COURSE CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

Offers ongoing training to develop artistic expression, modern dance vocabulary, musicality and performance skills. Required of dance majors seeking the BFA degree. Prerequisite: FA/DANC 1215 3.00 and permission of the department.

INSTRUCTOR(S)

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<th>Name</th>
<th>Section / Format / Term</th>
<th>Contact Email</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jones, Helen</td>
<td>Sec. A / STDO / F</td>
<td><a href="mailto:helenj@yorku.ca">helenj@yorku.ca</a></td>
<td>York Ext. 44651</td>
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<td>Sec. B / STDO / F</td>
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SPECIAL FEATURES

Prerequisite: FA/DANC1215/17 3.0 Contemporary/Modern Dance Forms, or equivalent, or by placement.

INSTRUCTOR:
Helen Jones
helenj@yorku.ca
office: ACE 326
office hours: Wednesday, Thursday, Friday. 12pm - 1pm by appointment

In this second year studio course students will be introduced, through physical practice and pedagogical theory, to the contemporary dance technique internationally known as the Martha Graham Technique. Classes will be focused on the study of the classic Graham based, codified syllabus and the philosophy and movement principles that are central to this technique and relevant to all western contemporary dance forms. Technique, athleticism, and performance skills are developed through the understanding, and individually appropriate application in practice, of the core concepts of the Graham work.

Key technique objectives include gaining a deepening awareness of individually appropriate posture and dynamic alignment, moving from one’s core/centre of gravity, the use of breath in Graham’s “contracting” and “releasing” to initiate (and arrest) movement, the “rule” of opposition and spiral, use of the back, shifting of weight, pitching, fall and recovery. The importance of music, rhythmic structure, and phrasing is strongly emphasized.

Students will incrementally learn the classic exercises of the floor work, centre, and movement travelling across the floor. And, when sufficiently skilled, the dancers will be challenged to learn, and then develop, movement combinations with a focus on performance.

TOPICS AND CONCEPTS

The required reading for this course is Blood Memory by Martha Graham. Details will be provided in the first week of classes. There will be additional course readings and we will view relevant and related dance on
video/dvd. Class discussions, and the contribution of all participants, will provide valuable opportunities to share ideas and observations. Students will be evaluated on their participation, engagement, and increasing ability to articulate their ideas and observations on the work being viewed/discussed.

LIST OF LEARNING OUTCOMES AND EXAMPLES OF

Developing individual artistry and performing skills is integral to Graham training and students will find this applicable to other dance forms and will facilitate their own choreographic explorations.

As the core movement vocabulary is mastered and the dancers advance past the fundamentals we will work toward performing longer and more challenging dance combinations that may include choreographic fragments adapted from ballets by Martha Graham, and other choreographers who have drawn from the Graham heritage.

By the end of the term, with sufficient effort, application, and consistent attendance, students can expect to be integrating and applying many elements of the core movement principles of the technique in their dancing, have acquired increased technical strength and skill which will transfer to all their dancing, and will have gained a deeper understanding of Graham’s influence and legacy and, perhaps, also an inspired vision of their own potential contribution.

Students will be required to keep their own record of class work, including personal cues, corrections, directions, and reflections. This pedagogical exercise will enable the student to keep track of the curriculum development, hone notational skills, and provide perspective on their technical progress and individual learning experience.

GRADED ASSESSMENT

Students are encouraged to meet one-on-one with the course director at least once before mid term to discuss specific individual interests, technical goals, concerns, progress, etc. Other meetings such as for coaching, with individuals or small groups, that will require studio space are scheduled upon student request.

Attendance: All students sign in each class and are expected to have read and understood the Department of Dance policy regarding mandatory attendance, grade penalties, and criteria for additional and, or, make-up assignments. The attendance sheet is also a convenient way for students, instructor, and accompanist, to note special events, changes in schedule, progress of injuries, projected absences, and to sign up for coaching or meetings.

Written Component - Term Work Record

Students will be required to keep a detailed record of the term’s class work including:

- Documentation to demonstrate learning and understanding of class structure, exercises, combinations, and including artistic and musical information such as time signatures and phrasing.
- Personal observations, reflection and comments, which are essential to illustrate individual progress and engagement. This component would be expected to include technical directions/corrections, images, cues, references to class readings and topics of discussion, and an opportunity to express personal values around the art of dance.

The format is up to the individual but needs to be accessible (for example if written in a language the instructor cannot read, the student can give a verbal translation) in order to be accepted. Students may collaborate, as this can be fun and reinforce learning but, their papers must indicate clearly who they collaborated with and each individual must add their own unique personal reflection piece. The deadline for submitting the assignment will be agreed upon after mid-term.

Evaluation of students’ class work record is factored into the grade breakdown above as follows:

- Appropriate understanding and insight into class work is factored into Technical Skill, etc.
- Documented retention of material and cumulative learning is factored into Progress
- Personal reflection, images, quotes, additional material that illustrates involvement and initiative regarding the course content is factored into Skill, Progress, and Participation, etc.
Optional Paper or Presentation

In special circumstances, if a student believes s/he is not able to sufficiently demonstrate learning in class due to skill level, or other factor unrelated to injury or illness for which please refer to the Dance Department Attendance Policy. That student will be encouraged to considered an alternative such as a relevant project or presentation, and thus potentially earn a more representative grade.

Also, a student may approach the course director about submitting additional creative work (previous examples have included essays, research, poetry, painting, video) related to a personal or specific course related interest. Relevant assignments may be selected to be presented to the class and factored into the Participation, Involvement, Engagement, etc. component of the student’s final grade.

Course Text/Reading: Martha Graham’s Blood Memory (Doubleday, 1991) is the required reading for this course. The book is currently out of print but is available at the library and can be purchased inexpensively through on-line sources.

Additional readings will be assigned or recommended during the course.

Attending Performances, Viewing Dance and Related Arts: It is understood that the student dancer will attend a rich variety of dance, and other, performances during the year, and share their experiences and their observations in related class discussions.

Evaluation:

The grading guidelines for this course will be discussed in detail with students at the beginning of term.

Mid-term grade and written individual evaluation of progress: Students in this course will receive a written evaluation and an unofficial mid-term grade, worth 15% which is broken down into the categories above and factored into the final grade. The written evaluation is to provide individual students with constructive feedback on how they are doing in the course thus far.

Technical Skill, Physicality, Artistry, and Knowledge (35%)

Students are evaluated on their ability to consistently demonstrate their level of technical skill, knowledge and awareness through appropriate posture and alignment, co-ordination, perceiving and accurately reproducing movement, maintaining/increasing a healthy level of athleticism and overall body fitness, applied use of flexibility and muscle strength, and ability to travel through space. The integration of dance artistry includes sensitivity to music and rhythm structure, use of phrasing, exploring the range of possible movement dynamics, creative development of class material (choreography), and the ability to communicate through movement.

Regarding the term work record: appropriate understanding and insight into class work is factored into Technical Skill, etc.

Individual Progress (35%)

Progress will be assessed according to how effectively a student is seen to retain, test, and explore course material and concepts, and proceed to thoughtfully, and creatively, integrate their learning into their dancing in class.

Progress is constantly being evaluated but students will have opportunities to perform in regular, informal “test” class.

Regarding the term work record: documented retention of material and cumulative learning is factored into Progress.

Participation, Engagement, Professionalism (30%)

Active participation and the spirit of inquiry, what Martha Graham called a great curiosity, are key to success and a rewarding experience in this course. Appropriate effort and consistent attendance will help prevent muscle strain and injury and is essential for an appropriate grade.
Professionalism, as it is understood for a dance artist, includes a positive work ethic, being prepared for class, demonstrating the ability to focus on relevant goals, attentive behaviour in class, being receptive to new ideas, applying personal and general corrections, contributing thoughtful feedback, demonstrating sensitivity and respect for others, and taking responsibility for one’s own well-being.

Regarding the term work record: personal reflection, images, quotes, additional material that illustrates involvement and initiative regarding the course content is factored into Participation, etc.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

**Important University Sessional Dates (classes start/end dates, reading/co-curricular week, add/drop deadlines, holidays, etc.):** [https://registrar.yorku.ca/enrol/dates/fw17](https://registrar.yorku.ca/enrol/dates/fw17)

**York University Grading System:**

**Grading, Assignment Submission, Lateness Penalties, and Missed Tests:**
The grading scheme for courses conforms to the 9-point grading system used in undergraduate programs at York (e.g., A+ = 9, A = 8, B+ = 7, C+ = 5, etc.). Assignments and tests* will bear either a letter grade designation or a corresponding number grade (e.g. A+ = 90 to 100, A = 80 to 90, B+ = 75 to 79, etc.) An average piece of work in university is about a C+ or B. Grades go up or down from there depending on the attention and effort applied as well as evidence of tangible change.

The Senate Grading Scheme and Feedback Policy stipulates that (a) the grading scheme (i.e. kinds and weights of assignments, essays, exams, etc.) be announced, and be available in writing, within the first two weeks of class, and that, (b) under normal circumstances, graded feedback worth at least 15% of the final grade for Fall, Winter, or Summer Term, and 30% for full year courses offered in the Fall/Winter Term be received by students in all courses prior to the final withdrawal date from a course without receiving a grade.

**N.B.** Final course grades may be adjusted to conform to Program or School grades distribution profiles. Once final grades have been posted, the full breakdown will be available and can be discussed in an appointment with the Course Director or Chair of the department.

"**20% Rule**":

No examinations or tests collectively worth more than 20% of the final grade in a course will be given during the final 14 calendar days of classes in a term. The exceptions to the rule are classes which regularly meet Friday evenings or on Saturday and/or Sunday at any time, and courses offered in the compressed summer terms.

**Last date to drop a full year (Y) course without receiving a grade:** February 9, 2018

**Last date to drop a Fall term (F) course without receiving a grade:** November 10, 2017

**Last date to drop a Winter term (W) course without receiving a grade:** March 9, 2018

**Course Withdrawal Period:** (withdraw from a course and receive a grade of “W” on transcript)

**Last date for full year (Y) course:** February 10 to April 6, 2018

**Last date for Fall term (F) course:** November 11 to December 4, 2017

**Last date for Winter term (W) course:** March 10 to April 6, 2018

Please note that financial deadline dates differ from add/drop deadlines.
Department of Dance Studio Dress Requirements:

In order to give students the best possible guidance in Contemporary Ballet and Modern studio dance classes, teachers must be able to see the entire body. Postural alignment and joint and muscle use cannot be corrected in these classes if loose or bulky clothing hide the body. Other dance forms we teach may require specific footwear, props, and/or other clothing options. Please make sure to check your outlines for each of your studio dance classes for the specific dress requirements and the details each teacher will require.

The general requirements are:

- Form fitting clothing that covers torso and legs should be worn. Bring close-fitting warmer clothing and socks for cold days. (No loose-fitting or ragged clothing unless specified).
- Hair must be worn off the neck and face for Ballet, and back and off the face for Modern.
- Students can wear leotard and tights (any solid colour), and ballet slippers for Ballet and bare feet for Modern.
- Please be considerate of your fellow dancers; avoid long fingernails and jewellery (including piercings, watches, earrings, necklaces, bracelets, and large rings). Ensure hair-wear is secure.

Department of Dance Studio Use Regulations:

- There is absolutely no food or drink (other than water) permitted in the studios.
- Leave street shoes and boots in the cubbies outside the studio or preferably, in your locker. If you must bring street shoes and boots in to the studio, please place them inside a bag. Grit and dirt brought into the space pose a safety hazard for dancers (particularly for those working barefoot) in addition to damaging the floor surfaces. NO BARE FEET in the Dance Department hallways or bathrooms.
- Do not prop the studio doors open by using the deadbolt, the mirror curtain, or anything that blocks the studio entrance.
- Please return studio furniture to its rightful place according to the floor plan posted by the door in each space.

Department of Dance Video Guidelines:

The Department of Dance has developed these guidelines in order to raise awareness of expected behaviour regarding recording/videotaping curricular work, and to foster a culture of respect for intellectual and creative property, as well as for individual privacy.

While the Department recognizes the democratizing effect of the internet, the Department requests that students do not post curricular work publicly to the internet, unless by express permission of the Chair of the Department, and waivers signed by all concerned. Work is to be shared only via private file-sharing access. This applies to documentation made by the Department and/or by individual students for their own archives.

Department of Dance Guidelines For Scented Products:

York University endeavours to provide an indoor environment that supports the University community at work and study. Some people experience severe health problems from exposure to chemicals contained in scented products including aftershave lotions, hair spray, deodorants and fragrances. In consideration of those who are affected by such chemicals, use unscented products only.

Department of Dance Guidelines For Physical Demands of the Program:

Courses in the Department of Dance may include elements that are physically demanding. Prior injuries can be aggravated by strenuous exercise so check with your physician and inform the Course Director before beginning the course. Be sure to share with the Course Director any changes in your injury or health that may affect your participation.
Courses in the Department of Dance may also include the possibility/likelihood of human contact (i.e., correction of alignment or technical execution as well as the possibility of collision with colleagues). Students uncomfortable with the use of touch are requested to relay feelings to the Course Director as soon as possible.

Department of Dance Guidelines For Safety and Wellbeing:
Should an accident occur in studio, there is a very clear protocol for reporting. This information is posted in every studio. Faculty members and staff are well versed in the protocol. For the various minor issues that come up in your day-to-day life as a dancer, it is recommended that you carry a well-stocked personal first aid kit in your dance bag.

Department of Dance Attendance and Participation Policy for Studio Classes:
Students are expected to participate in every dance class, both studio and lecture courses. Under exceptional circumstances they may miss, without penalty, half the number of classes per term as the class meets in the week. (i.e., If your class meets two times a week, you may miss ONE class over the entire course without penalty.)

Details are as follows for studio classes that meet two (2) times per week:
- Absences or early departures in excess of 1 per term can result in a grade deduction of 2% per occurrence.
- In the event of an absence or limited participation, all missed material is to be learned prior to returning to class.
- In the event of an injury or illness preventing full participation for more than 1 class in a term, it is the student’s immediate responsibility, in consultation with the Course Director, to devise a plan for make-up work. The sooner this is done, the less stress you will experience from the uncertainty of the situation. If you are injured or ill, obtain and submit a hard copy doctor’s note. The doctor’s note will allow you to arrange for appropriate make-up work. Grade penalties can still apply, but the documentation assists in gauging the amount of penalty and make-up work needed.
- Partial class participation beyond 1 class per term results in a 1% grade penalty.
- Non-participation beyond 1 class per term results in a 2% grade penalty.
- As detailed in the Injury Guidelines in the Department of Dance, students must complete a minimum of 60% of the studio work to receive course credit.
- Finally, in consideration of all participants, if you are ill, stay home and/or see your healthcare provider. You will recover faster and, should your illness be contagious, you will have shown others consideration by limiting their exposure. Do NOT come to class if you are ill!

Department of Dance Technical Evaluation Policy:
It is the Department’s responsibility to ensure that every dance major experiences optimal training and educational conditions. This is especially important in physical practice where safety is a pedagogical imperative. To that end, all students enrolled in dance technique courses (i.e. Contemporary Modern and/or Contemporary Ballet) participate in technical level evaluation at the beginning of the Fall term. Dance faculty conduct evaluations in a traditional group class setting. Students who have successfully completed the pre-requisite courses, have maintained an appropriate level of fitness, and have continued with technical training over the spring and summer months normally proceed to the next level.

It must be noted that a satisfactory grade in the pre-requisite course does not guarantee placement in the next level of technique. Some students may be required to remain at the previous level to safely develop additional technical skill. Extended illness, injury, or insufficient technical skill are some of the factors that lead to such a decision.

The study of dance as a physical and artistic practice requires a commitment to year-round technical training, body conditioning, and cross training. Students are, therefore, expected to independently seek out
and maintain an appropriate training regimen all 12 months of the year.

**York University Academic Senate Policies and Information:**

All students are expected to familiarize themselves with the Policies and Regulations information which can be found on the 2017/18 Academic Calendars page:

http://calendars.students.yorku.ca/2017-2018/dance

We recommend carefully reviewing all three sections: About, Degree Requirements, and Faculty Rules. Important information is explained here including the Policy on Academic Honesty, Academic Responsibility and Student Responsibility, and Academic Standing. Further details are available on the Secretariat Policies website, http://secretariat-policies.info.yorku.ca/, which covers the following topics:

- Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities
- Religious Accommodation
- Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities
- Academic Honesty

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Many courses utilize Moodle, York University’s course website system. If your course is using Moodle, click here to access it.

Moodle @ York University