

Dr. Codone

TCO 363

Beginning Ballroom Dance is the first course of two sequential physical education electives at Mercer University. It is designed for individuals with no prior dancing experience. In this class students learn a variety of different ballroom dances including three Latin and three classical dances. They are tested with a "Jack and Jill" dance final at the end. In this final, partners and the dance they must perform are drawn randomly. Students are expected to do that dance on the spot. Participants in the course only have the in class example of the professors dancing, and at times have trouble performing the initial basic steps or "basic". Each classical and Latin dance in the course has a "basic" from which all other variations of the dance stem. Supplemental instructions will be created in a handout form for the students to refer to when they exit the classroom. If the students do not fully understand the "basic", they will not be able to continue to learn the other variations in the dance properly.

The "basics" of the classical and Latin dances learned in the course are not fully retained by the students. The course is taught by verbal instruction by the professor speaking and kinesthetic instruction when the students are practicing with their partners. I intend to create visual instruction for the students to take with them after the class is over. This will appeal to visual learners that are not fully catered to during the class, and also reinforce the students with other learning styles.

The students in the Beginning Ballroom Dance class were interviewed about their ballroom dancing skills, and what they learn in the course. The general consensus of all of their answers was that they understand the “basic” while in class, but often forget or get the basics of different dances confused after the class is out of session. The students pay attention, but have no concrete homework or assessments out of class that will help them retain their information. I also talked to the professor of the class. She states she must often review with the students before each class. This takes up valuable time in the class period. According to the current instructor, the basic is the essential part of a dance to learn.

Since students are having trouble retaining this information, they should be able to receive some sort of supplement they can use outside of the classroom. The basic steps of each dance learned in the course should be delivered in a way that is effective inside and outside of the classroom for study purposes. The audience of the instruction will be college students ranging from ages 17 to around 25. They will be taking Beginning Ballroom Dance as an elective, so it is known that it is not their main academic pursuit. The students in the class know most of the dances fairly well, but have trouble distinguishing them at times. The class is taught in the University Center Aerobics Room, so there is no chalkboard or overhead projector to display teaching supplements or examples for the course. The lack of traditional material may keep the students from preserving the information they receive in class. I believe a tangible dance handout with the basics of each dance would be a great choice to aid in the visual learning of the students. It could be a handy tool for students to look at before classes to save the teacher from excess review time.

There are not too many other options to this problem except additional instruction. Most students understand the concepts in the class, but just have trouble keeping them in their minds for extended periods of time. The instruction will not only reinforce the information learned in class, it will also increase the longevity of the information.

Any dance terminology will be explained clearly. Pictures and diagrams will be made to point out foot placement and counts according to the music. Instruction will be developed to help the students retain the information after they exit the class. After the students receive the instructions they will be able to take it to class and follow along with the professor as well as take it home and use for personal study. As a result students will have the basic of all of the dances memorized. This will cut down on the amount of time that the professor must review, and allow the class to learn additional variations in the dances.

The Instruction will be designed to help students retain the basic of each dance they will learn in the class. The students learn six dances total. Two separate information sheets will need to be printed, one for the women's steps and one for the men's. The final product will be a packet or front and back page that will be divided into six dances. The different dances will show the basic, how to initiate the dance, and the counts to continue. Pictures of foot placement will be included in each section.