

Argentine tango lessons ignite rhythm and connection within Ames community

William Dotterweich, Student Life Reporter

As students and members of the Ames community scramble to prepare for finals and the holiday season, campus tango lessons keep up the good spirits.

Each Sunday from 4-7 p.m. in room 3512 of the Memorial Union, Valerie Williams instructs students and community members on the art of Argentine Tango. Williams has been instructing Argentine tango lessons at Iowa State since 2003.

"What I like about tango is that you get to be expressive with music and your partner," Williams said. "It allows you to communicate clearly with your partner, which makes tango so exhilarating."

As the Argentine tango is improvised, Williams said the tango is simple but challenging.

"If your partner has one small mishap, you can't get mad at them," Williams said.

People of all ages attend Williams' lessons, ranging from 17 to 75. As participants are always moving their feet during the lesson, attendees are encouraged to wear dancing shoes, socks or shoes with smooth soles on the dance floor.

Williams said social dances have started building back up after the global pandemic.

"During the pandemic, we had no contact, but we did dance individually at home," Williams said. "There has been a rise of students and community members coming to the lessons every year following the pandemic."

Iowa State students can purchase a punch card that grants them access to five lessons priced at \$45. The general public can purchase these cards for \$55. Cards are available during lesson times, at The Workshop and online through MidwesTix.

The Iowa State University Student Engagement site provides more information about Argentine tango lessons.



William Dotterweich

Valerie Williams guides participants through a dance sequence. Williams is approaching her 21st year of instructing Argentine tango lessons at Iowa State.