

Kate Walker

Teaching Resume and Philosophy

The role of the teacher is one of the most significant and valuable roles in society. It has the potential to be the most meaningful and the most hurtful, the most inspiring and the most discouraging, the most rewarding and the most challenging. Being a teacher is not easy, but neither is being a student. I have become distinctly aware of the dualism that is within the teaching role and its potential for wonder and challenge. I am deeply impacted by the teachers that inspired me, encouraged me, and held me in care and dedication towards my dreams. I am also influenced by the teachers that hurt me. Teachers I was shaking at the barre for because I was so scared to mess up, and teachers who required things of my body that were less than authentic. My teaching philosophy is rooted in three aspects: environment, work, and students. Creating intention for how these three aspects will operate in the dance classroom is imperative. In the next section, I will break down each of these ideas, defining them and providing examples for how they are presented in the classroom.

The environment in my classroom is the foundation of learning and growth. It is necessary that students feel the space is an open and safe place to learn. I want to emphasize the power of vulnerability and authentic expression and practice. For example, I love for students to feel empowered to make mistakes and *fail forward*. Dance is an art and art is a personal journey of expression. Our class will be shaped around the understanding that the class is not there for me as the instructor, but that the space and class is there for the student to explore and embark on self-improvement and hard work towards their goals. One way I do this is tasking students to set a few goals at the start of the class that can act as guiding focus moving forward. Along with

this, I acknowledge that working on goals that are daunting takes time, so I also like to start individual classes having students form personal intentions for the day. The environment will always emphasize the beauty within mistakes. Challenges, frustrations, and mistakes will always be met with curiosity and a conversation about potential growth opportunities. The student can also be met with space to work and process on their own.

The class always operates as a collective space of combined ideas and bodies. This type of environment recognizes that our shared experience is that we are all *unique* and that the only thing that is constant, is change. By having openness and safety as our roots, we can grow together. Throughout the entire class, the students are supported in their own journeys. For example, I will guide students to never start a combination in class with the intention of achieving perfection. Beauty comes not within the perfect but within the discoveries we uncover on our journey towards self-growth. I like to help foster this my leading improvisational exercises where the goal is for the students to create in spaces that seem foreign to them. Growth can blossom when students try things beyond our movement habits.

I am naming the content of my class, 'work'. This is used to identify any physical or mental material we practice. For example, any combination, class pair share, choreography etc. can be categorized as work. The students are tasked at absorbing and performing the work to the best of their ability. I will respond and guide the teaching of this work from a body centered perspective with an emphasis on acknowledging diversity. Classes will use general anatomy and individual anatomy awareness to shape movement choices. Combinations and corrections will be heavily informed by 1.) Felt sensations by the student 2.) Conversations on anatomical awareness between students and the teacher to shape safe and effective practice.

I operate under the philosophy that everyone is a mover and that no *one* person is at a disadvantage for performing dance movement. When students face challenges when moving through the work, we will work together to find a solution. Along with this, I challenge the student to turn inward so that when approached by me or a peer, we can have an open dialogue. My class will require putting on our critical thinking hats as we consider what is working and what isn't. For example, class discussions and feedback will often be informed by skeletal and muscular anatomy to shape physical understanding of the human body. When we are faced with inevitable individual challenge in movement, we will work together as a class to facilitate conversation for support and growth with group pair share. Through these conversations we grow respect, empathy, and compassion for the bodies around us and bond through our shared anatomy.

So far, I have detailed the ways in which my class is structured to support student centered learning. The third key foundation to my teaching philosophy is to have emphasis on self-accountability and self-awareness from students. My goal as a teacher is to empower students through student guided and informed activities that embrace power in their choices. In my role as a teacher, I want to build students who dance for themselves. I will be a teacher that provides areas for growth and allows students the time and space to apply and explore. I believe deeply in the idea that smart dancers are not *scared* dancers: scared dancers fear disappointing their teachers and act in a reactive sense of doing to please. Smart dancers are able to work diligently to blossom under structures of support.

In conclusion, my teaching philosophy is based in the idea that my role as a teacher is to create a safe, supportive, and thought-provoking class for my students. I feel empowered and honored by my role as a teacher being that I can be someone that holds space and love for my

students. The class environment will support mistakes and personal growth. The content will be situated within the context of human anatomy and uniqueness among individuals. Above all, I want dancers to feel safe and comfortable to express themselves. They should feel free to dance in a way that is authentic and inspiring to them. The outcome of this philosophy is mutual respect among individuals for themselves and each other, fostering confidence and a hard-working attitude towards shaping their craft.



KATE WALKER

EDUCATION

University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky May 2024 (expected graduation)
BA in Dance- Interdisciplinary Arts Minor (Arts Administration focus)
Lafayette High School and SCAPA (School for the Creative and Performing Arts- Dance major) 2016-2020
Lexington Dance Factory

WORK EXPERIENCE

- Lexington Dance Factory- Dance Instructor 2018-2020
 - Taught ballet to 10–13-year-old students as well as pre-ballet for 2–3-year-old students
 - Taught jazz to 10–13-year-old students
- School for the Creative and Performing Arts Assistant Stage Manager March 2022

CHOREOGRAPHIC EXPERIENCE

- Commissioned for group piece for Dance SCAPA (2022)
- *Materialized*, UK Dance Department Concert (2022)
- *Conformity*, UK College of Fine Arts Studio Season (2021)
- “Flow” Music Video Choreographer (2020)

RELEVANT SKILLS

Student Mentor

- Creative Arts Living Learning Program Peer Mentor
- Advise and support students in artistic and educational success
- Utilize safety training skills (provided by UK Residence Life) to ensure student safety
- Natural and effective leader
- Exhibit excellent communication
- Serve as a positive role model

Arts Based Program Development and Management

- Creative Arts Living Learning Program Peer Mentor
- Plan and host 3-6 events monthly (events created to inspire, support, and enhance artistic success)
- Assist coworkers and program coordinator with administrative tasks (case management, organization of information, and event marketing)
- Apply creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills
- Practice teamwork and leadership
- Specialize in logistics and time management

Lesson Planning

- Dance Instructor

- Create dance lessons for a variety of student levels
- Specialize in organization of ideas and concepts to yield supportive education
- Practice strong communication skills with students and assisting faculty

APPLICABLE TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION

- Spring 2023- Teaching Methods Course (required for UK Dance major)
- CPR Certified (American Red Cross and the American Heart Association)
- Level One Yoga Teacher Certified (YogaFit)

DANCE TRAINING

Ballet	University of Kentucky	2021-Present
	School for the Creative and Performing Arts	2016-2020
	Lexington Dance Factory	2009-2020
	Kiddie Kapers	2005-2008
Jazz	University of Kentucky	2020-Present
	Lexington Dance Factory	2009-2020
Modern	University of Kentucky	2020-Present
	Lexington Dance Factory	2018-2020
	School for the Creative and Performing Arts	2016-2020

Summer Programs:

- Mutual Dance Theatre Modern Dance Intensive (2021)
- University of Kentucky Summer Dance Intensive (2021)
- Kentucky Performing Arts Governor's School for the Arts (2019)
- Lexington Dance Factory Ballet Summer Intensive (2017, 2018 and 2019)
- Louisville Ballet Summer Intensive (2017)

PERFORMANCE EXPERIENCE

- *Break* by Theresa Bautista at the Gaines Center for the Humanities Bale Boone Symposium with Bill T. Jones
- Materialized (University of Kentucky Dance Department Concert) 2022
- The Art of Exchange: Music and Dance Collaborative Concert (University of Kentucky Dance Department Concert) 2022
- EchoLocation: The Mobile Tour (University of Kentucky Dance Department Concert) 2021
- Once Vacant: Bodies in motion...still. (University of Kentucky Dance Department Concert) 2020
- *The Nutcracker*, Lexington Dance Factory: 2014-2019 Snow Queen (2019), Dew Drop (2018), Sugar Plum Fairy (2017), Dew Drop (2016), Spanish Lead (2015), Waltz corps, Snow corps, Arabian corps, Waltz demi-soloist, Flutes, Spanish corps, Tea from China corps