

Basic Course Information

School(s) Offering This Course:

School Name	Course Learning Environment	Transcript Code(s)	
Central High School East/West (050975)	Classroom Based	Abbreviation Modern Dance	Course Code D120

Title:

Modern Dance 1

Length of course:

Full Year

Subject area:

College-Preparatory Elective ("g") / Visual & Performing Arts

Integrated (Academics / CTE)?

No

Grade levels:

9th

UC honors designation?

No

Course Description

Course overview:

Through the intense study of modern dance technique, Modern I students will achieve correct body placement and alignment at the end of their freshman year. Students will acquire muscle strength, control, and flexibility as well as increased self-discipline and artistic expression. Students will build upon basic ballet technique as it is the foundation for modern technique. Students will learn basic modern dance technique starting with floor work from Martha Graham and Lester Horton technique, and advancing to simple combinations in the center and across the floor adding Jose Limon and Katherine Dunham technique. Over the course of the year, students will learn modern and ballet dance vocabulary from the techniques listed above. Through their study of vocabulary and technique, they will develop a discerning eye with the ability to distinguish one modern technique from another. This ability will support the student through their study as they advance to Modern II. The discipline acquired through the study of dance also benefits the student's academic focus and commitment.

Modern I is a course for the entering freshman dance major with little or limited previous study and experience in such genres as ballet, modern, jazz and contemporary. Each dance student follows a rigorous conservatory approach to the study of modern dance for two consecutive semesters. This class is an introduction to the concepts of modern dance through the techniques developed by Martha Graham, Lester Horton, Jose Limon, Katherine Dunham and other dance masters. Students will learn the basic core concepts of the dance techniques of the artists listed above. As these students acquire strength and a basic understanding and vocabulary of these techniques, their study will expand to movement across the floor and simple dance combinations.

Prerequisites:

Audition based (Required)

Co-requisites:

None

Course content:

Modern Dance 1

The core of the training of Modern I is taught and perfected on the floor or standing. The student must find and strengthen their physical center and gain security in their work. The confidence that students acquire in center floor is then transferred to work across the floor. The teacher demonstrates modern dance instructions during this process, and corrections are given verbally and manually. The teacher instructs the course using verbal, auditory, kinesthetic, and visual teaching strategies to connect and differentiate content to create meaning and understanding. Students are encouraged to work at their level of ability and not to compare themselves to their peers. Footage of professional dancers and field trips to live performance help students to set a standard to which they should aspire, and not judge themselves within their peer group. This fosters confidence and a commitment to individual goals and success.

Since modern dance is a physical art, assessments are based on the student's ability to execute required technical movements. The execution of these movements will reveal the student's strength and readiness for difficult combinations as the semester progresses. Students are also assessed by written and physical quizzes based on knowledge acquired from dance vocabulary, live performances, and guest teachers brought in from the professional dance world. A student also will be assessed by his/her ability to choreograph, and improvise modern dance technique by the end of Modern I.

Modern I students are exposed to innovators of Modern dance like Martha Graham, Lester Horton, Jose Limon, and Katherine Dunham through film, written materials, and live performances of their works. Students are taught the historical contributions of these artists to modern dance as well as their influence on ballet dance. Students start with the historical introduction of modern dance through the study of Modern dance pioneers such as Isadora Duncan, Ruth St. Denis, Loie Fuller, Ted Shawn, Pearl Primus and many others. They are then taught to connect and the sequential progression of modern dance pioneers to early modern dancers like Graham, Horton, Limon, and Dunham, and on to post-modern dancers like Merce Cunningham, Mark Morris, Alvin Ailey, Twyla Tharp, and Alwin Nikolais.

Modern dance vocabulary is taught during the first semester of Modern I. This vocabulary coupled with exposure to dance on film and live performances, allows the student to connect the vocabulary learned in class with the execution of steps by seasoned dancers in the field of

Modern dance. This prepares the beginner student to acquire the skill to apply their visual perception of the technique to a physical application.

In the second semester, students are required to compare and contrast the techniques of Martha Graham, Lester Horton, Jose Limon, and Katherine Dunham. They must be able to describe the distinct differences between the techniques, as well as the similarities. They also must know the historical connections between the different artists, and why their techniques may be similar.

All Modern I students must learn Modern dance terminology. The knowledge of this terminology will be tested in a variety of ways over the two semesters. -The first two tests will be written tests administered by the modern dance teacher through demonstrated steps which the students will then write the corresponding name in the numbered space on the quiz. Quiz 1. Basic Ballet terminology. Quiz 2. Martha Graham dance vocabulary. Quiz 3. Lester Horton dance Vocabulary. -The second set of tests in this series will require the student to perform the modern dance step when prompted by the modern dance teacher with dance vocabulary words. Quiz 4. Martha Graham dance vocabulary/dance steps Quiz 5. Lester Horton dance vocabulary/dance steps Quiz 6. This test will require students to watch footage of four dance techniques/companies, (Graham, Horton, Limon, and Dunham) and they will be asked to identify each technique/company. Final. This will require students to choreograph two short 8 bar dance phrases which represent two distinctly different modern dance techniques. - Each student is assessed daily by their participation in class and the execution of the technique they have learned during the year. The ability to look at the dance step taught by the teacher and execute that step, is assessed by a grade each day.

The students will participate in a block period modern dance class two to three times a week during the first semester and second semester. Dance vocabulary will be taught and students will be tested for their proficiency. Students will view modern dance footage and will go to live dance performances. Students will learn and acquire the ability to distinguish one modern dance technique from another, and execute those steps to the best of their ability. Dance classes will consist of: (Semester One) 1. Work on Martha Graham technique 4 weeks A. Warm-up B. Floor work C. Center phrases D. Across the floor 2. Work on Lester Horton technique 4 weeks A. Warm-up B. Center work C. Across the floor 3. Compare and contrast Graham and Horton technique. 2 weeks A. Warm-up B. Floor work C. Center phrases D. Across the floor E. Short center floor dance combinations assessed by teacher for Progress Report 4. Introduce Jose Limon technique 3 weeks A. Warm-up B. Center phrases C. Across the floor 5. Introduce Katherine Dunham technique 3 weeks A. Warm-up B. Barre work D. Center phrases E. Across the floor 6. Injury prevention/care of the body 1 week/ongoing A. Feet B. Legs C. Back D. Neck E. Study of proper alignment for body while studying different Modern technique. 7. Diet/health for dancers 1 week/ongoing A. Proper daily diet for dancers B. Proper diet for performing C. Individual body awareness and dietary needs D. Nutritional need of teens in dance 8. Written test on Modern dance vocabulary ongoing 9. Papers will be written on videos viewed in class and live performances of Modern dance technique. 10. Students have continued to strengthen their Modern dance technique throughout the semester and will be assessed for their physical ability to execute modern dance steps, physically repeat steps after being prompted with vocabulary, and their ability to work artistically and constructively with their peers. Student will receive a grade of A-F (Semester Two) 1. Modern technique continued from semester one. 4 weeks 2. Written papers and journals on Modern dance videos viewed in class. 3. Choreography and improvisation 3 weeks A. Different choreographic styles B. Techniques of improvisation C. Students begin to work with each other experimenting with new concepts brought into the classroom by teacher. 4. Individual choreography assignments. 5 weeks Presented in class for a grade during the fifth week. 5. Teacher sets choreography on students for 7 weeks spring dance concert. Students are required to perform to receive final grade (A-F)

As the Modern dance student approaches their second semester, dance combinations are extended into short choreographed works. These choreographed dances are rehearsed in class then presented in the spring to an audience of parents and peers. Students are also encouraged to choreograph and present short combinations in the classroom setting.

Course Materials

Literary Texts

Title	Author	Publisher	Edition	Website
Technical Manual and Dictionary of Classical Ballet	Gail Grant	Courier Corporation	3rd/2012	[empty]
Master Teacher of Dance	Alexander Pushkin	The New York Public Library	2001	www.nypl.org

Additional Information

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Comment to UC:
- Students will be given a list of modern and ballet dance vocabulary words. - Students will be given handouts based on information acquired from dance history books. This information will solidify their understanding of Modern dance and its historical context. Information will be given from the following books: Modern Bodies (Dance and American Modernism from Martha Graham to Alvin Ailey) by:Julia L. Foulkes Ballet and Modern Dance by:Susan Au - Video and field trips to live modern dance performances are key for Modern I students. It is important for them to see the dancers they are trying to emulate, and to connect their learned dance vocabulary to the steps the professional dancers are performing.