

DANCE

Mission Statement

We believe that vital dance artists and scholars develop from independent thinkers who are committed to cultivating a personal aesthetic and artistic focus, and who resourcefully engage in original research and commit to the construction of knowledge. Our mission supports the development of student artists/scholars who are informed citizens and responsible agents of positive change in a world where the moving arts are essential. Our goal of exposing students to cutting edge and experimental dance practices from diverse cultures and with global perspectives is embedded in our curriculum and ideology. The focus of our movement practices intentionally centralizes Contemporary Dance and African/African-Diasporan forms. The integration of embodied practices with scholarly inquiry is integral to our mission.

Writing within the Major: Both dance scholars and dance artists come to better understand their ideas and those of others through writing. We focus our teaching of writing on experiential and conceptual ideas prompted by and about the body to generate precise description and sophisticated analysis. Our aim is to hone students' observation and reflection skills, and ability to document these intelligently and concisely through writing.

Student Learning Goals

Students will be able to:

- Broaden perspectives through risk taking, embracing ambiguity, and exposure to a range of choreography and performance.
- Synthesize knowledge and generate new, independent and original theoretical and creative projects.
- Demonstrate multifaceted practical, analytical, and reflexive understanding of languages, history, and the cultural significance of dance's various bodily-kinesthetic forms.
- Employ various methods for describing, discerning, analyzing, labeling, and categorizing human movement.
- Be proficient movers in a combination of aspects of embodied movement practices, at the intermediate level, at a minimum.
- Demonstrate a fluency in disciplinary vocabularies both orally and written that is evident across coursework and utilized within the body of student's senior research.
- Use basic 21st century technology including digital equipment and software applications in order to access and document artwork, and to use it appropriately to market or create within those media.

Faculty and Staff

Chair: Associate Professor Mark Evans Bryan

Associate Chair: Associate Professor Ojeya Cruz Banks

Associate Professor Ojeya Cruz Banks; Assistant Professor Marion Ramirez; Visiting Assistant Professor Mollie Wolf

Resident Musician: Matthew Dixon

Academic Program Coordinator

Kristi Mathews

Academic Administrative Assistant

Cristina Dorda Soriano

View faculty profiles and contact information (<https://denison.edu/academics/dance/contacts/>)

Requirements for the Major in Dance (B.A. Degree)

The Bachelor of Arts degree in Dance reflects a philosophy that integrates principles of theory and practice resulting in the discovery of an original voice. "Movement Practice" courses engage students in dance technique and performance work, and in learning and applying physical skills to the creation and reconstruction of African/Diasporan and Contemporary dance. "Dance Studies" courses emphasize creating, moving, recording, reading and writing, exposing the fundamental patterns of skilled movement acquisition, generating close textual analysis of specific movement forms, practicing dance making, and culturally contextualizing the diversity of dance forms. "Advanced Studies" courses provide opportunities to deepen and integrate primarily through independent research. In all courses, the boundaries between practice and theory are purposefully blurred, indicating our commitment to a liberal arts curriculum rather than a conservatory model.

Further, studying dance abroad allows students to experience another culture and way of life through the lens of movement and dance studies. Study abroad opportunities integrate the department's mission and make possible a deepening understanding and expansive perspective on movement in a global context. We encourage students to visit the Global Study office to explore options.

The Dance major requires 36 credits minimum.

Movement Practices

All dance majors must take a minimum of 12 credits in Movement Practices, combining coursework in any combination. Possibilities include:

- African/Diasporan Level II or III, 2 credits (DANC 222 - African/Diasporan Dance II) or Performance, .5-1 credit (DANC 422 - Performance: African/Diaspora)
- Contemporary Level II or III, 2 credits (DANC 232 - Modern/Postmodern Dance II) or Performance, .5-1 credit (DANC 432 - Performance: Modern/Postmodern/DANC 434 - Performance: Modern/Postmodern (Student))

Dance Studies

All dance majors must take at least one course (4 credits per course) in three separate areas of inquiry, comprising a minimum of 12 credits in Dance Studies. Our dance curriculum offers four areas of inquiry. Possibilities include:

- Critical Historical and Cultural Inquiries - Recent examples include Black Dance and Popular Culture; Global Hip Hop; The Body in Performance; and African/American Aesthetics.
- Compositional Studies: Choreographic Investigations; African Movement Aesthetics; Improvisation and Performance; Site-Based Work
- Human Movement Investigations: Somatics I; Somatics II
- Movement Analysis: Introduction to Laban Analysis; Introduction to Labanotation; Reconstruction for Performance

Advanced Studies

All dance majors must also enroll in a minimum of 12 additional credit hours. These 12 credits shall be comprised of three requirements:

- Any 4 credit hours that deepen a student's experience/knowledge in a chosen area of interest. This may include:
 - A series of Movement Practices courses (at the 200-level or above) that total 4 credit hours
 - An additional course in Dance Studies (at the 200-level or above)
- DANC 451 - Senior Research (Proposal: Thesis and Methodology) (4 credits)
- DANC 452 - Senior Research (Execution: Investigation and Presentation) (4 credits)

Requirements for the Minor in Dance (B.A. Degree)

24 credits minimum The Dance minor is designed to accomplish at least one of two possible objectives:

- encourage those new to dance to access this course of study, and
- avail those interested in a narrow study of dance to design a minor that suits their interests.

Beyond a reduced number of credit hours, the main differences between the major and minor are these:

- Majors may not include any 100-level courses in the fulfillment of the requirements; Minors may include any 100-level courses for fulfillment of the requirements.
- Majors must include at least three of the four categories of inquiry; Minors may select any course regardless of distribution.
- Majors must complete a senior research project; Minors are not required to complete a senior research project.

Movement Practices

All dance minors must take any combination of 12 credits in Movement Practices (any genre at any level). Possibilities include:

- African/Diasporan Level I, II or III, 2 credits (DANC 122 - African/Diasporan Dance I, DANC 222 - African/Diasporan Dance II) or Performance, .5-1 credit (DANC 422 - Performance: African/Diaspora)
- Contemporary Dance Level I, II or III, 2 credits (DANC 132 - Modern/Postmodern Dance I, DANC 232 - Modern/Postmodern Dance II, DANC 332 - Modern/Postmodern Dance III) or Performance, .5-1 credit (DANC 432 - Performance: Modern/Postmodern/DANC 434 - Performance: Modern/Postmodern (Student))

Dance Studies

All dance minors must take any three courses, resulting in 12 credits in dance studies (selected from any area).

- Critical Historical Inquiries: Dance as an Art Form; Black Dance and Popular Culture; Global Hip Hop; The Body in Performance; African/American Aesthetics.
- Compositional Studies; Choreographic Investigations; African Movement Aesthetics; Improvisation and Performance; Site-Based Work
- Human Movement Investigations: Somatics I; Somatics II
- Movement Analysis: Introduction to Laban Analysis; Introduction to Labanotation; Reconstruction for Performance

Additional Points of Interest

Denison's distributional General Education (G.E.) requirements include two 4 credit-hour courses in two different departments in the Fine Arts Division. All Movement Practices courses may accumulate credit toward fulfilling a G.E. Fine Arts requirement. Any Dance Studies course fulfills one G.E. Fine Arts requirement.

When registering, please follow these general guidelines:

- All 100 level courses assume no previous experience with Movement Practices or Dance Studies.
- All 200-level courses assume a review of the fundamentals of the languages and practices of the sub-discipline will be necessary, including a review of library searches and basic digital technology. Level II Movement Practices courses are appropriate for students with previous experience in dance training, even if not in the genre being offered.
- All 300-level courses require independent thinking and processing. Level III Movement Practices courses require two semesters at the 200-level in the same genre, or permission of the instructor.
- All 400-level Movement Practices courses are by audition or invitation only.
- It is expected that a student will enroll in the same level movement practice course for two or more semesters. This repetition is permissible by the University and Registrar.
- Performance courses will not accrue additional fees from the University, even if the student is already at the limit of credit hours for that semester.

Courses

DANC 122 - African/Diaspora Dance Level I (2 Credit Hours)

African/Diaspora Dance I focuses on African-centered forms of dance in one of many possible genres across the African Diaspora (e.g., traditional African forms, dances of the African Diaspora, African American vernacular, Hip-Hop, Contemporary African, etc.). Taught from a cultural perspective, this course emphasizes fundamentals such as fluidity, use of the head, spine and pelvis, grounded and weighted qualities, isolations and complex embodied rhythms. Concert attendance, short written critical responses and weekly written journals are examples of outside work that is required. No previous dance experience is expected.

Crosslisting: BLST 122.

DANC 132 - Contemporary Dance I (2 Credit Hours)

Contemporary Dance I is intended for students with minimal or no formal dance training. This is a full-participation movement experience requiring a commitment to attend each class session. Students will develop increased self-awareness through sensitivity to movement dynamics, choreographic.

DANC 174 - Dance as Art (4 Credit Hours)

Dance as Art is open to students interested in dance as a performing art, a physical practice, and a field of embodied inquiry. It serves to introduce students to many of the disciplines, methodologies, and theoretical approaches within the field of dance. Students will engage with methods for viewing, analyzing, and discussing dance as a performing art—in both its formal and socio-cultural dimensions; will gain experience with dance as a movement practice; and will have the opportunity to generate their own choreography as a mode of aesthetic production and compositional reasoning. No previous dance experience is necessary. This course fulfills a Fine Arts general education requirement.

DANC 194 - Special Topics in Dance (2-4 Credit Hours)

From time to time, according to the expertise of the faculty and the interest of the students, special courses that can address intensive study are arranged and offered. This course can be taken more than once for credit. Courses recently offered are African Hand Drum Ensemble, Yoga: Practice & Theory, and Foundations of Movement. Whether this course substitutes in the major or minor for an "area study," and, if so, for which one, is determined by the Chair. Generally, these courses will fulfill a minor requirement.

DANC 199 - Introductory Topics in Dance (1-4 Credit Hours)

A general category used only in the evaluation of transfer credit.

DANC 210 - Seminar in Production (4 Credit Hours)

Seminar in Production focuses on many aspects of dance concert production. Topics covered include budgeting, marketing, graphic design, costume design/construction, lighting design for dance, box office and house management, video documentation, scheduling and backstage production. Professionals/faculty will guest lecture in the various subfields. Students will collaborate in the production of major department-sponsored events, working as technical crew for evening events. This course demands hands-on real-life learning. Limited readings are assigned. A portfolio of completed work is required.

DANC 222 - African Diaspora Dance Level II (2 Credit Hours)

African/Diaspora Dance II focuses on African-centered forms of dance in one of many possible genres across the African Diaspora.

DANC 232 - Contemporary Dance II (2 Credit Hours)

Contemporary Dance II is intended for students with some formal dance training and expects students to be working at an intermediate level. This is a full-participation movement experience requiring a commitment to attend each class session. Students will develop and advance their self-awareness as movers through sensitivity to dynamics, choreographic phasing clear spatial intention, and articulate, expressive gestures. This class emphasizes clear bodily alignment movement efficiency and flow, whole-body connectivity, flexibility and strength; and the use of breath, momentum, and especially release into gravity to foster ease, expression, and delight in motion. Improvisation is used in partnership with instructor-taught, choreographed material. Attendance at Departmental concerts, short written responses, and 30-minutes of weekly self-directed studio time are required outside of class. Level II is open to students with previous dance experience in any genre. Students are encouraged to consult with the instructor prior to enrollment to determine their experience level.

Prerequisite(s): 100-level movement course(s).

DANC 274 - Cultural Studies (4 Credit Hours)

This course frames dance as a complex political activity made public through various agendas of race, creed, national origin, sexuality, and gender. Students may simultaneously be exposed to poststructuralist epistemology, feminist theory, and power & justice ideologies while they are meeting a survey of historical works from a selected cultural context. In this way, the course is less about coming to know a canon of "masterworks" and more about learning how to interrogate dance in many cultures from multiple perspectives. Students will be expected to engage in movement activities as a method toward an embodied understanding of theory, but will not be evaluated on their movement performance or ability. No dance experience necessary. This course may be crosslisted depending on the specific course content.

DANC 284 - The Art of Dance-Making (4 Credit Hours)

This course focuses on the creation and presentation of assigned short movement studies that focus on principles of dance composition for the concert stage. Past focus has been on the relationship of movement to sound, interrogating the use of music in modern dance history. Through solo, duet and group forms students learn about the compositional elements of space, time, dynamics, flow and shape, discover their own unique movement style, become familiar with how the body works and how it can be expressive, and expand their own definitions of dance. Three fundamental aspects of creative work in movement will be emphasized: movement invention, compositional structure, and creating meaning. A desire to take risks and be transformed, a willingness to use the body as an expressive tool, an eagerness to learn, and willingness to question personal choices are essential for success in this class. An interest, ability and a desire to be physically challenged to work toward expressive clarity in movement, is assumed. This course will explore a range of different topics of choreographic investigation and may be taken more than once for credit. Prerequisite(s): DANC 122 or DANC 132 or consent of instructor.

DANC 294 - Special Topics in Dance (2-4 Credit Hours)

From time to time, according to the expertise of the faculty and the interest of the students, special courses that can address intensive study are arranged and offered. This course can be taken more than once for credit. Courses recently offered are Modernism Re-Composed, Visual Art Making & Movement, Embodiment in/off through Writing and Freestyle & House Dance. Whether this course substitutes in the major or minor for an "area study," and if so for which one, is determined by the Chair. Generally, these courses will fulfill a major or minor requirement.

DANC 299 - Intermediate Topics in Dance (1-4 Credit Hours)

A general category used only in the evaluation of transfer credit.

DANC 332 - Contemporary Dance Level III (2 Credit Hours)

Contemporary Dance III is designed for students with significant experience in modern, postmodern, or contemporary dance training. This course provides the student with the rigorous training required for performance, demands an attitude that anticipates professionalism, and will continue to develop strength, flexibility, endurance, and sensitivity to gravity, momentum and phrasing. A willingness to think broadly about movement, to be open to new perspectives and possibilities and to take risks and be fully engaged without knowing exactly what you are doing will be essential and encouraged. This class will focus on process and will ask students to consider how they move and why. Students will be challenged to discover their own movement potential and methods for accomplishing physical tasks.

Prerequisite(s): One year or two semesters of DANC 232 or consent of instructor.

DANC 361 - Directed Study (1-4 Credit Hours)

Individual pursuits in (1) composition/improvisation/choreography, (2) history/cultural studies/criticism, (3) somatics/systems of movement re-education, or (4) movement analysis/reconstruction, under the supervision of a faculty member. Only those students who have had the initial coursework in that pursuit may apply.

DANC 362 - Directed Study (1-4 Credit Hours)

Individual pursuits in (1) composition/improvisation/choreography, (2) history/cultural studies/criticism, (3) somatics/systems of movement re-education, or (4) movement analysis/reconstruction, under supervision of a faculty member. Only those students who have had the initial coursework in that pursuit may apply.

DANC 363 - Independent Study (1-4 Credit Hours)**DANC 364 - Independent Study (1-4 Credit Hours)****DANC 374 - Somatics I (4 Credit Hours)**

Through various approaches to learning (memorizing factual information, sharing autoethnographic body-centered stories, drawing evocative and descriptive images, and moving through guided developmental movement explorations), students are introduced to anatomy and kinesiology in their own bodies. The course materials approach the body primarily from a first-person stance through different kinds of movement activities in relation to reflexes and developmental material through skeletal, muscular, and neurological systems. Students are required to keep weekly journals, work in small study groups in and out of class, and create and document a "personal practice" (sometimes referred to as a series of personal bodywork sessions) to illustrate their commitment to self-as-home, command of anatomical and kinesiological principles and reasoning, and the application of those processes on self-identified movement inquiries.

DANC 384 - Laban Movement Analysis (4 Credit Hours)

Students explore aspects of Effort, Shape, Space, and Body as defined in the Laban tradition. Materials focus on observing, analyzing, and recording any kind of human movement practice. All students should expect to create movement studies and to motif their work as part of this inquiry. Interest in creating and observing qualities of movement practice is essential. Dance experience is helpful, but not required.

DANC 386 - Reconstruction (4 Credit Hours)

This course functions like a performance course, reconstructing dance movement from a score for inclusion in a public performance. The 4-credit course is distinguished from a 2-credit performance course in that students will be responsible for the reconstruction of the choreography. The work can be performed publicly only with permission of the copyright holder of the dance. Students will meet for the standard 4 hours per week (56 contact hours) as well as be responsible 4 hours/week in rehearsal with other student dancers and work 4 hours/week on assignments. The standard commitment of 12 hours/week in and out-of-class may be "loaded" into Weeks #2-#12 of the semester, allowing the course to end before the semester concludes. Only offered occasionally.

DANC 394 - Special Topics in Dance (2-4 Credit Hours)

From time to time, according to the expertise of the faculty and the interest of the students, special courses that can address intensive study will be arranged and offered. This course can be taken more than once for credit. Courses recently offered are Intro. to African American Theater, Dance Technique for Performance, Contact Improvisation. Whether this course substitutes in the major or minor for an "area study", and if so for which one, is determined by the Chair. Generally, these courses will fulfill a major or minor requirement.

DANC 399 - Advanced Topics in Dance (1-4 Credit Hours)

A general category used only in the evaluation of transfer credit.

DANC 422 - Performance: African/Diaspora (1 Credit Hour)

New and reconstructed works choreographed by faculty and guest artists in African/Diaspora dance are learned by students and rehearsed for public performance. Participation can include attending biweekly company classes and contributing to the production of the performance. Differences in course number refer to genres of performance work. By audition or invitation only. Auditions are typically held during the first two weeks of each semester or immediately preceding a short residency by a guest artist.

Crosslisting: BLST 422.

DANC 432 - Performance: Contemporary Dance (1 Credit Hour)

New and reconstructed works choreographed by faculty and guest artists in modern/postmodern dance are learned by students and rehearsed for public performance. Participation can include attending biweekly company classes and contributing to the production of performance. Differences in course number refer to genres of performance work. By audition or invitation only; auditions are typically held during the first two weeks of each semester or immediately preceding a short residency by a guest artist.

DANC 434 - Performance: Contemporary Dance (Student Project) (0.5 Credit Hours)

Participation as a cast member in the choreographic research process of new and reconstructed works in Modern/Postmodern forms created by students who have completed adequate choreographic studies coursework. Student participants learn and rehearse these student-generated projects for public performance. The project is supervised by faculty. Enrollment is by audition or invitation only. Auditions are arranged by the student choreographer, often during the first two weeks of each semester.

DANC 436 - Denison Dance Company (4 Credit Hours)

This four-credit advanced-level studio course in Dance is a hybrid of technique class and rigorous ensemble laboratory for the development of an original piece of choreography by faculty and/or invited guests, created with collaborative input by dancers. The course is designed for students who want: a) to deepen their understanding and embodiment of intermediate-advanced and advanced Contemporary Dance technique, and b) to apply that learning and their evolving physical, expressive, and artistic expertise to participating in the creation and performance of a new dance work. This new work or works will be performed publicly during, or at the end of, the semester. The creative approach in this course emphasizes whole-self engagement—body, mind, and spirit—through a movement vocabulary characterized by spirals, flow, and articulate gesture. In the four-day per week format, dancers will delve into a focused dance practice that blends active movement learning and repetition, ensemble building, and body care for dancers. Outside work is minimal, however students are expected to schedule one-hour of solo or small group studio time to review, practice and advance their capacity to self-coach. Additionally, students will be expected to carve out time for 1-3 special weekend rehearsals with faculty and any designers or guests (costume, lighting, etc.) plus all required technical and dress rehearsals, and Department of Dance Fall or Spring Concert showtimes.

Prerequisite(s): DANC 122 or 132 or 222 or 232 or consent of instructor.

DANC 442 - Performance: Ballet (1 Credit Hour)

New and reconstructed works choreographed by faculty and guest artists in ballet are learned by students and rehearsed for public performance. Participation can include attending biweekly company classes and contributing to the production of the performance. Differences in course number refer to genres of performance work. By audition or invitation only; auditions are typically held during the first two weeks of each semester or immediately preceding a short residency by a guest artist.

DANC 444 - Performance: Ballet (Student Project) (0.5 Credit Hours)

Participation as a cast member in the choreographic research process of new and reconstructed works in Ballet forms created by students who have completed adequate choreographic studies coursework. Student participants learn and rehearse these student-generated projects for public performance. The project is supervised by faculty. Enrollment is by audition or invitation only. Auditions are arranged by the student choreographer, often during the first two weeks of each semester.

DANC 451 - Senior Research (4 Credit Hours)

This course, offered every fall, is designed to address the research and methodological needs of all senior dance majors and those minors choosing to undertake independent research in this or another department. The integration of movement and analytical course work through the intensive examination of a specific interest is the foundation for the senior dance major's own research. This investigation includes methodologies from books like *Researching Dance* by Hanstein and Fraleigh and *Contemporary Choreography* by Butterworth and Wildschut. This investigation, serving as preparation for DANC 452, is closely guided by the faculty. All students in the course conclude by writing a substantial prospectus or grant proposal including a focused artist or research statement and review of the relevant literature. All majors are required to take both semesters of Senior Research (DANC 451 and 452).

DANC 452 - Senior Research (4 Credit Hours)

This course, offered every spring, is required of all dance majors. This course focuses on the completion of a senior research project and integrates movement and analytical course work through the intensive examination of a specific interest. This course is the foundation for the senior dance major's own research. During the course of the semester's work, each student will write up a significant dance research experiment, produce several excerpts of historical works in concert, create and produce an original choreographic work, or comment on a period in dance's history or a sociological movement in dance, or the like. The resultant document/performance will be presented publicly for an identified audience in partial fulfillment of the degree requirements. Open to dance majors only.

Prerequisite(s): DANC 451.