

NYU Steinhard School of Culture, Education and Human Development
Department of Music and Performing Arts Professions
Dance Education Program
Fall 2009

SYLLABUS

Advanced Dance Practicum: Methods of Dance Assessment
E89.2077.002

Instructor: John-Mario Sevilla
September 8 – December 16, 2008
4:55 – 6:35 p.m.
15 1:40 sessions

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Course Description

As dancers standing or moving before the instructor and mirror in a studio or perform in front of an audience, we know that certain kinds of assessment are immanent throughout the day-to-day, moment-to-moment discipline of dance. All forms of evaluation and testing explicitly and necessarily intend to define and record levels of aptitude and achievement, however, a few fundamental questions of education may be overlooked in the design and implementation of a dance assessment program. In this course, we will explore those tacit understandings and expectations. The course will also strive to understand the tools and instruments of assessment, as we attempt to embody and design them organically in teaching and learning. We will also envision how assessment can make an educator more reflective, responsive and effective to meet the needs of the students, school, community and his or her own teaching practice.

Rationale

Long before the implementation of No Child Left Behind (2001), assessment and evaluation have provoked passionate conversations in and about education, particularly in the arts. For arts educators, there is a disconnect between the factual knowledge that standardized testing such as NCLB urges and the creativity, diversity, critical consciousness and the embodied affective, social learning that holistic education promotes. I assert there is a certain disconnect between NCLB and a typical deliverance of a dance education. The ramifications are real. In order to connect the values and experiences in the classroom with the expectations of the world beyond his or her studio walls, the dance educator needs to explore and address the gap between these various contexts and theoretical frameworks that affect learning and understanding.

Assessment provides the opportunity to accomplish a variety of educational goals, some of them very explicit and others somewhat subtle. When performed intelligently and imaginatively, with

care and transparency, assessment may empower the student to become engaged in and take responsibility for his or her learning. For the teacher, assessment may encourage clarity in teaching, reviewing and communicating content and methods to those within and outside the classroom or studio. Holistic assessment among educators and students may build a community of engaged risk-takers who are constantly seeking solutions to teaching and learning challenges facing them.

Assessments teach. They teach what adults seem to value. And they define and uphold a given field. Thus, when the dance educator articulates content standards and student achievements through assessment, he or she validates dance as a significant subject area that is essential to human knowledge. When such assessment goals are measurable and achieved, the teacher promotes dance as a discreet discipline that is critical for human development. He or she expresses that dance, like any subject area in the school, belongs in the curriculum and the cultural life of the student.

Goals

Through committed engagement in discussion, written assignments, reflection and presentations, students will:

- 1) Identify and explore diverse
 - a. standards of dance and dance education, personal and collective goals
 - b. personal, institutional and cultural contexts of dance assessment;
- 2) Differentiate and apply models and tools of
 - a. measurement, evaluation and performance
 - b. reflection and communication;
- 3) Synthesize these experiences into the design of
 - a. reflective portfolio of the course materials
 - b. culminating dance assessment proposal.

Course Requirements for 3 credit hours

(For variable credit hour requirements, see item 6).

- 1) *Attendance, Punctuality, Timeliness, Classroom Assignments and Discussion.* You must attend all classes; turn in all assignments and be on time; remain for the entire class; always exhibit professional and respectful behavior; and participate in all classroom discussions.
 - a. *Attendance:* Only one excused absence is permitted. Each additional absence will decrease the cumulative grade by a 5% increment. Only one absence is allowed without make-up. Other absences must be made-up in arrangement with the instructor. Email the instructor in advance if you will be late or absent. Arrange for a classmate to gather course materials and take notes for you.
 - b. *Punctuality:* You are expected to be ready at the beginning of the class and remain for the entire scheduled time. Three late arrivals, three early departures, or any combination of three late arrivals and early departures will count as an

absence. Late written assignments are reduced by one letter grade. Late written assignments will be acceptable for only seven days after the due date. Assignments submitted after seven days will not receive a grade.

- c. *Classroom assignments:* You are expected to complete every classroom assignment.
 - d. *Discussion:* See attached Rubric.
- 2) *Interview with a Professional.* Each of you will interview a practicing dance educator. You and a classroom partner will develop a list of questions to ask each of your practicing dance educator regarding his or her tools, strategies and challenges in assessing understanding. You will schedule and conduct the interview preferably in person. You and your partner will compare and contrast your findings and submit a minimum 5-page summary (APA style preferred). Due October 20. The paper will compare and contrast the following questions, among the other questions that you and your classroom partner formulate:
- a. What tools and strategies are the dance educators using effectively in the classroom? Discuss how and why they are working.
 - b. What are the challenges and obstacles that hinder assessing or evaluating a student?
 - c. Choose one topic from one of the assigned readings and place it in the context of these dance educators and their classroom(s). How are your dance educators fulfilling or overlooking this topic in their learning environment? Analyze why you think this is so.
 - d. What aspects of your educators' assessment practice do you wish to imbed in your teaching? Explain why.
- 3) *Assessment Proposal.* You will design a lesson plan that articulates and highlights a strategy to assess understanding of a topic in dance education determined and defined by you. The proposal will have two formats:
- a. Oral presentation or performative demonstration (maximum 10 minutes) on December 1 or 8;
 - b. Written design (5-page minimum, APA style preferred) due December 8 to the Dance Education office.
- 4) *Portfolio.* You will maintain a collection of all artifacts collected (notes, readings, weekly assignments, handouts, journal reflections, inspirations and questions, Interviews with Professional, and Assessment Proposal) from this course. You will be asked to organize and design this data in a portfolio that demonstrates your inquiry and understanding. Due December 15. You may be invited to submit a copy of your Portfolio as an exemplar for future Dance Assessment resources.
- 5) *Assessment and Evaluation.* The final grade will synthesize the data (a collection of self, peer and teacher evaluations) employing the following percentage values:
Attendance, Punctuality, Timeliness and Participation =25%

Interview with a Professional = 25%
Assessment Proposal = 25%
Process/Reflective Portfolio = 25%

Grading:

94-100%	A	Exemplary
90-93%	A-	Excellent
87-89%	B+	Extremely Good
84-86%	B	Very Good
80-83%	B-	Good
77-79%	C+	Satisfactory
74-76%	C	Satisfactory
70-73%	C-	Nearing Satisfactory
67-69%	D+	Minimum Passing Grade
65-66%	D	Minimum Passing Grade
0-64%	F	Failure

Incomplete grades are not a grading option. Under exceptional circumstances, such as those with a serious illness or other emergency, and at the discretion of the course instructor, an incomplete grade may be granted, based on the student's performance throughout the course of the semester.

6) Variable Credit Hour Requirements.

- 1 credit: 1) Attendance, Punctuality, Timeliness and Participation = 50%
 3) Assessment Proposal = 50%
- 2 credits: 1) Attendance, Punctuality, Timeliness and Participation = 33%
 2) Interview with a Professional = 33%
 3) Assessment Proposal = 34%

Required Resource

Anderson, L.W., Bloom, B.S., and Krathwohl, D.R. (2001). A taxonomy for learning, teaching and assessing: A revision of Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives. Longman Publishing Group.

Policies

Any student attending NYU who needs an accommodation due to a chronic, psychological, visual, mobility and/or learning disability, or is deaf or hard of hearing should register with the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at 212 998-4980, 240 Greene Street, www.nyu.edu/csd.

Please refrain from all cell phone use during class. Please clean up after any food or drink. Please be familiar with all university policies on Academic Integrity and responsibilities of a student.

Schedule (subject to change)

Class #1, September 8

Topic: *Introductions*

Class #2, September 15

Topic: *Assessment of and for learning: Stakeholders and/or students*

Class #3, September 22

Topic: *Purposes, contexts and consequences; Aims, goals and objectives*

Class #4, September 29

Topic: *Aims, goals and objectives; criteria*

Class #5, October 6

Topic: *Designing a portfolio, part 1 (collecting data)*

Class #6, October 13

Topic: *Designing a portfolio, part 2 (conversations about data)*

Class #7, October 20

Topic: *Rubrics*

Due: *Interview with a Professional*

Class #8, October 27

Topic: *Authentic assessment*

Class #9, November 3

Topic: *Teacher reflection; curriculum and program evaluation*

Class #10, November 10

Topic: *Integrating the parts*

Class #11, November 17

Topic: *The Great Dance Education Debate #1: "Resolved: Student achievement in dance artistry can be assessed by standardized testing."*

Class #12, November 24

Topic: *The Great Dance Education Debate #2: "Resolved: Student achievement in dance artistry can be assessed by standardized testing."*

Class #13, December 1

Topic: *Presentations of Assessment Proposals*

Due: *Written Assessment Proposal*

Class #14, December 8
Topic: Presentations of Assessment Proposals

Class #15, December 15
Due: Portfolio