

University of Florida School of Theater and Dance

DAA 2341 - Section 1143

Contemporary African & African Diasporic Dance Practices 1

Spring 2026

Course Information

**Tuesday & Thursday | Period 8 - 9
(3:00 PM - 4:55 PM)**

Nadine McGuire – G10

Instructor of Record

Rujeko Dumbutshena

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Office: Nadine McGuire Theatre & Dance Pavilion 2nd floor, Room 231

Office Phone: 352-273-0521

CAADDP 1 Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 4:30pm – 5:00pm or by appointment

Zoom Meeting Room: [Rujeko's Personal Zoom Meeting Room](#)

Required Texts

All required reading and viewing materials will be made available on Canvas as PDFs, through e-reserves, or hyperlinks. Instructional materials for this course consist of only those materials specifically reviewed, selected, and assigned by the instructor. The instructor is solely responsible for these instructional materials.

Canvas & Zoom

This course is set up on Canvas (e-learning) and may make use of Zoom for virtual meetings as needed. All students must have access to Canvas and Zoom on a regular basis to successfully complete the course. All assignments and out-of-class communication will take place in Canvas. A schedule and timeline for the course can be found on the Canvas calendar. For help with Canvas or Zoom, contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.

Dance Headquarters: https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/414947/modules#module_1363582

Course: <https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/528033>

Communication

Do not hesitate to contact me. I prefer emails and will reply to them within 24 hours. I am available during office hours. If that does not work for your schedule, please email and we can set up an in person, call, or zoom meeting: [Rujeko's Personal Zoom Meeting Room](#)

All UF syllabi are subject to change. This syllabus represents current plans and objectives. During the semester, those plans may change, and you are individually responsible to follow updates provided. Your regular attendance and attention to announcements made on Canvas ensures you will be up to date.

Course Description

Contemporary African and African Diasporic Practices 1 is a performance-based course aimed at understanding the technique and culture of various dance styles within the African continent & the African Diaspora. The course is an immersion into the practice, performance, and culture that focuses on developing and exploring African dance techniques. Level 1 technique in Contemporary African and African Diasporic dance is designed to deepen the practice of the aesthetics of neo-traditional and contemporary African dances from various African countries. This course will advance the knowledge and appreciation of movements, music, and culture of the dances learned. Students will develop their efficient use of grounded, relaxed, heavy-weighted movement, isolation, and undulation while acquiring a facility in a movement language that is intrinsically tied to its music and culture. We integrate these concepts with movement aesthetics, combinations, listening, and internalizing rhythmic patterns. Students will read, watch, and respond to articles and videos to help create historical linkages to contemporary uses of several African dances.

The class will begin with a basic warm-up geared towards releasing the body's weight by stretching, opening the hip joints, rolling down the spine, shoulder, neck, and pelvic rotations, and isolating. Movements will be learned alongside rhythm, song, and cultural history. You will be expected to participate fully, be present at the moment, and proceed with each exercise until you find better movement efficiency, execution, synchronicity, strength, stamina, confident projection, and individual expressivity. During seminar portions of the class, students are expected to arrive having read and watched material and ready to contribute to class discussions. Some discussions will take place on the Canvas discussion board.

Course Goals or Outcomes

- Develop a deeper appreciation of dance aesthetic music and culture from Africa,

- Implement aesthetics, movements, transitions, and combinations of dances learned
- Implement corrections from feedback
- Grasp and retain movement sequences
- Synchronize movements with drums and other dancers
- Commit to your learning process and development through self-correction
- Understand and deepen relationship to your body through weight release and grounding
- Understand rhythm, polyrhythm, and other musical concepts as they relate to dances taught
- Learn about the contexts, culture and history of dances learned
- Develop greater cultural awareness and understanding through music, and dance
- Deepen self-awareness and community building practices

Course Objectives

Retention: Students can remember phrases of moderate length, attending to shape, space and timing.

Quality: Students can demonstrate attention to movement quality and artistry after numerous repetitions

Musicality: Students can understand timing in movement phrase, including introductory elements of polyrhythmic material

Energy: Students can reproduce appropriate level and quality of energy within movement phrases with extended repetitions

UF Level 1 Dance Technique Learning Outcomes

Upon the successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate clear rhythmic timing in movement and movement phrasing
- Perform movement with confidence
- Demonstrate a foundational level of anatomical/kinesiological awareness
- Safely and accurately replicate movement of simple to moderate complexity
- Display foundational level of strength, flexibility, endurance, muscular stabilization, and Support

Course Requirements and Point System

Participation - 40 points: Students are expected to attend classes and follow dance attendance policies. Participation is based on preparedness, class discussion and movement practice. It is important to contact the instructor via email about classes you know you will miss or whenever you unexpectedly cannot attend or participate fully. If you are unable to participate or need to modify your participation in dance practice classes, communicate with the instructor and write a 300-word document outlining or describing your observations. **Reference participation rubric below.*

Submit Practice Videos - 15 points: Students are expected to practice outside of class at least 1 hour per week and to submit three practice videos. Students must submit Self-assessment comments and questions as part of their practice videos. Comments can be recorded after the practice video clip or added to Canvas when submitting the video into the assignment. Practicing with a partner or in a small

group (no more than 3 people) is encouraged. If you submit with a group or partner each dancer is responsible for submitting the group video and their individual comments. **Due 1/22, 2/12, 3/12.**

***NB: If you are available and would like to perform for Harn Museum Night on Thursday February 12 6-9pm. You can substitute your 2nd practice video submission for your performance at the Harn.**

Response to Articles - 16 points: Read two assigned articles posted in Perusal and comment when prompted. This will help you prepare for the seminar discussions that will be held on the Thursday after the assignments due date. Each article response is worth 8 points. **Due 2/3, 3/10.**

Seminar Discussion Participation - 9 points: You are encouraged to actively participate in the three seminar discussions scheduled this semester. Reading/watching and submitting comments to the Perusal and Playposit assignments prior to the scheduled discussions is required and will support your full participation. You will be graded based on your preparedness and participation (3pts per seminar discussion). **Due 2/5, 3/12, 4/09.**

Mid Quarter Self-Assessment - 3 points: You will conduct a mid-quarter self-assessment that candidly reflects on your technique, participation, and learning in this course and demonstrates awareness of your strengths and areas you would like to focus on improving. This self-assessment assignment will appear as a quiz in Canvas. **Due 3/1.**

Mid Quarter Combination - 5 points: You will submit a video of yourself performing the full combination of one of the dances learned in class. **Due 3/3.**

Performances Response to Video - 5 points: Watch the performance videos in Playposit and posted your reflections and comments when prompted. You will be asked to describe what you see and relate your reflections and observations to what we have learned and discussed collectively in class. **Due 4/7.**

Final Presentation Performance - 5 points: Using movement vocabulary from this semester's practice classes you will work individually and collaboratively to create a final performance presentation. You will perform movement combinations primarily as a group with some solos or duets. Grades are based on your individual performance. **Due 4/21.**

Criteria	Points	Due Date(s)
Participation	40	Ongoing
Submit Practice Videos & Self-assessment/Comments/Questions	15	1/22, 2/12, 3/12
Response to Articles	16	2/3, 3/10
Seminar Discussion Participation	9	2/5, 3/12, 4/9
Mid-Quarter Self-Assessment	5	3/1
Mid-Quarter Combination	5	3/3
Performance Response to Video	5	4/7
Final Performance Presentation	5	4/21

Criteria	Points	Due Date(s)
TOTAL	100	

Grading Scale:

Grade	Point Range
A	94–100
A-	90–93
B+	86–89
B	83–85
B-	80–82
C+	77–79
C	73–76
C-	70–72
D+	67–69
D	63–66
D-	60–62
E	59 and below

Weekly Course Schedule

Week	Dates	Tuesdays	Thursdays
1	Jan 13 & 15	Review Syllabus and course Intro to Ganza	Ganza,
2	Jan 20 & 22	Ganza,	Intro to Soboninko Submit - Practice video #1.
3	Jan 27 & 29	Soboninko Reading: "Gospel of Memory" article	Soboninko Reading: "Gospel of Memory" article
4	Feb 3 & 5	Soboninko Response to Article Due	Seminar Discussion # 1 No movement practice
5	Feb 10 & 12	Review dances Prepare for Harn Performance (TBD)	Review dances Prepare for Harn Performance (TBD) Submit - Practice video #2 Harn Museum Night Performance 6-9pm
6	Feb 17 & 19	Intro to Muchongoyo	Muchongoyo
7	Feb 24 & 26	Muchongoyo	Record midterm combination video Submit - Midterm Combination Video & Midterm Self- Assessment
8	March 3 & 5	Office Hours – check in <i>Asynchronous Work</i>	Office Hours – check in <i>Asynchronous Work</i>

9	March 10 & 12	Muchongoyo Submit - Response to Article	Seminar Discussion # 2 Submit practice video #3
10	March 17 & 19	NO CLASS – Spring Break	NO CLASS – Spring Break
11	March 24 & 26	Intro to Soko	Soko
12	March 31 & 2	Soko	Soko
13	April 7 & 9	Soko Performance Response Due	Seminar Discussion # 3 No movement practice
14	April 14 & 16	Review Dances Prepare for Final Presentations	Review Dances Prepare for Final Presentations
15	April 21 & 23	Final Performance	NO CLASS

Dance Area Attendance Policy (Fall 2024)

This course expects students to participate in in-person instruction. Unless other arrangements are made in advance, students are expected to be in attendance daily and to be on time.

For classes that meet 2x/week, students can take 2 absences with no penalty; no documentation is required for the first 2 absences as they are automatically excused. **If the third absence is unexcused, it will result in 5-point deduction from the final grade.** Excused or unexcused, on the third absence, a meeting is required with the instructor and/or area faculty to assess the student’s continued participation in the course. If the fourth absence and all subsequent absences are unexcused, each will result in an additional 5-point deduction from the final grade. Opportunities to make up missed material for unexcused absences is up to the instructor’s discretion and will be made available on an as-need basis.

Late arrival/ early departure: You are late if you arrive after role has been taken/class has begun.

- There will be a 5-minute grace period at the start and end of class.
- 3 late arrivals/ early departures for regular class meetings equals 1 unexcused absence.

Any absence from class for the following reasons must be supported by official acceptable documentation to avoid a grade penalty:

- Illness (including COVID-19)—doctor’s note must be on official letterhead with address and phone number, noting the date and time of visit and diagnosis verifying that an absence from class is warranted, **doctor name and signature**
- Serious family emergencies
- Special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences)
- Military obligation
- Severe weather conditions
- Participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition or debate
- Court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena)
- To help organize accommodations, students should inform the instructor by the end of the second week of classes of religious observances of their faith that will conflict with class attendance this semester.

*If you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>), please use the UF Health screening system (<https://coronavirus.ufhealth.org/screen-test->

[protect/covid-19-exposure-and-symptoms-who-do-i-call-if/](#)) and follow the instructions on whether you are able to attend class. Course materials will be provided to you with an excused absence, and you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up work (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>).

Instructor note: If you are experiencing barriers to in-class attendance, such as lack of transportation, housing insecurity, or other things, please contact me as soon as possible so that we can discuss solutions.

Participation

Attendance does not equal participation. Participation involves being present. The goal of class sessions is to challenge and support your development as a dance artist, and to co-create a learning community where individual experiences and voices are respected and supported, and each person is a collaborator in advancing the learning and development of the whole group. Ways to be present and participate fully include:

- timeliness and preparation for class
- removing potential distractions, such as cell phones and other devices
- active listening; careful, on-point contributions to discussions
- attending to fellow students' work and offering relevant feedback and critical support
- paying attention to the dynamics of the room and responding accordingly.

At the college level, students are expected to take responsibility for behaving in a demeanor corresponding to the professional field. Specific responsibilities are aimed toward deepening individual and collective artistic development.

*Participation Grading Rubric: CAADDP 1

This part of your grade is the most subjective. I will grade you according to my perception of your presence, participation, timeliness, preparedness, communication, practice and improvement, effort and energy in class, and your willingness to collaborate in community.

	<i><u>Exemplary 10-8 points</u></i>	<i><u>Proficient 7-6</u></i>	<i><u>Developing 5-0 points</u></i>
Movement	Student is on time, present, and participates fully in movements being taught. Exemplary execution of each movement. Displays good to excellent retention of movement combinations. Displays consistent commitment to practicing. Easily implements correction and feedback.	Student is on time, present, and participates in movements being taught and execute each movement to the best of their ability. Displays good retention of movement combinations. Displays commitment to practicing. Implements correction and feedback.	Student is mostly on time, present, and participates in movements being taught and efforts to execute each movement to the best of their ability. Displays some retention of movement combinations. Displays some commitment to practicing. Implementation of correction and feedback show some progress.
Communication	Communicates absences and lateness in a timely fashion.	Communicates to ask general questions about	Does not communicate to ask questions about course

	Communicates about any barriers to full engagement. Actively contributes during seminar discussions to reflect deep engagement with course material. Regularly communicates to ask thoughtful questions about movements combinations and assignments.	course material and assignments and/or to Communicates about any barriers to full engagement. Contribution during seminar discussions reflect engagement with course material.	material and assignments and/or to communicate about any barriers to full engagement. No contribution during seminar discussions to reflect engagement with course material.
Listening	In seminar discussions, listens to classmates' contributions with active nonverbal engagement; asks follow-up questions when appropriate. In movement practice classes actively listens to classmates' questions about movement execution and corrections.	In seminar discussions, often listens to classmates' contributions with nonverbal engagement; sometimes asks follow-up questions when appropriate. In movement practice classes often listens to classmates' questions about movement execution and corrections.	In seminar discussion, shows physical signs of being checked out (falling asleep, slumped posture, etc.); rarely refers to class content in comments/questions in formulating one's own; struggles to offer counter-perspectives.
Community	Consistently contributes to a collaborative, supportive, and respectful environment.	Contributes to a collaborative, supportive, and respectful environment.	Doesn't actively work collaboratively, or supportively.

CAADDP 1 Attire

Wear comfortable clothes that allow free/full range of movement but keep the alignment of the body visible. It is recommended that you wear "soft" pants or leggings. NO SHORT. Shorts are culturally inappropriate for African dance class. You are encouraged to wear a sarong/large scarf or traditional African print wrap skirt "lapa". Ask the instructor about where to acquire a "lapa". For safety reasons, do not wear eyeglasses or large jewelry. NO SOCKS. Socks are discouraged and may be worn only for protective purposes and with prior approval from the instructor. Soaks make it difficult to execute the grounding technique required in African dance. Since your body temperature will change throughout class, it is recommended you wear and/or bring layers of clothing.

Food and Drinks

It is recommended you have water available to drink during the class; please bring it in a closeable water bottle. Food is not permitted in the studio. Eating and chewing gum are not permitted in class.

UF Policies

Information about university-wide policies and resources can be found here:

<https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-syllabus-policy-links/>

Campus Resources

Campus Resources for Health and Wellness

Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx> or 392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit U Matter, We Care website to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress. A nighttime and weekend crisis counselor is available by phone at 352-392-1575.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit the Student Health Care Center website.

UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website

GatorWell: Mindfulness coaching, HIV testing, bulk condom request, and much more. <https://gatorwell.ufsa.ufl.edu/>

Additional Mental Health Resources

- UF has an Equal Access Mental Health Clinic that has a Free Therapy Night every Monday night that UF is considered open. Here is the FB page through which one can book appointments as well:

<https://www.facebook.com/equalaccessclinic/>

- The UF School of Medicine Equal Access Clinic website is here and has the above mental health services as well as specialized Women's and LGBT medicine: <https://equalaccess.med.ufl.edu/specialty-clinics-classes/>

- Alachua County Crisis Center web site: <https://alachuacounty.us/depts/css/crisiscenter/pages/services.aspx> Offers Crisis Counseling as well as a Mobile Response Unit that attends to severe mental health crises.

UF Reporting & Resources: Sexual Harassment, Racism, Microaggressions, and more. See SoTD's processes for reporting incidents in the Student Handbook. UF-wide reporting mechanisms and resources include:

Office for Accessibility and Gender Equity: Resources and instructions for reporting a Title IX violation: <https://titleix.ufl.edu/report/>

Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS): Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

Campus Diversity Liaisons: The Campus Diversity Liaisons (CDLs) are members of the leadership team of each college or business unit. They put the university's IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access) strategy into action at the college and unit level. The CDLs are also networked into the Office of the Chief Diversity Officer and they come together to share best practices, brainstorm solutions, and build their competencies in IDEA work. <https://cdo.ufl.edu/about/campus-diversity-liaisons/>

RESPECT Team: The purpose of the RESPECT Team is to provide impacted parties of bias incidents opportunities to be heard and supported; understand and respond to situations that affect the University of Florida; educate and inform the community; and create awareness of ignorance and intolerance.

<https://respect.ufsa.ufl.edu/>

Report through the University Ombuds: <https://www.ombuds.ufl.edu/>

Report a Student Concern: Report incidents or concerning student behavior that is happening in the University of Florida community. Navigate using the buttons below to connect with the appropriate reporting mechanism to share information related to student conduct or concerns. <https://report.ufl.edu/student-concern/>

UF Resources for Anti-Racism: <https://antiracism.ufl.edu/learn/uf-resources/>

University Police Department: Visit UF Police Department website or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

Campus Resources for Academic Support

The Writing Studio: The writing studio is committed to helping University of Florida students meet their academic and professional goals by becoming better writers. Visit the writing studio online at <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/> or in 2215 Turlington Hall for one-on-one consultations and workshops.

E-learning technical support: Contact the UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.

More Academic Resources Career Connections Center: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services. Library Support: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources. Teaching Center: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

The Orange Book: Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information

SPRING 2026 Dance Calendar

January

- 12 First Day of Classes / Welcome Meeting @ 6:30pm in G6
- 13 *Spring Into Dance* Auditions @ 6:30pm-9:30pm in G6
- 14-19 Shakia Barron Residency
- 16 Drop/Add Deadline
- 19 No Classes
- 20-22 On site visit Assist Prof. Candidate
- 21 Dance Alive's *Swan Lake* at UFPA
- 26 Spring Senior UnShowing 6:30pm in G6 +G10
- 29 Andrea Ward (Ric Rose Alumni Award) 8:45 am lecture ballet combined & 10:40 am CAADDP 3
- 30 Andrea Ward Master Class 10:40 am BAs & BFAs
6 pm Ric Rose Alumni Award Presentation (All Majors attending)

February

- 2 Spring Senior Unshowing TBD
- 6 BFA Dance Area Auditions
- 7 Harn SoundMoves TBD
- 12 Harn Museum Africa Night 6:30pm
- 13 Open Conversation during FMP, 10:40am-12:10p
- 6-15 F-Punk Junkies at SoTD

17 Cirque FLIP Fabrique – BLIZZARD, 7:30pm at UFPA
 18-22 BFA Senior Concert
 21 Dance Alive's *Romeo and Juliet*, 7:30pm at UFPA
 23 DARK DAY – No Dance Major classes all day
 TINA – The Tina Turner Musical, 7:30pm at UFPA
 25-Mar 1 ACDA Regional Conference at Brenau University

March

3-6 Rachel Tavernier Dunham Technique Residency
 4 @ 12:50: Combine Dance History & Kinesiology
 5 @ 10:40: Afro-Brazilian
 6 @ 10:40: Friday Movement Practice
 10-11 bang bang in the Squiteri Theater, 7:30pm at UFPA
 15-22 Spring Break / No Classes
 24 Sa Dance Company – RISE, 7:30pm at UFPA

April

3 Midpoint Presentations during FMP, 10:40a-12:35p
 9 Harn Museum night with Choreographer-in-Residence project
 10 Critical Response Appointments/CRA's, 9:30a-4:30pm IN PERSON (with first-
 years, year 1 transfers, + sophomores)
 16-19 *Spring into Dance*
 20 DARK DAY – No Dance major classes all day
 The Music Man, 7:30pm at UFPA
 21 CBP + CAADDP Class Culture Sharings (during class periods)
 22 Last Day of Classes
 CDP Class Culture Sharing (during class period)
 Final UnShowing (creative classes; BA symposium; research presentations;
 WIPs; celebrations) @ 6:30pm in G6

DANCE MAJOR REQUIRED EVENTS

- Monday, Jan 12 @ 6:30pm – Welcome Meeting in G6
- Monday, Jan 26 @ 6:30pm – Senior UnShowing in G6 + G10
- Wednesday, Feb 18 – Sunday, Feb 22, various times – BFA Concert in G6
- Friday, Apr 3, 10:40a-12:35p – Dance Area Midpoint Presentations in G6 (dance majors only)
- Friday, Apr 10, 9:30a-4:30p – Critical Response Appointments IN PERSON in G11 + G10 (first year dance majors, first year transfer dance majors, and sophomore dance majors)
- Thursday, Apr 16 – Sunday, Apr 19, various times – *Spring into Dance* in the Black Box
- Wednesday, Apr 22 @ 6:30pm – Final UnShowing in G6

RECOMMENDED FOR DANCE MAJOR CLASSES

(Including Dance Major required events above; events that are directly connected to dance performance somehow and/or SoTD)

- Tuesday, Jan 13 @ 6:30pm – *Spring into Dance* Auditions in G6
- Wednesday, Jan 21 @ 7:30pm – Dance Alive's *Swan Lake* at UFPA

- Friday, Jan 30 @ 10:40a – Master Class with Ric Rose Alumni Awardee, Andrea Ward in G6
- Friday, Feb 6 – Sunday, Feb 15, various times – *F-Punk Junkies* at SoTD
- Saturday, Feb 7 (time TBD) – *SoundMoves* at the Harn Museum
- Thursday, Feb 12 @ 6pm – *Africa Night* at the Harn Museum
- Tuesday, Feb 17 @ 7:30pm – Cirque FLIP Fabrique's *Blizzard* at UFPA
- Saturday, Feb 21 @ 7:30pm – Dance Alive's *Romeo and Juliet* at UFPA
- Friday March 6 @ 10:40am – Master Class with Master Dunham Technique Instructor, Rachel Tavernier in G6
- Tuesday, Mar 10 – Wednesday, Mar 11 @ 7:30pm – bang bang at UFPA
- Tuesday, Mar 24 @ 7:30pm – Sa Dance Company's *RISE* at UFPA
- Thursday, Apr 9 @ 6pm – Harn Museum Night with Choreographers-in-Residence
- Monday, Apr 20 @ 7:30pm – *The Music Man* at UFPA