

## Diasporic Bodies, Citizenship, and Dance – Fall 2020

*(Catalog Name: Diasporic Citizenship in Dance)*

Dr. Lela Aisha Jones

[ljones2@brynmawr.edu](mailto:ljones2@brynmawr.edu)

Days and Times: Thursdays 1:10-4:00pm

Locations: Pem Dance Studio, Goodhart Green Rear, or Zoom

*(Please note that it is possible this course will go remote when it is necessary to ensure the health and safety of each course community member.)*

OFFICE AND HOURS: Goodhart Hall 104A – Tuesdays 4:00 – 6:00pm

**\*\*THIS COURSE AND SYLLABUS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. STAY FLEXIBLE. \*\***

**DESCRIPTION:** Take a journey through citizenship, belonging, and revolutions for wildness and fugitivity guided by the lived experiences of prominent practicing teachers, choreographers, and performers of traditional and contemporary dances of Black and African descent. The overarching questions we will traverse are: What are philosophies and practices of integrity while traversing diasporic translineages and nomadism through dance? How do dancing diasporic beings/bodies push the boundaries of nationhood and citizenship? Grounded in diasporic Blackness, notions of diasporic citizenship, and Black radical traditions, this course will bring theory and dance/movement practice together through lecture, seminar, dialogue, guest artist/residencies with NYC artist NIA LOVE <https://www.nia-love.com>, workshops, and various engagements with our esteemed 2020 Flexner Lecturer Fred Moten. Dance/movement experience or background is not a prerequisite, although this course is a dance/movement and writing attentive course.

**PREREQUISITES:** No dance experience is necessary, however a willingness to move and create is essential. A previous dance lecture/seminar course or a course in a relevant discipline such as anthropology, sociology, or history is strongly recommended but not required.

**Learning Aims:** Through the moving being/body, readings, media, and journal reflections we will:

- develop being/body awareness.
- cultivate the moving being/body as a generative and creative force.
- generate confidence in performance practice and comfort with being seen.
- survey and engage in practices of black/African diasporic dance/movement and socio-cultural perspectives.
- survey and develop embodied, verbal, and written practices in connection to theoretical concepts.
- bring consciousness to the being/body and the archiving/organizing of movement.
- participate in solo, collective, and collaborative work towards creation of choreographic studies.
- support collective growth through engagement with community.
- surveying and developing embodied, discursive, and written practices in connection to theoretical concepts.

**Learning Objectives:** The primary outcomes of this course experience are for students to:

- perform with confidence and being/body awareness.
- exhibit creative prowess through studies and projects.
- read, discuss, and write about historical, philosophical, and/or social orientations relevant to black/African diasporic peoples and their bodily, dance/movement, and cultural practices in relationship to course content.
- summarize and express concepts, ideas, and theories through dialogue, embodiment, and movement performance.
- critically conceptualize, verbally express, and write reflective responses to readings, media, and movement experiences in class and in the moment.
- foster student driven development of personal processes of researching, writing, theory, and dance/movement making.
- exhibit
  - solo, partner, collective, and collaborative performance research ability.
  - support for the community of makers.
- contribute constructive feedback as a community offering.
- receive reflections on work shared with rigorous application.
- summarize and articulate growth through assignments.

**Integrity Expectations** (*inspired partially by NJAEP community agreements*):

- Listen to understand. Respond thoughtfully and with rigor.
- Get comfortable with discomfort.
- Be present and on time for class.
- Give and get grace. Meet people where they are and let there be room for mishaps, forgetting, forgiveness, and revamping. Be generous.
- Respect the ideas of others and offer useful feedback.
- Check in with you. Where are you? How are you entering, being with, and exiting community? Be present and compassionately accountable with yourself and the collective.
- Refrain from using technology unless otherwise indicated.
- Come dressed to engage in dance. Wear clothing that you feel fully comfortable moving in.
- Engage fully in the physical, verbal, energetic, and intellectual aspects of class.
- Be courteous. Refrain from private conversations during class or interruptions when others are articulating ideas or engaged.
- Stay open to and be present with the self and collective learning potentials present in the learning space.

## GRADING SYSTEM

30% physical presence, readiness, contribution, commitment

20% verbal presence, readiness, contribution, commitment

15% journals

15% movement study and formal writing assignment

20% Final Project and Portfolio

**A** (Excellent) excelled beyond the expectations of the course, all assignments turned in on time and given the optimal and full attention with masterful execution

**A-** (Excellent -) excelled in all elements of the course, all or almost all assignments turned in on time and given the optimal and full attention with masterful execution

**B+** (Very Good) did very well in almost all elements of the course, all or almost all assignments turned in on time and given clear attentive and aware execution

**B** (Good) did well in almost all elements of the course, all or almost all assignments were turned in on time and given grounded attentive and aware execution

**B-** (Good -) did well in around 75% of the elements of the course, all or almost all assignments were turned in on time and given some attentive and aware execution

**C+** (Satisfactory +) did well in around 70% of the elements of the course, some assignments turned in on time and given some aware and average execution

**C-** (Satisfactory -) did well in around 65% of the elements in the course, some assignments turned in on time and given some aware and average execution

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### **1. CONTRIBUTION:**

- **PHYSICAL:** This course requires physical movement. Students in this course should come well rested, dressed properly, and ready to engage with their own individual movement practice as well as the community of movers. In class, students should also engage in their movement practice with effort that exhibits their full attention and ability, which includes taking initiative and risks.
- **VERBAL:** This course requires an extensive amount of in class discussion as a learning tool. Students should come ready to offer verbal responses. In class, students should also engage verbally with effort that exhibits their full attention and ability, which includes taking initiative and risks.

**2. DIALOGUE AND DISCUSSIONS:** Verbal learning will be guided mostly by an exchange of dialogue and discussion of readings, dance/movement exercises, and reflections on media resources. Students should engage in the dialogue and inquiry during lectures with an effort that exhibits their full attention and ability, which includes taking initiative and risks by asking questions and offering perspectives.

**3. ASSIGNMENTS:** See moodle for details.

**4. ADDITIONAL ASSIGNMENTS:** In this course, there is an opportunity to earn additional credit by attending an embodied artistic experience/live performance on or off campus, remote or in-person, and completing a reflection paper. There are also subsidies available for attending these events from the dance department. Up to 2 points on the final grade can be earned through this process. All must be relevant to the course and approved by the professor prior to the event.

**5. LATE ASSIGNMENTS:** Each student has the potential to utilize an option to turn in 1 assignment late. These late assignments will not influence their grade. This assignment must be turned in within a week of the due date. If challenges arise please communicate this with the professor to plan. **This does not apply to final papers or projects.**

**6. ATTENDANCE:** This class is a studio and lecture/discussion course that can only be completed through live classroom engagement. If students have complications that cause them to be late, absent, or exit early, the students should consult the professor in advance for consideration.

**7. ABSENCES:** *Please do not come to class when you are not feeling well. As a collective safety measure these types of absences will be treated with individual care. Contact the professor regarding Covid-19 contact or other sickness to develop a plan.*

In general, make provisions to be in class. Your presence makes the semester run much smoother. Without any influence upon your grade, each student has **2 absences for once a week classes** and **4 absences for twice a week classes**. After 2 or 4, according to the frequency of your course, there will be an influence upon your grade. Absences beyond those given will result in a drop of your potential final grade by two levels. Some rare considerations will be made at the discretion of the professor if there are extenuating circumstances. When in doubt, contact the professor.

**8. LATENESS or EARLY EXITS:** Make provisions to be on time. Your presence makes the semester run much smoother. Class is a communal event; everyone should start together and finish together – especially because our time is limited.

- **LATE:** If a student is late to a movement class (meaning the class has begun), the student must check in with the professor for the appropriate time to enter the session. If there is not an appropriate moment the student will take notes and complete an observation study guide due within in two weeks. It is the student's responsibility to make sure the professor takes note of the date in which the document is completed to confirm its approval.
- **EARLY EXIT:** Early exits from class not discussed with or approved by the professor with a clear response from the professor and necessary follow up have the potential to influence the student's grade. It is also the student's responsibility to check in concerning any aspect of missing material because of an absence, lateness, or an early exit.

**9. TECHNOLOGY:** Please refrain from use of technology unless otherwise indicated.

**10. PHYSICAL Contact:** *This course will have no physical contact due to Covid-19 restrictions. Please disregard language below while we traversing Covid-19 pandemic guidelines.*

*This course requires physical prompts and engagement by the professor and between students. If you have questions or concerns about this element please contact the professor. It is possible that relevant arrangements can be made when necessary. However, due to the very nature of this course it is also possible that this course may not be a good fit if engaging with physical contact is an extensive restriction.*

**11. ACCESS/DIS/ABILITY:** *Bryn Mawr College is committed to providing equal access to students with a documented disability. Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first register with Access Services. Students can call 610-526-7516 to make an appointment with the Director of Access Services, Deb Alder, or email her at [dalder@brynmawr.edu](mailto:dalder@brynmawr.edu) to begin this confidential process. Once registered, students should schedule an appointment with the professor as early in the semester as possible to share the verification form and make appropriate arrangements. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and require advance notice to implement. More information can be obtained at the Access Services website. (<http://www.brynmawr.edu/access-services/>)*

**12. INJURY:** Students with injuries that prevent full class participation for more than one week should consult with the professor to consider completion or alternative options.

**13. ATTIRE:** Please wear loose fitting clothing. Bare feet, socks, and/or shoes will be required at various times throughout the course. Be prepared to dance in bare feet and/or socks. Additionally, plan for the weather by bringing daily options that will keep you warm and allow you to remove clothing as heat generates in our beings/bodies.

**14. MATERIALS:** folder, notebook, writing tools

**15. BASIC DANCE/MOVEMENT CLASS ETIQUETTE:**

- Bring a water bottle as no cups will be provided in accordance with Covid-19 guidelines.
- Be mindful of hygiene for a pleasant communal experience.
- Street shoes are prohibited on department dance floors unless required for the course. If required it is better to have a white soled separate pair that does not damage the dance floor. If this is not possible then shoes need to be cleaned properly before every class and before entering the studio.
- Remove any clothing covering the face and jewelry that may restrict your ability to move or may harm other people.
- Remove chewing gum or candy prior to class to prevent choking.
- Food and drinks (water only) are prohibited in the BMC dance spaces.

**16. COURSE SCHEDULE:** See moodle.