

Wesleyan University, Dance Department
Small-Scale Mining
DANC 378-01 Repertory and Performance – Spring 2022
M/W 4:40-6:10pm
Location: Schonberg Dance Studio
Office Hours: by appointment only
Instructor: Iddi Saaka – email: isaaka@wesleyan.edu

Course Description:

Dance is a strong tool that is a catalyst for hope, empowerment and social change. It has been and continues to be used in myriad ways in addressing problems in order to create more equitable societies the world over. This course is intended to equip students with collaborative skills in the creation and performance of a multidisciplinary dance performance that addresses the issue of illegal small-scale mining in Ghana, West Africa.

Humans have always relied on the earth for sustenance, from growing our food on its belly to tapping its natural resources to enrich and enhance our lives. We depend on the earth for our very existence yet, there are diverse man-made actions all around the world that cause great devastation to the earth and threaten our very existence. These actions, no matter where they occur affect all of humanity (albeit in varying degrees, depending on one's proximity to such activities) and should therefore be a concern for all of us. Human actions are directly connected to global warming that is becoming increasingly pronounced. Mining is one such human activity which can be considered as a double-edged sword. We mine the earth to extract mineral resources such as gold, diamond, bauxite, fossil fuel, coal, etc., to better our lives. At the same time, there are many mining activities across the globe that imperil the environment, ecosystem and our very lives. This research/choreographic process will focus on unregulated small-scale mining in underdeveloped countries, with emphasis on illegal small-scale mining in Ghana hereinafter referred to as galamsey. Galamsey provides jobs for millions of people who are able to lift themselves and their families out of poverty, reduces the unemployment rate in Ghana and serve as the live blood of rural economies. At the same time, galamsey activities destroy Ghana's natural water bodies and arable land and put whole villages in danger of food insecurity, disease, and social vice. What conditions drive people to engage in galamsey, what are the positive and negative effects of galamsey in the lives of people who do galamsey, galamsey communities, and the Ghanaian economy, what role does the Ghanaian government play in galamsey activities in the country? These and many more questions will drive our conversations in the course as we read and watch selected texts and videos to engage in a collaborative process to create a performance about mining. Through videos, articles, news media, personal reflections, discussions, improvisation, collaborative choreographic exercises and assignments, and writing, we will engage in a nuanced and collaborative exploration of small-scale mining in Ghana as source material for the creation of a performance for the concert stage.

Course Requirements:

- Work individually and collaboratively in and out of class on assigned readings, viewings of videos and creative movement assignments and exercises
- Challenge yourself through movement, singing, and writing
- Keep an open mind, knowing that this creative process may include false starts, and that this period of creative incubation requires hard work, respect for self and others
- Commit to the creation, rehearsal and performance of a fully developed dance piece for an audience

- Explore music using your voice, body and found materials as part of the creation of the dance
- Document your journey in the course through a semester-long journal entry
- Read and offer critical contributions to discussions on all articles
- Watch and offer critical contributions to all discussions on videos
- Submit all assignments in a timely fashion

GRADING CRITERIA

Grading for this course is determined by:

1. Your attendance, effort, presence and involvement in all classes
2. Thorough and timely completion of all assignments (reading, written and participatory)
3. Concert attendance (two during the semester)
4. Performance in the Spring Faculty dance concert on April 1 and 2
5. The quality of your participation in the group assignments in and out of class

Individual engagement in the material presented (movement and discussion), risk taking in body and thinking, exhibiting a willingness to challenge your assumptions of movement and the broader concepts touched on in this class and through its assignments, and a collaborative spirit, are all factors affecting your grade. Full participation and good work will result in a “B” grade. An “A” grade requires exceptional engagement, collaboration and risk taking in order to rethink and revise your current assumptions, challenging yourself to move beyond your range of comfort in both movement and thought. Verbal participation in class discussions and critiques is considered part of your grade.

Attendance and Participation:

Students are expected to attend all classes and workgroup meetings. Please be in the studio, ready to move when roll is taken at the start of each class. This is a participatory studio course, there is no substitute for your presence in class. It is not possible to “make up” a missed experience. You are allowed a total of two absences for illness, emergencies, etc. Three or more absences will affect your grade. Five absences constitute failure.

You may observe class two times for illness/injury and be counted present. As an observer you are required to take notes on a Class Observation Sheet (which should be printed from the Moodle page of the course) when you decide to observe class on a given day. These are to be handed in at the end of the class you observe. After two class observations you will be given one half absence for each additional observation.

Repeatedly arriving late (10 or more min) for class will affect your grade. Two late arrivals of more than fifteen minutes will constitute an absence. Each class is a cumulative experience, arriving late can lead to injury as well as short change the depth of your learning. If you are late, it is your responsibility to be sure you are marked present for that day (at the end of class please).

Performance Participation:

All students must participate in the spring dance faculty concert on April 1 and 2. Your full participation in this concert constitutes the Final Exam for this course. Call time for both days is 5:00pm. Please reserve these dates ahead of time and mark them on your calendar.

Assignments:**Journal Entry:** (Due on the last day of classes)

Active observation of your experience in class is required. Keep a personal journal in which you record notes and observations related to class activities including the readings and videos, and the learning of the dance steps. It is okay for your journal to have a personal tone to it because you are recording your journey in the course. Your journal will be submitted at the end of the semester for evaluation based on demonstrated consistency, effort, and care in creating the record of your experience

Readings:

Timely completion of readings in and out of class is a requirement in this course. Your active participation and thoughtful contributions to all discussions in class form part of your grade

Objectives:

- Work both individually and collaboratively in and out of class to create a dance performance
- Learn appropriate etiquette of rehearsal and performance of a dance piece
- Perform for an audience
- Gain some knowledge about dance as a catalyst for social change
- Acquire tools/skills in using a social issue as subject matter for embodied research
- Acquire cross cultural awareness of socio-political implications of small-scale mining
- Learn strategies to engage cross cultural issues for embodied research

Required Videos:

Bearing a Lode (Mexico): <https://rtd.rt.com/films/mexico-mines-ixtacamaxtitlan-almaden-minerals/>

Inferno Village (India): <https://rtd.rt.com/films/inferno-village/>

Congo, My Precious: The Curse of the “Conflict Minerals in Congo” (Congo):

<https://rtd.rt.com/films/congo-my-precious/>

The Golden Gamble: Gold Mining in the Philippines, a Dirty Business (Philippines):

<https://rtd.rt.com/films/golden-gamble-philippines-illegal-goldmines/>

Galamsey Videos:

Africa Investigates – Ghana Gold: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ye3Bs7D_i98

Fool’s Gold – Africa Investigates??: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c4T-xwFNQto>

The Price of Gold – Chinese Mining in Ghana Documentary – Guardian Investigations:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ohrrE1rjzLo>

Going for Gold – Short Documentary about Ghana’s Illegal Mining:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GxonRUAGc0I>

Ghana’s Gold Diggers – Scramble comes at high cost:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MOtmb6N6IIA>

Gold Mining in Ghana: Going Underground with a Child Minor (BBC Documentary):

<https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-africa-52324363>

Illegal Gold Mining Boom Threatens Cocoa Farmers (And Your Chocolate) (National Geographic Documentary/Write-Up on Ghana's Illegal Gold Mining):

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/article/ghana-gold-mining-cocoa-environment>

Minors Exploited in Small Scale Mining – Galamsey (video in twi):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V517pSeu7cM&t=512s>

The Gold Burden A - Hotline Documentary on JoyNews (26-3-18):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1n72GA07ILU>

The Gold Burden Part 2 - Hotline Documentary on JoyNews (27-3-18):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=98nBncrvGw>

WATCH THE LATEST GALAMSEY TRIP ON THE OFFINSO RIVER, RIVER PRA AND OTHERS IN THE CENTRAL REGION: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YkFzCSoHbsg>

Over 30 armed military battalion protecting miners degrading the Manso forest in the Ashanti Region:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A1P3CXTYqM>

2nd anti-galamsey war: The story so far: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wE6xsePRbos>

Wow! Military Storm Galamsey Site, Start Firing from Helicopter:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MgHJ0NqI2Bs>

Required Readings Found on Moodle Page of Course:

Bryceson, D. F. (2018). 'Artisanal Gold-Rush Mining and Frontier Democracy: Juxtaposing Experiences in America, Australia, Africa and Asia,' in *Between the Plough and the Pick: Informal, artisanal and small-scale mining in the contemporary world*. ANU Press. pp. 31-62

Mtapuri, O. (2017). 'Re-thinking Mining in Embattled Africa: A Calculative Sociological Logic,' in *Mining Africa. Law, Environment, Society and Politics in Historical and Multidisciplinary Perspectives: Law, Environment, Society and Politics in Historical and Multidisciplinary Perspectives*. Langa RPCIG. pp. 215-236

Garvin, H. (2002). 'Small-Scale Mining in Africa: Tackling Pressing Environmental Problems with Improved Strategy,' in *The Journal of Environment and Development*. Vol. 11, No. 2. Pp. 149-174

Warikandwa, T. V. and Nhemachena, A. (2017). 'Exposing the Emperor's Flawed (Neo-)colonial Template: Charting a Contemporary Regulatory Framework for Africa's Mining Sector,' in *Mining Africa. Law, Environment, Society and Politics in Historical and Multidisciplinary Perspectives: Law, Environment, Society and Politics in Historical and Multidisciplinary Perspectives*. Langa RPCIG. pp. 355-380

Hinton, J. J., et al (2003) 'Women and Artisanal Mining: Gender Roles and the Road Ahead' in *The Socio-Economic Impacts of Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining in Developing Countries* Ed. G. Hilson, Pub. A.A. Balkema, Swets Publishers, Netherlands. pp. 1-29

Lahiri-Dutt, K. (2007). 'Illegal Coal Mining in Eastern India: Rethinking Legitimacy and Limits of Justice.' in *Source: Economic and Political Weekly*. Vol. 42, No. 49. pp. 57-66

Hausermann, H. and Ferring, D. (2021). 'The State of Land Grabs: Regulatory Fictions in Ghana's "Small-Scale" Mining Sector,' in *Land Fictions: The Commodification of Land in City and Country*. Cornell University Press. Pp.243-256

Kwadwo, A. et al. (2016). 'The Good in Evil: A Discourse Analysis of the Galamsey Industry in Ghana,' in *Oxford Development Studies*, 44:4, 493-508, DOI: 10.1080/13600818.2016.1217984

Mark M. M., et al. (2020). 'Health and Safety Issues within Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining: A Case for Penhalonga, Ward 21 Mutasa District, Zimbabwe,' in *African Geographical Review*, DOI: 10.1080/19376812.2020.1850300

Kassa, H. (2018). 'Formalizing Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining: Problems, Contradictions and Possibilities,' in *The Future of Mining in South Africa: Sunset or Sunrise?* Mapungubwe Institute for Strategic Reflection (MISTRA). pp. 179-202

Roopnarine, L. (2006). 'Small-Scale Gold Mining and Environmental Policy Challenges in Guyana: Protection or Pollution,' in *Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies / Revue canadienne des études latino-américaines et caraïbes*, 2006, Vol. 31, No. 61 (2006), pp. 115-143

Nathan, A. (2015). 'Digging for Survival and/or Justice? The Drivers of Illegal Mining Activities in Western Ghana,' in *Africa Today*, Vol.62, No.2. Indiana University Press. Pp. 3-24

Gordon, C. & Gabriel B. (2017). 'Conflict, Collusion and Corruption in Small-Scale Gold Mining: Chinese Miners and the State in Ghana,' in *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics*, 55:4, 444-470, DOI: 10.1080/14662043.2017.1283479

Gavin, H. (2002). 'The Environmental Impact of Small-Scale Gold Mining in Ghana: Identifying Problems and Possible Solutions,' in *The Geographical Journal*. Vol. 168, No.1. pp. 57-72

Gavin, H. et al (2013). 'Going for Gold: Transitional Livelihoods in Northern Ghana,' in *The Journal of Modern African Studies*. Cambridge University Press. pp. 109-137

McQuilken, J. and Gavin, H. (2016). 'Issues and policy framework,' in *Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining in Ghana: Evidence to inform an 'action Dialogue*. International Institute for Environment and Development. pp. 19-22

McQuilken, J. and Gavin, H. (2016). 'Mapping the context of ASM in Ghana,' in *Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold Mining in Ghana: Evidence to inform an 'action Dialogue*. International Institute for Environment and Development . pp. 11-18

Akabzaa, T. (2009). 'Mining in Ghana: Implications for National Economic Development and Poverty Reduction,' in *Mining in Africa: Regulation and Development*. Pluto Press. pp. 25-65

Grading Chart:

(A+ 98.3), (A 95.0), (A- 91.7), (B+ 88.3), (B 85.0), (B- 81.7), (C+ 78.3), (C 75.0), (C- 71.7), (D+ 68.3), (D 65.0), (D- 61.7), (E+ 58.3), (E 55.0), (E- 51.7), (F 45.0)

Physical Interaction:

The teaching/learning process of this course may necessitate some physical contact for creative movement explorations between the instructor and the students, and students with each other. If there is any reason that you wish not be subject to such contact, please inform the instructor by the end of your first day in class. Should your stance change throughout the course of the semester please advise the instructor as you see fit.

Covid-19 Code of Conduct:

To protect your health and safety, the health and safety of instructors and staff, and the health and safety of your peers, all students must understand and adhere to the University's [Covid-19 Code of Conduct](#). Students are encouraged to review the code of conduct regularly to stay up to date on the current code. I, as the instructor of this course reserves the right to refuse to allow any student into the classroom who does not adhere this code of conduct.

Time Commitment:

While the exact time commitment for the class will vary individually and over the course of the semester, I recommend that you budget approximately three out-of-class hours for every class hour to complete the reading, assignments, homework, and project. I have designed the class so that it should be feasible to satisfactorily complete the requirements with approximately twelve hours per week of time commitment. If you are spending more time than this on a regular basis, I encourage you to check in with me.

Accommodation Statement:

Wesleyan University is committed to ensuring that all qualified students with disabilities are afforded an equal opportunity to participate in, and benefit from, its programs and services. To receive accommodations, a student must have a disability as defined by the ADA. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible. If you have a disability, or think that you might have a disability, please contact [Accessibility Services](#) in order to arrange an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations. Accessibility Services is located in North College, rooms 021/218, or can be reached by email (accessibility@wesleyan.edu) or phone (860-685-2332).

Religious Observances:

Religious observances require that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required assignments/attendance. If this applies to you, please speak with me directly as soon as possible at the beginning of the semester.

Classroom Behavior:

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences in race, color, culture, religion, creed, politics, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and gender expression, age, ability, and nationality. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of the preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. For more information, see the policies on the student code.

Discrimination and Harassment:

Wesleyan University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment. Wesleyan will not tolerate acts of discrimination or harassment based upon Protected Classes or related retaliation against or by any employee or student. For purposes of this Wesleyan policy, "**Protected Classes**" refers to race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against should contact [the Office for Equity and Inclusion](#) at 860-685-4771. The [responsibility of the University Members](#) has more information.

Honor Code:

All students of Wesleyan University are responsible for knowing and adhering to [the Honor Code](#) of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council – Office of Student Affairs. Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). The [Office of Student Affairs](#) has more information.

After Performance Assignment:

Prepare a presentation highlighting the main takeaways from this course. what about the process through the videos, articles, research and class trip would you say have been most impactful for you, what challenged you to venture into places you would never have imagined venturing into, what surprised you in this process, and what would be the next steps for you if you had the chance to continue with this project, what other issues and/or ideas would you want to pursue in furthering this experience? Your presentation could take any form including poetry, spoken word, video, power point etc.