

FTCP Capstone Project Report

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Course Name: Dance Improvisation

Project Name: Active Learning Exercises for “Lecture” on Dance Partnering Skills.

Date of Implication: November 18 & 20, 2008

Dance Improvisation class studies the methods and techniques of creating a dance as it is being danced. Former method or process before my participation in the Certificate program was to lecture on the challenges of working collaboratively with other dancers and then jumping into an improvised duet. The new method I created as a result of the Certificate program is a series of simple and interactive activities, followed by individual journaling and then group discussion. The goal of the new process is to get students involved in pairs with basic exercises that build up to complex and full-bodied improvised partnering, which include journaling and group to discussions to foster self-discovery and deeper understanding through participation.

I believe the results were good, with signs of deeper comprehension and interesting thoughts expressed in dynamic conversations. The students were more engaged in the process from the beginning. The process allowed for easier development of the techniques necessary for this art form, as students were allowed to discover the concepts of collaboration (instead of just hearing about the ideas from lecture).

The process was so successful that I have expanded the activities to my other classes in an adapted exercise that focuses more on the individual and group dynamics that can happen when people work collaboratively. It asks the student to discover if they are more of a leader, a follower or a cooperative participant when faced with collaboration.

Active Learning Activity for Learning Collaboration Methods:

Title: Discovery of Individual Tendencies and Group Dynamics Through a Nonverbal Collaboration Activity

Group size: 10 or more

Directions: Students must work together to form the shapes given by the instructor by walking to a spot in the room. All participants must work together to make the shape pattern in the space simply by their position in relationship to each other.

Rules:

No talking, gesturing or communication in any overt way. Each participant can only walk to a spot on the floor and stand, making adjustment as needed. The only method of communication is through your action of walking and standing.

Examples of Shapes to Make:

Circle

Square

Triangle

Isosceles Triangle

Line shortest to tallest

Line Darkest Eyes to Lightest Eyes

Two Wavy Lines

The Letter T

The Letter Q

The Word "Dog"

Journaling Assignment: Write about the experience. Did you want to lead the group? Did you want to follow someone's lead? Did you get frustrated when others had different ideas about how to achieve the shape? How did you respond when your idea did not coincide with the groups?

Group Discussion: Share comments from the journaling exercises.

If you have questions please contact me.

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