EXPANDED COURSE DESCRIPTION
DANCE
School of the Arts, Media, Performance and Design
Dance Department
FA / DANC 2510/25100A 3.00 SECTION A
DANCES OF SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA
SUMMER 2019

Last Modified Date: 04/26/2019

COURSE CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

“Traditional and Current Dances of Sub-Saharan Africa introduces students to selected African dance forms in their cultural contexts such as Ghanaian, Togolese, Beninois, Nigerian and Guinean. The effects of contemporary changes on these art forms are examined. Studio/Discussion. Prerequisites: FA/DANC 1500 6.00 or permission of the department.”

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INSTRUCTOR(S)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Section / Format / Term</th>
<th>Contact Email</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amegago, Modesto</td>
<td>Sec. A / STDO / S1</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mamegago@yorku.ca">mamegago@yorku.ca</a></td>
<td>York Ext. 22130</td>
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SPECIAL FEATURES

Course Title: FA/DANC 25100/25100A 3.00: Traditional and Current Dances of Sub Saharan Africa: Summer Section 1 2019

Course Calendar Description

Offers African dance forms at an introductory and intermediate levels. It includes the study of the dances in their cultural contexts such as Ghanaian, Togolese, Beninois, Nigerian and Guinean. The effects of contemporary changes on these art forms are examined. Studio/Discussion.

Prerequisites: FA/DANC 1500 6.00 or permission of the department. Open to majors and non-majors

Special Features

Introduction to and Intermediate Traditional and Current Dances of Sub Saharan Africa.

Course Director: Dr Modesto Amegago
Office: Accolade East Room 313
Telephone: 416736 5137: Extension 22130
Email: amegago@yahoo.com

Course Consultation Hours: Thursday 4-5.30PM or by appointment

Class Meetings: Tuesdays and Thursdays 1.00-4.00 PM:
Venue: Studio E 249 Accolade East Building.
**Expanded Course Description**
This course provides opportunities for students to study/further their study of African dance and music and their cultural contexts. The course exposes students to a variety of African dance techniques as well as specific music and dance forms drawn from West African cultural and educational contexts. Students are led through the act of playing African instruments such as bells, clappers, rattles, drums and xylophones, and singing African songs as well as performing the dance/musical forms during the semester. Students are required to complete a quiz on specific dance/musical forms and write a reflective/final paper, or choreograph a dance piece, utilizing some of the movements learnt in class and other related movements (learnt from other classes/settings). The final paper should be handed over to the instructor by the end of the semester, so also the choreographed piece should be performed in class during the end of the semester.

**TOPICS AND CONCEPTS**

*These include:*
An overview of the history, location social organization/politics, religion and means of livelihood of specific African Societies/cultural groups.

**Origin and development**
**Performance contexts**
**Functions of African dance and musical forms**
**Evaluation and Analysis**
**Posture**
**Movement quality**
**Musicality**
**Spatial organization**
**Levels**
**Dynamics**
**Creativity**
**Improvisation**
**Costumes, Make-ups and Props**
**Performance Processes**
**Engagement**
**Observation and Participation**
**Listening**
**Reflection**
**Aesthetic Evaluation**
**Dance Studio Etiquette**
**Skill Acquisition and Progress**

**Prerequisites for FA/DANC 1500 6.00 2510A or Permission of the Department**

**Required Text:** None

**Recommended Texts:**

Syllabus

Week One: April 30 and May 2

Topic/Theme:
1. Course Overview: Self-Introduction, Review of the Course Outline/Description, Syllabus and Requirements 
2. Introduction to the week’s activities: Dance as an Expression of Socio-historical and Cultural Values: A Case of Agbekor

Activity: Introduction to the cultural context, instrumental patterns and songs of Agbekor; playing of drums, rattles and bells, listening observing, discussing, memorizing and taking notes of class activities, introduction to African dance techniques through warm-up and Gota dance, learning Agbekor dance in large and small groups, cooling down and feedback.

Week Two: May 7-May 9

Topic/Theme: Continuation of Agbekor; Introduction to Dance in The Context of Thanksgiving: A Case of Bambaya Dance and (some Odunde Dance movements)

Activity: Reviewing Agbekor instrumental patterns and songs; listening observing, discussing, memorizing and taking notes of class activities, continuation of African dance techniques through warm-up, reviewing and learning more Agbekor (and Gota) movements in large and small groups, learning Bambaya dance, (and some /Odunde dance movements) in large and groups, cooling down and feedback.

Week Three: May 14 and 16

Topic/Theme: 1. Review of Agbekor (and Gota), and Bambaya (and some Odunde movements; 2. Introduction to Selected Nigerian Dance by Guest instructor Sani Abu Mohamed.

Activity: Warming up, review of Agbekor and Bambaya dances (and some Odunde dance movements) in small and large groups, reviewing and learning more Agbekor and Bambaya movements in small groups, learning selected Nigerian dance in large and small group, cooling down, feedback.

Week Four: May 21 and 23:

Topic/Theme: Midterm Presentation, 2. Dance and Communication of Women’s Socio-cultural Values: A Case of Adowa.
Activity: Reviewing of the previous dances in small and large groups, performing Agbekor and Bambaya in small groups; introduction to the cultural contexts, instrumental patterns and songs of Adowa, listening, observing, discussing, memorizing and taking notes of class activities, continuation of African movement techniques through warming-up, learning Adowa dance in large and small groups, cooling down, feedback.

Week Five: May 28 and 30


Activity: Writing a quiz on the dances learnt during the term, Reviewing the instrumental patterns and songs of the Nigerian/Guinean dance and Adowa, introduction to instrumental patterns and songs of selected Guinean/Nigerian Dance, listening, observing, discussing, memorizing and taking notes of class activities; continuation of African movement techniques through warm-up, reviewing the previous dances, learning new Guinean/Nigerian dance in small and large group, redesigning and fine-tuning all the dances for final presentations, cooling down and feedback.

Week 6: June 4 and 6

Topic/Theme: Run-through and Final Performance/Presentation

Activity: Running through the various dances in large and small groups, performing the dance/musical forms and choreographed pieces for final evaluation, and for public observation, feedback, submission of the final papers, course wrap up.

LIST OF LEARNING OUTCOMES AND EXAMPLES OF

The purpose of this course is to lead students to understand the historical and cultural contexts of African dance/music, develop their movement vocabulary, broaden their cross cultural awareness, acquire skills in dancing, playing instruments and singing songs, develop skills in creating dances and writing papers on African and World dance/musical forms, and apply these knowledge and skills to their class assignments, research, future education and careers.

Brief List of Specific Learning Objectives/Outcomes of the Course

• By the end of the semester, students will:
  • Broaden their awareness of the historical and cultural contexts, and functions of African dance/music.
  • Recognize the creativity of individual and social groups and the diversity of diversity of African dance and music and dance forms and open-ended creative process.
  • Acquire skills in performing, creating, evaluating, analyzing and theorizing African dance and music.
  • Exhibit their practical and theoretical knowledge and skills through midterm and end of semester performances, quiz and written papers.
  • Demonstrate their ability to apply these knowledge and skills to their future education, performance, creativity, research, documentation and careers.

GRADED ASSESSMENT

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• Evaluation:
  • Assignment 1: Midterm Performance: 15% (May 21)
  • Assignment 2: Quiz: 15 % (May 28 or 20).
  • Assignment 3: Final performance: 20% (June 4 and 6).
**Assignments and Evaluation Criteria:**

**Assignment 1: Midterm Performance: (Due Date May 21)**
Students are required to perform some of the dances they learn in class in small groups (of four or six) during the midterm.

**Assignment 2: Quiz: (Due date May 28 or 30).**
Students are required to complete a quiz set on the various dance/musical forms and relevant class activities. The quiz will require students to provide concise but detailed answers to the questions. This Quiz will be evaluated on correctness, validity and clarity of answers and appropriate use of grammar.

**Assignment 3: Final Performance: (Due Dates: March 26, 28 and April 3)**
Students are required to perform some of the dance/musical forms they learn in class in small groups (of four or six) at the end of the semester. They are also required to showcase the dance and musical forms during open class performance on the last day of classes.

**Evaluation of the dance and musical skills during the weeks, midterm and final Performances:**

- **Dancing** throughout the semester and during the midterm and final performances will be evaluated on the level of engagement, mastery of movements (movement qualities, performance skills, attitude and progress), based on the assumption of the appropriate posture, proper execution of the movements, timing and proper coordination of the movements with the music, and proper expression of emotion/feeling in the face and body.
- **Singing** throughout the semester and during the midterm and final performances will be evaluated on the proper pronunciation and understanding of the lyrics in relation to context, proper rendition of songs, personal involvement in singing and proper coordination of the songs with instrumental sounds.
- **Instrumental music** throughout the semester and during the midterm and final performances will be evaluated on the mastery and proper application of the playing techniques, proper handling of instruments, proper articulation of musical sounds, coordination of the sounds with other instrumental sounds, songs and movements, and knowledge of linguistic and cultural contexts of the sounds.

**Assignment 4: Reflective/Research Paper or Choreography: Due Dates (June 4 and 6)**
Students enrolled in 2510A are required to write a 4-5 pages reflective paper on their learning experiences throughout the semester. This paper should contain a summary of the class activities of each date/week of the term/semester, a student’s overall impression or comments and/or suggestions.

Students enrolled in 3510A are required to (Option A) choreograph a dance piece, utilizing some of the movements learnt in class and other relevant movements, to address any of the topics or themes covered in class, or specific theme(s) of their choice, or (Option B) write a five to six page (double-spaced) paper that addresses the origin and development of African dance and music; or compares the origin, cultural contexts and functions of African dance/musical forms/styles; or discusses the knowledge they acquire from the course and how they hope to utilize it in the future.

Students who would like to choreograph dance pieces may choose to work as individuals or in small groups (of not more than six people) in choreographing the dance piece. Individual students’ pieces should be about four minutes long, while group pieces should be relatively longer, depending on the number of students in the group: For example, a group of three students should compose a ten-minute dance piece while a group of five students should compose a piece ranging from 15-20 minutes long. The Choreographed pieces should
be performed in class on June 6, so also the written papers should be handed over to the instructor on June 4

Evaluation:
The *Choreographed Piece* will be evaluated on the use of the dance, musical and other artistic elements and themes, to create a coherent, harmonious, or aesthetically pleasing and meaningful piece which highlights a clear beginning, progression; climatic and ending moments, appropriate movement designs in space and time, levels and dynamics, etc.

**Reflective/Research Paper** will be evaluated on clarity, validity, coherence, grammatical structure and the quantity of information they contain.

**Attendance** will be evaluated on prompt, regular and full class attendance throughout the semester.

**Class participation:** Students will be evaluated on their level of engagement or involvement in the weekly class activities, such as instrumental learning/performance, singing, dancing and class discussions and other assignments.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

**Attendance and Participation:**
This course is mainly a studio course that runs for only three hours, twice in a week. Therefore, students are required to attend all classes promptly and participate in all the class activities throughout the semester. Poor attendance will affect a student’s progress in class and the final grade. A student may be permitted to miss one class without penalty. Every additional absence from class will amount to **Three points deduction per occurrence** from the final course grade. Marks will be deducted from late attendance and early departure from classes (for example, one point may be deducted for arriving in class after 30 minutes, or departing 30 minutes before the end of class, without permission from the instructor). If you miss a class, ask your classmates about what was done in class on that day and any possible assignments and assistance.

**Please Note** that because the course is offered by the Dance Department, the emphasis will be laid on the dance component in the teaching/learning and evaluation process (especially due to time constraints).

**Attire:** Students are allowed to wear comfortable clot ranging from African clothes, loose pants, leotards and T-shirts but they are expected to dance bare feet. Jewelry should not be worn in class for they may harm students when dancing. Long hair must be tied securely off face to enable the dancer to concentrate and move freely. **Important University Sessional Dates (classes start/end dates, reading/co-curricular week, add/drop deadlines, holidays, etc.):** [http://registrar.yorku.ca/enrol/dates/](http://registrar.yorku.ca/enrol/dates/)

**Last date to add a Summer course without permission from Instructor:** May 3
**Last date to add a Summer course with permission from Instructor:** May 10
**Last date to drop a Summer term (1) course without receiving a grade:** May 27
**Course Withdrawal Period:** (withdraw from a course and receive a grade of “W” on transcript) May 28 June 10.

Please note that financial deadline dates differ from add/drop deadlines.

**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.

Assignment Submission/Lateness Penalty:
Proper academic performance depends on students doing their work not only well, but on time. Assignments must be received on the due date specified and are to be handed in at the beginning of class. No electronic submissions will be accepted. Assignments received later than the specified due date will be penalized one-half letter grade per day. There are exceptions to this lateness penalty for valid reasons such as illness, compassionate grounds, etc. but require supporting documentation (e.g. a doctor’s letter).

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.

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, stairs, elevators, or bathrooms. Bring indoor flip-flops or slippers to go from studio to studio.
- 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. Programs Assistant Flannery Muise and faculty member Claire Wootten are the department’s certified first-aid reps.

**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 2018/19 Academic Calendars page:

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:**
  http://calendars.students.yorku.ca/2018-2019/policies-and-regulations/academic-policies-and-regulations/academic-accommodation

  - **Religious Accommodation:**

  - **Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities:**

  - **Academic Honesty:**

- **Professionalism and Classroom Etiquette:**

  Professionalism is an attitude—much more than the act of receiving money for your work. It is about having confidence and pride in your work with a willingness to contribute to the group. These guidelines will also help you attain autonomy and professional capacity.

  - Address all your personal care issues before class begins. This includes doing a bathroom run, filling your water bottle and having a supply of tissues. You should not need to leave the studio during class unless you are experiencing a personal emergency.
  - Please participate in helping to prepare the studio space for dancing in advance of the class start time to ensure a timely beginning.
  - Please stand and cease all preparatory/warm-up activities when the Course Director or special guest indicates the start of class.
  - Whether a correction is given to an individual or the entire class, all students are expected to apply the correction to their own work.
  - When working in pairs or small groups, aim to stay focused on the given task and be prepared to direct your attention back to the group quickly in order maintain the classroom pace. Respect and support your peers by staying focused. This means that there are times when one must put aside personal feelings and frustrations to maintain an optimal work environment.

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

Moodle @ York University