

The Dance Technique Sequence

THR 40 | Beginning Modern Dance Technique

This class is designed to be taken during the first year of study; however, dance majors may opt to retake the course as many times as they need to fulfill the technique class requirement. This class introduces students to contemporary dance and ballet terminology, and covers basic movement concepts such as jumping, turning, floor work, and articulation of the body. Concepts around phrasing and musicality are introduced. Class conduct and self-discipline is stressed at this level. Students are exposed to foundational concepts such as: core awareness and core support, groundedness, freedom of movement, body safety (basic anatomical and kinesiological principles), and rhythm. Some improvisation is explored and students are asked to attend live dance performances.

3 UNITS / FALL AND SPRING / AUDITION 1ST DAY

THR 141 | Intermediate Modern Dance Technique

This class is designed for students who wish to continue progressing through the technique sequence. Enrollment is based on dance ability. Dance terminology is expanded at this level. Students are taught to differentiate and articulate body parts and body patterns. They are encouraged to formulate their own questions about their technique training and explore complex, and perhaps contradictory, movement ideas. Basic anatomy and anatomical principles for dynamic alignment are explored further. Students practice skills using repetition and transformation of material. Increase in concentration and endurance during the course work is expected. Phrasing and musicality is deepened to include working with more complex rhythms and tempos. Students are taught self-motivation strategies through task-based exercises and improvisation scores. Partnering is introduced focusing on increased awareness of the body in space—in proximity and distance to others.

3 UNITS / FALL AND SPRING / AUDITION 1ST DAY

THR 142 | Advanced Modern Dance Technique

In this course, students continue to expand and reinforce dance terminology. Key terms and concepts are explored more fully through writing, discussion, and hands-on work. Longer combinations are taught to build overall strength and endurance. Students are expected to know the difference between active weight (defined as strength and fluidity co-existing) and passive weight (defined as collapsed and unsupported effort). Students work with teachers to identify weaknesses and habits that do not serve expressive dancing. Students build confidence and knowledge around the concept of “the core” allowing width, breadth, and expansion through the body. Basic anatomy/anatomical principles for dynamic alignment are continued. Students fully integrate the concept of groundedness, especially developing a deeper understanding of the pelvis as the power center. The quality, rhythm, texture, and transitions found within music are highlighted. Students are exposed to increased complexity of floor patterns, direction changes, and level changes. Students demonstrate the ability to perform inversions/handstands and floor work. Improvisation skills are taught as well as compositional strategies.

3 UNITS / FALL AND SPRING / AUDITION 1ST DAY

— SEE REVERSE SIDE —

Dance & Performance Studies Curricular Progression

Year 1 Introduces students to contemporary dance technique, studies-based courses, and stagecraft/design. Students are encouraged to meet with the faculty undergraduate advisor and the undergraduate academic advisor to plan the trajectory of their coursework. In this first year, students become familiar with the TDPS community.

Year 2 Students continue training in contemporary dance technique at the appropriate level. Students begin the choreography sequence, prepare for upper-division performance studies courses, and deepen understanding of stagecraft (choosing an area of study for lab work). Students are encouraged to audition for dance and theater shows such as the choreography showcase, Lab Run, and/or workshop performances, after completion of their crew/lab assignments.

Year 3 Students continue training in contemporary dance technique at the appropriate level. Ideally the choreography sequence is completed so that students may apply for 195/196/197 projects to be completed in the fourth year. History, theoretical, literary, and/or cultural connections are deepened as students move through courses of study. Students are expected to begin to articulate critical analysis of performance and apply this knowledge to upper-division studies. Students are encouraged to audition for dance and theater productions, such as the choreography showcase, Lab Run, workshop performances, Berkeley Dance Project, or other TDPS productions, after completion of their crew/lab assignments.

Year 4 Students continue training in contemporary dance technique at the appropriate level. Students are critically engaged with performance studies and dance studies concepts and are able to apply this information to practical classes. Students focus on electives that hone and develop specific skills and interests. Collaborative work, independent studies, honors projects, internships, and/or pedagogy training are encouraged in the fourth year. Students are also highly encouraged to audition for, and/or apply design or choreographic skills, to dance and theater productions. It is expected that all crew/lab assignments have been completed prior to the fourth year.