

DEREE COLLEGE SYLLABUS FOR: DA 2025 LE THE CHOREOGRAPHIES OF THE AMERICAN MUSICAL
2/2/3

(Spring 2016)

PREREQUISITES:

None

CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

The historical evolution, structure, content and aesthetics of the American musical. Its dramaturgical role within the musical form. Opportunity to learn and perform choreographies from landmark works of American Musical Theatre.

RATIONALE:

This course is designed to examine the role and significance of dance and choreography within the American Musical Theatre. Learning and performing selected choreographies from the most significant American musicals is enhanced by analysing historical, cultural and social elements that contextualize the (on-going) evolution of the genre.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

As a result of taking this course the student will be able to ;

1. Identify the vernacular roots of the dance choreographies in American Musical Theatre.
2. Discuss the choreographies in relation to popular forms of dance in comparison to high art forms (opera and ballet)
3. Explain the relationship of choreography to libretto, lyric and music
4. Examine the choreographies in relation to cultural, political, social and ethical themes addressed in the work.
5. Identify key practitioners, their style and their contribution to the form.
6. Demonstrate ability to perform basic sections from the repertory.

METHOD OF TEACHING AND LEARNING:

In congruence with the teaching and learning strategy of the college, the following tools are used:

ASSESSMENT:

Summative:

Written analysis (1000 words)	40%
Performance research project	60%

Formative:

In class participation	0
Rehearsals	

The formative of "in class participation" aims to prepare students for the examination.

The Written Analysis tests Learning Outcomes

The Performance research project tests Learning Outcomes

The final grade for this module will be determined by averaging all summative assessment grades, based on the predetermined weights for each assessment. Students are not required to resit failed assessments in this module. Failure to pass the module results in module repeat.

INDICATIVE READING:

REQUIRED READING:

Everett, W. A. ed. (2008) *The Cambridge Companion to the Musical* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

RECOMMENDED READING:

Bush-Jones, J. (2003) *Our Musicals, Ourselves: A Social History of the American Musical Theatre*, New England: University Press of New England.

INDICATIVE MATERIAL:
(e.g. audiovisual, digital material, etc.)

REQUIRED MATERIAL: n/a

RECOMMENDED MATERIAL: uploaded in Blackboard

COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS:

Correct English in all written work.

SOFTWARE REQUIREMENTS:

Word

WWW RESOURCES:

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/broadway/timelines/>

INDICATIVE CONTENT:

1. The choreography of the American Musical, origins and main features: popular culture (the musical) vs. high art (opera and ballet).
2. The role of the choreography in relation to the libretto, lyrics and music.
3. The choreography of the American musical as a reflection of an American 'body politics'
 - 3.1 The 'dream ballet and the conquest of the West (e.g. Oklahoma)
 - 3.2 America in a time of war (e.g. South Pacific)
 - 3.3 America as a cultural melting pot (e.g. Flower Drum Song, West Side Story, The Lion King).
 - 3.4 America's civil struggles (e. g Hair, South Pacific, Porgy & Bess).
4. Key works and practitioners (e.g. Agnes de Mille, Jerome Robbins, Bob Fosse, Bennet, Taymor)
5. Musical Theatre Dance Forms
 - 5.1 Forms and Styles and from early vaudeville to contemporary era.
 - 5.2 Vernacular Roots: Jazz, Tap, Swing
 - 5.3 Social Dance Motifs
 - 5.4 Lyrical /Contemporary
 - 5.5 Latin/Ethnic
6. Performing the Choreography
 - 6.1 Mastering of steps, movement on and off stage as solo or part of group
 - 6.2 Clarity of dance style , accuracy of rhythm and musicality
 - 6.3 Perform choreography while expressing and maintaining 'characterization' and theme of story line