

TAPS 1341, Introduction to Ballet, Spring 2020

Brown University
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:30-3:50pm;
Wednesday Lab, 5-6:20pm
Location: Online/Remote

Instructor: Prof. Patricia Seto-Weiss (she/her/hers) (patricia_seto-weiss@brown.edu)
Office: Virtual Office
Office hours: see Google Calendar Link accessible through Canvas at the start of the semester

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an introduction to basic ballet vocabulary and movement patterns. We will focus on maintaining correct body alignment while increasing fitness and coordination appropriate for a beginner level. In addition to our work on technique, we will develop a critical understanding of the art form through short reading and video viewing assignments. No prior ballet experience is necessary for this course. Whether you are a dancer, actor, athlete, musician, or a concentrator in a different field, you are welcome to join. Students with prior ballet experience who would like to brush up on basics may take the course as well.

After brief warm up core exercises, each Zoom class will start with a traditional ballet barre that introduces basic elements of classical ballet. Traditional center work appropriate for the virtual setting will follow. The class will culminate with jump combinations. All choreographies will be designed to be safely performed within remote learning spaces. A stretching and cool down session will conclude each class.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon successfully completing this course you will be able to:

- Understand basic ballet vocabulary, movement principles, and formal organization of a ballet class
- Execute basic ballet steps properly and with musical accuracy
- Acquire increased body and spatial awareness
- Gain physical strength, flexibility and coordination
- Engage more deeply with ballet, whether as a performer, choreographer, or audience member
- Gain a deeper appreciation of the art form in the context of the liberal arts

VIRTUAL CLASSROOM SETUP AND ETIQUETTE

Since we will be meeting on Zoom for our synchronous sessions, I recommend that you set up your virtual dance space so that your device/webcam shows most of your body. It might take some time to find the perfect angle, but it is possible to make this work even in the smallest of spaces.

I understand that sometimes internet connections might be flaky and require you to turn off your video, but I would encourage everyone participating in the class to keep the video on whenever possible. This way, I can give you feedback in real time. Please mute yourselves once the class session has started.

You will need a chair, desk, dresser or anything equivalent that can be used as your barre. Make sure to have enough space in front, to the side, and to the back to fully extend your leg straight into the air in each direction. (If your room does not allow for this, make sure that you can rotate your body safely at the barre to work within your space). I would recommend using a yoga mat during certain jump combinations to accommodate slippery floors and add cushioning. In addition to a yoga mat, some students find it helpful to wear sneakers during jump combinations. For the stretch/cooling down part at the end of each class, please have your Theraband (Resistance exercise band) and yoga mat ready to go.

Each class session will be recorded to the cloud and accessible through Canvas. If you have any questions/concerns regarding space setup or special accommodations, feel free to reach out to me.

COURSE EXPENSES/MATERIALS REQUIRED

Ballet slippers (highly recommended): \$20

Resistance exercise band (Theraband): \$10

Yoga mat: \$20 and up

If your Brown undergraduate financial aid package includes the Book/Course Material Support Pilot Program (BCMS), concerns or questions about the cost of books and course materials for this or any other Brown course (including RISD courses via cross-registration) can be addressed to bcms@brown.edu. For all other concerns related to non-tuition course-related expenses, whether or not your Brown undergraduate financial aid package includes BCMS, please visit the Academic Emergency Fund in E-GAP (within the umbrella of "E-Gap Funds" in UFunds) to determine options for financing these costs, while ensuring your privacy.

LAB TIMES

Lab sessions will mainly focus on conditioning and stretching exercises which promote ballet technique in a healthy and safe way. We will also use this time to address questions in regards to weekly ballet exercises covered during the class sessions and discuss weekly assignments.

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Your grade will be based on active participation, reasonable progress in the execution of ballet steps, and timely submission of assignments. A willingness to take corrections and a positive attitude will also be taken into account.

40%	Participation (please read participation policy below)
20%	Weekly assignments
20%	Performance paper (due 3/11)
20%	Final project (due 4/15)

Please note that a passing percentage in each category listed above is required to receive credit for this course.

Participation Policy

Active participation is essential to successful completion of this course. It is highly recommended that you join our classes and lab sessions synchronously each time. However, I understand that things come up, so you may miss up to four synchronous Zoom sessions without penalty. **If you miss more than four classes and have not reached out to me to arrange asynchronous accommodations, you may risk not receiving credit for the course.**

WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS:

Reading/Video Responses

I will assign readings or viewings of videos to foster an understanding of the history of ballet and to allow for a critical engagement with the art form. Students will write short responses posted onto Canvas (graded with a check, check +, and check -). We will share thoughts on the materials during lab sessions.

Movement Assignments

Even though we will only meet online this semester, it is very important to me to be able to give you as much individual attention and corrections as possible. Some weekly assignments will be movement assignments, which will give me the opportunity to carefully review your ballet technique, give feedback, and work towards achieving your individual goals. I will upload a video with a movement sequence. You will be required to review the combination and upload a video of your dancing through the GoReact app on Canvas. I will then provide detailed, time-stamped feedback through the app.

PERFORMANCE PAPER AND FINAL PROJECT:

Performance Paper

You will be required to view a virtual dance performance and write a 4-6 page double-spaced report. Detailed guidelines will be provided later in the semester (due 3/11).

Final Project

As a culminating project, students will choreograph a movement sequence that will be presented in a short video. This choreography should be approximately 2-3 minutes long. More information will be provided later in the semester (due 4/15).

WORKLOAD EXPECTATIONS

This 1-credit course will require approximately 180 hours of coursework over the semester:

- 50 hours of class/lab meetings
- 80 hours for assignments, conditioning on your own, reviewing steps and combinations
- 25 hours of work for one performance paper
- 25 hours of work on final project

ACCESSIBILITY AND ACCOMMODATIONS

Brown University is committed to full inclusion of all students. Please inform me early in the term if you may require accommodations or modification of any of course procedures. You

may speak with me after class, during office hours, or by appointment. If you need accommodations around online learning or in classroom accommodations, please be sure to reach out to Student Accessibility Services (SAS) for their assistance (seas@brown.edu, 401-863-9588). Students in need of short-term academic advice or support can contact one of the academic deans in the College.

If you have sustained an injury, it is important that you let me know *before* the start of class.

CLASS RECORDING AND DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS

I would like to record our discussion because some students may be in different time zones, have poor internet connections, or have health issues. This means that we will record all classes to make them available to all students that are enrolled but cannot be present. If you have questions or concerns about this protocol, please contact me so that we can talk through those to also ensure your full participation in this course. Lectures and other course materials are copyrighted. Students are prohibited from reproducing, making copies, publicly displaying, selling, or otherwise distributing the recordings or transcripts of the materials. The only exception is that students with disabilities may have the right to record for their private use if that method is determined to be a reasonable accommodation by Student Accessibility Services. Disregard of the University's copyright policy and federal copyright law is a Student Code of Conduct violation.

USE OF TECHNOLOGY TO SUPPORT STUDENT LEARNING

This course will use the following technological platforms: Canvas, GoReact, Panopto, YouTube. I am committed to ensuring access to online course resources by students. If you have any concerns or questions about access or the privacy of any of these platforms, please reach out to me. The IT Service Center (<https://it.brown.edu/get-help>) provides many IT Services including remote assistance, phones, tickets, and chat. Please also see the Online and Hybrid Learning Student Guide.

OFFICE HOURS

I will be available to students during office hours to discuss any questions or concerns you might have, or simply to chat. My office hours this semester will be held virtually by appointment. Please see the Google calendar link on Canvas for time slots.

COURSE OVERVIEW

IMPORTANT: This schedule is provisional and likely to change. While we will work through every element of a traditional ballet class each session, we will highlight particular themes as we move through the semester.

Th 1/21	First day of class: Course introduction
T 1/26 - Th 1/28	Emphasis on basic elements and arm movements
T 2/2 - Th 2/4	Basic center adagio and movements in 3s: balances, etc.
T 2/9 - Th 2/11	Introduction to linking steps: pas de bourrée, glissade, etc.
T 2/16	Long weekend. No class.

W 2/17 - Th 2/18	Linking steps, part 2
T 2/23 - Th 3/4	Balances and movements requiring one standing leg
T 3/9 - Th 3/18	Introduction to basic turning steps [Performance Paper due 3/11]
T 3/23 - Th 4/1	Petit allegro: preparation for assemblé, pas de chats, etc.
T 4/6 - Th 4/8	Extended adagio: slow movements, long balances
T 4/13 - W 4/14	Review sessions
Th 4/15	Final projects