

The Ohio State University
Department of Dance

Professor: NAME
Email: name.#@osu.edu
Office Hours: By Appt.

Dance IMPROVISATION
Dance 5121
1-3 credit hours

Course Description:

This course is for experienced dance practitioners who have had some introductory experience with improvisation and allows for advanced explorations of dance improvisation methodologies and critical analysis of the relationship of this work to other domains.

Course Objectives:

At the successful completion of this course students will:

- Gain experience with improvisation methods
- Develop their artistic relationship to improvisation
- Articulate and critically reflect on improvisation methods and their own practices

Course Procedures:

This course will include in class practices focusing on a particular method from a number of sources, outside practice by students and documentation of their practices in their blogs, viewings and discussions in class and online, written reflections and readings.

Course Requirements:

Attendance at all class sessions

Homework assignments

Final Project

Grading Scale and Evaluation:

Letter grades are based on a point system as follows:

A	93-100	B+	87-89 points	C+	77-79 points	D+	67-69 points
A-	90-92	B	83-86	C	73-76	D	63-66
		B-	80-82	C-	70-72	E	62-0

Percentage values:

60% Participation and engagement in class

- Depth of exploration/inquiry
- Focus
- Open-mindedness
- Positive approach to material
- Patience with self and for others
- Courage in times of vulnerability
- Willingness to take creative risks
- Respect for the class community and differing points of view
- Completion of written assignments

30% Online Reflections on Readings and Viewings

10% Final project

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>.

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>.

Escort service and phone number for evening courses 292-3322.

Selected Bibliography

“Harried Parents Urged to Just Let their Kids Play.” AP Online 9 October 2006
<<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/15186964>>

Albright, Ann C. “Dwelling in Possibility.” Taken By Surprise. Ed. Ann Cooper Albright and David Gere. Middletown: Wesleyan UP, 2003. 257-266.

Goldberg, Naomi. “Be an Animal.” Writing Down the Bones: Freeing the Writer Within. Boston: Shambhala, 1986. 90-92.

Halprin, Anna. “After Improv.” Interview with Nancy Stark Smith, 1987. Moving Toward Life: Five Decades of Transformational Dance. Ed. Rachel Kaplan. Middletown: Wesleyan UP, 1995. 188-206.

Nachmanovitch, Stephen “Power of Mistakes.” Free Play: Improvisation in Life and Art. New York: Penguin Putnam, 1990. 88-93.

----- “Playing Together.” Free Play: Improvisation in Life and Art. New York: Penguin Putnam, 1990. 94-101.

Steinman, Louise. “The Unexpected.” The Knowing Body: The Artist as Storyteller in Contemporary Performance. Berkeley: North Atlantic Books, 1995. 77-100.

Zapora, Ruth. “A Body with a Mind of Its Own.” Taken By Surprise. Ed. Ann Cooper Albright and David Gere. Middletown: Wesleyan UP, 2003. 21-24.

The Ohio State University
Department of Dance
Autumn 2014

Being Here, Being With, Being Together

Aka Improvisation

Dance 4201/6201

1 credit hour

270 Sullivant Hall

Wed. 3:00-5:00, 1st 7 weeks only

Dr. Harmony Bench
bench.9@osu.edu
Office: 302 Sullivant Hall
Office hours: Tues/Thur 12:00-1:00

1. Course Description

This course is for undergraduate and MFA students who would like to deepen their own improvisation practice. Bringing artistic practices and philosophical discourses into conversation, we will explore improvisation as a practice of living and being through which we can encounter political and philosophical issues that face us in 2014: Namely, how can we live together?

2. Course Objectives

At the conclusion of this course, students will have a more concrete understanding of their own improvisation practices. They will be able to articulate their priorities and interests in relation to philosophical discourses, and they will be able to speak to the multi-dimensionality of their own practices as private, collective, and public.

3. Course Content and Procedures

This course will integrate classroom improvisation workshops, personal (both public and private) practice and reflection, score generation, group exercises, and online discussion of targeted readings drawn primarily from the disciplines of dance and philosophy.

4. Requirements and Evaluation

This course is built around three sites for deepening improvisational practices: a private practice, where you will work introspectively on the prompts and sensations that interest you; a public practice, where you will specifically attend to the environment around you, and a shared or collective practice, which will take place in the studio during class time. This course meets once per week for 7 weeks. It is therefore a condensed experience with 6-7 hours of work per week. In addition to the 2 hours we meet together on Wednesdays, students will spend an additional 2 hours per week outside of class engaged in improvisational practices and will spend approximately 2-3 hours per week on readings and reflections/responses.

Private Practice:

1 hour per week. You should allow your private practice to unfold in a space where you are unlikely to be disturbed, whether that's in a studio or at home. You may engage in one long practice or a couple of shorter practices. You may want to give yourself prompts or a specific improvisation score. The point is to take time to listen to your body. This is an opportunity to center yourself, to tune in to your body and its sensations, and to care for yourself.

Public Practice:

1 hour per week. Your public practice will take place in any venue considered 'public'—a park, a building corridor, or anywhere your practice is likely to be seen. You may engage in one long practice or a couple of shorter practices. You may want to give yourself prompts or a specific improvisation score. The point is to engage with the world around you. This is an opportunity to invite being seen, to expose yourself to others, and to take risks.

Collective Practice:

2 hours per week. Our collective practice will take place on Wednesdays 3-5. We will take a small amount of time to discuss our private and public practices, and reflect on online discussions and reading responses. The majority of class time will be spent in practice. We will give ourselves prompts and scores to direct our attention throughout each practice, and we will work together to build a supportive community in which each member is a vital contributor. We will begin to articulate what we know as movers or what we can discern through movement as we engage in dance as a life practice and improvisation as a practice of freedom.

Readings and Online Reflections/Responses:

There will be short readings each week. Online responses to prompts regarding the readings should be **250-300 words**. You will be engaged in improvisation practices throughout the week. Online reflections on your private and public practices should be **250-300 words each**. Prompts will be posted online each Wednesday for the upcoming week, and each of these long posts (3 per week--reading, private practice, public practice) are due each **Tuesday at 2PM**. Each week, you will also read your colleagues' posts and respond to 3 per week in about **50 words each**. Your 3 responses to your colleagues are due each **Wednesday at 2PM**.

The grading week begins on Wednesday. Work for each week is graded on a yes/no basis--either you met the requirements or you did not. Each week is worth 5 points.

Reading and reading response=1pt

Private practice and reflection=1pt

Public practice and reflection=1pt

Collective practice (i.e. attendance)=1pt

Reading colleagues' posts and 3 responses=1pt

Our last class meeting will be the conclusion of the course (there will be nothing due after the last class). Work in this course thus totals 31pts possible.

5. Grading Scale

26-31 A

24-25 B

21-23 C

18-20 D

17 or less E

6. Required Texts

All readings are on Carmen.

Academic Misconduct (rule 3335-31-02) is defined as “any activity which tends to compromise the academic integrity of the institution, or subvert the educational process.” Please refer to rule 3335-31-02 in the student code of conduct for examples of academic misconduct.

Disability Services Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated, and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>.

7. Topical Outline

Week One:

Wed. 8/27 First Day: introductions

Week Two:

Wed. 9/3 Being Together: Freedom

Readings:

Foster, from *Dances that Describe Themselves*

Goldman, from *I Want to be Ready*

Discussion posts:

Due Tues. 9/2 2PM posts on reading, private practice, and public practice

Due Wed. 9/3 2PM 3 response posts

Week Three:

Wed. 9/10--Being With: Relationality

Readings:

Manning, from *Planes of Composition*

Discussion posts:

Due Tues. 9/9 2PM posts on reading, private practice, and public practice

Due Wed. 9/10 2PM 3 response posts

Week Four:

Wed. 9/17--Being Here: Sensation

Readings:

Grosz, from *Chaos, Territory, Art*

Merleau-Ponty, from *The Phenomenology of Perception*

Discussion posts:

Due Tues. 9/16 2PM posts on reading, private practice, and public practice

Due Wed. 9/17 2PM 3 response posts

Week Five:

Wed. 9/24--Being Here: Solitude

Readings:

Koch, from *Solitude*

Discussion posts:

Due Tues. 9/23 2PM posts on reading, private practice, and public practice

Due Wed. 9/24 2PM 3 response posts

Week Six:

Wed. 10/1--Being With: Recognition and Responsibility

Readings:

Reagon, "Coalition Politics: Turning the Century"

Butler and Athanasiou, from *Dispossession*

Discussion posts:

Due Tues. 9/30 2PM posts on reading, private practice, and public practice

Due Wed. 10/1 2PM 3 response posts

Week Seven:

Wed. 10/8--Being Together: The Productive Non-Coherence of Community

Readings:

Rancière, from *The Emancipated Spectator*

Discussion posts:

Due Tues. 10/7 2PM posts on reading, private practice, and public practice

Due Wed. 10/8 2PM 3 response posts

The Ohio State University
Department of Dance

Professor: Bebe Miller
Email: miller.2506@osu.edu
Office: 316 Sullivant Hall
Office Hours: By Appt.

Dance 5194 Group Studies: IMPROVISATION
Autumn 2015, 1 credit hour
Laboratory, Wednesdays 3-5pm
320 Sullivant Hall – Barnett Theatre

Course Description:

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Required Texts and Materials:

~ available on www.smile.amazon.com; optional to select the Dance Notation Bureau Inc

De Spain, Kent: *Landscape of the Now: A Topography of Movement Improvisation.* New York, Oxford University Press, 2014.

Buckwalter, Melinda. *Composing While Dancing: An Improviser's Companion.* Univ. of Wisconsin, 2010.

Albright, Ann Cooper and David Gere, eds. *Taken By Surprise: A Dance Improvisation Reader.* Wesleyan University Press, 2003.

Smith, Nancy Stark and David Koteen. Caught Falling. Northampton, Contact Editions, 2008.

www.scores.motionbank.org: Bebe Miller Company, Thomas Hauert, Deborah Hay, Jonathan Burrows and Matteo Fargion

Selected Bibliography, in formation:

Goldberg, Naomi. "Be an Animal." Writing Down the Bones: Freeing the Writer Within. Boston: Shambhala, 1986. 90-92.

Halprin, Anna. "After Improv." Interview with Nancy Stark Smith, 1987. Moving Toward Life: Five Decades of Transformational Dance. Ed. Rachel Kaplan. Middletown: Wesleyan UP, 1995. 188-206.

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Steinman, Louise. "The Unexpected." The Knowing Body: The Artist as Storyteller in Contemporary Performance. Berkeley: North Atlantic Books, 1995. 77-100.

Course Procedures:

This course will include in-class practice focusing on a particular methods of compositional and performance improvisation; weekly practice by students outside of class time; and documentation of their practice and responses to readings on Carmen discussion boards. Additional written reflections and blog/ePortfolio postings may be assigned during the semester.

Course Requirements:

Attendance, participation, and engagement at all class sessions:

- Weekly class session including movement, observation, discussion and reflection
- Weekly session(s) outside of class time, solo and group, totaling 1 hour per week

The class will work together once a week in the studio. Students will also be responsible for one additional hour of solo and group sessions during the week in addition to readings and video viewings.

Wear loose fitting clothes covering knees and elbows; have kneepads available. We will work in bare feet. Be prepared for indoor/outdoor environments as the weather changes: shoes, proper clothing, an extra shirt.

After more than one unexcused absence your grade will drop one level (A to A-, etc.). You can make up a drop with extra written assignments: please see me to discuss topics. If you're well enough to attend but not well enough to dance your eye is helpful to everyone. Please use that time to observe the group and include your comments in your posting.

You may not join the class if you are more than 15 minutes late. Late arrivals may observe class and provide comments (as above). Each late arrival counts as half an absence.

Online reflections and readings – Weekly postings of 250 words on Carmen discussion board. Postings alternate between bi-weekly responses to that week's readings followed by bi-weekly responses to two weeks of out-of-class sessions. Responses to readings are due at midnight on the Monday before the next class session; responses to two individual practice sessions are due at midnight of the Monday before the subsequent class section.

Final Project –

Final improvisation class showing on the last Wednesday class meeting. Final reflection paper of 2-3 pages due on Friday at 5 pm following the last class meeting, delivered by email. Content will be discussed by the 10th week of classes.

E-PORTFOLIOS:

Students are encouraged to document their best work from this class and others for inclusion in their

ePortfolios. You can select an image, essay, reading response, or relevant Carmen discussion conversation as the basis of a blog post, and to provide context for that asset with your own critical reflection. Students are encouraged to provide the link to the ePortfolio to faculty, peers, and other interested parties who may respond with meaningful comments and input.

Grading Scale and Evaluation:

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Weekly Topical Outline

Week One: Introductions

Week 2-3: Agendas

Readings: DeSpain: *Introduction; What & Who; Agendas*
Smith: *Skinesphere*

Reading Responses due 8/31, midnight

Practice Postings due 9/8, midnight (Tuesday after Labor Day)

Week 4-5: Tracking

Readings: De Spain: *Tracking; Verbal/Nonverbal Awareness; The Audience/Improviser Relationship*

Reading Responses due 9/14, midnight

Practice Postings due 9/21, midnight

Week 5-6: Sensing, Timing, Spacing, Being

Readings: Buckwalter: *Time Machines; Spatial Relations*
De Spain: *Intentionality; What Is Good? The Transpersonal*

Reading Responses due 9/28, midnight

Practice Postings due 10/5, midnight

Week 7-8: Composing, Performing

Readings: DeSpain: *Resources* section, p. 93-172

Reading Responses due 10/12, midnight

Practice Postings due 10/19, midnight

Week 9-10: Sound, Scoring, Composing

Readings: Buckwalter: *The Possibilities of Music; The Eyes; Partnering Science; The Magical Object*

Reading Responses due 10/26, midnight

Practice Postings due 11/2, midnight

Week 11-12: Practice of Compositional Improvising

Readings: Albright: *Epilogue*
Buckwalter: *Epilogue*
De Spain: *Conclusion; Appendix*

Reading Responses due 11/9, midnight

Practice Postings due 11/16, midnight

Week 13: Thanksgiving Break, no class

Week 14-15: Practice and Performance of Compositional Improvising

Readings: TBD

Reading Responses due 12/2, midnight

Practice Postings and Final Response Paper due 12/11, midnight (Friday, Finals Week)