

# University City High School: Department of Dance

## COURSE SYLLABUS 2020-2021

Grade Level: 9-12

**Beginning | Intermediate | Advanced | Ballet Modern**

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*I am a dancer. I believe that we learn by practice. Whether it means to learn to dance by practicing dancing or to learn to live by practicing living, the principals are the same. In each it is the performance of a dedicated precise set of acts, physically or intellectually, from which comes shape of achievement, a sense of one's being, satisfaction of spirit.*

*~Martha Graham*

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Through the active study of movements of multiple forms of concert dance and group cooperation, the University City High School Dance Program is committed to providing a positive and safe atmosphere where students can learn, broaden and expand their understanding and skills in dance and healthy living. Students will maximize their fitness, poise, and coordination while developing a working knowledge of dance language and will be able to analyze, create, design, and perform various types of dance while deepening their knowledge and heightening their movement skills as well as their understanding and appreciation of dance.

Committed to the unique task of working with all aspects of a students' being: physical, intellectual, spiritual, and emotional. I am responsible not only for excellence in training, protecting and caring for the physical body; but also nurturing the student's intellect, emotions and spirit.

An instructor to a range of skill levels, I am challenged to create meaningful lessons with a goal to instill discipline and a sense of achievement and teamwork; all of which build & develop pride and good physical health. Through this process, there is a hope to build confidence, maturity, and life skills allowing students to flourish as an important presence in their homes, communities, and beyond. Given high expectations for achievement, students are held with a level of accountability for their actions with ongoing encouragement to always give their best in order to achieve desired results.

### TOPICS COVERED

- Techniques of Ballet, Jazz, & African, with additional exposure to Dunham Technique, modern, cultural dance, and musical theater;
- Dance Literacy – dance language, aesthetics, choreography, critique;
- Dance History – important figures in dance, cultural context of dance;
- Injury prevention, nutrition, and anatomy as it pertains to dance;
- Relation of dance to other disciplines such as science, math, language arts, music, theater and visual arts

### **CLASS EXPECTATIONS**

- Students are expected to participate and be present in every class (cameras on);
- Designated space to participate physically in classes;
- Always present your best work & apply corrections & feedback with a positive attitude;
- Participate in class discussions & complete/submit written assignments;
- Participation in “end of unit” presentations conducted through Distance Learning

### **Behavior Expectations**

Despite the unpredictable and unprecedented times we’re living through, EVERYONE in class should feel and be treated as though they are in a safe, positive working atmosphere. Behaviors that disrupt your learning, other students’ learning or class instruction will not be tolerated.

### **Guidelines & Expectations for High School Students**

- Students are expected to attend scheduled classes on a daily basis.
- Students are expected to check emails and Google Classroom pages on a daily basis, and should maintain weekly contact and communication with teachers.
- Students will be assigned a variety of activities (whether in building or in distance learning), and are expected to participate in all learning activities, as directed by teachers.
- If a student has a specific question or need regarding an assignment/content, an email should be sent directly to that teacher. Students can expect to hear a response within 24 hours Monday - Thursday.
- If a student is in need of individual or small-group instruction, a student can schedule a conference with a teacher by accessing the [teacher availability schedule](#).
- In addition to questions via email, students can receive support via online office hours. A schedule for open office hours can be found by accessing the [teacher availability schedule](#). \*Open office hours are available to any student, regardless of which teacher the student has in class.
- Students are expected to uphold the District’s [Responsible Digital Citizen Guidelines](#)

### **Schedule and Office Hours**

We are here to provide instructional guidance to meet students' educational needs. Students are not limited to assigned classroom instructors and can access help from any UCHS teacher in order to ensure all questions and concerns are adequately addressed in a timely manner.

In the calendar below, you will find a schedule of each teacher's availability. There are four types of availabilities listed for each teacher between the hours of 8:00am and 3:00pm:

1. **Course meeting** - teachers have a block of time dedicated to specific students from one of their courses. Only students of that teacher's course should be attending the call at that time.
2. **Open office** - this means that any student, from any course and teacher, may get help in that content area. Students have immediate access to help, via whatever platform selected by the teacher.
3. **Scheduled conferences** - this is a time for students to get one on one help with that teacher. To sign up for a slot, click on the link and sign up for a preferred time slot. \*Students will need to specify if the conference request is for an in-person or online meeting.
4. **Offline** (email only) - this is teacher work/development time; the teacher is unavailable to students but can be reached via email (expect response within 24 hours Monday - Thursday).

**Students are required to attend all course meetings.** Attendance will be tracked, and frequent absences will result in progressive discipline, per the UCHS Behavior Guidelines. If students miss a course meeting, a recording of the session will be available in Google Classroom. Teachers are available for open office hours and individual conferences. These schedules will be updated and posted weekly. A schedule of available times to connect with teachers will be provided and updated by 3pm each Friday, for the upcoming week. Please click on the link to access the schedule:

**[Click here for teacher availability schedule.](#)**

### **METHOD OF ASSESSMENTS**

- **Participation** – 25% (as outlined in the Class Expectations)
  - **Mastery of Dance Skills** – 25%
  - **Effort and Cooperation** (movement & discussions) – 25%
  - **Written Assignments & Tests/Exams** – 25%
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- ★ **Formative Assessment** – Daily class points earned through assessment measuring student growth, retention, and depth of knowledge weekly.
  - ★ **Summative Assessment** – Points earned through assessments measuring student growth and depth of knowledge in the middle and end of a technique unit.
  - ★ **Semester Grade** = Summative 70%, Formative 30% of grade.

### **Absences & Missed Work**

Students have the amount of days absent to make up and submit assignments. If you know you are going to be absent, please let me know ahead of time to make arrangements for alternative work.

It is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements regarding missed work.

**Contact:** If you have any questions or concerns, please make an appointment to talk to me by emailing me at [nthomas@ucityschools.org](mailto:nthomas@ucityschools.org) or call the school (314) 290-4062.