

Sam Houston State University
Department of Theatre & Dance
Dance Program -- Spring 2008
DNC 533.01 (3 Credit Hours) – The Development of Advanced Skills in Dance (Somatics)

COURSE SYLLABUS

Instructor: Hillary Bryan, MFA, CMA, RSMT
Class Meeting Time: Tu&Th 11:00-12:20 p.m.
Class Meeting Location: AB3, Room 104
Instructor Office: AB III, room 235
Instructor Phone: 936-294-3525
Instructor Office Hours: Monday 11:30-1 p.m. & Tues/Thurs 12:30-2 p.m.
Instructor E-mail: hilary@hilarybryan.com

Required Texts

1. ***Making Connections*** by Peggy Hackney (1998), any edition
2. ***Journal*** – Please document your process and your response to work in class. Record movement ideas, random thoughts, flights of fancy, your experiments applying this work to classes you're teaching, etc.
3. ***Reader*** including additional readings as assigned. These will likely be combined into a photocopied reader for purchase at the bookstore.

Course Description

In order to live as responsive and responsible human beings, all persons need to have the widest possible range of means for understanding themselves and others and finding meaning in their experience... Without dance education, individuals are not only denied access to a significant area of human knowledge, but are also hampered in terms of their capacity to fully perceive the world, communicate with others, and understand the body in which they reside.
National Dance Association, *Dance Curricular Guidelines*, 1991

Somatic experience is the experience of our bodies. As movement artists we strive to become articulate in the language and experience of our bodies. As teachers, coaches and therapists we help others also to "understand the body in which they reside." This class will operate largely as a laboratory to explore in depth topics of interest to the students both as dancer-choreographers and as coaches and teachers of movement.

We will examine common problems in total body connectivity and learn hands-on techniques to incorporate into studio teaching. We will also learn to structure experiences for our students that support mind-body integration. The class will be rooted in Laban Movement Analysis, Bartenieff Fundamentals, Body-Mind Centering, and Experiential Anatomy, and will include concepts from other practices as well.

Course objectives

- To learn and practice hands-on skills for teaching technique
 - To learn and practice developing movement phrases for class that address specific connectivity issues (Simple-Complex)
 - To improve technical skill by improving inner connectivity
 - To broaden expressive range by improving function (strength, flexibility, organization)
 - To explore and articulate a personal philosophy of movement.
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Evaluation

10% – Journal

20% – Midterm and additional projects

20% – Final project (includes project documentation – process notes, script, reflection paper, etc.)

50% – Participation (includes attendance and active contribution to class discussions, etc.)

Attendance

You are expected to arrive on time, dressed & ready to move. A student will be allowed three absences – including illness/injury – before the grade is affected. There are no “excused absences.” If you miss material, it adversely impacts the whole class. Your class participation grade will be reduced by 1/3rd grade for each absence beyond three, i.e., from A to A-, from B+ to B.

Late arrivals. Late arrival is inappropriate. It betrays your lack of respect for the class and is dangerous to your health. Three late arrivals/early departures count as an absence.

Injury/illness. A student who is injured is expected to observe class and take notes. These notes are then made available to the group to expand everyone’s understanding of material covered. **A student whose illness may be contagious is expected to be at home recuperating.**

Recommended Texts

1. ***Amazing Babies book and DVD (in the Listening Library)*** by Beverly Stokes (2002)
2. ***Dynamic Alignment Through Imagery*** by Eric N. Franklin (1996).
3. ***Wisdom of the Body Moving: An Introduction to Body-Mind Centering*** by Linda Hartley (1995).
4. ***Bodystories: A Guide to Experiential Anatomy*** by Andrea Olsen, in collaboration with Caryn McHose (1993).
5. ***Sensing, Feeling, and Action: The Experiential Anatomy of Body-Mind Centering*** by Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen (1993).
6. ***Anatomy of Movement*** by Blandine C. Germain (1985 French, 1993 English).
7. ***Taking Root to Fly*** by Irene Dowd (1981, 1990, 1995, 2001).
8. ***Body Movement: Coping with the Environment*** by Irmgard Bartenieff with Dori Lewis (1980).
9. ***Human Movement Potential*** by Lulu Sweigard (1974).
10. ***The Thinking Body: A Study of the Balancing Forces of Dynamic Man*** by Mabel Elsworth Todd (1937).

Touch

Movement is a physical language and often includes communication through touch and weight. Students will be expected to engage physically with other students, from holding hands to participating in hands-on exercises. Also, the instructor, in the practice of professional movement training, will occasionally touch students to demonstrate specific positions or principles. Please speak to the instructor about any concerns you might have in this regard.

Academic Dishonesty

Students are expected to withhold Academic Policy Statement 810213 of the SHSU Faculty Handbook:

All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form

of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials.

Classroom Rules of Conduct

According to Section 5 of the Student Handbook, students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment that is conducive to learning:

Students will refrain from behavior in the classroom that intentionally or unintentionally disrupts the learning process and, thus, impedes the mission of the university. Cellular telephones and pagers must be turned off before class begins. Students are prohibited from eating in class, using tobacco products, making offensive remarks, reading newspapers, sleeping, talking at inappropriate times, wearing inappropriate clothing, or engaging in any other form of distraction. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result in a directive to leave class. Students who are especially disruptive also may be reported to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action in accordance with university policy.

Visitors in the Classroom

According to the Faculty Handbook, the following is recommended concerning visitors to the classroom:

Unannounced visitors to class must present a current, official SHSU identification card to be permitted in the classroom. They must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. If the visitor is not a registered student, it is at the instructor's discretion whether the visitor will be allowed to remain in the classroom.

Americans with Disabilities Act

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that no otherwise qualified disabled individual shall, solely by reason of his/her disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any academic, Student Life program or activity. Disabled students may request academic assistance when needed from a committee of Continuing Academic Assistance for Disabled Students by visiting the Director of the Counseling Center, located in the Lee Drain Annex. Phone 936 294 1720.

Religious Holidays

Students who are absent from class for observance for a religious holy day will be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within one week of returning to class. The student, not later than the 15th calendar day after the first day of the semester, must notify the instructor of each scheduled class day that s/he would be absent for a religious holy day. Refer to the Academic Calendar for the deadline for notification by students to the faculty of the student's intent to be absent on religious days and those days needed for travel.
