

**FRIDAY, APRIL 2, 2021**

## **Dance & Body Science**

**Carisa Armstrong, Christine Bergeron, Alexandra Pooley, and Andrea Alvarez,**  
Texas A&M University

**Registration Cap: 290**

### **Workshop Overview:**

Texas A&M University Dance Science Program is dedicated to educating students on health and wellness issues specifically associated with dancers. This work includes proper biomechanics of movement, conditioning to maximize athletic and aesthetic performance and providing the tools needed to minimize dance injuries. This one-day workshop is designed to provide some insight into the field of Dance Science and how it can be applied in the studio. Each session will address anatomy, biomechanics, alignment and give the participants exercises that can be incorporated into their daily practice.

### **Workshop Content:**

#### **Session 1: Franklin Method: Lower Back Fascia and Dance**

Presented by: Alexandra Pooley & Christine Bergeron. Demonstrators: Carisa Armstrong & Andrea Alvarez

- This workshop will help the dancer experience the connection between lumbar fascia and alignment. Students will learn movement exercises and imagery to help with ease of movement, coordination and a stronger connection anatomically to their bodies to assist their dance performance and technique. Research has shown that dance practitioners favor somatic practices to supplement training and enhance performance. Dancers' formal training involves pedagogy that revolves around imagery (anatomical, metaphorical, and aesthetic), dance and sports science research has analyzed the positive impact imagery can have on the performer. This presentation will involve the Franklin Method to help dancers become more efficient and aware of their bodies while moving in space.
- Dancers will learn Franklin Method Fascia Trainer Exercises for the lower back to help students to feel more ease and lengthening throughout the body.
- Discussions will take place throughout the workshop regarding anatomy, alignment problems and the impact lower back fascia has on dance movements.

#### **Session 2: Conditioning to Correct Common Dance Misalignments**

Presented by: Carisa Armstrong & Andrea Alvarez. Demonstrators: Alexandra Pooley & Christine Bergeron

- This workshop will teach dancers to identify common dance misalignments and provide them with conditioning exercises that can be implemented to correct these issues. Dancer injuries are often attributed to misalignments due to fatigue, misinformation or lack of conditioning. By identifying the problematic issues and providing specific cross-training exercises, the presenters hope to lower the overall incidence of injury in dancers.
- Dancers will learn conditioning exercises directly related to common misalignments and weaknesses found in dance training.
- Discussions will take place throughout the workshop regarding anatomy, alignment problems and the impact these exercises have on dance movements.

### Session 3: Science of Stretching

Presented by: Christine Bergeron & Carisa Armstrong. Demonstrators: Andrea Alvarez & Alexandra Pooley

- This workshop will present current research on stretching and how it impacts dancers' training. The different types of stretching will be defined, demonstrated and discussed. Participants will engage in stretching techniques that can be used for their personal training or to implement into technique classes. The timing of the styles of stretching will be addressed including how long but also when in the class structure these should happen.
- Dancers will learn the styles of stretching, when they should be implemented and specific stretching routines to implement.
- Discussions will take place throughout the workshop regarding anatomy, alignment problems, timing and the impact these factors have on the efficiency of stretching.

### Schedule:

TIME—all times are in Eastern Time	SESSION
12:00-12:10pm	Welcome and Introductions
12:10-1:30pm	Session 1: Franklin Method: Lower Back Fascia and Dance
1:30-1:50pm	Break
1:50-3:10pm	Session 2: Conditioning to Correct Common Dance Misalignments
3:10-3:30pm	Break
3:30-4:50pm	Session 3: Science of Stretching
4:50-5:15pm	Reconvene for Questions, Comments

### Space/ equipment requirements for participants:

Participants will need a space approximately 6ft x 6ft, in order to participate in the movement portions of the sessions. These sessions can be attended without participation if the registrant is just interested in the information but can not perform the movement portion.

### Presenter Bios:

**Carisa Armstrong** received her Master of Fine Arts in Dance from Case Western Reserve University in 2002. Ms. Armstrong joined the Department of Health and Kinesiology at Texas A&M University as a Lecturer in 2003. She was promoted to Clinical Assistant Professor in 2008 and to Clinical Associate Professor in 2013. Ms. Armstrong teaches undergraduate courses in modern dance technique, dance composition, Pilates, and a number of dance science courses. She has been heavily involved in the development of the Dance Science Program and in the continual evaluation and revision of the curriculum. Ms. Armstrong's research is split between dance science and her creative scholarly activities. She has presented her research and choreography internationally/nationally at conferences/festivals such as: International Association for Dance Medicine and Science, Performing Arts Medicine Association, National Dance Society, and the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. Ms. Armstrong served as a Board Member for American College Dance Association for 6 years, as Secretary for National Dance Association and as Vice President of Dance for Texas Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance twice. She currently serves as the Secretary for American College Dance Association.

**Christine S. Bergeron** has been the Director of Dance Programs and Initiatives at Texas A&M University (TAMU) since 2008. She has a B.A. in Dance Education from the University of Akron and a M.F.A. in Choreography and Performance from Florida State University. Currently she is working towards her PhD in Dance Science from the University of Wolverhampton where she is conducting research on Pilates and its effect on dance training and performance. Her research in Pilates and Dance has been presented nationally and internationally and published in peer reviewed journals. She not only conducts research on dancers but also is a nationally recognized choreographer. Currently, with a team of artists and

community members, she is working on a dance performance, But where there's life, there's hope, integrating immersive theatre, media and historical context. This multifaceted project not only incorporates live performance and film but also has an educational component. The collaborative team is working on a dance film based on the Holocaust to incorporate into K-12 Holocaust education. For more information on this project visit our website at <http://hopelife.tamu.edu>

**Alexandra Pooley** was born and raised in the United Kingdom. She has completed her MFA at the Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance. Over the last 10 years Alexandra's teaching career has included teaching dance and physical education to a wide variety of ages and abilities from group sessions to toddlers and careers, and disability (dance for all) to undergraduate University students. Alexandra Pooley has been teaching for Texas A&M University for the last 6 years within the Kinesiology Dance Science Undergraduate Degree and within the Physical Education Activity Program.

**Andrea Alvarez** is an Instructional Assistant Professor in the Health and Kinesiology Department at Texas A&M University (TAMU). She earned her MFA in Contemporary Dance from Case Western Reserve University and BS in Kinesiology: Dance Science Track from TAMU. She teaches a variety of classes and activities for the Physical Education Activity Program and for the Dance Science Program. Her areas of interest include dance science research and keeping up with current literature. As dancer and choreographer, she has performed works by renowned choreographers throughout the USA as well as internationally, and her choreography has been presented at various regional and national venues

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