

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

**THE 3234: Diversity and Multiculturalism in American Theatre**  
**Spring 2024 Syllabus / Sec. 8135 & 813U**

2 Credits / MW Per. 4-5: (10:40 AM -12:35 PM) / Rm: CON G012

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Office Hours: M & R. 1:00-5:00 PM *by appointment*

**Course Description:**

This course traces the development of constructed images of marginalized peoples as presented in the American theatre from the colonial period to the present. 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, in addition to all marginalized cultures within American society.

**Objectives and Outcomes:**

This is a dramatic philosophy and dramatic theories course, designed to elevate the level of artistic capability in each individual by aiding the investigation of potential derived from the process of combining aspects of cultural studies to enhance their interpretive skills, and providing deeper levels of knowledge and levels of understanding of pluralistic ideology 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 any production. The course will also provide avenue toward the understanding of relevant cultural studies terms related to the field and the role that theatre plays as an institutional acculturating tool of American hegemony (i.e., identity, identity politics, subject/object configuration, agency, appropriation, marginalization, encoding and decoding, dominant-negotiated-oppositional reading, camp and parody, double-consciousness, etc.).

**Required Texts:**

*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

**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. This term's coupon productions will include *Everybody* and *Pliant Girls*. Your attendance at these productions will be important and a production response paper will be required. Two production responses will be worth 25 points to be factored into your final grade. Students desiring extra credit may do analysis for the third production. These “response papers” should be no longer than 2-3 pages in length.

#### **2. POSITION/ RESPONSE PAPERS:**

Two (2) brief response papers will be expected. These papers and due dates are noted on the course calendar. 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. Detailed instructions for response papers will be provided and uploaded on Canvas.

#### **3. ATTENDANCE POLICY:**

Every class meeting will be essential to the 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 lecture, presentation 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 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 to assist with these exams.

**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 in 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 on what classmates should remember about the play.
- Make sure to include your name on the handout.

**Each presentation must take no longer than 30-35 minutes of class time.**

**Each presentation will be worth 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 <i>(100% for perfect attendance; 10 points dropped for more than 3 absence)</i>	100
2. Play presentations	100
3. Mid-Term Essay	100
4. Production Responses (2 @ 25 each)	50
5. Cultural Criticism Terminology Exam	50
5. Final 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. 8 First Class Meeting / Introduction and Orientation  
 Wed. Jan. 10 Explaining Cultural Studies regarding Theatre Studies, (de)construction.  
 Fri. Jan. 12 Cultural Theories: Pluralism, Multiculturalism, Political Correctness, Bricolage, etc.

**Week #2:**

Mon. Jan. 15 **MLKing Day / NO CLASS**  
 Wed. Jan. 17 Ideology, image, identity, subject-object configuration, agency-voice, appropriation, etc.  
 Fri. Jan. 19 Cultural regimes, realms of resistance, cultural hegemony, superstructure-base configuration

**Week #3:**

Mon. Jan. 22 “New Ways of Reading and Seeing” - Read Intro. In *American Drama*, Pg. 1-5  
 Wed. Jan. 24 Video Crash Course #29: “North America Gets a Theatre” / Puritan Ethics & Stage Images  
 Fri. Jan. 26 Read Play: ***METAMORA* by John Augustus Stone (1829)**

**Week #4:**

Mon. Jan. 29 Race, Minstrelsy, and creation of “other” images / Video: Crash Course #30  
 Wed. Jan. 31 Read Play: ***THE OCTOROON* by Dion Boucicault (1859)**  
 Fri. Feb. 2 American theatre at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> into the 20<sup>th</sup> century

**Week #5:**

Mon. Feb. 5 Play Presentation #1: ***TRIFLES* by Susan Glaspell (1916)**  
 Wed. Feb. 7 1930s-The Federal Theatre Project (1935-39) & Agitprop Theatre of Social Protest  
 Fri. Feb. 9 Play Presenter #2: ***WAITING FOR LEFTY* by Clifford Odets (1935)**

**Week #6:**

Mon. Feb. 12 American Theatre in the 1940s and 1950s / Double Consciousness  
 Wed. Feb. 14 Play Presenter #3: ***MULATTO* by Langston Hughes (1935)**  
 Fri. Feb. 16 1960s Revolutionary Theatre and its After Effects

**Week #7:**

Mon. Feb. 19 Play Presenter #4: ***DUTCHMAN* by LeRoi Jones/Amiri Baraka (1964)**  
 Wed. Feb. 21 Mid-term review of plays, issues and cultural studies methods and terms  
 Fri. Feb. 23 **Mid-Term Exam (In class essay writing)**

**Week #8:**

Mon. Feb. 26 Open Discussion Day/ Review of Mid-Term Exam questions  
 Wed. Feb. 28 Identity Politics, Structures of Feeling, Homo-social vs. Homosexual dichotomy  
 Fri. Mar. 1 Play Presenter #5: ***STREAMERS* by David Rabe (1976)**

**Week #9:**

Mon. Mar. 4 Feminist Voice (liberal, radical), post-structural innovation, Imagery and Metaphor  
 Wed. Mar. 6 Play Presenter #6: ***SPELL #7* by Ntozake Shange (1979)**  
 Fri. Mar. 8 TBA

**Week #10: SPRING BREAK / Mar. 9-16**

**Week #11:**

Mon. Mar. 18 Postmodernism and Performance Art  
 Wed. Mar. 20 Play Presenter #7: ***WE KEEP OUR VICTIMS READY*** by **Karen Finley (1989/91)**  
 Fri. Mar. 22 Blues Aesthetics, Spirituality and Music in Black Drama

**Week #12:**

Mon. Mar. 25 Play Presenter #8: ***MA RAINEY'S BLACK BOTTOM*** by **August Wilson (1984)**  
 Wed. Mar. 27 Hispanic/Latin-American Voice  
 Fri. Mar. 29 Play Presenter #9: . . . ***NO STINKING BADGES!*** by **Luis Valdez (1986)**

**Week #13:**

Mon. Apr. 1 Orientalism - Eastern vs. Western Otherness / Binary Polarities  
 Wed. Apr. 3 Play Presenter #10: ***M BUTTERFLY*** by **Henry David Hwang (1988)**  
 Fri. Apr. 5 Contemporary American Theatre - Read in *American Drama*, Pg. 722-735

**Week #14:**

Mon. Apr. 8 Play Presenter #11: ***MAPLE AND VINE*** by **Jordon Harrison (2011)**  
 Wed. Apr. 10 TBA  
 Fri. Apr. 12 Presenter #12: ***BETWEEN RIVERSIDE AND CRAZY*** by **Stephen Adly Gurigis (2015)**

**Week #15:**

Mon. Apr. 15 Review and Prep for terms test  
 Wed. Apr. 17 **Cultural Criticism Terms Test**  
 Fri. Apr. 19 Summary and Review for Final Papers / **Final Exam Presented and Discussed**

**Week #16:**

Mon. Apr. 22 **Final Formal Class Meeting/**  
 Wed. Apr. 24 **No Class Meeting/ SoTD Convocation – 4PM**

**(Take Home Final Exam Papers due  
 no later than midnight-11:59 PM, Monday, April 29th)**

**Students with Disabilities/ Special Accommodations:**

The instructor will make every attempt to accommodate students with disabilities. Students with disabilities requesting accommodation should first register with the Disability Resource Center/ DRC (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter that must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

**Cell Phones and Beeping Electronic Devices:**

**These must 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 Presentation List**

All students are expected to read plays before they are discussed in class. All plays, except the last two, are found in the course anthology of plays.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Play Presentation #9: ***I DON'T HAVE TO. . . NO STINKING BADGES!* By Luis Valdez (1986)**

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

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

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



## Brief List of CULTURAL STUDIES TERMS

Most of these terms are defined in *The Columbia Dictionary of Modern Literary and Cultural Criticism* by Joseph Childress and Gary Hentzi. Additional terms will be introduced, discussed and utilized during class meetings. Make sure to take good notes throughout the semester and/or highlight them in your dictionary/ textbook. You will be expected to understand and make use of these terms in all of your arguments in this course and in particular, to make clear use of them as you present a point of view in your final examination essay for the course.

### 3 WAYS OF READING

ABJECTION  
 ABREACTION  
 AESTHETIC IDEOLOGY  
 AGENCY/ AGENT  
 APPARATUS  
 APPROPRIATION  
 AUTHOR  
 AUTHOR FUNCTION  
 AUTHORITY  
 BASE AND SUPERSTRUCTURE  
 BLACK AESTHETIC  
 BLACK ARTS MOVEMENT  
 BRICOLAGE  
 CANON/ CANON FORMATION  
 CHANGING SAME  
 CODE  
 CONNOTATION/ DENOTATION  
 CULTURAL CAPITAL  
 CULTURAL LITERACY  
 CULTURAL FEMINIST  
 CULTURAL STUDIES  
 DECENTERED SUBJECT  
 DECENTERING  
 DECONSTRUCTION  
 DIALECTIC  
 DIFFERENCE, New Cultural Politics  
 DOUBLE CONSCIOUSNESS  
 DOUBLE-VOICED TEXT  
 (THE) ENLIGHTENMENT

### EPISTEMOLOGY

ESSENTIALISM  
 HARLEM RENAISSANCE  
 HEGEMONY  
 HERMENEUTICS  
 HOMOSOCIAL  
 IDENTITY  
 (IDENTITY POLITICS)  
 IDEOLOGY  
 IMAGO  
 LIBERAL FEMINISM  
 MARGINAL/ MARGINALIZATION  
 METAPHOR  
 MIRROR STAGE  
 MULTICULTURALISM  
 (POLITICAL CORRECTNESS)  
 NAMING  
 NEW BLACK AESTHETIC  
 ORIENTALISM  
 OTHER/ OTHERNESS  
 PARADIGM  
 PLURALISM  
 POSTMODERNISM  
 POSTSTRUCTURALISM  
 POWER  
 RADICAL FEMINISM  
 SOCIALIST FEMINISM  
 STRUCTURE OF FEELING  
 SUBJECT OBJECT  
 WOMANIST