

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will focus on developing professional communication skills necessary for a successful career in dance. Students will learn to use various media platforms, including social media, blogs, and podcasts, to promote their work, engage with audiences, and navigate the professional dance industry. Emphasis will be placed on writing effectively for digital platforms, understanding media's influence on public perceptions of dance, and applying AI tools for professional growth.

Note from Professor Johnnie:

The idea is to get you planning for the life and skills you will want upon graduation and how best to use the last semester of your four years in the Dance Unit. While your major represents a critical piece, the other courses you've taken, the experiences you've selected, the events and workshops you've attended, the artistic community you've built, the skills you've acquired, and the connections you've made are also an important part of your artistic and career plan.

As artists you need craft, but also a plan for monetizing that craft by graduation. While you will need to rehearse, these four years were also your most important time and opportunity to explore and learn about yourself: the habits you set now will determine both the range of art you can make and your ability to sustain your life as an artist well into the profession.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

By the end of this course, students will:

- Understand how media shapes public perceptions of dance and the dance industry.
- Develop strategies for using writing and media platforms to enhance their professional profiles.
- Learn to craft compelling content tailored to specific dance audiences, such as social media posts, bios, and artist statements.
- Use AI tools effectively for professional development in dance.
- Build a professional presence online through platforms like social media, blogs, vlogs and podcasts.

COURSE MATERIALS:

- No textbook required. Additional readings and resources will be provided via the course management system (CANVAS).
- Access to basic digital media creation tools (e.g., social media accounts, blogging/vlogging platforms, podcasting tools).

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING (TOTAL: 100 POINTS):

- Media Portfolio (30 points): Create and curate a digital portfolio (social media, blog, or podcast) that represents your artistic practice. This will include a brief bio, artist statement, and a sample post/podcast on a current dance topic.
- Writing Assignment (30 points): Compose a professional bio and artist statement. Focus on clarity, professionalism, and engaging your target audience.
- Social Media Strategy (20 points): Develop a social media strategy plan tailored to your career goals. This should include post ideas, content schedule, and target audience analysis.
- Class Participation (20 points): Active participation in discussions, in-class exercises, and peer feedback. Contributions to group discussions about professional development strategies, media literacy, and the role of AI in dance will be evaluated.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Building Common Language: Students will

- identify the terms and metaphors used in the dance profession
- articulate the overlapping and divergent areas among dance industries

Critical Thinking: Students will

- analyze performances and exhibitions
- explain the different modes of attention and reaction to dance
- judge the value of innovation

Citizenship: Students will

- understand the different models of artistic success
- evaluate the importance of relevance and social responsibility
- Investigate methods for productive exchange and problem solving

Currency: Students will

- investigate current trends
- develop the habit of staying informed about dance
- create and observe work for our time

Entrepreneurship: Students will

- articulate the relationship between art and entrepreneurship
- predict some of the small business skills dancers may need in the future
- evaluate their own skills and personality
- formulate a career plan

Success: Students will

- define what it means to be an artist
- develop a voice
- think beyond technique



COURSE SCHEDULE:

This course is required for graduation. Class attendance, participation and completion of all assignments ARE required.

Week 1: Course Introduction & Overview of the Dance Profession

Topics: Course structure, expectations, and professional pathways in dance. Introduction to the dance profession.

Activities:

Course introduction and discussion of career pathways in dance.

Create a "dance persona tree" to explore career aspirations.

Assignment: Write a 1-page personal mission statement for your dance career.

Due: End of Week 1

Week 2: Writing for the Dance Profession

Topics: Audience-centered writing and communication in the dance field. Basics of persuasive writing for dance professionals.

Activities:

Brief introduction to writing pitches and press releases.

Collaborative brainstorming of dance company ideas (name, focus, mission).

Assignment: Write a draft of your company pitch (1-2 paragraphs).

Due: End of Week 2

Week 3: Research and Critical Thinking in Dance

Topics: Research and data gathering for dance projects. How to inform your work with relevant, well-researched content.

Activities:

Discuss current trends in the dance industry.

Brief overview of key resources for researching dance.

Assignment: Revise your company pitch using research-based findings (1-2 paragraphs).

Due: End of Week 3

Week 4: Company Pitch Presentations

Topics: How to present your company or dance project. Basic public speaking for dance professionals.

Activities:

Present your company pitch to the class.

Peer feedback and discussion on improving pitch presentations.

Assignment: Refine your company pitch based on feedback.

Due: End of Week 4

Week 5 & Week 6: Introduction to Grant Writing for Dance

Topics: The importance of grants and funding in dance. Key components of a grant proposal.

Activities (spread across two weeks):

Read and analyze examples of successful grant proposals.

Begin drafting a grant proposal for your company or dance project.

Assignment: Write a draft of your grant proposal (1-2 pages).

Due: End of Week 6

Week 7 & Week 8: Visual Writing and Media for Dance Projects

Topics: Basics of visual storytelling and writing for digital media in dance.

Activities (spread across two weeks):

Review examples of dance media (films, websites, promotional material).

Develop a visual description of your project (short paragraph describing a performance or event).

Assignment: Write a short (1-2 paragraph) visual description of your dance project or idea.

Due: End of Week 8

Week 9: Press Releases for Dance Projects

Topics: Writing an effective press release for dance events or performances.

Activities:

Read and analyze dance press releases.

Discuss essential components (headline, body, contact information).

Assignment: Write a 1-page press release for an upcoming dance project or event.

Due: End of Week 9

Week 10 & Week 11: Film Festival Packet Development

Topics: Understanding film festival submission packets for dance films.

Activities (spread across two weeks):

Write loglines, taglines, and synopses for your dance project.

Develop a simple film festival packet including these elements.

Assignment: Create a 1-page film festival packet with a logline, tagline, and synopsis.

Due: End of Week 11

Week 12 & Week 13: Writing Non-Diagetic Scripts for Dance

Topics: Writing scripts for dance performances without dialogue.

Activities (spread across two weeks):

Discuss non-dialogical scripts and their role in dance.

Develop a simple script for a short dance performance.

Assignment: Write a 1-2 page non-dialogical script for a dance performance (outline format is fine).

Due: End of Week 13

Week 14: Peer Review & Final Refinement

Topics: Peer feedback on final assignments and portfolio work.

Activities:

Peer review of scripts, press releases, and festival packets.

Discuss how to improve and finalize your work.

Assignment: Revise your script, press release, or festival packet based on peer feedback.

Due: End of Week 14

Week 15: Final Presentations and Course Reflection

Topics: Present your final work to the class and reflect on professional development throughout the course.

Activities:

Final presentations: Share your dance company idea, grant proposal, press release, and script.

Class discussion on next steps in professional development for dance.

Assignment: Submit final version of all assignments (company pitch, grant proposal, press release, script).

Due: End of Week 15

GRADING BREAKDOWN:

- Media Portfolio: 30%
- Writing Assignments: 30%
- Social Media Strategy: 20%
- Class Participation: 20%

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION:

- Regular attendance and active participation are required for successful completion of the course.
- Two unexcused absences are allowed.
- Further absences may impact your grade.
- Students are expected to engage in class discussions and complete in-class activities.
- Attendance, participation, promptness and full engagement during class is essential for your improvement as a dancer and also fulfills the requirements for this course.
- Students must demonstrate professionalism, including not talking, sleeping, texting, internet surfing, and other behaviors that are not positive contributions to the class. Non-professional behaviors such as those listed above will be recorded and will be factored in your final grade, though a student cannot fail the class for this behavior alone.
- Professor Johnnie considers students to be individuals who are responsible for their own behaviors. Students are expected to make decisions with an awareness of the consequences that will most likely result from these decisions. If you enroll in the class, you are obligated to meet the responsibilities of this class, regardless of other commitments, including work, family, and other class obligations.
- Students are expected to communicate in a civil manner in their academic interaction at all times, both in and out of the classroom. This means that interactions are to be carried out in a polite, courteous, and dignified manner, which is respectful and understanding toward both peers and professors.
- Failure to behave in a civil manner may result in disciplinary actions as described by the Student Conduct Code.

MORE ON ATTENDANCE:

- For an absence to be considered excused, students must provide detailed documentation that specifies why the absence is absolutely necessary. Each student is allowed one unexcused absence– that is, students can take 1 absence with no documentation with no penalty.
- If the second absence is unexcused, it will result in 5% deduction from the final grade.
- Excused or unexcused, on the second 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.

- Requirements / opportunities to make up missed material is up to Professor Johnnie's discretion.
- Due to the participatory nature of the course that includes internal and external class collaboration along with group work, 3 unexcused absences may result in automatic failure of the course.

ASSIGNMENT MAKE-UP:

- With the exception of documented crises specified in the attendance policy, assignments can be made up only if the student has made arrangements with Professor Johnnie at least 72 hours prior to the due date. Otherwise assignments cannot be made up and will receive a score of zero.
- All make-up course work must be completed within a week of the student's absence.
- No late assignments will be accepted. These policies are in place to keep students on track for finishing the course and so that your instructor can submit final grades in a timely fashion.

OFFICIAL DOCUMENTATION FOR ABSENCE:

- 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 and when the return to class activity is expected, 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)

STUDENT INJURY AND ILLNESS POLICY:

- The Dance Area of SoTD believes that dance student's physical and mental well-being is paramount to success in all arenas of their dance training, from class to the stage. In the case of injury, fostering a productive and holistic response insures a speedy and effective recovery.
- If the dance student becomes ill or injured to the degree that they cannot attend and participate in dance classes, SoTD sponsored rehearsals, or performances, the 5 steps of the dance student injury and illness policy are to be followed:
 - The student is required to see a healthcare professional immediately.
 - If the illness or injury prevents the student from participation in dance class, rehearsal, or performance, the student is to request documentation from the health care professional that explicitly projects the duration of the injury, and/or the amount and type of activity recommended for the welfare of the student.
 - Following the appointment with the health care professional, the student is required to bring medical recommendations and related documentation to the attention of his or her instructor(s), choreographer(s), or director(s) as the basis for discussion.
 - Unless otherwise medically advised, the student is prohibited from active participation in all related UF dance activities, classes, events, performances, etc.
 - The student may not personally select one activity as having a higher priority over another. The student is not to dance in any events, activities, performances or rehearsals if the student is not in dance class. If the infirmity culminates in a medical withdrawal, this is also a withdrawal from all performance related activities.
- The student is never allowed to sacrifice classroom participation for the demands of a performance. The student will not be allowed to participate in a performance if they miss dance class due to an injury.
- The student is expected to follow the student injury and illness policy even if performances take place beyond the scope of SoTD, as with another UF, professional, or community performing group, etc.

GRADING STANDARDS:

"A" – SUPERIOR. This rating is for exceptional work and excellent attendance. Exceptional work is defined as consistent and applied effort, rigorous work on assignments and strong articulation of the reading material and class work. Work is consistently well thought out in concept and execution. The artist matches risk with execution. There is a deep investment as evidenced by the research, editing and execution. The artist took the concepts of the assignment and made entirely original and authentic responses and projects.

"B" – ABOVE AVERAGE RATING. Work shows evidence of effort but the student is not always rigorous in execution of material. There is good development of skills; the work and the concentration are good. The student has a good grasp of the assignment and has engaged in several rounds of editing and multiple drafts. The student took risks although concept and execution may not match.

"C" – AVERAGE RATING. The student has difficulty completing or understanding assignments. The assignment was not fully integrated into the student's potential. Under-rehearsed. Going with the 1st or 2nd draft. Execution shows past ideas vaguely recycled and not an understanding of the new concepts.

"D" – BELOW AVERAGE RATING – Attendance is poor. Work shows little understanding of the material given. The student is resistant or nonchalant in relationship to assignments and applying effort. There is little or no improvement throughout the semester. Assignment is not thought out. Assignment not matching research or investigation. Didn't go outside of the box; instead went to the simplest idea. You made it right before class.

'F' – FAILING – Did not complete or present assignment. Student has not shown up or has rarely done so.

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

A student will be required to repeat any course within the major in which a grade of "C-" or lower is received.

EMAIL POLICY:

It is the responsibility of the student to maintain and regularly check their email on this account. Please include your name & class in the subject line or within the body of all correspondence. It is not an excuse to claim that you did not receive the email because you did not check your account or that your account does not function properly.

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/.

SYLLABUS CHANGE POLICY:

Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE POLICY:

At the University of Florida, students and faculty work together to allow students the opportunity to observe the holy days of their faith. A student should inform the faculty member of the religious observances of their faith that will conflict with class attendance, with tests or examinations, or with other class activities prior to the class or occurrence of that test or activity. The faculty member is then obligated to accommodate that particular student's religious observances. Because students represent a myriad of cultures and many faiths, the University of Florida is not able to assure that scheduled academic activities do not conflict with the holy days of all religious groups. Accordingly, individual students should make their need for an excused absence known in advance of the scheduled activities.

The Florida Board of Education and state law govern university policy regarding observance of religious holidays. The following guidelines apply:

- Students, upon prior notification to their instructors, shall be excused from class or other scheduled academic activity to observe a religious holy day of their faith.
- Students shall be permitted a reasonable amount of time to make up the material or activities covered in their absence.
- Students shall not be penalized due to absence from class or other scheduled academic activity because of religious observances.
- If Professor Johnnie is informed of or is aware that a significant number of students are likely to be absent from class because of a religious observance, the faculty member should not schedule a major exam or other academic event at that time.
- A student who is to be excused from class for a religious observance is not required to provide a second party certification of the reason for the absence. Furthermore, a student who believes that they have been unreasonably denied an education benefit due to religious beliefs or practices may seek redress through the student grievance procedure.

UNIVERSITY POLICY ON ACCOMMODATING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, <https://disability.ufl.edu/>) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

COUNSELING AND WELLNESS:

- Visit counseling.ufl.edu/ 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 <https://shcc.ufl.edu/>
- University Police Department: Visit <https://police.ufl.edu/> or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
- Health and Wellness U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit <https://umatter.ufl.edu/> to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- 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; <http://ufhealth.org/emergency-room-trauma-center>
- For some resources on studying in unsupportive environments, please take a look at this resource list compiled by the UF Department of Psychology: https://docs.google.com/document/d/11YAeLIZEGexvmxanpQjTOE4xw_wsMQgS4uwt7GohvM/edit

ACADEMIC RESOURCES:

- E-learning technical support: Contact the UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.
- Career Connections Center: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services <https://career.ufl.edu/>
- Library Support: <https://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/> ask 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. <https://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>
- Writing Studio: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. <https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>
- Student Complaints On-Campus: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/>
- On-Line Students Complaints: <https://distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process>

CONSENT TO RELEASE:

By taking this class you grant a non-exclusive license to the School of Theatre and Dance, and the University of Florida to use your likeness, your voice, any works created collaboratively by the class, and any audiovisual works created by you to fulfill the requirements of this class for current and future publicity or other purposes through print, online, broadcast, screenings, and other media, with the single exclusion that the School of Theatre and Dance, and University may not post online any of your audiovisual works in their entirety before either obtaining your explicit consent or waiting a period of three years after the conclusion of this course. You retain sole ownership and rights to your own works created in this course; the rights to works created in small groups of less than four are owned in equal portion by the members of the creating group, while the rights to works created by larger groups (including the entire class) are owned by the School of Theatre and Dance."

ARTIST CONTRACT:

I, _____, understand that I am un-dertaking an intensive, guided encounter with my own creativity here at FSU. I commit myself to the Fifteen-week duration of the course.

I, _____, further understand that this course will raise issues and emotions for me to deal with. I, _____, commit myself to excellent self-care—adequate sleep, diet, exercise, and pampering—for the duration of the course.

In order to be an artist I, _____, must:

- Show up to the studio; use the studio to rest, to dream and to try.
- Care for my artist-self everyday.
- Seek guidance, courage and humility.
- Remember that it is far harder and more painful to be a blocked Artist than it is to do the work.
- Be alert, always for the presence of creativity lead-ing and helping my artist-self.
- Choose companions who encourage me to do the work, not just talk about doing the work or why I am not do-ing the work.
- Remember that all master creators love creativity.
- Remember that it is my job to do the work, not judge the work.

Place this contract in my dorm or living quarters:

Great creator within myself, I will take care of the quantity. You take care of the quality.

(Signature)

(Date)