

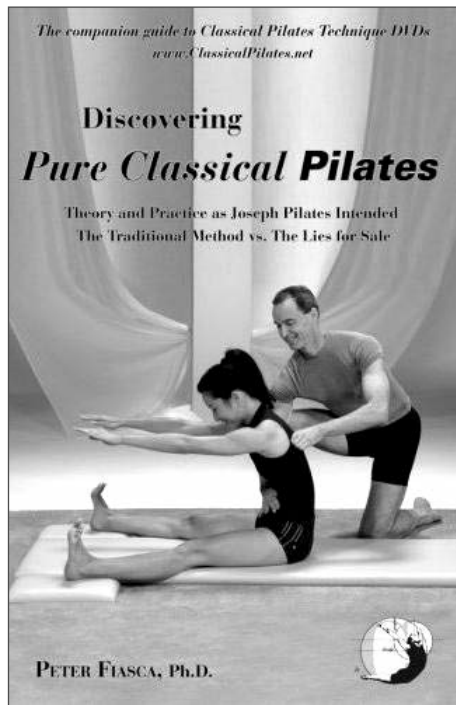
# Keeping it Classical at the Pilates Center

Amy Nelson Riley

In 1999, certified Pilates instructor Dr. Peter Fiasca founded Pure Classical Pilates, Inc., with the mission to “promote health and well-being by preserving Joseph Pilates’s traditional method of mental and physical conditioning...by distinguishing the integrity of Authentic Pilates from various derivative approaches.”

In January 2010, the Pilates Center at Goucher College welcomed Fiasca, who led apparatus lessons, a group mat class, and an instructor workshop. In line with Fiasca’s philosophy, the Pilates Center at Goucher only employs instructors trained in Authentic Pilates and only teaches the original method. Yet, Fiasca provided enormous insight into much of what has become “archival” Pilates material, which are exercises and phrases developed by Joseph Pilates that have not been passed down to younger generations of teachers. Thus, the clients and instructors at Goucher were able to keep it classical, while still discovering elements of this mind/body routine that were previously unknown to them.

Betty Kansler commented on Fiasca’s class, saying “I so enjoyed observing the Pilates class.



The cover of Peter Fiasca’s new book.

Peter demonstrated mastery of the Pilates Method with grace and ease. He gave practical

tips and good advice for advanced and beginning students...and maintained a sense of humor.” Pilates instructor and alumna Amanda Pugh noted “what I love most about Pilates, which I regained from Peter Fiasca’s teaching, is a sense of freedom and enjoyment in movement.”

Fiasca also holds a Ph.D. in psychology and has “over 25 years of clinical, educational, and supervisory experience in solution-focused therapy, insight therapy, and therapy based on cognitive-behavioral techniques.” Much of his work can be found on his website [www.ClassicalPilates.net](http://www.ClassicalPilates.net). In his recent book, *Discovering Pure Classical Pilates* (2009), Fiasca details the necessary conditions of the classical Pilates method; standards of studio excellence; traditional Pilates vs. marketplace manipulation; how Pilates is distinct from physical therapy, dance, and yoga; and the mind-body connection that links psychology and Pilates. Fiasca says that he has a “passion for preservation,” and the Pilates Center at Goucher College is pleased to be mentioned in his book as a studio that “sustains a high level of classical education for its students.”

## Think Outside the Studio! The Wellness Center: A Great Resource for All Dancers

Nadiera Young '12



The Wellness Lab

Photo courtesy of Nadiera Young.

The Physical Therapy Room, also known as the Dancer Wellness Center, is an extended part of Goucher’s Dance Department and is intended as a resource for students to treat their existing injuries and learn to prevent injuries. Many of the people who occupy the room are dancers,

and the room is open to all students enrolled in a dance class, as well as anyone certified to use the equipment, which is used to strengthen the body and stretch sore areas.

Among the many materials available are Therabands, stretchy bands that provide resistance and help strengthen muscles, tendons, and ligaments. They can be used for the entire body, but most of the students used them for the strengthening their feet and ankles. There is also the Proflex, which helps to stretch the calf muscles and the Achilles tendon. Body rolling balls are also available but are more for body maintenance than strengthening—using them to massage the body decreases tightness and tension.

Once a week, physical therapist Bonnie Schuman, who works primarily in the dance department, assists those who are injured and gives advice about staying injury-free. Bonnie is considered one of the best physical therapists for the students because she was a dancer and is familiar with the common injuries and stress put on a dancer’s body.

Along with Bonnie, some of Goucher’s dance faculty, as well as student workers in the dance studio, also work in the Wellness Center and keep the PT room open every day. Ellie Jones '12 works in the PT room and is, in a sense, Bonnie’s assistant. Jones says that “what’s great about working in the PT room is learning so much from Bonnie and [helping] others with what I learn. Also, it is great to know how to take care of myself as a dancer.”