

Las Positas College
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Course Outline for DANC 2A

JAZZ DANCE BEGINNING

Effective: Fall 2013

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

DANC 2A — JAZZ DANCE BEGINNING — 0.50 - 2.00 units

Practice in basic jazz dance techniques and routines.

0.50 - 2.00 Units Lab

Grading Methods:

Letter or P/NP

Discipline:

	<u>MIN</u>	<u>MAX</u>
Lab Hours:	27.00	108.00
Total Hours:	27.00	108.00

II. NUMBER OF TIMES COURSE MAY BE TAKEN FOR CREDIT: 1

III. PREREQUISITE AND/OR ADVISORY SKILLS:

IV. MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:

- A. Describe the origins and development of jazz dance 1. African dance elements and slavery in America 2. Minstrel shows in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries 3. Cultural influences of each decade from the 1920s through the present day
- B. Participate in the elements of a jazz dance lesson: 1. Pre-warm-up 2. Warm-up 3. Isolation exercises 4. Locomotor movements 5. Dance combinations 6. Cool-down
- C. Perform the principle elements of jazz dance 1. Shifting weight 2. Pointing and flexing the foot 3. Jumping (take-off and landing in demi-plie) 4. Turning and spotting
- D. Stretch effectively- standing, sitting, lying

V. CONTENT:

A. Historical development of jazz dance

1. West African influences

- a. Rhythms and movements brought to America by African slaves.
- b. Earthy style of West African dance included low levels, bent knees, pulsating body movements emphasized by body isolations, and hand clapping.
- c. Intermingling of African cultures helped to create a new culture with both African and American elements.
- d. Laws enforced by the slave owners prohibited the playing of African drums or performing African dances which resulted in slaves trying to hold onto their cultural identity through rhythms and movements such as foot stamping and tapping, hand clapping, and rhythmic voice sounds.

2. Minstrelsy influences

- a. The Afro-American style of song and dance was the most popular form of entertainment in the United States for more than half a century-from approximately 1845 to 1900.
- b. White entertainers parodied their conception of slaves' lives which depended greatly on solo performance and improvisation.
- c. Minstrel shows began to incorporate a theatrical form of social dances such as the cakewalk and later the buck-and-wing.
- d. It was difficult for black dancers to gain stature as part of a troupe where white performers, often in blackface, were still the stars.
- e. The rise of new accompaniments employed the unusual rhythm known as syncopation.

3. Modern cultural influences

- a. In the 1920s, there was a growth of jazz dance directly influenced by the fast ragtime beat which expressed gaiety and freedom.
- b. In the 1930s, black American bands gave birth to the big-band or swing era, well-known dances that emerged from this era were the jitterbug (or Lindy Hop) and the boogie-woogie.
- c. Jazz dance was further integrated into Hollywood films and Broadway musicals by the successful careers of Busby Berkeley, Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers, Leslie Carron, Cyd Charisse, and Gene Kelly.
- d. In the 1940s, jazz dance was influenced by ballet and modern dance and became a professional dance form.
- e. Jack Cole developed an innovative training technique that involved isolation of body parts with natural body movements that flow from one action to the next.
- f. Early in the 1960s, Katherine Dunham and Pearl Primus, two black dancers involved in the study of anthropology, researched Afro-Haitian, West Indian, and Latin dance forms and contributed their findings to the growing vocabulary of modern jazz dance.
- g. Choreographers such as Michael Kidd, Gene Kelly, Gower Champion, and Jerome Robbins used dance - especially jazz dance - to fuse dance and drama to further the storyline on stage, television, and film.
- h. Matt Mattox, Luigi, and Gus Giordano further developed professional jazz dance technique.
- i. Bob Fosse's distinct style of jazz dance was highly creative and included bizarre movements that were often slick, erotic, and intense.
- j. In the 1970s, breakdancing became a new dance phenomenon.
- k. Two influential films, *Fame* (1980) and *Flashdance* (1983) gave jazz dance a tremendous boost in popularity.
- l. A new medium for dance and professional dancers in the 1980s was the music video.
- m. Michael Jackson's impact on jazz dance - his music, videos, choreography, style, and presentation - was immeasurable.
- n. Professional dance instructor Joe Tremaine influenced many dancers and choreographers with his fast, funky style, which is referred to as "West Coast jazz" or "L.A. jazz."
- o. Hip hop, a dance style from the streets, gained popularity in the 1990s and moved to a syncopated beat with mostly bouncy, fast, and funky movements.
- p. Wider variety of performance platforms became available, including cabaret and lounge shows, cruise ship entertainment, touring dance companies, and competitive events.
- q. Currently, jazz dance evolves in pace with music and moods of each new decade.

4. Relationship of jazz dance to other forms of dance

B. Posture, body alignment, and placement

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- 1. Alignment reference points
- 2. Alignment exercises

C. Foot positions

- 1. In turn-out: 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th
- 2. In parallel: 1st, 2nd, 4th, 5th

D. Arm positions

- 1. Ballet positions; 1st through 5th with the arms slightly rounded and forward of the body
- 2. Jazz positions; 1st through 5th with straight arms and fingers spread wide open

E. Basic body positions

- 1. Arch
- 2. Contraction
- 3. Flat back
- 4. Diagonal flat back
- 5. Hinge
- 6. Lunge
- 7. Jazz sit
- 8. Jazz split

F. Stretching technique

- 1. Standing; torso. parallel forward with straight and bent knees, side, body wave, back, hand walk, runner's lunge
- 2. Floor; "L" sit, "V" sit, pretzel, straddle, hamstring, cobra, chest lift, spinal twist

G. Body isolations

1. Head
2. Shoulders
3. Rib cage
4. Hips

H. Locomotor movements

1. Jazz walks
2. Step touch
3. Cross touch
4. Jazz square
5. Jazz slide
6. Chasse
7. Kick-ball-change
8. Pas de bourree
9. Triplet
10. Kicks-grand battement
11. Fan kick

I. Turns

1. Pivot
2. Paddle
3. Chaine
4. Touch turn
5. Pirouette

J. Aerial movements

1. Jumps; straight, tuck, pike, arch
2. Hop
3. Jete

K. Floor work

1. Cookie cutter
2. Straddle roll

VI. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

- A. **Demonstration** -
- B. **Observation and Demonstration** -
- C. **Discussion** -
- D. **Audio-visual Activity** -
- E. **Lecture** -
- F. **Classroom Activity** -

VII. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:

- A. Write a two page paper about the contributions of Bob Fosse to the development of jazz dance.
- B. Demonstrate and a perform jazz dance combination choreographed by the instructor showing correct footwork, turning, jumping, and spotting.

VIII. EVALUATION:

A. **Methods**

1. Exams/Tests
2. Class Participation
3. Class Work
4. Class Performance

B. **Frequency**

Participation recorded daily and testing of individual performance of dance combinations three times per semester and written final exam

IX. TYPICAL TEXTS:

1. Kraines,M.G., E. Proyer *Jump into Jazz: The Basics and Beyond for Jazz Dance Students*. 5th ed., McGraw-Hill, 2004.

2. McWaters,D.,Vereen,B. *The Fosse Style.*, University Press of Florida, 2008.
3. Written handouts will be provided.

X. OTHER MATERIALS REQUIRED OF STUDENTS:

- A. Students are to provide their own dance apparel and footwear.