TITLE: FUNDAMENTALS OF MOVEMENT & SOMATICS OF DANCE

PREREQUISITE: THE 205 and 207 required.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Biomechanical principles related to the skeletal and muscular systems with explorations and applications as they relate to the dancer's training.

TEXT REQUIRED:

(Note – Several additional handouts will be provided in class throughout the semester.)

COURSE OVERVIEW: This course is designed to introduce dance students to the basics of human anatomy (the science of the human body) and kinesiology (science of human motion), providing a broad overview in each of these disciplines. Studies will focus on the skeletal and muscular systems, as these are most significant to developing a basic understanding of dance movement. A second area of emphasis will be on the growing interest and development in the study of somatics: that which relates to and affects the body. Course material will be broad in nature, providing students with a sound, yet universal experience, preparing them for further, more advanced studies in the future.

Dance kinesiology and basic anatomy will provide the core study for this course, with an additional emphasis on current somatic techniques such as the Alexander Technique, Pilates, Yoga, Feldenkrais Methodology, and Bartinieff Fundamentals. The course is designed to guide students in developing a greater awareness of the body and its movement potential, and to provide skills that improve dance technique, enhance performance, and prevent injuries. Self-awareness, personal growth, sound anatomical information, and the introduction of different body therapies will lead the student to an increased understanding of movement habits and an enhanced physical performance.

Realizing the Democratic Ideal: The teacher education component within the School of Theatre at Illinois State University is committed to preparing future educators who promote a high level of competence and integrity in practicing their profession. Graduates will contribute to the realization of the democratic ideal by providing excellence in
education thus enhancing the quality of life potential for all learners. This course contributes fundamentally to the mission realizing the democratic ideal through attention to a deeper understanding of the knowledge and materials of dance.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**
Through successful completion of THE 204, students have the opportunity to develop and demonstrate knowledge, skills, and competencies in the following areas:

1. Human anatomy and kinesiology, specifically as applied to the dancer's training.
2. Identification of bony landmarks of the skeletal system, joints and joint actions, and the movement potential/restrictions from their placement within the body.
3. Basic understanding of the muscular structure and the actions of specific groups of muscles.
4. Basic biomechanical principles affecting the structure and function of the musculoskeletal system.
5. Theory and practice in a variety of somatic approaches with a focus on improving the use of the body.
6. General information on the Alexander Technique, Feldenkrais Methodology, Yoga, and the Pilates Method and their application to the dancer and the dancer's training (other somatic approaches may be studied/presented).
7. Use of imagery and how this is applied within the dancer's training.
8. Understanding of the vital integrative connections between the body, the mind, and the movement, through a variety of approaches, experiences and information.
9. The ability to identify correct alignment and how it is achieved through basic postural analysis.

**COURSE CONTENT/OUTLINE:**

I) **INTRO TO HUMAN ANATOMY AND KINESIOLOGY**
   a. Skeletal System
   b. Muscular System
   c. Use of Muscle groups
   d. Effects of Gravity
   e. Postural Analysis
   f. Application to Dance Movement

II) **STUDY OF SOMATIC APPROACHES**
   a. Alexander Technique
   b. Bartenieff Fundamentals (time permitted)
   c. Pilates Method
   d. Feldenkrais Methodology
   e. Yoga

**REQUIRED STUDENT TASKS AND EVALUATION:**

- **50 pts.** Classroom Work and Participation- Including all regularly scheduled course sessions and one off-campus experience outside of regular class time(see below)
- **100** Journal, Written Assignments, and Selected Readings- (see below)-Thursday, April 15
- **50** Quizzes (see below)- Given throughout the semester (expect “pop” quizzes)
- **100** Final Project – (see below)-Thursday, April 22
- **200** Written Examinations
  - Midterm Exam- Thursday, March 4
  - Final Exam- Thursday, May 6 at 10:00am

**500 pts. total**
(Note – No late papers/assignments/projects will be accepted…be responsible…be timely in your work!)

**GRADING SCALE:**

100-90%=A  89-80%=B  79-70%=C  69-60%=D  59-0%=F

1. **Consistent Classroom Participation**
   Each student is expected to consistently attend, actively participate in each class, and arrive promptly. The nature of the class material requires the student’s consistent presence and participation; it is in these sessions that the information is presented and where experiential work is done. There will be one On-Site somatic experience (i.e. off-campus) that each student will be required to attend. The experience will be outside of regularly scheduled class time and arranged within the first few weeks of the course.

2. **Journal, Written Assignments, and Selected Readings**
   The journal is primarily for the student, and provides a place to store lecture notes, handouts, and individual research conducted throughout the semester. In addition, it is used as an outlet for collecting thoughts about activities presented each week, keeping track of corrections given, and a means to encourage each student to think about what has been experienced. Written assignments to coincide with lecture material and exercises/activities will be provided throughout the semester to encourage additional research and practice on presented topics. Each student will be responsible for all reading assignments and handouts, and understanding their significance and application to the field of dance performance/education. Journals maybe subject to “check-ups” throughout the semester before the final due date.

3. **Quizzes**
   Anatomy/Kinesiology quizzes will be given throughout the semester that will underline anatomical terms, the skeletal system, the muscular system, joint/muscle actions, and postural considerations. Somatic approaches will also be included on quizzes as they are presented throughout the semester.

4. **Final Project**
   This project will examine one of the major body therapies/somatic approaches (as approved by the instructor) and will focus specifically on how it is applicable to one's dance training. This project will include a postural analysis and commentary on how this approach would address one's specific alignment needs. Detailed guideline regarding the project will be discussed and distributed in class.

5. **Written Examinations**
   Mid-term exam and final comprehensive exam will cover all course material provided throughout the semester (dates already listed).

**ATTENDANCE INFORMATION:**
Please inform the instructor if you will be absent due to a death in the family, religious holiday, serious injury, or university sanctioned activity. **Communication with the professor concerning individual attendance, with regard to consistent classroom participation will be the responsibility of the student.** Class will start promptly at 10:10am. Do not arrive late or plan to leave early. Make-up classes are not allowed for lecture courses.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**
- Please turn off all cellular devices during class sessions. Be respectful of your teacher and fellow classmates.
- Attire – Students should wear clothing that is conducive and appropriate to dance class on days when movement (study of somatic approaches, postural analysis, etc.) will be included in the class
discussion. The instructor will inform the class of these days in advance. Speak with the instructor if you have questions regarding attire.

- Class will meet in two different locations throughout the semester (see top of syllabus). Please be aware of which location you are meeting in on any given day.
- Specific class sessions will be devoted to exploring body therapies and somatic approaches which entail using tactile cues (i.e. hands-on approach). Please speak with the instructor in advance if you have questions concerning this matter.
- No grades will be distributed via e-mail during the course of the semester (even at the request/permission of the student). Every effort to present grades in a reasonable and timely manner will be made.
- Individual conferences with the instructor are highly encouraged to discuss class material and aid in better understanding the complex material that will be introduced. The formation of small study groups is also highly encouraged.
- Students will be responsible to consistently check the instructor’s website for new information, schedule changes, etc. You will find this information at [http://www.ilstu.edu/~ssemoni/](http://www.ilstu.edu/~ssemoni/). Go to the Teaching Page and the THE 204 link.

**Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:**
Illinois State University is an institution concerned with helping all of our students feel welcome, and with helping all students learn and develop to their full potential. To help meet these goals, any student needing to arrange a reasonable accommodation for a documented disability should contact Disability Concerns at 350 Fell Hall, 438-5853 (voice), 438-8620 (TDD).

*(ALL INFORMATION ON SYLLABUS IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITH ADVANCE NOTICE.)*