Expression- 3 Credits**  
Spring 2018  
T/R 12:30-1:45  
FAIC 219

Professor: Nichola Johnson [johnsonnicho@easternct.edu](mailto:johnsonnicho@easternct.edu)  
Office Hours: By Appointment

### Course Description

Dance Concepts is a studio course that explores the dance activities of improvisation, technique, choreography/composition, and performance. Students will create and perform short and informal dance studies in a variety of styles, and use movement analysis, choreographic concepts, and personal reactions to write about and critique dance performances, both informal and professional. Students will engage in creative/critical conversations that challenge the awareness of arts making, individual creative voice, and overall process of discovery. Close attention will be paid to an ethical creation of work and the authentic use of voice.

### Tier 2: Creative Expression objectives

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the creative process in a specific medium or genre;
2. Expand and apply basic techniques appropriate to a specific creative medium;
3. Articulate and analyze the critical and aesthetic values of the medium or genre under consideration;
4. Communicate ideas through art, literature and other creative forms.
5. Ethically approach creative making and authentic voice.

### Specific Course Objectives

1. Learn techniques of improvisation and composition/choreography through improvisational exercises and creating dance compositions
2. Gain experience in talking and writing about dance.
3. Learn and practice elements of dance and dance making
4. Become more comfortable dancing in public and performance settings.
5. Develop a confidence in creative making and individuality.

### Course requirements and grading (100 points total)

Our course textbook is *The Creative Habit: learn it and use it for life*, by Twyla Tharp. Our emphasis will be on making a habit of being creative, in dance and then extended to other areas of life. There are four short assignments drawn from the textbook. Students will engage with various readings, films, and physical exercises throughout the entirety of the course and will be evaluated on knowledge and implementation of information given. There will be a midterm exam and final exam, drawing on your class experience, course materials, and the textbook. You will also be required to see a live professional dance performance and write about it. Students will keep a journal for this course. Each day in class should culminate with a journal entry outlining your highs and lows of the day. The journal should also hold all notes, choreography, inspirations, and information gathered from this course. On occasion structured journal entries will be given.

• <b>Class participation</b> (in improvisation, choreography, discussions)	<b>40%</b>
• <b>Text-based assignments and Movement Studies:</b>	<b>20 %</b>
• <b>Written critique</b> of a live dance performance	<b>10 %</b>
• <b>Mid-term exam</b>	<b>10 %</b>
• <b>Final exam</b>	<b>20 %</b>

Grading scale: 93-100=A, 90-92=A-, 87-89=B+, 83-86=B, 80-82=B-, 77-79=C+, 73- 76=C, 70-72=C-, 67-69=D+, 63-66=D, 62 and below=F.

### Format

Classes will begin with a warm-up, which will be followed by creative explorations and informal presentations by the students. Discussions, film viewing, and a live performance will compliment experiential activities.

### Attire

Students are expected to wear dance or exercise clothes. Dress in layers to adjust to the studio temperature and your degree of warm-up. Hair should be secured away from face and neck. No loose or bulky jewelry or watches. No gum. Footwear is usually bare feet or cotton socks (less slippery than synthetic), but you can also wear such as ballet slippers, jazz shoes, etc., as appropriate to the class activity and what you own. No hard-soles. No street shoes on the dance floor (what you wear getting to class).

## **General expectations**

Arrive in a timely manner and stay the entire class. Schedule other appointments (doctor, advisor, interview, etc.) around class time. Come a few minutes before class to stretch and to center your mind. Leave your belongings and cell phones to the side. Unplug. No talking during warm-ups. All written assignments are to be submitted by the due dates. Assignments have a one-week "late" submission period (20% deduction) and then are closed. Don't lose "easy" points toward your final grade!

## **Safety information and motivation- listen, learn, love**

*You are in charge of your body.* Listen to your body. For example, come out of a stretch before the group does if your body says to. Also, take an occasional "pass" on an activity if you are feeling anxious. At the same time, try to "lean into" new territory. Learn to breathe fully to relax and to support your movement, and to pay more attention to your posture, movements, and breathing patterns during the rest of your day. Love yourself and your body by stretching or dancing in between our two weekly classes, and dancing for yourself, setting your own particular goals, not comparing yourself to others. Show generosity of spirit for others by giving them space to express themselves, and to grow. Listen, learn, love.

Develop good habits for a lifetime, especially good movement habits like stretching in the morning, quiet time for/with your body, regular exercise, and a sense of adventure and pleasure in new movement experiences.

## **Class attendance**

This is a "studio" class, and class experience is the basis for all development. You are allowed one absence for the semester without an effect on your grade. After that, each absence causes a 5 pt deduction from your final grade total of x/100. If you are not feeling well, but not contagious, two observations will be credited as attendance ONLY IF short-written statement noting what you learned from watching is handed in before you leave class. After that, observations will result in a 1 pt deduction. Late arrivals (after attendance is taken) or early departures will result in a 1 pt deduction. You can make up an absence by attending a second live performance, the you clear with me

100% attendance, with no "lates" or "early departures," will give you 3 points added to final grade.

University functions such as sports team travel will be excused with a note from the appropriate person or department. Save your doctors notes in case you have excessive absences (more than 5) due to illness or other circumstances, in which case you can speak to me about make-up work. Otherwise, do not show me doctor's notes, as they will not excuse an absence (you get one free).

**Academic Services Center (ASC)-** Students are encouraged to use the support offered by the Academic Services Center (ASC) located on the ground floor of the Library. Advising Services and tutoring in math, writing, and other subjects, including supplementary instruction, are available. The ASC also offers assistance in study techniques, time management and understanding learning styles. Fall 2013 hours: Sun. 2-9; M.-Th. 9-9, Fri. 9-5. (Closed Sat.) For further information call 465-4310 or check the ASC website at <http://www.easternct.edu/asc/>

## **Academic Misconduct**

Students should read and understand Eastern's Academic Misconduct Policy, which can be found in the Eastern Student Handbook or at: <http://www.easternct.edu/judicialaffairs/academicmisconduct/> All violations will be handled under the procedures established in this policy.

## **Statement of Accessibility**

If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need accommodations for this class, it is your responsibility to contact the Office of AccessAbility Services at (860) 465-0189. To avoid any delay in the receipt of accommodations, you should contact the Office of AccessAbility Services as soon as possible. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive, and that I cannot provide accommodations based upon disability until I have received an accommodation letter from the Office of AccessAbility Services. Your cooperation is appreciated. **Please note that syllabus is subject to revision at any time at discretion of Instructor.**

**DNC 330**  
**Course Schedule**  
**Spring 2018**

<b>Class dates</b>	<b>Topics</b>
<b>January</b> <b>22, 24</b>	Course Introduction-syllabus review & icebreaker What is Dance? Dance Conditioning The Importance of Ritual and Habit In-Class Film: The Creative Habit <b>Assignment: Read from TEXT: Chapters 1 and 2</b> Journal Entry: Text Exercise #3
<b>29, 31</b>	Discussion of Reading from TEXT Text Exercise: #1 (in class) Elements of Dance Improvisation: "Mirror", "Flocking", "Slowing things Down", "Formulaic Structures" <b>Assignment: Movement Study #1 "Hitting the Books" and read from TEXT Chapter 3</b>
<b>February</b> <b>5, 7</b>	Share Movement Study #1 Discussion of Chapter 3 Improvisation: "Listen and Let Go" Creative Autobiography In-Class Collaborative Movement Making: Fear and the Unknown <b>Assignment: Movement Study #2 Creative Autobiography Part One</b>
<b>12,14</b>	Introduce Mary Overlie's Six Viewpoints (SSTEMS) Revisit The Elements of Dance SPACE Improvisation Exercise: "Place and Space" <b>Assignment: Movement Study #2 Creative Autobiography Part Two</b>
<b>19, 21</b>	Share Movement Study #2 SHAPE Movement Scores Contact improvisation <b>In-Class Film: TBA</b> <b>Assignment: TEXT Chapter 4, Film Response</b> <b>Text exercises TE 8 (400 words total) Due March 5</b>
<b>26, 28</b>	Abstraction (vs mime) TIME Effort: space (indirect/direct), time (sustained/quick), weight (light/strong), flow (free/bound) In-class: Text Exercise #14 <b>Text Ch. 5,6</b>
<b>March</b> <b>5, 7</b>	Review. <b>In-class mid-term exam (Thurs)</b>
<b>19, 21</b>	EMOTION Choreographic Structure <b>Text Ch. 7,8</b> <b>Text exercises TE 13 (400 words total) Due March 28</b>
<b>26, 28</b>	MOVEMENT Chance dances- music, sets, choreography <b>Movement Study #3-Social Justice</b>
<b>April</b> <b>2, 4</b>	Movement Study #3 In-Class Work: Form and Function (Tuesday) Share Movement Study #3 (Thursday)

<b>9, 11</b>	<b>STORY</b> Creative Writing <b>Assignment: Movement Study #4 Poetry and Movement Due April 16</b> <b>Text Ch. 9,10</b>
<b>16, 18</b>	Share Movement Study #4 Improvisation Exercises and Phrase Making <b>Text Ch. 11,12</b> <b>Assignment: Text Writing Assignment Due May 2</b>
<b>23, 25</b>	Site-Specific Choreography <b>Collaborative Site-Specific Projects</b>
<b>30, May 2</b>	<b>Share Site-Specific Projects</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Final Class/Discussion</b>

\*Submit writing assignments, in class, on the date they are due. Text readings and assignments that don't have a written component will be covered on the exams.

\*All Movement Studies will include a written component, identifying the creative process, and summarizing the conceptual nature of the work

\*All email communication should use my University email: [johnsonnichol@easternct.edu](mailto:johnsonnichol@easternct.edu)

\*Assignments will have a 1-week late period (minus 20 %), and then are closed for good.

Don't lose "easy" points toward the 100 point total of your final grade. Letter grades will be assigned strictly by the following:

Grading scale: 93-100=A, 90-92=A-, 87-89=B+, 83-86=B, 80-82=B-, 77-79=C+, 73- 76=C, 70-72=C-, 67-69=D+, 63-66=D, 62 and below=F