New Course Request

Indiana University

1. School/Division: THEATRE/DANCE
2. Academic Subject Code: THTR-D
3. Course Number: 205 (must be cleared with University Enrollment Services)
4. Instructor: CAROLYN AINE-JOHNSON
5. Course Title: CHOREOGRAPHY
6. First time this course is to be offered (Semester/Year): FALL 2009
7. Credit Hours: Fixed at 3.0 or Variable from to
8. Is this course to be graded S-F (only)? Yes No X
9. Is variable title approval being requested? Yes No X
10. Course description (not to exceed 100 words) for Bulletin publication:

    This course will teach students to study, analyze, and apply the basic elements that are essential for a practical theory of choreography. Students will learn to create choreography for solos and group pieces performed on stage and in other spaces.

    PREREQUISITES: 4 CREDITS OF DANCE TECHNIQUE CLASSES.

    WILL SEEK APPROVAL FOR IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

11. Lecture Contact Hours: Fixed at 1.0 or Variable from to
12. Non-Lecture Contact Hours: Fixed at 2.0 or Variable from to
13. Estimated enrollment: 20, of which 20 percent are expected to be graduate students
14. Frequency of scheduling: R will this course be required for majors? N/A FAL SEMESTER
15. Justification for new course: REQUIRED FOR DANCE MINOR THAT THE DEPARTMENT
16. Are the necessary reading materials currently available in the appropriate library? YES
17. Please append a complete outline of the proposed course, and indicate instructor (if known), textbooks, and other materials. SEE ATTACHED.
18. If this course overlaps with existing courses, please explain with which courses it overlaps and whether this overlap is necessary, desirable, or unimportant.
19. A copy of every new course proposal must be submitted to departments, schools, or divisions in which there may be overlap of the new course with existing courses or areas of strong concern, with instructions that they send comments directly to the originating Curriculum Committee. Please append a list of departments, schools, or divisions thus consulted.

Submitted by: [Signature] Date 1-27-09

Department Chairman/Division Director

[Signature] Date

Dean of Graduate School (when required)

[Signature] Date

Approved by: [Signature] Date 3-17-09

Dean

[Signature] Date

Chancellor/Vice-President

[Signature] Date

University Enrollment Services

After School/Division approval, forward the last copy (without attachments) to University Enrollment Services for initial processing, and the remaining four copies and attachments to the Campus Chancellor or Vice-President.
New Required Course for the Dance Minor

Choreography – THTR-D205 (3 credit hours)


Justification: This course will be of major significance for the student taking a Dance Minor. While a few dancers are fortunate to hire a choreographer to create dances for them, most dancers must compose their own. In fact, many organizations such as schools, churches, theatres, swing choirs, opera companies and many others need choreographers. Choreographers are sometimes called upon to compose a dance piece for commercial purposes, such as selling a product on television.

Choreographers may have the freedom to create whatever they wish; however, for particular occasions, dances must be choreographed to meet distinctive requirements. Often, a dancer must fulfill two major duties, that of dance composer and performer.

Choreography (dance composition) is an extremely underestimated skill. It is not a matter of linking together an assortment of steps to make a dance, any more than grouping together several chords or notes, will make a song - at least not something of quality. Like music composers, dance composers must be highly trained in the principles of their craft. This is the reason some professionals use the term “dance composition” interchangeably with “choreography.” Another similarity between composing music and composing dance, is that both require a vast amount of time for quality work. Generally, one minute of dance takes approximately two hours to compose. To dance scholars, dance composition has been likened to writing a paper. The author (choreographer) must have a clear intent, must choose the most appropriate words (movements) and organize them in such a way that they communicate to the reader (audience). Doris Humphrey (1895-1958), world renowned dancer, teacher, dance composer and author of The Art of Making Dances, bemoans the fact that dance has lagged behind music and painting in creating a “theory of craftsmanship” based upon “intellectual analysis.” She states that dance has been primarily created instinctively (16).

For one trained in choreography, there is less of a temptation to resort to novelty and tricks for the sake of entertainment alone or to bore the audience with repetitious movements and patterns. Consideration of the historical period of the dance(s) and the ethnicity of the characters are of paramount importance. In our culturally diverse world today, a conscientious dance composer is well-prepared for the task at hand by researching these matters. While many ethnic and period dances must undergo a certain amount of transformation in order to be appropriate for the stage, it is important that the dance composer maintains a good portion of their characteristic elements. Otherwise, the dance may dazzle the audience, but becomes a travesty both historically and culturally. Ignorance is not bliss. I attended a musical that was set in the eighteenth century and was horrified when dancers began performing a waltz that did not even exist until the mid-nineteenth century. While the audience was ignorant of this fact and enjoyed the dance, this play became the laughing stock of the professional dance community. Humphrey maintains that one who is trained in dance composition is able to “stop vulgarity from creeping in” which prevents
a mishmash of style . . .” This person “shuns the cliché” . . . and “knows the difference between valid theatricality and tricks” (23).

Another justification for offering this course is that it is listed by the National Association of Schools of Dance as an important area of study. This can be found in their handbook for 2007-2008, under Appendix II.B., Advisory Statement on Undergraduate Minors in Dance, page 130. Section C. states “minors require 15-24 semester hours and involve a range of dance studies from areas such as performance, choreography, theoretical studies, and history.” This course will fulfill the choreography requirement.

Course Description: This course will teach students to learn, analyze and apply the basic elements that are essential for a practical theory of choreography. Students will learn to create choreography for solos and group pieces to be performed on stage and in other spaces. Prerequisite: 4 credits of a dance technique class.

Brief Outline of Course and Activities:

1. Students will read the text and other assigned articles on Dance Composition.
2. Students will observe and analyze choreography by observing films.
3. Students will participate in the following dance composition exercises in class:
   a. Students will create shapes: how the body forms or designs itself in space. The dance composer may accomplish this task by focusing on the linear, two or three-dimensional, planal or plastic shapes.
   b. Students will move through floor patterns: various pathways that are created on the dance space; in acting terms this would be defined as blocking.
   c. Students will try different design motifs: this involves symmetry and asymmetry forms both for solo and group dance pieces.
   d. Students will utilize different dynamics: a quality of action that includes tension and tempo that results in a movement that is smooth or sharp.
   e. Students will listen to and create various rhythms: timing of action in solos or group dance pieces.
4. Students will listen to lectures and participate in discussions concerning:
   a. Special compositional principles for the stage
   b. Special compositional principles for other appropriate dance spaces (classrooms, outdoor events, banquet halls, churches, etc.).
   c. Choreographic considerations for dance concerts, musical theatre productions, swing choirs and churches have different choreographic principles that must be applied.
5. Students will choreograph solo and group dances.

Goals and Objectives:
At the end of the course students will be able to:

1. Compose dances for the stage and other appropriate dance spaces.
2. Critique dance compositions with an objective eye.
3. Facilitate others who may wish to choreograph.
4. Collaborate with others on choreography.
Assignment Percentages:
- Quizzes from lectures and text: 10%
- Choreography (exercises assigned) 40%
- Midterm Choreography Project 20%
- Final Exam (choreography Project and questions from text) 30%

Grading Scale Final grades will be based on the final point total:
- A = 93-100%
- A- = 90-92.9%
- B+ = 87-89.0%
- B = 83-86.9%
- C+ = 77-79.9%
- C = 73-76.9%
- B- = 80-82.9%
- C- = 70-72.9%
- D+ = 67-69.9%
- D = 60-62.9%
- D- = 60-62.9%
- F = 0-59.9%

Academic Honesty:
All students are expected to adhere to ethical standards as stated in the IUSB Code of Ethics at: http://www.dsa.indiana.edu/Code/.

Disabilities:
Please contact me or the Raclin School of the Arts office concerning any disabilities or medical information that you need to share with me. You may also call Disabled Student Services at (574) 237-4479 for more information.

Religious Observances:
If you have special religious observances, contact me so arrangements can be made according to your need.

Course Outline:
Week 1: Introduction
  Chapter 1: “The Sleeping Beauty,” an historical overview of how dances are created
  Chapter 2: “Choreographers are Special People” discusses the responsibilities of a choreographer

Week 2:
  Chapter 3 “Sources of Subject Matter -- What to Dance About?”
  Chapter 4 “The Theme”

Week 3:
  Chapter 5 “The Ingredients and the Tools”
  Chapter 6 “Design Part 1: Symmetry and Asymmetry”
  Exercises to create symmetrical and asymmetrical poses for the solo dancer

Week 4
  Exercises to create symmetrical and asymmetrical dance combinations for the solo dancer
  Exercises to create symmetrical and asymmetrical poses for small groups
  Exercises to create symmetrical and asymmetrical dance combinations for small groups

Week 5:
  Chapter 7 “Design Part 2: For One and More Bodies”
  Chapter 8 “Design Part 3: The Phrase”
Week 6  Chapter 9  “Design Part 4: The Stage Space”

**Midterm Exam:**
Show and discuss student dance composition assignments of solos

Week 7  Chapter 10 “Design Part 5: Small Groups”
Show and discuss student dance composition assignments for small groups

Week 8  Show and discuss student dance composition assignments for small groups

Week 9  Chapter 11 “Dynamics
Chapter 12 “Rhythm”
Show and discuss student dance composition assignments

Week 10  Chapter 13 “Motivation and Gesture”
Chapter 14 “Words”
Show and discuss student dance composition assignments

Week 11  Chapter 15 “Music”
Show and discuss student dance composition assignments

Week 12  Continuation of showing and discussing student dance compositions.

Week 13  Chapter 16 “Sets and Props”
Show and discuss student dance composition assignments

Week 14  Chapter 17 “Form”
Chapter 18 “Checklist”
Show and discuss student dance composition assignments

Week 15  Show and discuss student dance composition assignments and review for final exam

Week 16  **Final Exam:** Choreography Projects and questions from text.