

Outcome of January 29, 2012 Open Meeting about Sunday Practica

11 people attended the meeting. The following previously identified topics were discussed:

- Accommodating a range of levels and general practica format
- Guiding people to the appropriate circle
- Dancer-to-dancer communication and etiquette

Ideas were refined into the specific plans shown below. They are prioritized with a 1 (highest priority), 2 or 3. Anything noted as a handout should also become a poster and a page on the blog.

We also had some discussion about music, bringing back and retaining advanced dancers, and matching calling to the music. These topics merit additional discussion, possibly in one or more working committees.

How will we better accommodate a range of levels and generally improve the practica format?	Priority
Have working committees for the following. Each committee ideally consists of 3 to 4 people. Each committee will have specific tasks. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheduling (who will be the “instruction circle” manager, who will present a move in the “dance circle,” also booking paid instructors) • Music • Etiquette • Guidelines for peer-to-peer teaching 	1
Have 2 circles for the full 2 hours: “Instruction” Circle <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always have someone available to run an “instruction” circle. This responsibility should rotate among a list of people who can follow a set of guidelines. • Dancers can work on basics, learning to call, role reversal, and technique. • There will be a topic or move taught or reviewed, followed by repetitive calling of basic moves. Participants may take part in calling. • “Instruction” circle is actively managed, but is <i>not</i> 2 hours of instruction. • True beginners should be asked to arrive at 4:30. This will make the task of managing this circle easier. 	1

<p>“Dance” Circle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Someone will present a move each week. This may be a new move, or a review of a move that has not been presented in a while. • There will be a schedule so we know who is presenting each week, and what level (intermediate, advanced) the move will be. • Anyone can present a move but they are expected to follow a set of guidelines on how to present a move (how to do peer-to-peer teaching). • As currently, people will take turns calling. • Make sure callers are aware they have a responsibility to call recently taught moves. <p><i>In order to accomplish this, we’ll need more volunteers to do peer-to-peer teaching.</i></p>	1
<p>Develop and implement guidelines for peer-to-peer teaching:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to present a step to the “dance” circle (peer-to-peer teaching). Also hold a workshop on this periodically. • A separate set of guidelines for how to run the “instruction” circle. Guidelines will include teaching awareness of technique, how to avoid injuring fellow dancers, and rueda survival skills. 	2
<p>Have a paid instructor teach a workshop during practica time, 1x/quarter or 1x/month. Topics might include frame, body movement, listening to son and timba, new calls, etc.</p>	3
<p>Keep a list of moves on a new blog page. Update it regularly with new moves. Also update the handout and poster of calls. Callers especially should use the list.</p>	3

How will we determine which circle people should dance in and guide them to it?	Priority
<p>Develop a handout on things you should know before dancing in the “dance circle”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survival skills (what to do if you make a mistake or don’t know a call) • A set of moves that you need to know (moves that form the building blocks of more advanced moves) • A few questions related to awareness of technique 	1
<p>Teach survival skills in the “instruction circle” so when folks move to the “dance circle” they will know how to participate without disrupting the dancing if they make a mistake or if they don’t know a call. Also teach awareness of technique.</p>	1

<p>Make the “instruction circle” appealing to dancers at any level who are working on technique.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage intermediate dancers to spend time in both circles. • Also model that advanced dancers can spend time in both circles. Those involved in practica management and committees should model that advanced dancers have something to gain by dancing in the “instruction circle” and working on their technique. <p><i>We should all work to build a culture where we believe in working on technique (clean execution of steps).</i></p>	2
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	Priority
<p>How will we build a culture where dancer-to-dancer communication and etiquette are constructive, courteous and respectful?</p> <p>Have a working committee for etiquette. The committee will:</p> <p>Develop a handout on etiquette (ground rules for participating in practica). It will address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether and how to provide peer-to-peer feedback • Sample dialog for when something isn’t working • Other issues as appropriate, such as hygiene/illness, and avoiding injuring other dancers <p>Hold a workshop on etiquette/communication</p>	2
<p>Create an understanding that at practica you may receive feedback, and that we are building a culture where feedback will be constructive and courteous. Those involved in practica management and committees should model good etiquette/communication.</p> <p><i>We should all work to build a culture where communication is constructive, courteous and respectful.</i></p>	2