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DAC330, 3 credits
University at Buffalo – SUNY
Spring 2024
T/Th 10:30-11:50am
Alumni 188

DAC330: Global Dance Studies

Course Description

This course introduces students to various approaches to studying dance in a humanities context that emphasizes the relationship of performance practices to issues of race, nationality, gender, class, and sexuality. We will explore how people create meaning through dance and how dance, in turn, shapes social norms, political institutions, and cultural practices across time and space. The course utilizes the U.S. as a home base whose cultural practices are ever-evolving due to histories of colonialism, patterns of migration, and contemporary diasporic populations. We will keep in mind the unequal power hierarchies shaping our modern world, and therefore we will examine how and why certain forms have become delineated as "Western" and others as "world" or "ethnic," despite similarities in movement, meaning, or purpose. We will encounter a diversity of dance practices sited in a broad geography as we develop skills in writing about dance through three methodologies: ethnography, criticism, and history. To complement this survey, we will finish with a deep dive into the myriad of dance studies approaches possible for analyzing dance as genre and dancing as culture creation.

Learning Outcomes

| Learning Outcome | Method(s) of Assessment |
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| Develop a breadth of understanding in dance and related disciplines and the ability to think independently, to integrate, and to synthesize information within the dance discipline and across disciplines. | Class participation, methodology essays, reading responses |
| Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the forces that have shaped dance throughout U.S. and global histories and as an evolving contemporary art form, including representative works, individuals, styles, cultural contexts, events, and movement theories. | Class participation, reading responses, methodology essays |

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| Develop the ability to read, speak, and write analytically about dance as a cultural text. | Class participation, reading responses, methodology essays |
| Understand how categories of diversity create institutional inequities, intersect with each other, and may function differently in national and transnational contexts. | Class participation, reading responses |
| Understand how historical legacies such as colonialism and slavery have shaped contemporary global realities; how migration, immigration, and differential access to citizenship effect different populations; and how definitions of diversity differ among nation states. | Class participation, methodology essays |
| Demonstrate a knowledge of bibliographic resources in dance as a humanities discipline, including Web-based resources, and the skills to access these resources. | Methodology essays |

Required Materials

Ann Dils and Ann Cooper Albright, eds., *Moving History/Dancing Cultures: A Dance History Reader* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2001).

Access to UBlearns for all additional readings.

Attendance at a professional dance concert (in person or virtual, see below).

Methods of Assessment

Participation (25%):

Rubric devised by class. Final self-reflection included in participation assessment.

Reading Responses (30%):

For each class meeting, students will bring an entrance ticket in the form of a notecard with the following reflections on that day's reading:

- One thing that you learned
- One way that the reading relates to your own experience
- One question about the content.

Please make sure your name is on your notecard. Students receive 3 freebies – that is, 3 days when you do not have to turn in a notecard. Graded pass/fail.

Methodological Essays (45% total, 15% each):

Each 5-8 page essay will ask you to demonstrate competency in a particular methodological approach to dance studies. Each essay will be worth 12.5% of your final grade. Remember Susan Leigh Foster's questions as you prepare your essays.

Essay A: Ethnographic Participant-Observation: Attend a participatory dance event, meaning, one in which non-professional dancers constitute the majority of people dancing. This could take the form of an introductory dance technique class, a social dance class, an evening at a nightclub, a student dance group rehearsal, or other event. (This could also include virtual dance events during the pandemic.) It is up to you whether you prefer to observe only or mix your observation with participation, though I recommend the latter. Thick description of the event that considers context as well as content is expected.

Essay B: Dance Criticism/Movement Analysis: Attend a live dance performance, one in which persons deemed as professionals in their genre are sharing work with an audience. Write a piece of dance criticism, in which you analyze and assess all aspects of the performance—the movement vocabulary, sets, costumes, lights, sound, etc. – and interpret the work in its cultural contexts. Balance description, interpretation, context, and evaluation.

I strongly recommend that you attend Urban Bush Women's performance at the CFA on Wednesday, March 13th, 7:30pm.

Essay C: Archival analysis: Using the UB Libraries search tools, limit your format to “databases” and search for “Proquest Historical Newspapers.” (We’ll look at other newspaper databases as well, but this is always a good place to start.) Once in the database, pick a dance topic to investigate from a particular decade of the twentieth century in the U.S. Find three good articles, reviews, photographs, advertisements, or other material about your topic, and write an essay in which you analyze both your search process and the content of your findings. You are expected to contextualize your topic for its contributions to and shaping by U.S. cultures of racism, sexism, xenophobia, and other structural inequalities that shape how dance is made, funded, and received.

Grade Scale

Your final grade will be calculated as follows: A = 940-1000, A- = 900-939, B+ = 870-899, B = 840-869, B- = 800-839, C+ = 770-799, C = 740-769, C- = 700-739, D = 600-699, F = below 600.

Course, Departmental, and Institutional Policies

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Plagiarism is unacceptable. Do not sell yourself short by pirating someone else's ideas: do the work yourself, be brave, and share it. This does not mean we are not inspired by others' work, nor does it mean we should not acknowledge where others have influenced us or can support our ideas. This is done through proper citation not just of scholarly work, but also of creative work. You MUST cite anything that does not originate with you. Pick a style – MLA, APA, or Chicago – and stick to it. Please see me with any questions about plagiarism and citation BEFORE you turn your work in. If you plagiarize, you will fail the assignment. No exceptions. Be aware that any and all work you turn in may be scanned through plagiarism detection software at my discretion.

UB Official Academic Integrity Policy: Academic integrity is a fundamental university value. Through the honest completion of academic work, students sustain the integrity of the university while facilitating the university's imperative for the transmission of knowledge and culture based upon the generation of new and innovative ideas. For the complete policy please visit: <http://undergrad-catalog.buffalo.edu/policies/course/integrity.shtml>

ACCESSIBILITY

I am committed to the academic success of all students in this course. If you have a disability of any kind that will affect your participation in this course, please let me know so that accommodations can be arranged in advance. University resources are available at <http://www.student-affairs.buffalo.edu/ods/>.

ATTENDANCE

- Students are allowed **two** absences for whatever reason.
- When possible, notify me in advance of your inability to participate in class. At that time, you are also expected to make arrangements to complete missed work. If you are well enough to participate remotely, contact me for possible accommodations.
- If you miss more than 2 classes *without making arrangements* to make up the work, your grade will drop 1/3 grade for each absence. Please contact me if you are experiencing a life event or prolonged illness/injury that will result in multiple missed classes so that we can figure out together a way to support your work in this class.

CLASSROOM COMMUNITY

We are committed to cultivating an inclusive learning environment devoted to dialogue across intellectual and cultural differences. The study of theatre and dance routinely involves sensitive and challenging material, and although we do not know all the complexities that individuals bring to the classroom, studio, or rehearsal space, we remain committed to making those spaces supportive, collaborative, and inclusive. In order to achieve this, students and faculty alike are expected to engage with class materials and each other with respect and professionalism.

Coursework in theatre and dance is also a physical endeavor, and we hold to a standard of affirmative consent for physical contact. Students may withhold or withdraw consent for physical touch at any time, and at no point should any student submit to unwanted touch or physical engagement from peers or faculty.

Students are encouraged to bring issues of harassment, exclusion, or discrimination to the attention of the instructor, a faculty member with whom they feel comfortable, or the department chair. In addition, UB's office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) exists to ensure that issues of harassment, discrimination, and accommodation are addressed in a timely and effective manner, and to foster and sustain a working and learning environment where each member of the community can succeed. If you experience harassment, discrimination, or a lack of accommodation, you are encouraged to speak with EDI confidentially, with no threat of retaliation:
<http://www.buffalo.edu/equity.html>

Netiquette sidebar: my goal is that our class will be a warm and welcoming space, yet it is also a professional space. Please review the following if you need to brush-up on communicating with your professor:

<http://web.wellesley.edu/SocialComputing/Netiquette/netiquetteprofessor.html>

INJURY-INCIDENT REPORT POLICY

In the event of injury, an incident report should be filed immediately. To file an incident report, contact campus police at 716-645-2222.

CRITICAL CAMPUS RESOURCES

Sexual Violence

UB is committed to providing a safe learning environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic and dating violence and stalking. If you have experienced gender-based violence (intimate partner violence, attempted or completed sexual assault, harassment, coercion, stalking, etc.), UB has resources to help. This includes academic accommodations, health and counseling services, housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and assistance with reporting the incident to police or other UB officials if you so choose. Please contact UB's Title IX Coordinator at 716-645-2266 for more information. For confidential assistance, you may also contact a Crisis Services Campus Advocate at 716-796-4399.

Mental Health

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning or reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. These might include strained relationships, anxiety, high levels of stress, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, health

concerns, or unwanted sexual experiences. Counseling, Health Services, and Health Promotion are here to help with these or other issues you may experience. You can learn more about these programs and services by contacting:

Counseling Services: 120 Richmond Quad (North Campus), 716-645-2720, or 202 Michael Hall (South Campus), 716-829-5800. Health Services: Michael Hall (South Campus), 716-829-3316. Health Promotion: 114 Student Union (North Campus), 716-645-2837.

Basic Needs Insecurity

If you are experiencing food insecurity, UB has a variety of services available to assist you with food access. Please visit the following for details:

<https://www.buffalo.edu/studentlife/help/emergency/food-support.html>

If you are experiencing housing insecurity, UB's Emergency Fund may be able to assist you. Please visit the following for details:

<https://www.buffalo.edu/studentlife/help/emergency/emergency-funds.html>

Course Calendar

subject to change at instructor's discretion
reading is due on the day assigned

MHDC – Moving History, Dancing Cultures

*indicates reading available in Unit course pack

Unit 1: Introduction to Dance Studies

Th 1/25: introduction to course

T 1/30:

1. MHDC pgs. 92-94, 370-373,
2. *Nyama McCarthy-Brown, "World Dance: Retire the Term,"
3. *Thomas F. DeFrantz, "Dance Studies as a Humanity."

Th 2/1: guest class

T 2/6:

1. MHDC, Cynthia Jean Cohen Bull, "Looking at Movement as Culture."

Th 2/8

1. *Susan Leigh Foster, "Choreographies of Protest."

Unit 2: Writing About Dance - Ethnography

T 2/13:

1. MHDC, Joanne Kealiinohomoku, "An Anthropologist Looks at Ballet as a Form

of Ethnic Dance."

Th 2/15:

1. MHDC, Deidre Sklar, "Five Premises for a Culturally Sensitive Approach to Dance,"
2. *Yvonne Daniel, "Dance Ethnography."

T 2/20:

1. *Priya Srinivasan, "Ethnohistories."

Th 2/22:

1. *Rachel Carrico, "Dancing Like a Man: Competition and Gender in the New Orleans Second Line."

T 2/27: Zoom visit from Dr. Trevor Boffone

1. *Trevor Boffone, excerpts from *Renegades: Digital Dance Cultures from Dubsmash to TikTok* (Preface, Introduction).

Unit 3: Writing About Dance - Criticism

Th 2/29:

1. *Sally Banes, "On Your Fingertips: Writing Dance Criticism,"
2. *Gia Kourlas, "DanceAfrica review"
3. *Charmian Wells, "Strong and Wrong."

T 3/5

1. *Kate Mattingly, "What is Dance Criticism?"

Th 3/7:

In-class work day

DUE: how-to-read-scholarship exercise via Brightspace by 5pm FRIDAY 3/8

T 3/12:

1. MHDC, Deborah Jowitt, "Beyond Description: Writing Beneath the Surface,"
2. MHDC, Deborah Jowitt, "Chance Heroes."

W 3/13: Urban Bush Women performance, 7:30pm

<https://www.ubcfa.org/events-exhibitions/dance/ubw-2024.html>

Th 3/14:

1. *Alastair Macaulay, "Choreographic Climate Change,"
2. *Eva Yaa Asantewaa, criticism selections,
3. *Gia Kourlas, "Asantewaa at Gibney."

WEEK 8: Spring break, no class

Unit 4: Writing About Dance - History

T 3/26:

1. *Thomas A. Faulkner, "From the Ballroom to Hell"
2. *Beth Israels, "Dance Hall Reform"
3. Additional archival material TBD.

Th 3/28:

1. *Nadine George-Graves, "'Just Like Being at the Zoo': Primitivity and Ragtime Dance" **OR** 2. *Danielle Robinson, "'The Ugly Duckling': The Refinement of Ragtime Dancing and the Mass Marketing of Social Dance."

DUE: methodology essay 1 (A or B), via Brightspace by 11:59pm FRIDAY 3/29

T 4/2:

1. MHDC, Julie Malnig, "Two-Stepping to Glory: Social Dance and the Rhetoric of Social Mobility."

Th 4/4:

1. *Ariel Nereson, "New Women and Girls of Today in Motion: The 'Strenuous Clasping' of Tango Teas."

T 4/9: library session with subject area librarian Deborah Chiarella, please bring a laptop or other device

Th 4/11:

1. MHDC, Jane Desmond, "Dancing Out the Difference: Cultural Imperialism and Ruth St. Denis's *Radha* of 1906"
2. Listen to Pillow Voices Podcast, "[The Complexities of Indian Dance at The Pillow](#)" with Lionel Popkin.

Unit 5: Case Study in Africanist Aesthetics as Art and Culture Creation

T 4/16:

1. MHDC, Kariamu Welsh Asante, "Commonalities in African Dance: An Aesthetic Foundation,"
2. *Julie Kerr-Berry, "Africanist Aesthetics of Jazz Dance."

Th 4/18:

1. MHDC, Brenda Dixon Gottschild, "Stripping the Emperor: The Africanist Presence in American Concert Dance"

DUE: methodology essay 2 (A or B), via Brightspace by 11:59pm FRIDAY 4/19

T 4/23:

1. *Gia Kourlas, "Where are All the Black Swans?"
2. *Dada Masilo, "Swan Lake."

Th 4/25:

1. MHDC, Barbara Browning, "Headspin: Capoeira's Ironic Inversions."

T 4/30:

1. *Ana Paula Höfling, "Introduction" to *Staging Brazil: Choreographies of Capoeira*.

Th 5/2:

1. *Dixon Gottschild, "Decolonizing Flamenco Through Exploring Black Influences."

DUE: any outstanding revisions on pass/fail essays

FINAL:

DUE: Methodology essay 3, and self-reflection, via Brightspace by 11:59pm 5/14