
DANC 107

Samba

Overview

Deeply enmeshed with Brazil's colonial history Samba has arisen as a symbol of its national identity. With dance as our foci, this course will offer an embodied exploration of the racial and cultural mixing at Samba's roots and the tensions therein. We will also study the music, history, aesthetics, ideologies and socio-cultural context of the dance through reading, writing, videos and discussions.

Course Objectives

- Become a more articulate dancer by acquiring Brazilian techniques of layering isolations, improvisation, polyrhythm & polymeter.
- Develop personal creativity, expression and confidence through improvisational exercises, choreography, group work, presentations and performances.
- Develop an awareness of one's somatic experience and improve strength, flexibility, endurance, balance, coordination and movement efficiency.
- Participate in the development of a dance performance from inception through presentation.
- Know how to collaborate with musicians and understand the relationship between Samba dance and drumming.
- Recognize that dance has cultural meaning and be able to write and think critically about Samba in its historical context.
- Apply embodied knowledge and experience to research to further understanding and be familiar with another way of knowing.
- Be able to formulate a research question with dance at its center.

Requirements

* This is a full course. It is expected students will do 8 hours of work per week.

1. Attend all classes (only 3 absences are permitted)
2. Complete all assignments
3. Contribute to class discussions
4. Practice dancing outside of class
5. Support fellow students & contribute to a positive learning community

Fall 2018
MW: 1-2:50 Warner Main
F: 1-2:50 A|LC 201

Instructor: Alysia Ramos
E-Mail: aramos@oberlin.edu
Office: Warner 106
Office Hours: M/W 4:30-5:30

Writing Assoc: Maria Turner
mturner@oberlin.edu

Materials

All readings, videos and podcasts are available on [dropmark](#).

A notebook and pen are required for Friday classes.

\$10 Fee for costume supplies.

Calendar

Sept. 24
Research Paper Topic Due in class

Oct. 15
Midterm Presentations

Oct. 19
MidTerm Chats
1st Paragraph Due

Nov. 16
Full Draft Due in class

Nov. 30
Final Presentations

Dec. 7, 4:30pm
Final Performance

Dec. 8, 10pm
Brazilian Night at the Sco

Dec. 19, 9pm
Final Paper Due

Grading

Participation	30
In-class Writing Assignments	10
Topic statement	5
Midterm Group Presentation	15
1st Paragraph	5
Research Paper 1st Draft	5
Research Presentation	5
Final Performance	10
Research Paper Final Draft	10

Positionality Statement

I'm mostly white - in spite of my last name, big nose and booty shaking abilities, which often thrust me into the category of "ethnically ambiguous." This means that I have come to Samba as an outsider. People have different opinions about this in regards to authenticity, expertise and appropriation. I welcome these conversations. That said, I have spent over 30 years studying dance and movement in its various forms, vernaculars and cultural contexts and feel very confident in my ability to pass on what I have learned. My intention is to investigate different ways of using the body, to honor and understand diverse aesthetic and technical traditions, to offer students a range of expressive possibilities and to respect the rich array of cultural backgrounds from which we all descend. I also believe strongly in the transformative potential of stepping outside of the movement prescribed by our own cultural identities in order to understand ourselves and appreciate others a little better. I understand that I have been privileged to have the freedom to do this and to be here teaching it to students. I do not take that privilege lightly. I am grateful both for the freedoms and opportunities that have come with being a white American female and for the passes I've been extended for my ethnic ambiguity. Questions about race and culture in relationship to dance and the body have been pervasive in my career, just as they have been recurring topics here at Oberlin. I think that means there is a lot to unpack there, so I say let's get into it and learn from it! Thanks for joining me.

The Honor Code

Oberlin College students are on their honor to uphold a high degree of academic integrity. All work that students submit is expected to be of their own creation and give proper credit to the ideas and work of others. When students write and sign the Honor Pledge, they are affirming that they have not cheated, plagiarized, fabricated, or falsified information, nor assisted others in these actions.

Honor Pledge: "I have adhered to the Honor Code in this assignment."

Course Bibliography

1. "From inclusion to integration: intercultural dialogue and contemporary university dance education" by Danielle Robinson and Eloisa Domenici
2. "Five premises for a culturally sensitive approach to dance" by Deidra Sklar
3. "Embodying differences: issues in dance and cultural studies" by Jane C. Desmond
4. "The prehistory of samba: carnival dancing in Rio de Janeiro, 1840-1917" by John Charles Chasteen
5. "Samba the body articulate" by Barbara Browning
6. *Mystery of Samba* by Hermano Vianna
7. "Hybridity brazilian style: samba, carnaval, and the myth of "racial democracy" in Rio de Janeiro" by Natasha Pravaz
8. "From popular culture to microenterprise: The history of brazilian samba schools" by Alison Raphael
9. "Where is the carnivalesque in rio's carnaval? Samba, mulatas and modernity" by Natasha Pravaz
10. "Rio's Carnival goes political, and a little-known samba school ignites a firestorm" by Anna Jean Kaiser
11. "Performing mulata-ness: The politics of cultural authenticity and sexuality among carioca samba dancers" by Natasha Pravaz
12. "Mulatice: Fetish or feminine power?" by Corey Souza
13. "Uses of the Erotic: the erotic as power" by Audre Lorde
14. "Samba in Chicago: Escaping hegemonic multiculturalist boundaries" by Bernadete Beserra
15. "Exotic Identities: Dance, difference, and self-fashioning" by Sheila Bock, Katherine Borland

