**Course Syllabus**

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| **Course Title** |
| Dance Improvisation & Composition |

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| **Instructor Information** |
| Rebecca McGregor Dance Teacher & Vermont State Dance Festival Coordinator Lyndon Institute P.O. Box 127 168 Institute Circle Lyndon Center, Vermont 05850 [802-535-3774](tel:802-535-3774)  [rebecca.mcgregor@lyndoninstitute.org](mailto:rebecca.mcgregor@lyndoninstitute.org)  [www.lyndoninstitute.org](http://www.lyndoninstitute.org) |

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| **Course Description & Pertinent Information Regarding Dance** |
| **Course Description:**  Improvisation and Composition teaches students about the elements of movement, manipulations of movements and phrases, how to structure/develop dances, and proper methods of critiquing work. It is an important course in the development of a dancer or anyone interested in moving their bodies properly because it teaches students how to explore their movement potentials, push their boundaries (technically and creatively), builds self-esteem, communication, collaboration skills, and appreciate themselves and the art of dance more.  Students will…   1. develop an idea of proper body alignment through anatomy and learn how to allow the body to make movements happen by exploring their movement potential 2. experience dance as an art form – how it has developed through history and how it means different things in different communities, how dance is expressive and representative of various themes and emotions 3. learn how to become a choreographer using the elements of movement 4. learn how to become a better dancer and refine his/her skills through critique work   **Pertinent Information Regarding Dance:**  In this course, you will…  \***Be prepared** **and on time**.  **If you are late**, make sure come with a note and I mark you present.  **With any material missed** (whether absent or tardy), **I will give you a Completion Contact upon return to school☺** *The reason attendance is so important for dancers is because your body is your instrument; not only will you learn physically in class but by being present and doing the exercises, mentally you will be aware and more able to prepare your body for further, more difficult elements without causing or risking injury on yourself.* I hold my students to high expectations for attendance and active participation unless a family or personal emergency arises. You will be pushed in this class, as far as you allow yourself, but it will also be a lot of fun!  \*If a student is **absent or tardy a lot of the time**, it up to my discretion to include that student in choreographies or parts of choreographies. Choreographies are class based and include all students but when students are absent or late a lot, it is difficult for the class to move on when the absent/tardy individual is missing a lot of material. Thus, as the instructor, I reserve the right to remove that person from sections or complete dances if necessary.  \*It is also important to note that at various times throughout the year there will be **rehearsals and performances outside of the school day/class period** students will be expected to attend. Why? Because part of being enrolled in a dance class or being a dancer is to gain the experience of working in the theatre and performing. Attendance is taken at all required rehearsals and performances for this course and this impacts personal progress in preparation for performance evaluation. Students are expected to work with bosses and coaches to make sure they can attend the performance rehearsals and performance. Dance is a performing art thus if the student is unable to attend scheduled performances for this development, the student’s grade will be adversely affected. For each performance event or end of the semester LI dance show missed, I will take off 10 points of the student’s performance evaluation grade for that event. If a family or medical emergency arises, I need a written document from a parent/guardian to explain the student’s excused absence in advance/prior to the event because it takes a lot of preparation to rework the dances and prepare the other students to perform without this individual. Dance is like sports. It is a team oriented activity and it takes everyone working together.  \***Participate actively, complete assignments, and be engaged** in the learning process to the best of your ability.  **\*If you do not feel well during class**, I will either send you to the nurse or ask you to do your best. You may only sit out if I have a written/verbal note from a doctor or the school nurse and at that point you are required to take notes from class work that day.  **\*Cheating** is a serious problem and I will not allow it in my room. There will be times for writing assignments or research papers and if I find that a student has cheated, I will enforce the school policy as stated in the handbook.  \***Be respectful** of every member in the class…that includes yourself☺  \***Leave drama at the door and consider this space your safe space and place of release!**…I need and your class needs your full attention and positive energy to make our work successful and a positive learning experience☺  \*I will not tolerate **inappropriate behavior or disrespect**. If a student shows either quality, I will use my consequences policy: #1 warning, #2 separation from unwanted behavior or activity, then follow the expectations for Level 1, 2, or 3 behavior as written in the student handbook. It is rare and undesirable to have to do these things but sometimes students need a break and make unsafe choices for themselves or my classroom and this policy helps maintain respect and a safe learning environment.  \***No chewing gum or eating (unless you don’t have a lunch block)** while dancing. A water bottle is wise and encouraged.  \***Be open, honest, responsible, and enthusiastic** about learning new methods of movement.  Thank you☺ |

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| **Proficiencies Focus** |
| **National Core Dance Standards**  In the LI dance curriculum I align all learning to the NCDS. In this course we will touch upon each of the proficiencies to gain a complete understanding of how to create and perform work as well as respond to work and make connections in art and the artistic process.  **Artistic Process**: Creating  **Anchor Standard 1**: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.  **Process Component:** Explore  **Enduring Understanding**: Choreographers use a variety of sources as inspiration and transform concepts and ideas into movement for artistic expression.  **Essential Question**: Where do choreographers get ideas for dances?  **Anchor Standard 2**: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work  **Process Component:** Plan  **Enduring Understanding**: The elements of dance, dance structures, and choreographic devices serve as both a foundation and a departure point for choreographers.  **Essential Question**: What influences choice-making in creating choreography?  **Anchor Standard 3**: Refine and complete artistic work.  **Process Component:** Revise  **Enduring Understanding**: Choreographers analyze, evaluate, refine, and document their work to communicate meaning.  **Essential Question**: How do choreographers use self-reflection, feedback from others, and documentation to improve the quality of their work?  **Artistic Process**: Performing  **Anchor Standard 4**: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation.  **Process Component:** Express  **Enduring Understanding**: Space, time, and energy are basic elements of dance.  **Essential Question**: How do dancers work with space, time and energy to communicate artistic expression?  **Anchor Standard 5:** Develop and refine artistic technique and work for presentation.  **Process Component:** Embody  **Enduring Understanding**: Dancers use the mind-body connection and develop the body as an instrument for artistry and artistic expression.  **Essential Question**: What must a dancer do to prepare the mind and body for artistic expression?  **Anchor Standard 6:** Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work  **Process Component:** Present  **Enduring Understanding**: Dance performance is an interaction between performer, production elements, and audience that heightens and amplifies artistic expression.  **Essential Question**: How does a dancer heighten artistry in a public performance?  **Artistic Process**: Responding  **Anchor Standard 7**: Perceive and analyze artistic work.  **Process Component:** Analyze  **Enduring Understanding**: Dance is perceived and analyzed to comprehend its meaning.  **Essential Question**: How is a dance understood?  **Anchor Standard 8**: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work  **Process Component:** Interpret  **Enduring Understanding**: Dance is interpreted by considering intent, meaning, and artistic expression as communicated through the use of the body, elements of dance, dance technique, dance structure, and context.  **Essential Question**: How is dance interpreted?  **Anchor Standard 9:** Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.  **Process Component:** Critique  **Enduring Understanding**: Criteria for evaluating dance vary across genres, styles, and cultures.  **Essential Question**: What criteria are used to evaluate dance?  **Artistic Process**: Connecting  **Anchor Standard 10**: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.  **Process Component:** Synthesize  **Enduring Understanding**: As dance is experienced, all personal experiences, knowledge, and contexts are integrated and synthesized  to interpret meaning.  **Essential Question**: How does dance deepen our understanding of ourselves, other knowledge, and events around us?  **Anchor Standard 11**: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural and historical context to deepen understanding.  **Process Component:** Relate  **Enduring Understanding**: Dance literacy includes deep knowledge and perspectives about societal, cultural, historical, and community contexts.  **Essential Question**: How does knowing about societal, cultural, historical and community experiences expand dance literacy? |

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| **Tentative Course Schedule & Grading Expectations** |
| **Tentative Course Schedule:**  For detailed information overviewing the course curriculum by month check out the course overview as posted on the dance class page on the school website: <https://www.lyndoninstitute.org/page/arts/dance/dance-classes> or go to [www.lyndoninstitute.org](http://www.lyndoninstitute.org), click on arts, dance, then dance classes to open documents with detailed information about this course and approximately when various content will be taught. However, here is a general breakdown of a study by month:  1st month – studying anatomy and exploring movement potential  2nd month – examining dance as an art form, learning about the meaning of dance in different cultures and how it has evolved throughout history, begin studying elements of dance and learning how to become a choreographer…solo work  3rd month – solo work finishing and critiquing…learning how to become a better dancer and enhancing choreographic skills and abilities  4th/5th month – practice different styles/forms of dance, manipulate styles/forms with own movement potentials, choreographic skills…prepare for end of semester show, choreographic assessments and complete portfolio of work (portfolio and preparation for end of semester performance are ongoing activities)  **Grading Expectations:**  Homework – weekly reading/movement activities as assigned by instructor  Quizzes and Tests – end of chapter reviews and choreography assessments  Term Paper/Long Range Assignments – Solo Study and Choreographies for end of semester public performance, Research Project, Portfolios  Grading Policy –  Journals & Weekly Activities/Journals & Notebooks (20%)  Participation, Preparedness, Effort (10%)  Dance Habits of Work (10%)  Solo Study/Projects (20%)  Research Project/Writing Assignments (20%)  Portfolio and Choreography Assessment(s)/Tests & Projects (20%) |

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| **Required Texts/Material** |
| **Texts: (provided by instructor)**  EXPERIENCING DANCE by Helene Scheff, MartySprague, Susan McGreevy-Nichols  **Materials:**  Students will need a change of clothing for dance class, rehearsal and events. They must change at the beginning and end of every class (unless I express they do not need a change for some reason in particular). Clothing for dance can be similar to athletic clothing or specific dance clothing. Students do not need to buy dance shoes. They can borrow from me for performances. Clothing does need to cover the body appropriately for class. If a student does not have a change of clothes or his/her clothing is not appropriate for class/rehearsal, I will have them borrow from the supply closet. As with any profession, dancers must follow dress code thus it is for a dancer’s safely and comfort that s/he changes for class, rehearsal, and events. If bringing a change of clothing for each class is difficult, the student/parent should have a conversation with me so we can work out a plan so the student can come to compliance with this expectation with the rest of his/her class and be most comfortable for learning each day. Thank you. |