

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF SPIRITUAL SCIENCES

Texas, USA

DIPLOMA IN DANCE – BHARATANATYAM

Academic Year: 2026–27

DIPLOMA LEVEL – 1

Total Contact Hours: 96

THEORY – I | NRITYA SHASTRA

Unit	Title	Contents
Unit 1	Introduction to Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Introduction to Dance and its scope in ancient Bhārat (India);- Introduction to Bharatanāṭyam and its role in holistic development;- Story of Nāṭyaveda according to Nāṭyaśāstra and its evolution;- Bāṇīs / Paramapara (styles) of Bharatanatyam and contribution of legends; (Pandanallur, Thanjavur, Vazhuvoor, Mysuru and Kalakshetra.
Unit 2	Basics of Nāṭya Śāstra	<p>Basics of Nāṭya Śāstra (N.S):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Definitions and distinctions: Nṛtta, Nritya, Natya; Chaturvidha Abhinaya: Āṅgika, Āhārya;
Unit 3	Music Concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Revision of Karnataka music: Swara, Raga, Tāla; Tālangas; Sapta Tālas in five Jātis;- Concept of speed (1–2–3–2–1) with reference to Ādi Tāla
Unit 4	Ślokas	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Asamyuta, Samyuta, Nṛtta Hastas with ślokas (Abhinaya

Unit	Title	Contents
		Darpaṇa); Revision of Śirobheda, Drṣṭibheda, Grīvābheda, Bhrūbheda with Ślokas

THEORY – II | TECHNICAL TERMS OF BHARATANATYAM

Unit	Title	Contents
Unit 1	Sabhā Lakṣaṇa	Introduction to Sabhā Lakṣaṇa; Kiṇkiṇī, Pātra Antaḥprāṇa, Bahiḥprāṇa, Nīca Nāṭya; Nāṭyakrama as per Abhinaya Darpaṇa.
Unit 2	Nāṭyapātra	Nāṭyapātra: Guṇa and Doṣa (A.D); Aṅga Śuddha; Importance of physical & aesthetic discipline
Unit 3	Key terminologies	Tāṇḍava & Lāsyā; Nāṭya Dharmī & Loka Dharmī; Recaka; Aṅgahāra
Unit 4	Karaṇas	Preparatory Ślokas to Karaṇas: Śiro Bheda, Uro Bheda, Pārśva Bheda, Kaṭi Bheda (N.Ś); Sthānaka

PAPER – 3: PRACTICAL – I | YOGIC VYAYAMA AND ADAVUS

Viva-Voce

Total Hours: 24

Unit	Title	Contents
Unit 1	Basic Exercises & Kriyas	Basic exercises and their importance; Bharatanāṭyam Kriyās: Tāḍa Calanam, Jānu Kriyā, Aramaṇḍala Kriyā, Ardha Kaṭi Kriyā; Grīvā Kriyā, Meru Vakra Kriyā, Hasta Calana Kriyā; Trāṭaka, and its varieties

Unit	Title	Contents
Unit 2	Yoga Āsanas	Yogāsanas for dancers: Trikoṇāsana, Vīrabhadrāsana (types), Pārvakonāsana, Ardhacakrāsana, Pādāṅguṣṭhāsana, Vṛksāsana; Sitting āsanas – Padmāsana, Baddhakonāsana, Vajrāsana; Relaxation
Unit 3	Ādavus	Revision of Daśavidha Ādavus in 3 speeds
Unit 4	Tāla & Ślokas	Recitation of Ādi and Rūpaka Tālas; Dhyāna Śloka and Guru Vandā with meanings; Introduction to Gaṇeśa Śloka and one devotional śloka; Application of Tāla and Ślokas with Ādavus

PAPER – 4: PRACTICAL – II | NRITTA

Total Hours: 24

Unit	Title	Contents
Unit 1	Alaripu & Tāla	Tiśra Alaripu; Tāla recitation and coordination; (Knowledge on the structure, characteristics, presentation, and Notation writing).

Unit	Title	Contents
Unit 2	Jatiswaram	Jatiswaram in Ādi Tāla: Knowledge of Rāga, Tāla, and Composer; Recitation of Jatis and Korvais; Singing and practice of Jatiswaram.
Unit 3	Kauthuvam	Kauthuvam – introduction, characteristics, and learning. (Knowledge on the structure, characteristics, presentation and Notation writing).

DIPLOMA LEVEL – 2

THEORY – III | ABHINAYA, RASA AND MUSIC

Total Contact Hours: 96

Unit	Title	Contents
Unit 2	Samyuta Hastas	Samyuta Hastas with Ślokas (A.D); Vinyoga of Samyuta Hastas – 2–3 usages each.
Unit 3	Karnataka Music-	Introduction to Karnataka Music: Sarala(li) Varase & Janti(a) Varase (recitation), Alankaras; Introduction to Purandara Dasa & Tyagaraja.
Unit 4	Musical Instruments	Brief knowledge of four categories of musical instruments used in Karnataka Music.

THEORY – IV | DANCE HERITAGE

Unit	Title	Contents
Unit 1	Temple Sculptures	Dance sculptures at temples of South & North India: Konark Sun Temple, Mukteshwar Temple (Orissa), Hoysala, Chalukya, Vijayanagara periods;
Unit 2	Prominent Contributors	Rukmini Devi Arundale, Tanjavur Quartet, Dr. Venkata Lakshamma, Kolar Kittappa, Mangudi Dorairaja, Vallathol Narayana Menon; Contribution of each personality to revival, codification, performance & pedagogy.

PRACTICAL – III | MOVEMENT STUDIES AND REPERTOIRE

Unit	Title	Contents
Unit 1	Adavus Revision	Revision of Dashavidha Adavus in 3 speeds.
Unit 2	Other Adavus	Knowledge and practice of other Adavus: Kaṭṭu, Bhramari (Suttadavu/Sutral adavu), Vishru (paraval/Mardita) adavu, Muktāya (Alapadma & Kartarī hasta with Tryasra añcita), Korvais and Tīrmānams.
Unit 3	Advanced Kriyas	Advanced Kriyās & movement techniques: Ūrdhvamukha, Mumukha, Himmukha, Pārśvamukha Kriyās, Tāḍacalana, Meruvakra Kriyā, Ardha Kaṭi Kriyā, Aramaṇḍala Kriyā, Hasta Pāda Utthāna Kriyā, Maṇibandha & Vartula Kriyās; Aṅguṣṭha Trāṭaka Maṇḍala Bhēdas; Cārī Bhēdas; Pāda Bhēdas (Abhinaya Darpaṇa).
Unit 5	Repertoire	Devaranāma – characteristics, meaning, Rāga, Tāla, Composer Chaturashra Alārippu.

LEVEL-3

ADVANCED DIPLOMA

THEORY

Unit	Title	Contents
Unit I	Temple Tradition and Historical Development of Bharatanatyam	Temple tradition and historical evolution of Bharatanatyam, including its growth through various periods and patronage systems. Overview of Indian Classical Dance Forms of North India and South India.
Unit II	Anga, Pratyanga, and Upanga (as per Nātya Śāstra)	Concept, definition, and classification of Anga, Pratyanga, and Upanga as explained in the Nātya Śāstra, with reference to their importance in classical dance technique.
Unit III	Chaturvidha Abhinaya	Study of Chaturvidha Abhinaya, with special reference to Vācika Abhinaya and Sāttvika Abhinaya, their meaning, characteristics, and application in performance.
Unit IV	Bhāva and Rasa	Bhāva – definition and classification; Rasa – definition and types; Relationship between Bhāva and Rasa and their role in aesthetic experience (<i>Rasānubhava</i>).

PRACTICAL

Unit	Title	Contents
Unit I	Śloka	Recitation and expressive interpretation of Ślokas, emphasizing pronunciation, bhāva, and abhinaya.
Unit II	Todaya Maṅgalam / Mallari	Performance of Todaya Maṅgalam or Mallari as traditional invocatory compositions.
Unit III	Kriti	Expressive and technical presentation of a Kriti, focusing on sāhitya, bhāva, and rhythm.
Unit IV	Trikāla Jāti	Demonstration of Jāti in three speeds (Trikāla) with clarity of rhythm and movement.
Unit V	Navarasa Abhinaya	Emotive expression of the Navarasa, highlighting facial expressions and body language.
Unit VI	Tillāna	Performance of a Tillāna, emphasizing Nṛtta, rhythm, and dynamic movement.