**Course Description:** This body conditioning class is designed to increase general strength and flexibility, and to deepen your understanding and awareness of how you move through Ballet Floor-barre, Modern Dance, and Yoga and Pilates-based exercises. Introduction and application of somatic practices (i.e. the Alexander Technique, Laban Movement Analysis) will be included for a better understanding of the relationship between use, structure, and functioning. Some selected readings and video viewings may be assigned.

**Outcomes:** At the conclusion of this course, students will be able to

- demonstrate increased skills and knowledge in general body conditioning for strength, flexibility, muscular endurance, coordination, and relaxation
- practice the use of breathing related to the control and flow in the performance of exercises
- demonstrate connectivity in movement through an understanding of mind-body integration.
- engage in reflective self-assessment contributing to individual growth.
- link and apply the various techniques and concepts taught in Body Conditioning to other activities.

Many of the exercises will be repeated throughout the semester while adding variations and increasing the level of difficulty. The repetition of the exercises develops the “muscle memory” that is used to recognize and to deepen your understanding of the movement. We will focus on proper execution of exercises emphasizing good body alignment and an internal sense of muscular awareness and control. The attention given to one muscle group affects other areas of the body, therefore, we will pay attention to awareness of muscular balance and amounts of resistance and ease of tension, performing with **accuracy and precision**, encouraging **proper breathing** that supports the exercise and aids in the **control and flow** of motion.

**Take the time necessary to understand these exercises (as simple or as difficult they may be) by starting with the conscious attention and awareness of your whole self and sense of movement.**

**Grading:** This is a Pass/Fail course. With this in respect, your **attendance, positive attitude, and positive effort** in class, and the completion of the below listed assignments are your responsibilities for receiving a passing grade. You are permitted up to 4 absences without penalty to your grade, however, **if you exceed 4, you run the risk of failing this course.** You will be able to **make up a maximum of 2 classes** in the event of an emergency situation or illness.

**Observations:** If you are injured or have a non-contagious illness, you will be allowed to sit out of class (up to two times) and take written observations. Written observations should be your thoughtful remarks on the material covered in class. They should not be simply a reiteration of the exercises given, but notes on your observations of the execution of that material, comments or corrections made by the teacher, etc. There is no required length, however, observations that clearly do not account for the entire class period will not receive full credit.

**Assignments:**

1. **Dance Performance Observation Paper:** Attend one (1) live professional concert dance performance and write an Observation Paper that illustrates and connects your understanding of training, fitness, coordination, use of breath with movement, etc. as experienced in class to that observed in the art form of dance performance. These papers must be **typed, double-spaced, with 1" margins** and at least **2 pages** in length. You will receive a list of upcoming performances that you can attend for this assignment.

2. **Reflection Paper:** Among the listed objectives to body conditioning, think about your own personal strengths and goals. Make notes for yourself on the exercises and ideas that support your goal(s). In what ways have the concepts and approaches that we've used in class influenced your general use and functioning in and out of class? **Paper – Due 1 week before our last class of the semester.** 2 pages typed – This is a written reflection of your progress, your understanding of the work we did in class and how you would possibly incorporate any of these exercises or ideas into your own personal fitness schedule or in other aspects of your life.

**What you will need:**

- Exercise floor mat
- Small towel (optional)
- Yoga Blocks (optional)
- Thera-Band (available through medical supply stores or order on-line (search google and enter “Thera-Band” or bands by Gaiam). You will need **6 ft. or 7 ft.** (not the latex free ones unless you need that type) They are also available at Medical West, 444 S. Brentwood Blvd. (approx. 1 mile North of the Galleria.) Purchase of band may be made in class with payment to the instructor ($5 each) We will discuss this option in class.
- Comfortable workout clothes – clothing worn must be appropriate for physical movement (fitted tee-shirt/tank, bike shorts or exercise pants, leggings, etc.) Pony-tail holder / clips (for long hair)