Truman has dance fever. With television dance shows like “Dancing with the Stars” now entering its 10th season and continuing to thrive, that popularity seems to be trickling down to Truman.

There are about 10 different dance organizations on campus, varying from ballet to poi — a dance form that incorporates swinging balls or scarves around your body.

Junior Kathryn Gonner, president of Truman Society of Dance Arts, said several campus dance groups were launched from TSODA.

“Groups like Poi and USMED were originally part of TSODA, and then they started their own organizations, which is really cool,” Gonner said.

TSODA offers several traditional dance classes each semester, including ballet, jazz and tap at both beginner and advanced levels. When choreographers are available, more contemporary classes such as hip hop and Latin dance also are offered.

“Next semester it may be something completely different,” Gonner said.

“Dance is an art — an art that happens to provide cardiovascular exercise.”

Reality dance shows reveal that an ordinary person who danced for four hours a day, like the contestants on the shows, underwent noticeable changes in their bodies.

This sparked a trend in American gyms. Lance hill, executive director of the Adair County YMCA, said classes that incorporate dance moves became very popular and remain among the most popular classes offered at local health and fitness clubs today.

Brenna Cook, interim fitness and wellness director at the Student Recreation Center, said instructional classes that offer dance moves are popular at the rec center as well.

“Even now, this far in the semester, students will line up and wait 45 minutes early to ensure they get a spot in the class.”

The rec center added classes like Zumba to their instructional fitness class schedule to accommodate the increased interest in dance-based classes.

“Students started asking about Zumba classes because they were interested,” Cook said. “About that time, our student instructor Claire Christian said she was planning on becoming certified to teach Zumba, so we were able to add it to the schedule.”

Students dance for health, fun

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Dance has even made its way into the health science curriculum. Traditional dance classes, including ballet, tap and rhythmic movement, have been offered through the exercise science department at Truman for several years.

This semester, contemporary dance classes, including hip hop for health, have been added to the health science core offerings. Jordan Clayton, president of the Society of Urban and Ethnic Dance Excellence, said hip hop for health, added this semester, has been a good addition to the core classes.

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