

Adriana Durant  
**Teaching Philosophy**

I support active learning. I encourage students to challenge their limitations both physically and conceptually while embracing their individual strengths. Varying the structure of my classes by including compositional exercises, improvisation, and postmodern dance technique, I present material physically, theoretically, and historically. I value clear communication with students who have diverse learning styles; I present information from different perspectives.

Improvisation is imbedded in my composition courses. I start with the body, then, lead students in investigations of its relation to space and time. I am committed to teaching the importance of improvisation and compositional skills as tools for entering the current professional field in dance as performers, dancemakers, and/or teachers. We discuss compositional devices and experiment with music and text to create content, structure, and context. My objective is for students to trust their intuition as they recognize the role of choice in dancemaking. It is also important to me that students become adept at articulating their own responses to dance. I teach giving and receiving feedback as an essential part of the process—both of crafting a piece of choreography and of maturing as an artist.

My interest in dancemaking lies in structuring the content of physical experimentation and improvisation. I teach students to follow impulses, curiously exploring the body's potential. I encourage students to interrupt their natural patterns in order to find new dynamics, phrasing, and movement ideas. Developing finely tuned awareness, commitment, and intention in the body and mind, they learn to make compositional choices in the moment. Integrating improvisation in the classroom creates an atmosphere that supports focused practice and artistry in a community where I can exchange knowledge with my students.

From ballet to social dance, martial arts to improvisation, I have been influenced by many movement techniques. Drawing from and building on ballet and postmodern dance vocabularies, my technique classes explore weight, effort, dynamics, and momentum, encouraging students to take physical and performative risks. My classes are also informed by ideas from somatic practices, performance theory, dance history, and studies in dance education.

I hope my enthusiasm and commitment to dance creates an atmosphere that inspires student dancers of all levels to view the improvement of technical facility as a means of increasing possibility for expression of self. I value the development of the student's individual aesthetic and encourage students to engage fully with concepts so that they develop the skills and the personal voice necessary in preparing them for professional careers as informed dance artists. Whether teaching dance composition, improvisation, or technique, I expect students to engage with movement material by negotiating physical and cognitive layers of information in order to deepen their personal investigation.

