

University of Florida/ College of the Arts/ School of Theatre and Dance

# THE 3234: Diversity and Multiculturalism in American Theatre

Spring 2023 / Section DM8T

MWF – Period 7 (1:55-2:45PM) – Con 0219

## INSTRUCTOR

Dr. Mikell Pinkney

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## OFFICE LOCATION

222 McGuire Pavilion

## OFFICE HOURS

Mon & Wed (Noon -1:30)

## COURSE OVERVIEW

This course traces the development of constructed images of marginalized peoples as presented in the American theatre from the colonial period through end of the Twentieth Century. Cultural Studies and Performance Studies tools and techniques of post structural and postmodern literary criticism will be used to analyze plays, productions and performances concerning issues of race, gender, class, ethnicity, sexual preference and orientation, to include all marginalized cultures within American society.

## REQUIRED TEXT

*American Drama: Colonial to Contemporary*, by Stephen Watt and Gary A. Richardson.

*Columbia Dictionary of Modern Literary and Cultural Criticism* by Joseph Childress and Gary Hentzi.

*Maple and Vine* by Jordon Harrison. Samuel French.

*Between Riverside and Crazy* by Stephen Adly Gurigis.

**ALSO:** Various in-class handouts in relation to plays and specific areas of discussion

## Objectives and Outcomes:

This is a theoretical dramatic philosophy course, designed to elevate the level of artistic capability in each individual. By aiding the investigation of potential, derived from a process of understanding elements of cultural studies, the aim is to enhance student's interpretive skills through deeper levels of awareness and knowledge regarding pluralistic ideologies and perspectives. The course focuses on how this knowledge may be transformed into richer interpretive powers and an ability to see multiple levels of meaning in the textual and creative aspects of plays and productions. The course will also provide avenue toward the understanding of the role that theatre plays as an institutional acculturating tool of

American cultural hegemony (i.e., identity, identity politics, subject/object, agency, appropriation, marginalization, encoding and decoding, dominant-negotiated-oppositional reading, camp and parody, double-consciousness, etc.).

### **Student Learning Objectives:**

1. Students identify and analyze key elements, biases and influences that shape thought within the discipline (Critical Thinking)
2. Students approach issues and problems within the discipline from multiple perspectives (Critical Thinking)
3. Students will communicate knowledge, thoughts and reasoning clearly and effectively in forms appropriate to the discipline, individually and/or in groups (Communication)
4. Students demonstrate higher awareness of minority and marginalized artistic cultural forms and perspectives of expression (Communication)
5. Students demonstrate awareness of foundations of American theatrical system (Communication)

For more information about General Education Student Learning Outcomes go to:  
**[http://gened.aa.ufl.edu/Date/Sites/10/media/gened\\_slo.pdf](http://gened.aa.ufl.edu/Date/Sites/10/media/gened_slo.pdf)**

### **Course Goals:**

- Students will be able to analyze the historical development of dramatic theory, philosophy and practice of marginalized/ minority cultures (SLO 1, 2 & 3)
- Students will become familiar with dramatic literature not part of the overall theatrical mainstream (SLO 1 & 2)
- Students will develop ability to discuss philosophies of “otherness” and “hermeneutical perspectives” among other cultural studies terminology (SLO 3, 4 & 5)
- Students will write about and discuss plays read over the course of the semester, focusing on being able to convey the essence of the literature with the skills of social and cultural awareness (SLO 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5)
- Students will communicate wider awareness of alternative voices and social agency (SLO 4 & 5)

### **Course Requirements:**

#### **1. PRODUCTION VIEWING:**

Attendance at live theatre productions is required for all students enrolled in this course. Your attendance at these productions will be important and a production response paper will be required. Two production responses will be worth 25 points each to be factored into your final grade. Students desiring extra credit may do analysis for a third production. These “response papers” should be approximately 2-3 pages in length.

## 2. POSITION/ RESPONSE PAPERS:

Two (2) brief response papers are expected. Papers are due by Wednesday following the closing of each production. The papers will focus on issues related to the course as they can be related to the production. The papers should utilize methods, terms and issues being discussed in the course. Each response will be worth 25 points toward final grades. Papers must utilize MLA format for paper writing, must be typed double-spaced, must use standard font of size 12, should be no more than 2-3 pages in length.

## 3. ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Every class meeting will be essential to development of awareness. Presence and participation in classes are essential for discussions that present individual insights, diverse points-of-view, and for better understanding, development and awareness skills provided by this course. Attendance grades WILL BE DROPPED BY 10 points for each class missed without an official excuse. **Bonus points are often awarded by the instructor, but only for students present on the day points are awarded.**

Any missed classes are the sole responsibility of the student; meaning, any missed lectures, presentations or discussion information or handout material missed due to absence **does not obligate the instructor to re-teach that information.** Group discussions cannot be recreated. Students are encouraged to “always attend class” whether or not they have read the assigned material for the day (of course they should read **all** daily materials and **all** plays). Something will always be offered in class discussions that may clarify terms, issues and important objectives of the course. Handouts and video viewing will also contribute to better understanding of concepts and terminology presented.

## 4. CULTURAL CRITICISM TERMINOLOGY EXAM:

This will be an in-class exam focusing on conceptual terms applied to play readings. No books or notes will be allowed for this exam.

## 5. MID-TERM AND FINAL EXAMS:

The mid-term and final exams will consist of written essay responses to selected questions. Exams are designed to evaluate student’s ability to articulate concepts learned in the course; to explain that they have acquired a “new way of seeing and understanding.” Students will be expected to respond to topical questions based on plays read during the term *and* must also utilize concepts and terms explained during the course. The mid-term and final exam will each be worth 100 points toward the final grade. The Mid-Term will be an in-class essay exam. The Final Exam will be a take-home essay. **These will be open-book exams with textbooks, notes and handouts allowed.** Students should make sure to keep up with readings, keep class notes and presentation handouts for these purposes.

### **Group Presentations of Plays Should Include:**

- A Power Point presentation and handout materials of important issues for the entire class. Handout should include 3-5 relevant study questions that may be included on an exam
- *Very brief* overview or plot summary (everyone in class should read each play)
- Possible meaning(s) and purposes of play title
- Themes and highlights of important issues discussed in play
- Relationships to cultural critical terminology
- *Brief* background about the playwright including other important works
- Location and setting of the action (including any meaning or metaphors associated)
- Major and minor characters (including their purpose and objectives in the play)
- The time period of the play and related issues from that historical moment
- Major quotes or lines from the play that present important messages for today
- Outside critiques of the play and the issues when it was produced (or later reviewed)
- Personal perspectives of the group on what classmates should remember about the play
- Make sure to list each group members contribution to the presentation on the handout

**Each presentation must take no longer than 30-35 minutes of class time. All group members will receive the same numerical point value for the presentation (100 points total). Points will be deducted for missing elements above.**

**Grading:** Grading will be based on a point system with 500 total possible points:

1. Attendance and Participation	100
<i>(100% for perfect attendance; 10 points dropped for each absence without official excuse.)</i>	
2. Group play presentations	100
3. Mid-Term Essay	100
4. Production Responses (2 @ 25 each)	50
5. Cultural Criticism Terminology Exam	50
5. Final Exam Paper	100
<b>Possible Total</b>	<b>500</b>

### **Point Total – Grade Equivalence**

**A = 475-500 / A- = 455-474 /**

**B+ = 434-454 / B = 413-433 / B- = 392-412 /**

**C+ = 371-391 / C = 350-370 / C- = 329-349 /  
D+ = 308-328 / D = 287-307 / D- = 266-286 /  
E = less than 266**

## **COURSE CALENDAR:** (Subject to Changes and Adjustments)

### **Week #1:**

Mon. Jan. 9 First Class Meeting / Introduction and Orientation  
Wed. Jan. 11 Explaining Cultural Studies in regard to Theatre/ Performance Studies, (de)construction  
Fri. Jan. 13 Cultural Theories: Pluralism, Multiculturalism, Political Correctness, Bricolage, etc.

### **Week #2:**

Mon. Jan. 16 **MLKing Day / NO CLASS**  
Wed. Jan. 18 Ideology, image, identity, subject-object configuration, agency-voice, appropriation, etc.  
Fri. Jan. 20 Cultural regimes, realms of resistance, cultural hegemony, superstructure-base configuration

### **Week #3:**

Mon. Jan. 16 "New Ways of Reading and Seeing" - Read Intro. In *American Drama*, Pg. 1-5  
Wed. Jan. 18 Puritan Ethics and Marginalized Images in American culture. Melodramatic polarities  
Fri. Jan. 20 **All Read Play: METAMORA by John Augustus Stone (1829)**

### **Week #4:**

Mon. Jan. 23 Minstrelsy and creation of black image/ Video Viewing: "Ethnic Notions"  
Wed. Jan. 25 **Cultural Criticism Terminology Exam** (25 Questions @ 2 points each/ 50 point total)  
Fri. Jan. 27 **All Read Play: THE OCTOROON by Dion Boucicault (1859)**

### **Week #5:**

Mon. Jan.30 Perceptions of Otherness-Difference/ Video Viewing: "The Women's Movement"  
Wed. Feb. 1 **Play Group #1: TRIFLES by Susan Glaspell (1916)**  
Fri. Feb. 3 1920s-The Harlem Renaissance

### **Week #6:**

Mon. Feb. 6 1930s-The Federal Theatre Project / Agitprop Theatre of Social Protest  
Wed. Feb. 8 **Play Group #2: WAITING FOR LEFTY by Clifford Odets (1935)**  
Fri. Feb. 10 American Theatre in the 1940s and 1950s / Double Consciousness

### **Week #7:**

Mon. Feb. 13 **Play Group #3: MULATTO by Langston Hughes (1935)**  
Wed. Feb. 15 1960s Revolutionary Theatre and its After Effects  
Fri. Feb. 17 **Play Group #4: DUTCHMAN by LeRoi Jones/Amiri Baraka (1964)**

### **Week #8:**

Mon. Feb. 20 Mid-term review of plays, issues and cultural studies methods and terms  
Wed. Feb. 22 **Mid-Term Exam (In class essay writing)**  
Fri. Feb. 24 Identity Politics, Structures of Feeling, Homo-social vs. Homo-sexual dichotomy

**Week #9:**

Mon. Feb. 27 **Play Group #5: *STREAMERS* by David Rabe (1976)**  
 Wed. Mar. 1 Feminist Voice (liberal, radical), Post-Structural innovation, Imagery and Metaphor  
 Fri. Mar. 3 **Play Group #6: *SPELL #7* by Ntozake Shange (1979)**

**Week #10:**

Mon. Mar. 6 Postmodernism and Performance Art  
 Wed. Mar. 8 **Play Group #7: *WE KEEP OUR VICTIIMS READY* by Karen Finley (1989/91)**  
 Fri. Mar. 10 TBD

**Week #11: SPRING BREAK / Mar. 11 - 18****Week #12:**

Mon. Mar. 20 Blues Aesthetics, Spirituality and Music in Black Drama  
 Wed. Mar. 22 **Play Group #8: *MA RAINEY'S BLACK BOTTOM* by August Wilson (1984)**  
 Fri. Mar. 24 Hispanic/Latin-American Voice

**Week #13:**

Mon. Mar. 27 **Play Group #9: . . . *NO STINKING BADGES!* by Luis Valdez (1986)**  
 Wed. Mar. 29 Orientalism - Eastern vs. Western Otherness / Binary Polarities  
 Fri. Mar. 31 **Play Group #10: *M BUTTERFLY* by Henry David Hwang (1988)**

**Week #14:**

Mon. Apr. 3 Contemporary American Theatre - Read in *American Drama*, Pg. 722-735  
 Wed. Apr. 5 TBA:  
 Fri. Apr. 7 **Play Group #11: *MAPLE AND VINE* by Jordon Harrison (2011)**

**Week #15:**

Mon. Apr. 10 **All Read: *BETWEEN RIVERSIDE AND CRAZY* by Stephen Adly Gurigis (2015)**  
 Wed. Apr. 12 TBD  
 Fri. Apr. 14 TBD

**Week #16:**

Mon. Apr. 17 Course Review Discussion  
**Wed. Apr. 19 Cultural Criticism Terms Exam**  
 Fri. Apr. 21 TBD

Mon. Apr. 24 **Final Formal Class Meeting/ Take Home Final Exam Presented and Discussed**  
 Wed. Apr. 26 **No Class Meeting/ SoTD Convocation – 4PM, Constans Theatre**

**(Take Home Final Exam due  
 no later than 5PM, Monday, Monday, May 1<sup>st</sup>)**

**Special Accommodations:**

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office (Peabody Hall) will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

**Cell Phones and Beeping Electronic Devices:**

**These must be turned off before the beginning of each class. It is strongly recommended that they be turned off before entering the classroom.**

**Academic Honesty:**

As a result of completing the registration from at the University of Florida, every student has signed the following statement:

*“I understand that the University of Florida expects its students to be honest in all their academic work. I agree to adhere to this commitment to academic honesty and understand that my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the University.”*

The instructor of this course fully supports the intent of the above statement and will not tolerate academic dishonesty. We, the members of the University of Florida Community, pledge to hold ourselves, and our peers, to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.

**Lectures given in this class are the property of the University/ faculty member and may not be taped without prior permission from the instructor and may not be used for any commercial purpose or internet posting. Students found to be in violation may be subject to discipline under the University’s Student Conduct Code.**

The Student Conduct Code is available at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/studentguide/>

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**SOTD Handbook and Production Policy Manual:**

**Listed on webpage under General Theatre / Current Students / Student Resources**

<http://www.arts.ufl.edu/programs/generaltheatre.aspx>

## SOTD Production Policy Manual

<http://www.arts.ufl.edu/downloads/sotd/10-11%20Production%20Policy%20Manual.pdf>

**In case of a disaster affecting the UF campus, for the latest information see  
<http://www.ufl.edu>**

***City Emergency Notification:***  
**Weekdays Evenings/ Weekends**  
**Fire/Police/Medical Emergency: 911**

## Campus Resources:

### Health and Wellness:

U Matter, We Care:

If you or a friend is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu) or 352 392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Counseling and Wellness Center:

<http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

*Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS)*

Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

*University Police Department*, 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

<http://www.police.ufl.edu/>

### Academic Resources:

*E-learning technical support*, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to [Learning-support@ufl.edu](mailto:Learning-support@ufl.edu).

<https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>.

*Career Resource Center*, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling. <http://www.crc.ufl.edu/>

*Library Support*, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>. Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

*Teaching Center*, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. <http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>

*Writing Studio*, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>

*Student Complaints Campus:*

[https://www.dso.ufl.edu/documents/UF\\_Complaints\\_policy.pdf](https://www.dso.ufl.edu/documents/UF_Complaints_policy.pdf)

*On-Line Students Complaints:* <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process>



# Online course evaluation process:

“Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at:

<https://evaluations.ufl.edu>.

Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at:

<https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

## Play Reading and Group Presentation List

All students are expected to read plays before they are discussed in class.

**All Read: *METAMORA* by John Augustus Stone (1829)**

**All Read: *THE OCTOROON* by Dion Boucicault (1859)**

Play Group #1: ***TRIFLES* by Susan Glaspell (1916)**

Play Group #2: ***WAITING FOR LEFTY* by Clifford Odets (1935)**

Play Group #3: ***MULATTO* by Langston Hughes (1935)**

Play Group #4: ***DUTCHMAN* by LeRoi Jones/Amiri Baraka (1964)**

Play Group #5: ***STREAMERS* by David Rabe (1976)**

Play Group #6: ***SPELL #7* by Ntozake Shange (1979)**

Play Group #7: ***WE KEEP OUR VICTIIMS READY* by Karen Finley (1989/91)**

Play Group #8: ***MA RAINEY’S BLACK BOTTOM* by August Wilson (1984)**

Play Group #9: ***I DON’T HAVE TO. . . NO STINKING BADGES!* by Luis Valdez (1986)**

Play Group #10: ***M BUTTERFLY* by Henry David Hwang (1988)**

Play Group #11: ***MAPLE AND VINE* by Jordon Harrison (2011)**

**All Read: *BETWEEN RIVERSIDE AND CRAZY* by Stephen Adly Gurigis (2015)**