

Montclair High School

Course Syllabus

Department: SVPA

Course: Introduction to Dance Techniques 538

Level: 9-12

Credits: 5 Visual/Performing Arts or 3.75 Physical Education

Course Description:

An introductory dance class for young men and women who wish to increase their flexibility, strength and coordination while exploring self-expression through movement. Students will learn the basic techniques, concepts and terminology of modern dance and ballet including isolated workshop days in hip hop, jazz and tap. Classes will emphasize postural alignment, balance, quality of movement and flow of movement sequence. Dancers develop improvisational and choreographic skills as new movement concepts and genres are introduced. Field trips to high-caliber performances of dance are scheduled to enhance the overall learning experience.

Standards:

1.1-1.5

Anchor Text(s):

None available. Suggest readings: Dance Composition Basics by Pamela Anderson Sofras; Contact Improvisation by Cheryl Palant; Learning About Dance by Nora Ambrosio; The Vision of Modern Dance by Brown, Mindlin and Woodford; Dancers Talking Dance by Larry Lavender; The Intimate Act of Choreography by Blom and Chaplin; Moving From Within by Alma M. Hawkins; Dynamic Alignment Through Imagery by Eric Franklin; Dance Imagery for Technique and Performance by Eric Franklin; Fifty Contemporary Choreographers by Martha Bremser

Supplementary Materials:

Classroom instruction is embellished through the use of videotaped showings pertaining to performances of current professional dance companies and the history of dance; supplemental training also in Yoga and Pilates.

Units of Study:

- Overview of course; establishment of class etiquette; introduction to movement concepts and principles, choreographic concepts, technical steps and terms; introduction to placement, alignment and physiology involved; establishment of self-assessment skills; execute basic combinations and transpose to other side
- Refinement of execution of exercises and steps from Unit I; expand knowledge of exercises, terms and concepts; application of breath to phrasing; accept and apply group corrections to personal performance; demonstrate correct placement and alignment
- refine execution of exercises and steps from previous units; execute combinations of increasing complexity and transpose to other side; expand upon knowledge of movement, concepts and terms; research a historical figure in dance for classroom presentation
- continued refinement of all learned exercises, steps, phrases and concepts; demonstrate self-reliance and performance attitude/quality in classroom performance; create brief dance in each genre utilizing personal style and movement vocabulary.

Proficiencies:

By the end of this course, students will:

- Embody an interest in movement and dance and exemplify an appreciation for the discipline and dedication required to be a dancer
- Demonstrate importance of arts in life and learning
- Demonstrate acceptable social interaction skills and behaviors as they are applied to proper dance class etiquette
- Visually identify, physically demonstrate and verbally describe approximately 100 terms from modern dance technique, ballet, jazz, and yoga terms applicable
- Demonstrate a basic understanding of the physiological processes of the human body as they relate to the execution of movement
- Demonstrate an increasing knowledge and skill in different techniques through daily execution of movement: refine alignment, placement and balance, increase upper and lower body strength, flexibility, agility, balance and clarity
- Feel comfortable improvising and problem solving with personal movement explorations and innovations
- Begin to discover and define a personal movement style, heighten awareness of self, and awareness of the role a dancer plays within groups or companies of dancers
- Demonstrate an understanding of movement concepts and choreographic principles and practices relative to the study of dance
- Create, contrast, analyze and critique dances that emphasize both a movement-based, and a thematic approach to dance making
- Craft a movement-based dance using basic choreographic principles, elements of motion and qualities of movement
- Demonstrate a basic knowledge of the origins of the varying dance techniques, the most prominent choreographers and performers of each art form, and a timeline of the development of modern dance from its beginning to present day
- Embrace a system of positive and productive self-evaluation and the ability to set personal goals and monitor progress

Evaluation & Assessment:

Student learning incorporates a variety of methods, strategies and skills. Therefore, in an attempt to accurately evaluate student achievement, various methods of alternative assessments will be employed in the grading of students, including:

- Tests/Quizzes are an assessment of cumulative knowledge and understanding of a unit of study and may include the following: performance-based assessments of applied learning, group composition, written tests designed to identify knowledge of terminology; physical and written activities demonstrating ability to analyze, compare and contrast differing technical steps and dance concepts. **10% of grade**
- Homework enables students to exercise and reinforce their understanding and knowledge of the content and skills taught in class. Homework is assigned on occasion to stimulate further thought and personal growth typically centering around teaching students to visualize themselves in positive terms as a learner with no limitations. **10% of grade in conjunction with tests/quizzes.**
- Class Preparation and Involvement is an integral aspect of the learning process where students demonstrate their on-going understanding of content and concepts taught. It is both a learning and evaluative tool that is a requirement of the course. Students perform a preparatory set of 6-10

exercises and learn/perform phrases on a daily basis. It is required that students dress appropriately for class (women in black leotard and tights/jazz pants; men in black sweats and white Ts), arrive on time, participate with full energy and maintain a productive, positive attitude on a daily basis. **80% (40/40) of grade.**