

THEA 0030 - DIVERSITY IN AMERICAN THEATRE

Catalog Description

Advisory: Completion of THEA 13 with grade of "C" or better
Hours: 54 lecture

Description: Introduction to the works and contributions of underrepresented communities to American theatre. The course will identify and deconstruct the historical references and significance of major playwrights, composers, and producing theatres created by Asian/Pacific Americans; Black/African Americans; Latinx Americans; European-Americans; Indigenous Americans; and other diverse groups. The theatrical works crafted by these populations will include subjects of race/racism, stereotypes, oppression, class, people with disabilities, and gender role/identity. Topics will be covered through readings, lectures, discussions, video, in addition to required viewing of play and musical productions. (CSU, UC)

Course Student Learning Outcomes

- CSLO #1: Identify and analyze stereotypes and cultural misrepresentations in dramatic literature and historically seen onstage within the contexts of racism, ethnocentrism, classism, xenophobia, gender bias, and homophobia.
- CSLO #2: Describe and identify the contributions of American BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) theatre practitioners and their works.
- CSLO #3: Analyze the dramatic literature of the cultural communities of diverse populations.
- CSLO #4: Trace the historical evolution of contemporary theatre's movement to prioritize diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in its practice.

Effective Term

Fall 2023

Course Type

Credit - Degree-applicable

Contact Hours

54

Outside of Class Hours

108

Total Student Learning Hours

162

Course Objectives

1. Describe and identify concepts of diversity, inclusion, and equity through the perspective of American theatre.
2. Identify and analyze the evolution of underrepresented theatre artists, works, companies, and movements from the 1900s to today.
3. Compare and contrast the challenges of marginalized groups as expressed in units including African American Theatre, Asian and Pacific

American Theatre, Latinx American Theatre, Native American Theatre, European-American Theatre, Feminist Theatre, LGBTQIA Theatre and Artists with Disabilities.

4. Examine the ongoing work for equity and inclusion in American theatre today.

5. Evaluate the landscape of enacting equity from the perspective of a producing Theatre company through play and musical selections, casting productions, and providing access to company members and a community audience that meets the equitable needs of everyone in a safe and sharing space.

General Education Information

- Approved College Associate Degree GE Applicability
 - AA/AS - Fine Arts
- CSU GE Applicability (Recommended-requires CSU approval)
- Cal-GETC Applicability (Recommended - Requires External Approval)
- IGETC Applicability (Recommended-requires CSU/UC approval)

Articulation Information

- CSU Transferable
- UC Transferable

Methods of Evaluation

- Classroom Discussions
 - Example: Students will be given question prompts based on the plays, lectures, and assigned readings to discuss in class. Also, following class project presentations, students will be graded on participation of discussions commenting on how the topic ties to the course. Instructors will also evaluate each student based on the level of contribution students offer consistently to daily discussion.
- Essay Examinations
 - Example: Example: Discuss the one of the key themes in August Wilson's *Fences* and apply the significance of one of those themes to Wilson's intent to journal the African American experience in the 20th century.
- Objective Examinations
 - Example: Students will be evaluated on their comprehension of course material via weekly quizzes, midterms, and final examinations. Weekly quizzes will cover plays and articles assigned for the week as well as terms from class lectures and discussions. Midterms and Finals will cover all sections studied up to that point, including influential theatre companies, playwrights assigned for reading, major movements in theatre history, and unifying themes across the assigned works. Example: Who introduced the term "spec-actor" in their book *Theatre of the Oppressed* as a means of allowing spectators to become actors? a.) Augusto Boal b.) Luis Valdez c.) Cesar Chavez d.) Maria Irene Fornes
- Projects
 - Example: Students will do research and give presentations on influential plays and/or playwrights. For example, a small group may be assigned *A Raisin in the Sun* and show a slide presentation to the class, with each student covering one aspect of the play i.e. biography of the playwright, themes of the play, cultural significance, etc.
- Reports
 - Example: Students will write a report based on a live performance that they will attend, using the terminology and criteria presented

in class. This live performance analysis paper is graded based upon a rubric students receive as a part of their assignment. They may also have the option to watch online performances of plays if they cannot see one live in person.

Repeatable

No

Methods of Instruction

- Lecture/Discussion
- Distance Learning

Lecture:

1. The instructor will lecture on the history of Teatro Campesino and its relationship to the United Farm Workers Movement led by Cesar Chavez. Instructor then guides a small group discussion of how students might create their own play or musical exploring a current social movement (for example, Black Lives Matter, Stop Asian Hate, or Me Too, Climate Change, etc.)
2. The instructor will lecture about David Henry Hwang's contributions to Asian-American theatre examining the progression of Hwang's dramatic works *M. Butterfly* (1988), *Yellowface* (2007), and *Chinglish* (2011). The instructor will facilitate a discussion of identity conscious casting.

Distance Learning

1. The instructor will set-up all assignments and discussion within learning management software to provide a means for an interactive and engaging learning environment. Tools, apps, and resources such as video conferencing software, films on demand, National Theatre live, and video sharing websites will be used as training, discussion platforms, analysis, and models for students to analyze and express opinions on topics introduced. Example: Instructor will post an online discussion laying out the details of casting selections made from original Broadway and revival or touring productions of *Oklahoma!* and *Hunchback of Notre Dame*, and *Hamilton*. Students will be asked to watch video excerpts from both versions of each musical, and discuss the ways in which casting choices have changed to be more inclusive of diverse populations.

Typical Out of Class Assignments

Reading Assignments

1. Read two essays from *Seeking Common Ground* and write a short response comparing and contrasting the authors' assessment of Latinx theatre in America.
2. Read *The Thanksgiving Play* by Larissa Fasthorse, then answer a short response about how it addresses how colonization remains a harmful force in the 21st century.

Writing, Problem Solving or Performance

1. Watch Paula Vogel's *Indecent* via BroadwayHD and write a short paper that captures how the piece changes from start to finish and how it addresses marginalized voices with examples you've experienced with the LGBTQIA, Jewish/Yiddish and Feminist theatre.
2. Write a paper that offers the opportunity to step into the role of the playwright. Select a contemporary socio-political issue in today's America that you feel connected to. Then, write a project proposal for a new play to be developed that would address that issue.

Other (Term projects, research papers, portfolios, etc.)

Required Materials

- The Routledge Companion to African American Theatre and Performance
 - Author: Kathy A. Perkins, Sandra L. Richards, Renée Alexander Craft, Thomas F. DeFrantz
 - Publisher: Routledge
 - Publication Date: 2020
 - Text Edition: 1st
 - Classic Textbook?: No
 - OER Link:
 - OER:
- Seeking Common Ground: Latinx and Latin American Theatre & Performance
 - Author: Trevor Boffone, Chantal Rodriguez, Teresa Marrero
 - Publisher: Methuen Drama
 - Publication Date: 2021
 - Text Edition: 1st
 - Classic Textbook?: No
 - OER Link:
 - OER:
- Diversity of American Theatre - From the Beginning to 2000
 - Author: Marsh Cassidy
 - Publisher:
 - Publication Date: 2012
 - Text Edition: 1st
 - Classic Textbook?: No
 - OER Link:
 - OER:
- A History of Asian American Theatre
 - Author: Esther Kim Lee
 - Publisher: Cambridge University Press
 - Publication Date: 2008
 - Text Edition: 2nd
 - Classic Textbook?: No
 - OER Link:
 - OER:
- Theatre of the Oppressed
 - Author: Augusto Boal
 - Publisher: Theatre Communications Group
 - Publication Date: 1985
 - Text Edition: 1st
 - Classic Textbook?: No
 - OER Link:
 - OER:

Other materials and-or supplies required of students that contribute to the cost of the course.