

## DAA 2104: Contemporary Dance Practice 1

Spring 2025 | Section: 1242 | Mon / Wed @ G010 from 8:45 – 10:15a



**Instructor of Record:** Alex Springer (pronouns he/him)  
**Email:** [aspringer@arts.ufl.edu](mailto:aspringer@arts.ufl.edu)  
**Office Location:** Room 232, Nadine McGuire Theatre + Dance Pavilion  
**Office Hours:** T/R 9-10a or by appointment.  
**Office Phone:** 352-273-0511

**Syllabi** can be found here <http://arts.ufl.edu/syllabi/>  
**Lab Fees** can be located at <http://aa.ufl.edu/policies/material-and-supply-fees/>  
**Canvas (e-learning):** <http://elearning.ufl.edu>  
**Email Policy:** Use ONLY your UFL.EDU email account for e-mail correspondence related to class.

### DAA 2104: CONTEMPORARY DANCE PRACTICE 1 COURSE CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

Experience in beginning level technique, readings, observations, and movement exploration exercises. Credits: 2; Prereq: DAA 1000 with minimum grade of C, or audition.

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

Contemporary Dance Practice 1 aims to develop a rigorous movement practice from which we can experience dynamic creative expression. This course is a continuation of the concepts taught in other movement classes and will build upon the foundations each student brings to the contemporary form. Contemporary denotes a “now-ness” and will take shape around the community gathered. Warm-up exercises focus on weight shift, broad kinesthetic awareness, generating heat for endurance, strength, and stability, and intelligent anatomical alignment and engagement in preparation for complex phrase material. These and all exercises draw upon my experiences within the contexts of post-modern concert dance, release technique, improvisation, partnering, West African dance, Hip Hop, Bartenieff, Qi Gong, and Yoga. Personal improvement will be assessed individually based on comfort with movement material, expression, willingness to take risk, and creative investigation. Collectively, we will honor and welcome what each person in the space brings to the community’s experience. This class is meant to be a time for play, exploration, and sharing each other’s many wisdoms.

**Recommended Equipment:** knee pads, water bottle, notebook

**Required Viewing/Reading:** TBA; all materials will be made available on Canvas.

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, students will have gained:

- Foundational understanding of alignment, conditioning, and kinesthetic awareness for reliable and efficient dancing.
- Sense of proprioception and attention on full body integration.
- Increased flexibility, strength, and range of motion.
- Awareness of musicality, rhythm, dynamics, and varied quality in movement.
- Higher proficiency in learning, retaining, and performing movement material.
- Sensitivity to music, environment, and imagery as they pertain to movement investigation.
- Ability to rigorously explore creative expression and individuality in all exercises.
- Experience collaborating with fellow students in a variety of contexts.
- Confidence to contribute to class discussion regarding the collective practice.
- Sensitivity to the community in practice together.
- An understanding of dance as a part of everyday life and culture.

# STUDIO PROCEDURES

**Proper Attire:** You should come dressed ready for class and able to move freely and comfortably. Long pants are best and knee pads are highly suggested. It is recommended that you do not wear jewelry that will impede your ability to move or put you or others at physical risk.

**Water + Food:** Be sure to bring a water bottle to class. Make sure you eat a well-balanced meal or snack before and after class. Please do not eat while in class or chew gum.

**Device Usage:** The studio is a place for focus and engagement, a precious time to be screen-free. Please leave your cell phones, tablets, computers, iPads, Apple Watches, etc. in your bags and on silent unless we are using them for classwork. If you need to be reachable by phone for any reason, let me know in advance of class.

**Lateness and leaving early** are also detriments to your progress. If you are late or leave early, it is your responsibility to communicate with the professor accordingly before/after class. Chronic tardiness or early departure will require an individual meeting with the instructor to discuss strategies moving forward. See attendance policy below.

## RESPECTFUL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

In order for us all to have a transformative, energetic, and generous experience, we will agree to *participate* in creating a respectful environment. We do so by:

- Showing up for yourself and others.
- Listening fully to each other at all times.
- Taking time to reflect before responding or reacting.
- Demonstrating personal motivation and lifting up those around us. Offer positive feedback to each other.
- Asking questions and contributing to class discussion.
- Collaborating equitably.
- Showing gratitude for community.
- **Communicate.** Please email me with *any and all* concerns, questions, and needs as they arise.
- + *YOUR SUGGESTIONS!* We will create, discuss, and compile community agreements specific to our group. We enter this space with various experiences and perspectives, together seek to create the safest space possible to learn, thrive, and grow.



## CULTURE OF CARE:

I propose we adopt a **culture of care** in all our endeavors. Care affects how we interact with ourselves, one another, and the space we share. Care invites more patience and generosity. Care can ensure our personal and collective safety, well-being, and development. I invite us to practice radical empathy and hospitality to cultivate an atmosphere where we can all feel welcome to enter and participate.

*“Not causing harm requires staying awake. Part of being awake is slowing down enough to notice what we say and do.”*  
-Pema Chödrön

# COURSE EXPECTATIONS + GRADING

## (1) PROJECTS + RESPONSES (40% or 400 points)

- **Letter to Alex** (10 points): write a 1-page introduction to me, reflect on your body story and set goals for the semester ahead.
- **Discussion boards** (10 points each / 30 total): make a post and dialogue with your peers in response to discussion thread.
- **Incremental Improvisation #1-4** (10 points each / 40 total): submit videos of short improvisational dancing. Each week expanding the duration.
- **Self-evaluations** (30 total): fill out the self-evaluation survey in preparation for midterm individual meetings.
- **Midterm Project + Paper** (60 points in-class presentation + 50 points paper / 110 total): complete and present a research project on an assigned contemporary choreographer. You will also be required to submit a short research paper on your artist.
- **Responses #1-4** (15 points each / 60 total): create responses via different modalities (writing, speaking, drawing, moving, etc) to various contemporary performances and readings we encounter together.
- **Final** (60 points in-class performance + 60 points paper / 120 total): synthesize class phrasework from class in performance during our class gather and submit a short 3-page reflection on your progress and development this semester.

## EXTENSIONS FOR ASSIGNMENTS:

Please do your best to submit work on time. I understand that there will be extenuating circumstances and ask that you contact me at least 24 hours in advance of the due date to arrange for an extension. I respect you and your time and know that sometimes flexibility is needed to do your best work. Please respect me by honoring these timeframes which will allow me adequate time to review your work and give thorough individual feedback.

## STATEMENT ON THE USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

The assignments in this course are designed to help you develop writing, analytical, and critical thinking skills. As a course requirement it is expected that you will perform work for this class without the assistance of any artificial intelligence (AI) technology such as ChatGPT and Grammarly. **Therefore, if you submit assignments that have utilized an AI generator (in whole or part) you will be treated as having engaged in academic dishonesty.**

In an effort to be abundantly clear, while AI technology is new and constantly evolving, please know that using ChatGPT or any other AI text generator to assist in writing your papers, or completing other written assignments, is construed as plagiarism and will be treated as such. Those found to have engaged in such academic misconduct may be subject to any additional sanctions listed in the student code.

## (2) CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT OF GROWTH + DEVELOPMENT (60% or 600 points)

You will receive two Growth + Development scores, each worth 300 points (600 total), at midterm and end of semester. The following areas are used by Dance Area faculty to assess student progress throughout the semester:

- **Artistry:**
  - *Musicality and Rhythm*—Student understands timing in movement and movement phrasing
  - *Performance Quality*—Student can execute movement with confidence
- **Embodiment:**
  - *Kinesthetic Awareness*—Student demonstrates an understand a foundational level of anatomical/kinesiological approaches in movement practice, including a comprehension of proprioception, spatial awareness, healthful alignment, and personal range of motion.
  - *Movement Execution*—Student can safely and accurately execute movement of simple to moderate complexity.
  - *Energy and Conditioning*—student can utilize and develop a foundational level of strength, flexibility, endurance, and muscular stabilization and support.
- **Communication:** Student exhibits an ability to speak from the self and their own experience, while being respectful of others and demonstrates the ability to articulate questions with clarity.
- **Community Engagement:** student takes care of the space as outlined in handbook/syllabus; demonstrate commitment to a collaborative learning environment by expanding one's willingness to work with all classmates versus a select few as the course progresses.



## ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION

It is your responsibility to be an active participant in this course. Be generous, inquisitive, and motivated. Speak up and be an eager contributor to conversations and peer to peer discussions.

While "active engagement" can hard to quantify, demonstrated engagement with the readings and regular constructive contributions to class discussions will improve your grade; absence, disruptive behavior, or lack of participation will count against your grade; **three late arrivals will count as one absence.**

Remember that a) you cannot participate if you are not in class and b) attendance alone does not constitute active participation; if you have difficulty speaking up in class, talk to me privately about this early in the semester.

**Students can take 2 absences with no penalty;** no documentation is required for the first 2 absences as they are automatically excused. **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 third absence and all subsequent absences are unexcused, each will result in an additional 5% deduction from the final grade. Opportunities to make up missed material for unexcused absences is up to the instructor's discretion and will be made available through other classes and/or assignments.

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 and diagnosis verifying that an absence from class is warranted, doctor 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)

To help organize accommodations, students should inform the instructor by the end of the second week of classes of religious observances of their faith that will conflict with class attendance this semester.

**Lateness and leaving early** are also detriments to your progress. If you are late or leave early, it is your responsibility to communicate with the professor accordingly before/after class. Chronic tardiness or early departure will require an individual meeting with the instructor to discuss strategies moving forward.

If you must **observe** class due to injury or illness, you will be required to write an observation analysis that must be submitted at the end of class.

In addition to attending all classes, attendance is required at the following performances. You will provide proof of attendance within one week after viewing the production via response assignments.

- **Senior Thesis BFA Showcase Concert @ SoTD G-6 Studio: Feb 19-23, various times**
- **Harn Museum of Dance @ the Harn Museum: April 5, 1-3p**
- **Spring into Dance @ SoTD Black Box Theater: April 10-13, various times**
- **Limón Dance Company @ UFPA: Apr 19, 7:30p**

## GRADING GUIDELINES FOR DANCE TECHNIQUE COURSE *\*Developed in part by Jan Erkert, University of Illinois*

**A or A- (Excellent):** The student’s work demonstrates technical advancement that excels and pushes results beyond what is requested. Excellent is for students who demonstrate an enthusiasm and commitment to learning and a willingness to take movement risks and integrate corrections. Excellent students demonstrate their best at all times and exceptional growth in the objectives of the course. An excellent student is capable of dancing at a legibly higher level at the end of the semester than when the semester began, working to the best of their ability, class after class.

**B+, B, B- (Good):** The student’s work fulfills the expected goals indicated in the syllabus, handouts, and in-class instructions. Good is for students who do their work consistently and with care, show dedication and a willingness to take new steps, show concentration and strong work habits. These students demonstrate increased accomplishment of some skills during the semester.

**C+, C, C- (Average):** The student’s work fulfills most of the expected goals indicated in the syllabus, handouts, or in-class instructions. Average is for students who do their work and actively participate in class, but rarely push themselves to a new level. Even though present in class, a C student does not command to be seen. Having accomplished some skills during the semester, both the student and the teacher know that their work could be better. Work habits are inconsistent. An average student can accomplish more.

**D+, D, D- (Poor):** The student’s work fulfills few of the expected goals and shows little understanding of the process. Poor is for students who have not done their work regularly. Lacking the necessary energy or rigor for the course, this student shows very little improvement. Consistently coming late or often absent, a poor student is not interested in improving their dancing.

**E (Failing):** The student’s work fails to demonstrate an understanding of the goals or the process involved. Failing is for students who miss many classes, are regularly tardy, and/or who sit out so much that there is no basis from which to grade. Failing students regularly display disinterest in the material as presented by the instructor and/or lack mature work habits and therefore achieve little success class after class.

### PERCENTAGES

Continuous Assessment of Growth and Development	60%
Projects + Readings	40%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

[Link to the university grades and grading policies](#)

### LETTER GRADES

A	95-100
A-	90-94
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
F	Below 63

# COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK	MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	ASSIGNMENT - Due Sundays at 11:59p
1	Jan 13 - course introduction	Jan 15	Write Letter to Alex, Incremental improvisation 1 min, + get tickets for Limòn Dance Company @ UFPA
2	Jan 20 - No Class: MLK Jr Day	Jan 22	Discussion Board: Authentic Movement + Incremental improvisation 2 min
3	Jan 27	Jan 29	Discussion Board: Non-stopping + Incremental improvisation 5 min
4	Feb 3	Feb 5	Response #1: So Say All of US
5	Feb 10	Feb 12	Self Evaluation: Survey
6	Feb 17	Feb 19	Incremental improvisation #4 + Response #2: Senior Thesis BFA Concert
7	Feb 24 - No Class: Dark day <i>Studio G-10 is available for assignment work time as needed.</i>	Feb 26	Midterm project
8	Mar 3 Midterm Meetings <i>Studio G-10 is available for assignment work time as needed.</i>	Mar 5 Midterm presentations in-class	Midterm paper
9	Mar 10 (No Alex) Combine with Pilates	Mar 12 (No Alex) Combine with Pilates	None
10	SPRING	BREAK	
11	Mar 24 (No Alex) Combine with Broadway Dance Styles	Mar 26	None
12	Mar 31	Apr 2	Response #3: Harn Museum of Dance
13	Apr 7	Apr 9	Response #4: Spring into Dance
14	Apr 14 - No Class: Dark day	Apr 16	Response #5: Limón Dance Company @ UFPA
15	Apr 21	Apr 23 Final movement phrase in-class	Prep for final in-class performance (due Apr 23) Final reflection paper (due Apr 28)

# IMPORTANT DATES FOR SPRING 2025

Please check your emails daily for Dance Area Headquarters Canvas site updates! [Link](#) to production calendar

## January

- 13 – First day of classes
  - Welcome Back Meeting G-6, 6:30p
- 14 – Auditions for Prof. Onye Ozuzu's new work for *Spring Into Dance*, 5-7p, G-6
- 20 – NO CLASSES, MLK DAY
- 21 – UFPA: Cirque Kalabanté, 11:15a, G-6
  - UFPA: Cirque Kalabanté, 7:30p, Phillips Center
- 22 – Possible ACDA adjudication showing, 6:30p in G-6 (open to all)
- 24 – BFA auditions for UF regular admission – all day G-6 and varied SoTD spaces
- 27 – UnShowing and ACDA adjudication for BFA Showcase choreographers only, 6:30-8:30p, G-6
- 30 – Ric Rose Alumni Award: Lecture with Guest Artist Juliana Azoubel 8:45-10:15a, G-6
  - Ric Rose Alumni Award: Guest Masterclass with Juliana Azoubel during CAADDP classes, G-6
- 31 – Ric Rose Alumni Award: Master Class with Guest Artist Juliana Azoubel 10:40-12:35a, G-6
  - Ric Rose Alumni Award presentation 6:00 to 8:00p, G-6

## February

- 7 – BFA Dance Showcase Load In, G-6
  - SoTD Macbeth – opening night (runs through 16<sup>th</sup>)
- 8 – UFPA: Dance Alive, *Dangerous Liaisons*, 7:30p, Phillips Center
- 9-11 – BFA Dance Showcase, spacing rehearsals, G-6
- 11-13 – UFPA: Riverdance, 7:30p, Phillips Center
- 13 - Museum Nights: Arts Across Africa, Harn 6-9pm
- 12-14 & 16 – BFA Dance Showcase, Tech rehearsals G-6
- 17 (Prog A) & 19 (Prog B) – BFA Dance Dress rehearsals, 7:30-10:30p, G-6
- 19 & 21 – BFA Dance Showcase, Prog A 7:30-9:00p, G-6
- 21 – UFPA: Niyaz presents The Fourth Light Project, 7:30p, Phillips Center
- 20 & 22 – BFA Dance Showcase, Prog B 7:30-9:00p, G-6
- 23 – BFA Dance Showcase, Prog A 1:30-3:00p, Prog B 4:00-5:30pm, Strike 5:30-7:30p, G-6
  - UFPA: Sun Country Dance Theatre presents 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Spring Youth Concert featuring *Hansel and Gretel*, 2:30p, Phillips Center
- 24 – DARK DAY for Dance Majors—no technique classes

## March

- 3 or 4 – BA Spring Social and Info Session (TBC)
- 6-9 – American College Dance Association (ACDA), regional conference at College of Charleston, SC
- 7 – SoTD *The Importance of Being Earnest* – opening night (runs through 14<sup>th</sup>)
- 11 – UFPA: The Peking Acrobats, 7:30p, Phillips Center
- 15-23 – SPRING BREAK
- 31 – *Spring Into Dance* spacing rehearsals begin, 6:30-10:30p, Black Box Theatre

## April

- 1 – UFPA: *The Great Gatsby Ballet* by the World Ballet Company, 7p, Phillips Center
- 1-3 – *Spring Into Dance* spacing rehearsals continue, 6:30-10:30p, Black Box Theatre
- 4 – *Spring Into Dance* Crew Orientation and Watch, 6-9:30p
- 5 – *Harn Museum of Dance*, tech rehearsal 9a-noon, performance 1-3p
  - UFPA: Dance Alive, *Romeo and Juliet*, 7:30p, Phillips Center
- 6-7 – *Spring Into Dance* Tech rehearsals and production meeting/notes, 6:30-11p, Black Box Theatre
- 8-9 – *Spring Into Dance* Dress rehearsals and production meeting/notes, 7:30-11p, Black Box Theatre
- 10-13 – *Spring Into Dance* performances, 7:30p Th-Sat, 2p Sun, Black Box Theatre (Strike Sunday)
- 14 – DARK DAY for Dance majors—no technique classes
- 17-18 – SoTD Staged Reading *The Conference of the Birds*, 7:30p, Black Box Theatre
- 19 – UFPA: Limón Dance Company, 7:30p, Phillips Center
- 23 – Last day of classes
- 24-25 – Reading Days
- 26-30 – Finals

## May

- 1-2 – Finals
- 2-4 – Commencement

# UF POLICIES

## COURSE EVALUATIONS:

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. [Click here for guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner.](#) 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.bluera.com/ufl/](http://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/). [Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students here.](#)

## UNIVERSITY POLICY ON ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. [Click here to read the Honor Code.](#) Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

## UNIVERSITY POLICY ON ACCOMMODATING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center. [Click here to get started with the Disability Resource Center.](#) It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

## IN-CLASS RECORDING:

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A "class lecture" is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To "publish" means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

# ACADEMIC RESOURCES

- *E-learning technical support:* Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu).
- [Career Connections Center:](#) Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.
- [Library Support:](#) Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.
- [Teaching Center:](#) Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.
- [Writing Studio:](#) 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.
- *Student Complaints On-Campus:* [Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information.](#)
- *On-Line Students Complaints:* [View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process.](#)

## HEALTH + WELLNESS RESOURCES

- *U Matter, We Care*: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu), 352-392-1575, or visit [U Matter, We Care website](#) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- *Counseling and Wellness Center*: [Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website](#) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.
- *Student Health Care Center*: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or [visit the Student Health Care Center website](#).
- *University Police Department*: [Visit UF Police Department website](#) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
- *UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center*: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; [Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website](#).
- *GatorWell Health Promotion Services*: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the [GatorWell website](#) or call 352-273-4450.

### CONTENT WARNING:

In this course, we will cover content and materials that some may find difficult. It is important that in an artistic practice course we do not shy away from engaging with materials that may be controversial or challenging. I will do my best to give you advance notice when specific materials or content covered may contain images, language, or perspectives that some may find difficult, and I encourage you to reach out to me if you are struggling with the course materials. In class, if you need to step away for a period of time as we are covering particular content, you may do so without penalty, but I ask that you remember that you are responsible for any information covered in your absence.

***\*THIS SYLLABUS IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE\****

Students will be notified in advance of important changes that could affect grading, assignments, etc.