

New World School of the Arts: Theater Division
Somatics DAA4930
Spring 2026
Thursday- 1:30-3:30pm
Sandra Portal-Andreu, M.S.
sportal@mdc.edu

Rationale:

This course introduces dancers to somatic practices that enhance body awareness, alignment, and movement efficiency. Through the integration of GYROKINESIS and Mindfulness practice, students will develop tools to improve technique, prevent injury, and deepen their connection to movement. Emphasis will be placed on understanding the principles of somatic work and applying them to dance practice and performance.

Objectives:

1. Understand the foundational principles of GYROKINESIS and Mindfulness Practice.
2. Apply somatic techniques to improve dance technique, performance, and injury prevention.
3. Develop body awareness and alignment through guided practice and self-exploration.
4. Cultivate a regular somatic practice that supports overall well-being and artistic growth.

Units:

1. Intro to Somatics
2. GYROKINESIS Fundamentals
3. Mindfulness practices for body and breath awareness

Grading:

• Peer Discussions/ Feedback	10%
• Journaling	20%
• Participation	40%
• Final Project/Practicum	30%

Materials:

1. Comfortable clothing suitable for movement.
2. A yoga mat.
3. Notebook or journal for reflections and observations.

Policies:

1. Attendance: Regular attendance is mandatory. More than two unexcused absences may result in a grade reduction. This course adheres to the attendance policies of New World School of the Arts and University of Florida.
2. Injury or Illness: Please inform the instructor immediately if you are unable to participate fully due to injury or illness. Modified participation can be arranged. All accommodations will align with the support services offered by New World School of the Arts and University of Florida.

Recommended Reading:

- The Body Keeps the Score by Bessel van der Kolk
- Body Stories: A Guide to Experiential Anatomy by Andrea Olsen
- The Thinking Body by Mabel Todd