

THAD 215
INTRODUCTION TO LABAN MOVEMENT ANALYSIS (3 credits)

Winona State University Course Syllabus
Spring 2009 MW 2:30-3:50pm
Location: Memorial 300 Dance Studio

Instructor: Matthew Nelson
Office: 125 Performing Arts Center

Phone: 507-457-5206
Email: matnelson@winona.edu

OFFICE HOURS: *and also by appointment

MW 10:00-2:30 until 3/15/10, and then 10-1, TR 11-12:30 and 2:00-3:30
If you can't find me in PAC 125 I may be next door in PAC 127 or in Memorial 300.
The best thing is to email me to let me know you're coming.

There will be no classes on the following days:

Martin Luther King Day Monday Jan. 18th
Spring Break: Mon March 8th and Wednesday March 12th
Wednesday March 17th (ACDF)

CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION: This course is an introduction to the theoretical and experiential movement system of Laban Movement Analysis that provides a framework for observing, describing and analyzing human movement patterns and understanding non-verbal actions and communication, as developed by movement pioneer Rudolph Laban. Grade only. No prerequisite. This course satisfies the requirements for University Studies: Critical Analysis.

COURSE OVERVIEW:

Laban Movement Analysis (LMA) is a comprehensive and holistic system that examines the fundamental elements and layers embedded in all patterns of human movement, providing a language for movement description and inquiry. The study of LMA, including physical study of the Bartenieff Fundamentals exercises, not only increases awareness of the basic principles of human movement, but can also provide a connective framework for how we as embodied beings create and communicate knowledge. In this class we will approach inquiry as a creative process through which our cognitive and kinesthetic abilities continually and integrally evolve. This course will provide an overview of the theory, vocabulary, movement practices, and basic notation symbols of Laban Movement Analysis within the categories of Body, Effort, Shape, and Space. Through lectures, readings, observations, experiential explorations, class discussions, group projects/presentations, individual movement practice, written assignments, and a final synthesis project students will be immersed in the perspective on human movement that the LMA system provides, and the inquiries towards which it can be applied.

This course includes requirements and learning activities that promote students' abilities to:

a. Evaluate the validity and reliability of information:

Through the comprehensive theoretical framework and application of Laban Movement Analysis (LMA), students will develop knowledge and skills needed to observe, analyze and evaluate basic principles of human movement relating to form, sequencing, dynamics, and perceived intent. Because the intent and dynamism displayed in human movement is individual to the mover and to the observer, the study of LMA necessitates investigation of both subjective and objective analysis, linking self-knowledge and personal bias with a social and external environment.

b. Analyze modes of thought, expressive works, arguments, explanations, or theories:

Students will utilize LMA as a comprehensive system to examine both pedestrian and dance movement. The study and analysis of movement through the lens of LMA and the Bartenieff Fundamentals provides a strong basis for connectivity as a cognitive strategy as well as a kinesthetic reality.

The functional units of the LMA system are: Body-the orchestration of the main body parts and body relationships utilized in movement; Effort-the dynamic qualities of weight, time, space and flow; Space-patterns of points in space with which the body relates; and Shape-the body's changing form in space. These basic components are analytic tools that are seen as irreducible, in that they are the smallest units needed to describe an observed movement. The integration of these elements, and the relationships formed between them, provides for creative inquiry.

c. Recognize possible inadequacies or biases in the evidence given to support arguments or conclusions:

Students will explore the complex and layered nature of movement observation and analysis by identifying and tracking their own and others' perceptual filters, biases and preferences through observation exercises, motif scoring, and experiential activities.

Labanotation is the comprehensive symbolic notation system for recording the quantitative and qualitative aspects of movement. Labanotation records a literal, all inclusive detailed description of the movement observed so it can be reproduced exactly as it was executed. Motif scoring is another method of recording movement that is closely related to Labanotation, but depicts only the core aspects and salient components of the movement observed. (source: www.dancenotation.org/DNB).

d. Advance and support claims:

Students will work with partners to identify signature patterns in their own and each other's movement, including preferences and predilections in body level organization, spatial organization and the qualitative components of Effort and Shape. In a final project that is both creative and analytic, students will provide movement challenges for their partners, along with appropriate coaching, to both fulfill and oppose signature patterns. This assignment evidences an overall objective of integrative thought—that both parts of a Cartesian split can be utilized in creative inquiry.

LMA effectively provides analytic tools to identify patterns of movement that signify both cultural and personal styles. Each of us has movement preferences, based on our physical and personal makeup as well as training and life experience and this collectively is often referred to as a "movement signature." LMA offers a valuable paradigm for self-observation and analysis, allowing a codified and more objective framework for what can be a very subjective process of gaining self-awareness and repatterning. The process of examining perceptions, biases and assumptions about one's movement through LMA can lead to significant changes and improvements through increased range and efficiency regarding functional and expressive movement options.

Course activities and assignments that address these Critical Analysis Requirements will be identified in the syllabus by letter (a), (b), (c), (d).

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

A. Students will demonstrate understanding in oral, written, symbolic (motif), and kinesthetic form of basic Laban Movement Analysis (LMA) analytic theory and terminology for the main categories of Body, Effort, Shape and Space.

(b), (d)

B. Students will be able to differentiate and integrate varied perceptions of human movement. (a), (b), (c)

C. Students will develop awareness of and an ability to consciously interact with their own personal movement signature, which includes preferences and predilections in terms of body level organization, spatial organization, and the qualitative components of Effort and Shape. (a),(b),(c)

D. Students will be able to synthesize the theoretical and experiential aspects of LMA in creative inquiry. (a),(b),(c),(d)

BASIC INSTRUCTIONAL PLAN AND METHODS:

The approach to this class will include movement experiences, hands-on body contact, readings, discussion, written assignments, lecture, live and video observations, and group projects, with an emphasis on active participation and body/mind synthesis. Students are encouraged to keep a notebook with lecture, reading, video, discussion, observation and movement notes as well as process reflections including visual images, poems, quotes or other responses. A course outline subject to revision will accompany this syllabus with class by class topics, and due dates for readings and assignments.

REQUIRED TEXT:

Hackney, Peggy (2002). *Making connections: Total body integration through Bartenieff fundamentals*. New York: Routledge.

All other readings will be posted on e-reserve on the library website unless otherwise noted. To access:

- From the Library Homepage select *Course Reserves*
- From this page select *Electronic Reserves*
- From Docutec ERes select *Electronic Reserves and Reserves Pages*
- Select Tab *Course Reserves Pages by Instructor*
- From drop down menu select (*professor name*) then *Search*
- Select the required *course number* to view
- *Accept* the Copyright Clause
- Select the *Title* of the required item to view
- From the Document Info Screen select the *File name* to open the document

ASSESSMENT: COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION: (Subject to change)

20% Attendance and Active Participation (see Attendance & Participation Policies) (a), (b), (c), (d)

10% Effort Observation Journal (a)(b)

Students will create a journal of Effort qualities seen in real world experience of both pedestrian and dance movement. This journal should have a minimum of 3 examples for each effort element, and three additional examples that put 2 or more elements together. In any one moment 2 or 3 elements are usually present. In your examples seek out what you think is *most important* to the movement you observe. Be ready to perform 3 of your examples for the class. It is required that you include examples from either Dancescape or Joe Goode's performance. A written paper specifically addressing Dancescape or Joe Goode's performance will accompany the journal. More details to follow. Journal is due on Wed. Feb. 24th.

15% Patterns of Total Body Connectivity Group Project (a)(b)(d)

In small groups students will present a chapter from Hackney's Making Connections on a pattern of total body connectivity to the class. We will have a workday when you will check in with me about what you're doing, and by that time you should have already found some clarity about your presentation. The presentation will not only facilitate knowledge of and about the pattern itself, but will also provide impetus to draw connections to the implications of the pattern in relationship to other patterns. Details to follow.

10% Personal Movement Practice (a)(b)(c)(d)

Over the semester we will continually layer new knowledge with old as we both derive and integrate knowledge in our body-minds. Your personal practice is an opportunity to figure out what information you particularly want to work with in your body, particularly within the realm of Bartenieff Fundamentals and Patterns of Total Body Connectivity. You will receive feedback on this practice both at mid-term and near the end of the term. A short written reflection will be due on Monday April 19th. More details to follow.

10% Truth and Lies (a)(b)(c)(d)

Students will find video footage from movies, political speeches, newscasts, or other media presentations that evidence perceived truth and perceived lies. Movement analysis will support the claim for truth, lies, and any other claims. In addition to presentation to the class, a paper supporting the claim will be due on **the date I write in later that's about 2/3 through the semester**. More details to follow.

15% Partner Observation/Coaching (a)(b)(c)(d)

Students will work with partners to identify signature patterns in their own and each other's movement, including preferences and predilections in body level organization, spatial organization and the qualitative components of Effort and Shape. In a final project that is both creative and analytic, students will provide movement challenges for their partners, along with appropriate coaching, to both fulfill and oppose signature patterns. A written and video component will be due on **Monday May 3**. Details to follow.

10% LMA Midterm quiz (a), (b), (c) **Wed Mar. 3**

MORE ABOUT THE ASSIGNMENTS/PAPERS: (*Note: Emailed assignments are not accepted)

All assignments must be submitted on time at or before the beginning of the class period of due date, and typed, double spaced, 12 point font, 1 inch margins all around. Staple multiple pages together.

*Note: Use double sided print option in Print function on computer, varies for Mac vs. PC

*You can also print on paper already used once, just make an X through the side that's not part of the assignment before you hand in.

In top left corner, single spaced, include: student's name, class section, date. On the second line include instructor and assignment title. Aesthetic appearance and clarity of your papers or assignments will affect your grade.

Grade will be lowered by a full letter grade for each calendar day late up to 3 days maximum. Assignments will be considered late if they are not submitted at the beginning of class period. Assignment submitted the same day post class will drop ½ letter grade.

Plagiarism results in automatic failure of the course.

With all of these assignments, more detailed instructions will be provided prior to the deadline. Students are responsible to read and follow all guidelines.

ADDITIONAL CLASS REQUIREMENTS & INFORMATION:

Students dance in movable clothing, i.e. workout clothes, sweats, or dancewear and barefoot (socks are to start with for warmups.) No jeans, everyday or dress clothes or overly long pants. Hair pulled off face and no dangling earrings, necklaces or watches. No gum chewing.

When you arrive for class, please put all personal items in the cubbies and be changed and ready to start on time. Please do not walk on the dance floor.

Restrooms are located on the first floor of Memorial.

Bring a pen or pencil and a notebook to each class, as well as any requested materials. Computers may sometimes be useful.

A water bottle is highly recommended.

****Please turn off all cell phones and pagers for the duration of class, thank you. Texting in class is grounds for instant participation grade failure!**

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

ATTENDANCE and class participation is required, of course. No unnecessary absences, please. Students are responsible to let the instructor know why you were absent, and catch up on class material, consulting with classmates as needed.

****Illness is not an excused absence, even with a doctor's note.**

***You are allowed 2 absences without affecting your grade and no need to provide documentation. More than 2 absences will also drop your total class grade ONE LETTER for each class missed.** For example, with 3 absences the highest total class grade you can achieve is a B.

Attendance will also affect participation grade.

*Exceptions will be made for athletic events with appropriate documentation. Be in touch with me BEFOREHAND for

appropriate make up.

Tardiness: Being late to class 2x is equivalent to 1 absence, if the lateness is less than 10 minutes. If you are more than 10 minutes late to a dance class without having notified the instructor in advance you may not participate in the class and that class will be counted as 1 absence.

*Be sure to speak with the instructor after class if you come in late so your presence can be recorded, the student is responsible to be marked for attendance once names have been called or the sign in clipboard has been passed around class.

*If you need to leave class early, it will count as a ½ absence if more than 10 minutes and please alert instructor ahead of time.

Active Observation Without Participation: You are responsible for assessing your own state of health in consultation with your doctor. If you are unable to dance, you may actively observe up to **3 classes** without participating. This active observation will include describing and commenting on class content and movement components. Handwritten documentation on movement observations and class content will be handed in to the instructor at the end of the class period.

Makeup Classes: **DUE: 1 WEEK AFTER MAKEUP UNTIL END OF CLASSES**

*Students are allowed **1 makeup class maximum**.

Makeup class approval **must** be requested from Matt ahead of time to ensure it is an appropriate substitute. Request permission via email from makeup class instructor (if not Matt) and introduce yourself when you arrive for class. Obtain a signature from the makeup class instructor with the date of attendance, and hand that in, along with a 1 paragraph typed written summary of movement aspects you experienced in class and your response.

Appropriate makeup classes: See Memorial 300 studio door for days and times and THAD website for faculty email contact info. Speak with Matt for approval.

Students are encouraged to notify the instructor in advance if class is to be missed and are responsible to contact a classmate for missed notes and material.

Injury Policy: Credit for all classes is contingent upon participation. If a student has or incurs an injury in the course of study resulting in **more than a 1 week layoff (2 classes)** from active participation, it is the student's responsibility to consult with the teacher as to creative options for the learning process or withdrawal from the class.

PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES: All students are expected to come to class prepared and focused, with an open and respectful attitude towards the instructor, their peers and themselves. Students are also expected to contribute to a safe and trusting environment, including a nonjudgmental approach towards learning, a willingness to take risks, make mistakes, ask questions, and support one another.

Students are also responsible for tracking their own attendance, and all content covered in class, including retention of material from week to week.

When you arrive for class, please prepare by spending time warming up, reviewing class material or focusing yourself. Once class begins, maintain a focused attentive concentration on class material and participate fully in every aspect of class including creative exercises, assignments, research, projects and discussions.

*Quality of class participation includes: good energy level each class, attentiveness to lectures and videos, contributions to class discussions and group work, completion of in class writings or exercises, full participation in movement aspects of class including both physical and creative components. Please note Grading Explanations below for evaluation standards for grading.

EXTRA CREDIT: **DUE: 1 WEEK AFTER EVENT UNTIL END OF CLASSES**

Students may earn extra credit by attending an additional events handing in a typewritten summary response, 1 full page minimum, discussing dance/movement related aspects and proof of attendance.

***Each student may do 2 EC assignments worth 1/3 letter grade each, for a max. of 2/3 grade added to your final class grade.**

See course calendar and “Area Dance Performance Calendar 2009-10” on D2L, WSU Update, class announcements or consult instructor if find alternative event. Also:

*THAD Theater Events

*Arts Improvisation Jams, Thursdays 7:30-9:00pm, Memorial 300 dance studio, Feb 18(Joe Goode), April 22

FREE, no experience necessary, facilitated by THAD professor Matthew Nelson unless otherwise posted

WRITING CENTER INFO: Call 457-5505 or email wcenter@winona.edu for appointments and information and visit the Writing Center website for writing resources and the “Online Tutor” service.

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION: If you have a documented disability and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please contact the instructor as soon as possible. Full statement on D2L

ACADEMIC HONESTY: All work produced by a student must represent that student’s personal effort, unless the instructor specifically permits or requires that it be done by a group. Papers and other work which a student prepares for class will contain only the student’s own words or, if the material originated with someone else, will enclose the quoted words in quotation marks and supply the complete bibliographical information in a footnote or endnote. Summaries or paraphrases of the words and ideas of other people must also be documented in this fashion. Work that does not exhibit these characteristics is a form of academic dishonesty known as plagiarism. This will result in strict sanctions including an automatic F for the course.

GRADING EXPLANATIONS

A=work of outstanding nature that exceeds course standards and depicts a deep and thorough understanding of subject matter

B=work that is above average in quality and thoroughness and depicts a mastery of the subject matter

C=Work of a satisfactory nature in quality and thoroughness and depicts a basic understanding of subject matter

D=Work that is substandard in nature and depicts a limited understanding of subject matter

WEBSITES:

Laban/Barteneiff Institute of Movement Studies

Language of Dance/Anne Hutchinson Guest

Motus Humanus (movement analysis professional organization)

Dance Notation Bureau

Moving On Center

Integrated Movement Studies

www.limsonline.org

www.lodc.org

www.motushumanus.org

www.dancenotation.org

www.movingoncenter.org

www.imsmovement.com