

Zeroing in on the core: Advanced tools for training in dance technique
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Pilates is a comprehensive body-conditioning method created by Joseph Pilates in the early 20th century. Pilates, developed a series of exercises and training techniques well known in dance circles first in Europe by Rudolf Laban and Hanya Holm and later in America by Martha Graham and George Balanchine who sent their dancers for training and rehabilitation. Pilates is based on the principle that everything is an extension of a strong and stable core. Pilates incorporates six key principles: centering, concentration, control, precision, breath, and flow. For dancers, pilates can increase muscular control, breath support, stamina, flexibility and extension.

The Pilates Ring sometimes called the “Magic Circle” is an incredibly versatile light weight resistance technology able to challenge multiple areas of the body. When the body pressures the ring, it triggers a balance challenge. While the body responds to right itself, the core muscles respond, getting attention and strengthening the core. The Pilates Ring uses concepts of body symmetry and light body-based resistance for flexibility, improved range of motion and balance rather than traditional muscle building equipment. The inclusion of Pilates Rings in the training of dance will not only improve dancer’s deep connection to their core, encouraging the development of strength, overall alignment and technique to support long-term health and wellness.

Dancers use many different tools to support their skill development and training in dance, some are new media or technology-based and include professional development instructional videos, handheld devices or video analysis applications, while other technologies are innovative malleable equipment. An ATLG grant will provide Pilates Rings are for use in dance and pilates classes offered at UNCG.