

**Agnes Scott College**  
**Choreography I**  
**Dance 315: 4 Credits**  
**Fall 2019**  
**MW 3:30-4:45**  
**Dance Center**

Instructor- Bridget Roosa  
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Course Description:

This course will introduce and explore elements of choreographic and compositional craft. We will begin by exploring time, space, energy, and phrasing through motif writing. Motif writing is a systematic way of developing, documenting, and describing movement based on Labanotation symbols. These symbols will provide:

- support in creation of movement material
- a reference for critiquing and describing movement qualities
- a shorthand method of documenting your own choreography

The course will then move to an in-depth study of rhythm, dynamics, spatial awareness, and tempo. Structured improvisation will be used to create movement while the student will achieve comfort in the process of exploring the many movement possibilities for their own choreography. Ultimately, the student will create a piece of choreography, utilizing the choreographic tools explored throughout the semester that will be presented at the end of the semester.

Goals and Objectives:

- Goal #1: To produce students knowledgeable and experienced in dance literacy, which includes Labanotation and analysis.
- Goal #2: To provide students with the choreographic tools necessary in creating and directing their own work.
- Goal #3: To provide and encourage exposure to various styles of dance performance.
- Goal #4: To provide the tools necessary to take on the leadership role of directing rehearsals with a focus in people management.
  
- Objective #1: Students will be able to record and read movement in motif writing, a systemized, modified form of Labanotation.
- Objective #2: Students in Dan 315 will develop a kinesthetic awareness of how to use the body as an instrument to create expressive and unique movements through improvisation.
- Objective #3: Students in Dan 315 will be able to demonstrate compositional elements such as space, time, energy and intent in the creation of a piece of choreography.

- Objective #4: Dan 315 will encourage the students to think critically and evaluate the elements of a dance performance or production.
- Objective #5: Students will be able to create rehearsal schedules, direct rehearsals, create goals and rehearsal plans, resolve conflict and lead peers through rehearsals.

Requirements:

Required Text: The Art of Making Dances by Doris Humphrey

ATTIRE: Please be dressed comfortably and able to move. No jeans, preferably barefoot. When showing movement studies please be dressed neatly so that proper observations can be made.

ATTENDANCE:

**Department Philosophy**

The faculty of the Department of Theatre and Dance expects students to recognize the correlation between regular class attendance, effective learning, and good grades. The study of Theatre and Dance is a participatory endeavor and a two-sided commitment. Therefore, class attendance is expected of all students. Excessive absenteeism will result in a lower final grade or failure. Just as the student has a right to expect her professors to be present and prepared for all class meetings, so the faculty expects students to assume responsibility for class attendance, preparation, and participation. The Department does not provide opportunities for make up of class sessions or class lectures. The responsibility for learning the material missed is entirely that of the individual student. Students are responsible for reading and adhering to the academic regulations in the college catalog and in the Student Handbook. These policies, regulations, and attendance actions are governed by the Honor System.

**Absences**

Absences for classes that meet two (2) days a week are as follows: 1) a maximum of three (3) absences will be allowed without penalty for the semester; 2) each absence after the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) results in a reduction of one-third (1/3) of the student's final letter grade; 3) seven (7) or more absences for the semester will result in failing the class.

Three (3) late arrivals to all classes will constitute an absence.

Unless explicitly stated to the contrary, students are expected to attend all class meetings regardless of the nature of the activity. Class meetings include, but are not limited to, the following: lectures, discussions, performances, presentations, critiques, reviews, tests, consultations and tutorials. The instructor of record for each course retains the responsibility for determining what constitutes a class meeting. Missing a scheduled class meeting will constitute an absence.

## **Make-up Work**

Class assignments and presentations must be completed on time. The possibility for any make-up work for absences that are excused will be determined and assigned on a case-by-case basis by the faculty member. Deadlines for such make-up work will be set by the faculty member. No make-up opportunity is available for work missed during unexcused absences. Making up missed work will not eliminate an absence from a student's attendance record.

If a student knows in advance of an absence that will occur (such as in the case of religious holiday or a school-sponsored activity) it is expected that work due on the day of the absence will be turned in on or before the due date. In the case of true emergencies, work must be completed by the date established by the faculty member. Grades for late assignments (except for true emergencies) will be reduced by one-third (1/3) of a letter grade for each day late with lateness calculated by calendar days rather than class meetings.

## **ASSIGNMENTS:**

**PLEASE NOTE: NO EXTENSIONS WILL BE GRANTED UNLESS THEY ARE REQUESTED AT LEAST 12 HOURS PRIOR TO THE DUE DATE. EXTENSIONS WILL BE GRANTED ON A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS.**

1. Class Participation, Involvement and Discussion: Students are expected to attend each class ready to move and contribute to class discussions. Each class session is worth a total of 3 points, which is determined on physical involvement, energy, creative effort and contribution to discussion. In addition, students will be required to keep a journal specifically for this course. This is where the student will take class notes, record observations for discussion, keep notes on continuous online viewings, and log their creative process. It would be most helpful for motif writing if this journal had ruled paper and spiral binding.
2. Homework/Choreographic Assignments: The student will be responsible for all readings and movement homework assigned so that they are prepared for class showings and discussions. Active participation in discussions is required. Each homework assignment will be graded on a 50-point scale and an average will create the homework portion of the grade.
3. Critical Review: Each student is required to regularly view choreography outside of class. This can be done by attending live performances or watching video online. Links to video that will be required to view will also be posted on moodle. Each student will have to write a critical review comparing at least 2 pieces of choreography that has been viewed online. This review will be due on November 4<sup>th</sup> at 12pm. All reviews must be turned in on moodle and no late work will be accepted.
4. Final Project: There will be a final choreography project assigned during the semester utilizing the tools studied throughout the course.

### Credit and workload:

Dan 315 is a 4-credit course. In addition to in-class time, you will be spending a minimum of 3 hours per week in preparation for our class sessions, including viewing video material posted on Moodle and completing reading assignments. You should also plan to spend an additional 5-7 hours per week composing choreographic assignments, working on group projects, and preparing the final project for this course.

### Grading:

- Class participation- 28 classes each worth 3 points- 84 points.
- Homework/Choreographic Assignments- 50 points
- Critical Review-16 points
- Final Project- 50 points.

Total points = 200.

The grading scale will be:

A 93-100%	B 83-89%	C 73-79%	D 63-69%
A- 90-92%	B- 80-82%	C-70-72%	D- 60-63%
F-Below 60%			

### Academic Honesty:

The Agnes Scott College honor code embodies an ideal of character, conduct, and citizenship, and is an important part of the College's mission and core identity. This applies especially to academic honesty and integrity. Passing off someone else's work as your own represents intellectual fraud and theft, and violates the core values of our academic community. To be honorable, you should understand not only what counts as academic dishonesty, but also how to avoid engaging in these practices. You should:

- review each course syllabus for the professor's expectations regarding course work and class attendance.
- attribute all ideas taken from other sources; this shows respect for other scholars. Plagiarism can include portraying another's work or ideas as your own, buying a paper online and turning it in as if it were your own work, or not citing or improperly citing references on a reference page or within the text of a paper.
- not falsify or create data and resources or alter a graded work without the prior consent of your professor. This includes making up a reference for a works cited page or making up statistics or facts for academic work.
- not allow another party to do your work/exam, or submit the same or similar work in more than one course without permission from the course instructors. Cheating also includes taking an exam for another person, looking on another person's exam for answers, using exams from previous classes without permission, or bringing and using unauthorized notes or resources (i.e., electronic, written, or otherwise) during an exam.
- not facilitate cheating, which can happen when you help another student complete a take home exam, give answers to an exam, talk about an exam with a student who has not taken it, or collaborate with others on work that is supposed to be completed independently.
- be truthful about the submission of work, which includes the time of submission

and the place of submission (e.g., e-mail, online, in a mailbox, to an office, etc.). You should understand that penalties result from dishonest conduct, ranging from failure of the assignment to expulsion from the college. You should speak with your professors if you need clarification about any of these policies.

#### Title IX:

For the safety of the entire community, any incidence of, or information about sexual misconduct must be reported immediately to the Title IX Coordinator Marti Fessenden (mfessenden@agnesscott.edu, 404-471-6547), Deputy Title IX Coordinator Karen Gilbert (kgilbert@agnesscott.edu, 404-471-6435), or Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students Karen Goff ([kgoff@agnesscott.edu](mailto:kgoff@agnesscott.edu), 404-471-6449).

#### Inclusion:

This course adheres to the principles of diversity and inclusion integral to the Agnes Scot community. We respect people from all backgrounds and affirm people's decisions about gender expression and identity. Please feel free to correct me if your preferred name or gender pronoun are different from that listed on the class roster.

#### Students with Disabilities:

Agnes Scott College seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in this class, please contact the Office of Academic Advising (X6150) to make complete the registration process. Once registered, please contact me so we can discuss the specific accommodations needed for this course.

#### Course evaluation:

Your feedback on the course is extremely valuable to the department, the administration, and me. In particular, I take your comments very seriously and use them to improve the course the next time I teach it. You are responsible for completing an evaluation of the course at the end of the semester. I will provide more details later.

#### Classroom Behavior:

It is of utmost importance that the studio/classroom serves the community as a safe space for creative growth and exploration. Please abide by the following guidelines:

- No outside shoes allowed on the studio floors
- No cell phones are permitted in the classroom
- Eating in the studio is not permitted
- Please choose your class attire carefully. Follow the guidelines listed and be sure not to wear something that will make others uncomfortable.

#### Miscellaneous:

1. I want you to know that I will make myself available to you at any time you request. Please don't hesitate to try and set up time for a tutorial or to discuss any concerns.
2. Last but not least-have fun! ☺

## Course Layout

### **8/28: First Day of Class**

Syllabus and introductions

**9/4**

Lesson: Motif- action, stillness, accent, the staff

Readings for the Week: The Art of Making Dances: Foreword and p. 1-20

**9/9 and 9/11**

Lesson: Motif- paths, stage space

Readings for the Week: The Art of Making Dances chapter 9: The stage space

**9/16 and 9/18**

Lesson: Motif- jumps, turns, level

Readings for the Week: none

**9/23 and 9/25**

Lesson: Gesture

Readings for the Week: The Art of Making Dances Chapter 13: Motivation and Gesture

**9/30 and 10/2**

Lesson: Rhythm and Dynamics

“The good choreographer never stays long with any 1 dynamic because he very well knows that too much sharp wears out the nervous system and too much legato puts everybody to sleep.”

Readings for the Week: The Art of Making Dances Chapter 11-12 (Rhythm and Dynamics)

**10/7 and 10/9 (Fall Break week)**

Catch up and Assign and discuss final project

**10/14 and 10/16**

Lesson: Theme and variation

Readings for the Week: The Art of Making Dances Chapter 6

**10/21 and 10/23**

Lesson: Music

Readings for the Week: The Art of Making Dances Chapter 15- Music

**10/28 and 10/30**

Lesson: Duets

Readings for the Week: The Art of Making Dances Chapter 7

**11/4 and 11/6**

Lesson: Directing Group Work

Readings for the Week: The Art of Making Dances Chapter 10

**11/11 and 11/13**

work sessions for final projects

**11/18 and 11/20**

work sessions for final project

**11/25 (and Thanksgiving Break)**

work session

**12/2 and 12/4**

Tuesday: Rehearsal and feedback

Thursday: work session

**12/9**

Final performance at 3:30 (or Friday 12/6 at 2pm: we will discuss as a class)