

Over the past 5 years at Hunter (and 1 at Queens College), I have taught a wide range of courses for CUNY students, from the most introductory level dance course for non-majors to the Hunter Dance Program's most theoretically complex and writing-intensive, graduate level Aesthetics class. I have taught required courses for the major including Contemporary Technique 1, Composition, Lecture Demonstration, and Dance History, as well as the MA Performance/Presentation class. I helped develop the MA, BA/MA and proposed MFA curriculum, writing course proposals for creative, theoretical and technology-based classes. I am currently working on our revised BA curriculum, developing a program that reflects Hunter's strategic vision and the demands of a changing field. I have mentored many students in their choreographic work and regularly write letters of recommendation.

For every course, whether 100- or 700-level, classroom, studio or blended, three governing principles shape my teaching practice as well as student discussions and outside coursework:

- Autonomous but accountable (to oneself and to a community of learners).
- Rigorous (in physical/intellectual labor and reflective/analytical processes).
- Relevant (to personal/professional goals and the world).

I believe I am preparing my students for any possible future; while some have already gone on to professional careers dancing with major, recognized companies and choreographers, others have become nurses and teachers. I aim to instill a work ethic built on personal responsibility. I teach methodologies and work place habits that are transferrable across the disciplines of dancer/choreographer and into the post-collegiate landscape of artists, administrators, educators, and organizers. I build regular self-assessment and self-directed research projects in every course; this applies to a course with weekly, touring performances to high schools; one that explores the cultural relevance of various dance forms; or another in which students present original, choreographic works.

When teaching contemporary technique, I work to establish the studio as a laboratory for somatically informed research. While each dancer individually deepens a personal knowledge base about his or her own "body as instrument" (including both capabilities and needs), I point out that a dancer's research is enhanced through a shared, group pursuit. Students are asked both to develop greater internal awareness and to hone their skills as outside observers. They must focus on themselves and their peers, both to aid in a shared space of supportive learning and to understand that mindful observation and reflection are equally important in developing advanced and sustainable skills alongside repetitive physical training. I base my physical warm-up on improvisation and Bartenieff fundamentals. Students read, reflect, write and practice physical examples of the ideas presented. I introduce related vocabulary and reinforce their studio practice with accessible technologies - regular online assignments and videos of their dancing at midterm and finals. I encourage students to identify their own working patterns and develop a practice of intellectual and physical rigor.

Many of our students arrive to Hunter with little training or from highly teacher-directed, trick-oriented, competition studios. I have found improvisation and the floor-based warm up help to neutralize these differences while also grounding the students in recognizable material. At the lower levels, introducing basic classroom etiquette and exposing them to the idea of higher learning as something more than mimicking in rote repetition is essential. They need to be hard workers in the studio, but must also develop the ability to establish and maintain a regular non-classroom habit of practice and maintenance. They must also understand that context and inquiry aid in the shift from training to education. At higher levels, I add the focus on dance as a performing art. I challenge students to increase the diversity of improvisational choices; to strengthen rapid acquisition of new movement material, while honing clarity of execution and exploring individual expressivity; and to refine their descriptive language. The underlying questions: Can they learn choreography quickly, can they perform it back with attention to detail and personal ownership in front of others, and can they speak to one another about what they're seeing? I would note that the Contemporary Technique 1 course enrollment has doubled since I began teaching the course, so that we now have 2 full sections.

As my observations show, there is an active exchange of ideas among the students. Even in a lecture-style history or aesthetics class I try to keep analysis and discussion at the forefront. I also require students to consider and research areas of related dance practice that is of personal interest to them. In final research projects, I ask students to deepen their engagement with material that they have previously taken for granted or thought they were authorities on. They synthesize the theoretical or historic frameworks presented in the course

with material of relevance. Dance programs across the country face a constant tension between an emphasis on the traditional canon material and the growing scholarship on contemporary practices and inclusion of previously excluded communities. With the incredibly diverse student population at Hunter/CUNY, that tension dominates the classroom discourse. Requiring students to conduct mentored, independent research has been my way of negotiating that tension. In that way, they are engaged in autonomous, rigorous, and relevant explorations that develop analytical viewing, reading, and writing skills followed up with a public speaking and presentation practice.

I aim to balance a professional-reality perspective with a hopeful view of the value of dance in the world. In my Lecture Demonstration course, undergrads are required to attend a week of daily, intensive, 8-hour rehearsals prior to the start of the fall semester. In this course, they glimpse the possible realities of a professional career – auditions, casting disappointments, learning repertory in a short rehearsal period, negotiating the current need for eccentric abilities as one shifts between styles of dance, dancing during early mornings, in changing venues and for critical (NYC Public High School) audiences. My LecDem students must also read biographies or memoirs of dancers to understand the level of struggle that the successful few once negotiated. In my graduate courses, I provide my students with material that they can bring back to their own classrooms, studio practice, mentoring situations or to the stage or academic conferences.

In my various other courses, I include basic and available technology-based assignments. All of my courses include online assignments. My graduate courses have included online, asynchronous course meetings to facilitate an effective level of contact for students who are also full-time teachers in the NYC K-12 system. I introduced the regular videotaping of student choreographed showings into the Dance Program, have updated our website into new Content Management Systems twice since my arrival, initiated an active social media engagement for the Hunter College Dance Company, have mentored several Independent Study students interested in technology and production, and am currently mentoring a CUNY BA student with an arts and technology focus and co-mentoring a student working group on technology integration for the program.

I try to bring my creative and professional research into the Hunter Dance Program on a constant basis. I believe my service related involvement in the dance community (on boards, advisory councils, grant and awards committees) has allowed me to attune my students to the concerns of practicing artists. When I have researched, spoken on or facilitated the various higher ed and dance panels and projects - Critical Correspondence's The University Project, Dance Theater Workshop's *Relevance of the University* panels, and Movement Research's *Evolving Pedagogies* Studies Project – I have been able to bring those national perspectives back into our curricular thinking for the future and have shared Hunter's unique place in that landscape.

I spend a substantial amount of non-classroom time with my students, working with them on their course-related concerns or addressing choreographic, performance or professional questions. In addition to many hallway conversations, I use online responses to their self-assessments to provide every student with individual attention that may not always be available in the limited class and studio time allotted. I have regularly included students in my research and performance process (detailed in my research statement) and have maintained consistent attempts to grow an alumni involvement on campus including maintaining a *Tech 1 Project* that brings a graduate, usually about 1-2 years out, back each semester to choreograph for new students and a recent Homecoming workshop and concert. My mentorship does not end when a student leaves my class or graduates from the program. As an active member of New York's dance community, I wish to serve as a bridge between these dedicated emerging artists and the professional community that will benefit from their presence in it.