

WELCOME TO DAA 2621 DANCE IMPROVISATION!

I. COURSE NUMBER AND TITLE: DAA 2621 (30729 and 30756 Dance Improvisation

Semester & Year: Spring 2022

Meeting Days and Times: T/TH 12:50 – 2:45 pm

Building and Room: SOC 2205 and BEYOND!

II. INSTRUCTOR:

Name: Professor Joan Frosch (Dr. Joan, preferred)

Email: jfrosch@arts.ufl.edu

Office Hours: by Zoom (hours and zoom link shared on CANVAS; and by appt.)

*Email Policy: Please only use your CANVAS acct. for email correspondence regarding this class, thank you!

III. COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The course introduces dance improvisation as an art form, a personal practice, and a process for creating choreography through movement exploration, readings, and observations.

IV. LEARNING OUTCOMES:

1. Examine habitual mind and movement tendencies.
2. Take up the physical challenge to exist outside your “comfort zones” while also accepting and capitalizing on your movement preferences.
3. Develop and hone performance, perceptual, and imaginative skills, both individually and in group settings.
4. Ably engage in specific improvisational techniques, parameters, and exercises in order to generate movement material.
5. Become competent in analyzing and evaluating improvised performances and practices through written, verbal, and movement communication.
6. Become conversant with the various locations of improvised dance, especially in Western concert dance traditions and in African diaspora forms.

V. REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS:

- Readings/Viewings as assigned via the Canvas Course Site from such works as:
 - *The Moment of Movement: Dance Improvisation* by Lynne Anne Blom and L. Tarin Chaplin

- *Contact Improvisation, Moving, Dancing, Interaction* (With an Introduction to New Dance) by Thomas Kaltenbrunner
- *Choreography: A Basic Approach Using Improvisation* by Sandra Cerny Minton
- Albright, Ann Cooper and David Gere. (Eds.). (2003). *Taken by surprise: A dance improvisation reader*. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press.
- Other materials as selected by the instructor

VI. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND POLICIES: Expectations:

Student will:

- Attend classes regularly, be prepared and on time, and ready to work for the entire class period; (note that unless previously approved by the instructor, any lateness or early class departure will affect your grade).
- Maintain a professional working attitude.
- Participate in all in class activities, engaging fully both mentally and physically.
- Strive to improve individual progress by demonstrating growing strength of physical commitment, mental flexibility, and an increasing awareness of body alignment, timing, and spatial pathways.
- Observe dance class etiquette (cell phone off, dress code, lateness policy, etc.)
- Strive to apply the corrections given and concepts discussed to your movement.

Assignments:

Journals: You are required to keep a twice-weekly course journal where you will record the reactions, observations, ideas, and inspirations you might have in class or upon reflection after class. Your journal will not only help you to raise your awareness but also help me to know you better, delve into your insights, and understand things about your process that might not be outwardly evident. Don't simply recapitulate what happened in class, rather take this opportunity to develop your growing awareness of your bodymind and meet your learning outcomes (pg. 1):

Some things to write about:

- My responses to the exercises we did in class and what questions/curiosities arose for me: "Why did I respond this way or that?" "What was the exercise targeting and how did I cope?" etc.
- Awareness of things you have attractions and/or aversions to, and why: for example, "I didn't like that because..."; "I felt comfortable because..."
- Write down the habits that you have developed in sensing and moving: For example, "I always do this...", "I never do that...." "I understand this, but I sometimes don't think about that..."
- What did you feel, see, sense?

- What concepts do you remember in from class? Can you awaken those in you body?
- Wildcard (centering on your work/personal discoveries in class).

You may write in any style you feel comfortable from straight observations, stream of consciousness, images, phrases, poems, etc. Feel free to include drawings, photos, images, memories, quotes, etc. Grading will center on the depth and quality of your thoughts and observations, personal or otherwise. Entries will be no shorter than 1 full handwritten page per class. I'll provide you some class time to start your twice-a-week entries (after each class). You will submit your journal a minimum of three times in the semester and whenever requested—so be ready! We will use the journals as part of your midterm and end term evaluations, and we will also use them whenever you visit me in office hours; if well done, they can form the basis for some class projects and assignments.

Projects: Midterm and Final projects will be assigned and based, in part, upon the thoughtfulness and creativity of your journal entries. They may include site specific, specific theme, character, prop, or other conceptual parameters and clearly demonstrate your attention to the power of honesty, quiet detail, and full physical commitment.

Your Midterm project will build a improvisational score which is collaboratively performed by the class in interaction with a particular environment created or selected. Ideas may emanate from journal entries formalized into a guiding question/ set of questions or “score” which communicates clearly to performers and guides their movement choices, quality of performance, and goals. We will co-create the midterm project rubric to evaluate your project.

Your Final project will challenge you and a class partner to collaboratively create a fresh, well-rehearsed (but not choreographed) improvisational performance and sound score answering a guiding question. The duet will clearly draw upon your team’s selection of the techniques, concepts, and improvisational methods learned in class and bring them to the “next level.” The movement vocabularies may be drawn from one or numerous styles of dance (Step, postmodern dance, salsa, contact, West African, etc.) and/or pedestrian movement clearly articulated in time and space to create a one-of-a kind tapestry in performance. We will co-create the final project rubric to evaluate your project.

Final Exam: Compare/Contrast paper due on CANVAS Thursday, April 28 by 12:40 pm: One paper, comparing and contrasting two distinct performances/practices of dance improvisation, is required. These may be concert dance performances, social dance gatherings, rehearsals, contact jams, etc. Instead of a straight critique or evaluation of the performances, you will be asked to assess them through the lens of how they relate to structures, themes, possibilities, and limitations of improvisation as you have studied and experienced this semester. The minimum length is three typed pages, double-spaced, 12 pt. font, 1” margins to be posted on CANVAS during finals week no later than 12:40 pm Thursday, April 28.

Event Attendance in class calendar: and available on CANVAS

Attendance Policy:

For all DAA studio classes that meet two times a week:

- Students can take two absences with no documentation with no penalty.
- If the third absence is unexcused, it will result in 5% deduction from the final grade.
- Excused or unexcused, on the third absence, a meeting is required with the instructor and/or area faculty to assess the student's continued participation in the course.
- If the fourth absence and all subsequent absences are unexcused, each will result in an additional 5% deduction from the final grade.
- Requirements / opportunities to make up missed material for unexcused absences is up to the instructor's discretion
- Due to the participatory nature of the course that includes in-class collaboration along with partner and ensemble work, two unexcused absences may result in automatic failure of the course.

Tardy Policy: You are late after roll has been taken/class has begun.

- Points will be deducted for being late or leaving early for any reason.
- There will be a five-minute grace period for roll-taking.
- Three tardies of regular class meetings equal one unexcused absence.

Make-up Policy

Excused absences (those that can documented accord. to University of Florida policy including <https://shcc.ufl.edu/forms-records/excuse-notes/> Infirmary); <https://dso.ufl.edu/safety-care/> (Dean of Students), may be made-up in the following manner:

- Non-Majors: Approved Performance Event/Written Assignment
- For both majors and non-majors, should you be unable to dance but still able to attend, you may 'actively' observe class for full credit only once in a semester by submitting an observation paper due at the end of the class.

Requirements / opportunities to make up missed material for unexcused absences is up to the instructor's discretion

Injuries are special cases. If an injury occurs see/contact me immediately regarding projected absences, make-ups, or possible withdrawal from the class.

Late assignments: Unless otherwise planned, all homework assignments are expected at the beginning of class on the date due. An asst. after the due date does not fulfill the assignment.

Studio Rules of Conduct:

Ringling cell phones, text notifications, texting, eating, etc. are disruptive to classroom activity. Please be considerate. In effort to keep our dance space a peaceful, safe, and clean environment for our students we ask you to observe the following:

- No gum. This is also for safety reasons since we don't want dancers choking.
- No talking, eating, or quick pick-me-ups during class. However, you may keep water bottles inside the studio for hydration provided they have caps to prevent spills.
- Turn off and put away all cell phones before entering the studio. Please make this a habit. All phone calls and texting must take place outside of the studio and NEVER during class time.
- If you have an emergency situation, inform the instructor prior to the start of class so that accommodations that do not disturb the class may be made.

Note: To help organize accommodations, students should inform the professor by the end of the second week of classes of religious observances of their faith that will conflict with class attendance during the semester. Any absence from class for the following reasons must be supported by official acceptable documentation to avoid a grade penalty: illness (doctor's note must be on official letterhead with address and phone number, noting the date and time of visit verifying that an absence from class is warranted and when the return to class activity is expected, doctor's name, and signature), serious family emergencies, special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences), military obligation, severe weather conditions, participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition or debate, court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena). Advance notice to the professor is requested whenever possible.

VII. COURSE SCHEDULE AND TOPIC OUTLINE:

Class schedule is subject to modification, but not without prior notification. Please note class material is sequential and comprehensive. Please take time to review movement sequences before and after class.

Week One 1/6	• Introduction • Improvisation in Everyday Life—nurturing (1) connection to ourselves and (2) the paradox of using limits and parameters to expand freedom and imagination. • Dance Majors attendance is expected: Wed.1/5 DANCE Welcome Meeting 6:30-7:30 pm Zoom link distributed by Dance Area Headquarters
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Week Two 1/11-13	• Postmodern dance – improv onstage (history) • Pedestrian movement
Week Three 1/18-20	• Mining our habits – shedding • Mining our preferences - embracing
Week Four 1/25-27	• Sensing and responding – self, pair • Sensing and responding – small groups, ensemble
Week Five 2/1-3	• Contact improvisation (history) • Weight sharing basics
Week Six 2/8-10	• Partnering with the floor; TWISTER 😊 • Sensing and responding in contact – pair with partner or props (real and imagined) • Sensing and responding in contact – with small groups or props/environments (Dance Major attendance is expected of a minimum of ONE Spring semester SoTD townhall: SoTD Town Hall #1 on Tuesday 2/10 at 2-3:15 pm— Zoom link to be distributed by SoTD)
Week Seven 2/15-17	• Midterm projects preparation
Week Eight 2/22-24	• Midterm projects presented and evaluated • REQUIRED attendance of one performance of DANCE 2022 2/24-27 at 7:30 pm CONSTANS THEATRE (You are required to capture THREE Movement signatures form DANCE 2022 to work with in week nine)
Week Nine 3/1-3	• Discuss DANCE 2022 and show DANCE 2022 movement signatures • Freestyling/Riffing on DANCE 2022 in the Cypher
Week Ten	SPRING BREAK 3/5-13
Week Eleven 3/15-17	•
Week Twelve 3/22-24	• Improvisation & Social Dance I • Improvisation & Social Dance II (Dance Major attendance is expected: Dance OPEN Conversation, Monday, 3/21 6:30-8:00 pm)

	Zoom link to be distributed by Dance Area Headquarters) (Dance Major attendance is expected of a minimum of ONE Spring semester SoTD townhall: SoTD Town Hall #2 3/23 at 2-3:15 – Zoom link to be distributed by SoTD)
Week Thirteen 3/29-31	• Lessons from dance and music of Africa and the diaspora • Music & dance improvisations • REQUIRED attendance of one performance: BFA Showcase Performances 7:30 pm -McGuire G-06 3/30-31 and 4/1-3
Week Fourteen 4/5-7	• Final projects preparation
Week Fifteen 4/12-14	• Final projects presented and evaluated
Week Sixteen 4/19	• Putting it all together: semester in review • 2nd year dance majors, 4th year dance majors (non-graduating); and first semester transfer dance majors attend a REQUIRED 15" "Critical Response Appointment" on April 18 - 19: times and Zoom link to be distributed by Dance Area Headquarters. • (4/20 Last Day of Classes)
Finals Week	Final Exam "Contrast/Compare Paper" due by 11:59 pm

VIII. GRADING CRITERIA:

Final Course Grade:

Your final grade is determined by your performance on a number of different tasks:

Midterm Project	15%
Final Project	15%
Journal	10%
Final: Compare/Contrast Paper	10%
Attendance & Participation	50%

TOTAL	100%
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Letter grades translate to percentages as follows:

Grades

95 – 100	A
90 – 94	A-
87 – 89	B+
84 – 86	B
80 – 83	B-
77 – 79	C+
74 – 76	C
70 – 73	C-
65 – 69	D+
60 – 64	D
59 and below	F

Important Policies

1. Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, dso.ufl.edu/drc) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.
2. Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via ufl.bluer.com/ufl/. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/
3. [http://aa.ufl.edu/policies/in-class-recording/](https://aa.ufl.edu/policies/in-class-recording/) Note that students cannot share or publish recordings without instructor permission.
4. All Spring 2022 courses delivered through any means (face-to-face, online, etc.) use the Canvas learning management system for the following purposes: Distributing and storing the course syllabus, along with any syllabus updates, and maintaining student grades. The only exceptions are courses set up as individual academic experiences such as directed independent study, supervised research, supervised teaching, and thesis or dissertation credits.
5. Additionally, I am also using Canvas for posting announcements, providing access to course materials, adding deadlines to the calendar, maintaining communication relevant to all students, and scheduling Zoom meetings. These practices will help ensure that students who may be geographically dispersed and taking courses asynchronously have access to course content and provide an extra layer of security for Zoom sessions. Doing so will also allow for uniformity of

the student course experience and will facilitate the process of making up of course work missed because of illness, periods of self-isolation, and other excused absences.

6. *LIKE ALL SYLLABI, THIS SYLLABUS IS A LIVING DOCUMENT AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE. You will be notified of important changes that could affect grading, assignments, etc. Meanwhile, I invite YOU to take on an active role by your participation in this course and to be in active communication with me throughout the semester on your creative ideas, questions, and suggestions for how we, as a community, LEARN AND MOVE! No cap!

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