

Just Dance!! (Gonna be okay)

Most people cringe at the thought of social dancing, claiming they have no dancing ability or protesting that the thought of having to ask a strange for a whirl on the dance floor is too horrific to consider. But dance is one of our best cultural expressions: a great way to meet people, learn something new, relieve stress, exercise, and just have fun. Austin has a diverse, rich subculture of social dance, ranging from swing to salsa, tango to country western. Here at UT, there are a number of organizations devoted to teaching you the graces of the various social dances. I challenge you with this skill module to break out of your no-dance shell and venture forth to these classes on campus or the social dance halls around Austin.

For this skill module, you will have to attend two dance events:

Option 1: Go to two classes from two different social dance organizations on campus (ex, a ballroom class and a country western class)

Option 2: Or go to one class on campus in a certain dance and go to a dance hall for another dance (ex, attend a tango class on campus and then go out to the Women's Federation for swing)

Option 3: Or go to a class on campus and then go take your new skills to a dance hall (ex, attend a salsa class and then go to Copa or Oasis to try your salsa dancing in the 'real world')

After attending these events, you are to write a one to two page summary addressing your experience. What was it like learning a new dance? How was it dancing with different partners and learning to communicate through dancing with them? Did you feel comfortable dancing? Did your attitude towards dancing change if it did? Compare and contrast your two experiences: How are the dances similar/different? Which one did you enjoy more? Where did you find the instruction more helpful? If you chose option 2: what was it like learning in a classroom setting versus learning as you go from your partners? How was it trying to find partners in the dance hall? For option 3: How did it feel applying your newfound skills in the dance halls with more experienced partners? Did dancing in the dance hall have a similar atmosphere as opposed to the class.

Here are some suggested classes/dance halls to check out:

On campus classes (you can find more information about class dates and times through the UT website and events calendar):

Longhorn Country Dance Club

University Argentine Tango Club

Texas Latin Dance (TLDF): they teach a variety of latin dances, from salsa, cumbia, bachata, merengue, to cha cha

Longhorn Salsa

Texas Ballroom: they teach two different dances every night.

ABC Ballroom: teaches different ballroom dances every week

For information about more social dance classes available on campus, look out for the notices on the campus events calendar and the e-mail the registrar sends out every week.

Remember, two classes from one organization cannot count, even though you can learn two completely different dances from one group like Texas Ballroom. If doing option 1, you must attend one lesson from two completely different organizations (but you can do different dances from two organizations that offer similar lessons; ex, a cha cha from texas ballroom and a waltz from abc ballroom or salsa from longhorn salsa and a bachata from TLD count)

Austin Dance Halls:

Copa: for all types of latin dancing (under 21 can only get in on Thursdays)

Oasis: offers salsa on Sunday nights

Ruta maya: offers salsa on Wednesday nights

Midnight Rodeo: country western (also only on Thursdays for under 21)

The Women's Federation: swing dancing (lessons offered from 8-9 then social dancing afterwards). If enough people are interested, I will plan a group outing on Thursday night that works for most people to the Fed since it's a short walk just down 24th St.

If you want to find other dance halls for a dance you're interested in, ask your instructors for further suggestions.

If you want to attend a class from an on-campus group or go to a dance hall that is not mentioned here, e-mail me at kupermananna@yahoo.com to get my ok. Also, let me know if you are interested to go on the group swing outing to the Women's Federation. Feel free to e-mail me with any questions or clarifications.

Remember to be safe wherever you go and have fun!