

THAR 6 Course Outline as of Fall 2025**CATALOG INFORMATION**

Dept and Nbr: THAR 6 Title: MULTICULTURAL THEATRE

Full Title: Multicultural Perspectives in American Theatre

Last Reviewed: 1/25/2021

Units		Course Hours per Week		Nbr of Weeks	Course Hours Total	
Maximum	3.00	Lecture Scheduled	3.00	17.5	Lecture Scheduled	52.50
Minimum	3.00	Lab Scheduled	0	8	Lab Scheduled	0
		Contact DHR	0		Contact DHR	0
		Contact Total	3.00		Contact Total	52.50
		Non-contact DHR	0		Non-contact DHR	0

Total Out of Class Hours: 105.00

Total Student Learning Hours: 157.50

Title 5 Category: AA Degree Applicable

Grading: Grade Only

Repeatability: 00 - Two Repeats if Grade was D, F, NC, or NP

Also Listed As:

Formerly:

Catalog Description:

An introduction to influences and trends in theatre of the United States through the study of contemporary African American, Asian American, Latinx, Native American and Arab American drama. The course will focus on script analysis, video presentations, and play productions to gain a deeper understanding of theatrical expression within each cultural heritage.

Prerequisites/Corequisites:**Recommended Preparation:**

Eligibility for ENGL C1000 or equivalent or appropriate placement based on AB705 mandates

Limits on Enrollment:**Schedule of Classes Information:**

Description: An introduction to influences and trends in theatre of the United States through the study of contemporary African American, Asian American, Latinx, Native American and Arab American drama. The course will focus on script analysis, video presentations, and play productions to gain a deeper understanding of theatrical expression within each cultural heritage. (Grade Only)

Prerequisites/Corequisites:

Recommended: Eligibility for ENGL C1000 or equivalent or appropriate placement based on AB705 mandates

Limits on Enrollment:

Transfer Credit: CSU;UC.

Repeatability: Two Repeats if Grade was D, F, NC, or NP

ARTICULATION, MAJOR, and CERTIFICATION INFORMATION:

AS Degree:	Area		Effective:	Inactive:
	E	Humanities	Fall 1995	
	G	American Cultures/Ethnic Studies		
CSU GE:	Transfer Area		Effective:	Inactive:
	C1	Arts	Fall 1996	
IGETC:	Transfer Area		Effective:	Inactive:
	3A	Arts	Fall 1997	
CSU Transfer:	Transferable	Effective:	Fall 1995	Inactive:
UC Transfer:	Transferable	Effective:	Fall 1997	Inactive:

CID:

Certificate/Major Applicable:

Major Applicable Course

COURSE CONTENT

Student Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Compare and contrast the cultural characteristics of representative theatre traditions, including African American, Asian American, Latinx, Native American, and Arab American theatre, as well as with those of historically dominant European American theatrical traditions in the United States.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the social, economic, political, and historical forces that shaped and continue to shape these representative theatrical traditions in the United States.
3. Analyze and interpret the theatrical practices, dramatic literature, and contributions of key artists within these representative theatrical traditions in the United States.

Objectives:

At the conclusion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Identify the values, beliefs, and behaviors that contribute to the definition of a culture.
2. Define key terms of cultural awareness such as oppression, privilege, racism, unconscious bias, ethnocentrism, xenophobia, and classism.
3. Examine the influence of ritual, ceremony, and storytelling on representative theatrical traditions in the United States.
4. Analyze the effect of historical negative stereotypes perpetuated by the entertainment industry in the United States.

5. Place a work of contemporary representative theatrical art in its historical, cultural, and stylistic context.
6. Distinguish among the theatrical practices and conventions of representative theatrical traditions, as well as with those of historically dominant European American theatrical traditions.
7. Analyze and interpret works of dramatic literature by key playwrights or performance artists from representative theatrical traditions within the United States.
8. Apply tools of identification, analysis, and cultural awareness to live theatrical presentations.
9. Trace the evolution of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in theatre of the United States.

Topics and Scope:

I. Introduction to Course

- A. Establishing a safe and respectful environment for discourse
- B. American Cultures courses at SRJC and the University of California
- C. Defining a culture
 1. Values and beliefs
 2. Behaviors, traditions, and customs
 3. History (origins, significant events, shared experiences, etc.)
 4. Geography and socio-economic factors
- D. Course vocabulary - defining key terms of cultural awareness
 1. Acknowledging the changeable nature of terms and factors influencing changes
 2. General terms such as multicultural, diversity, cultural diversity, cultural identity, racial-ethnic identity, and cultural heritage
 3. Terms relating to social or personal bias such as oppression, privilege, racism, unconscious bias, ethnocentrism, xenophobia, and classism
 4. Terms relating to immigration and minority/majority cultural dynamics such as acculturation, assimilation, "melting pot," appropriation, pluralism, and "first/second generation"

II. Introduction to Multicultural Theatre in the United States

- A. Brief overview of relevant theatrical terminology and concepts
 1. Production elements and positions
 2. Theatre conventions and practices
 3. Theatre genres and styles
 4. Script analysis and interpretive techniques
- B. Historically dominant European American theatrical traditions
 1. Demographics of the creators of U.S. theatre
 2. Demographics of U.S. theatre audiences
 3. Characteristics
- C. Identifying multicultural or representative theatrical traditions
 1. Major theatrical traditions representing racial-ethnic groups in the United States: Native American, Latinx, African American, Asian American, and Arab American Theatre
 2. Other representative theatrical traditions
 3. Important concerns when studying theatre and cultural heritage
 - a. The complex diversity within each cultural group being studied and how that influences the development of theatrical

traditions

- b. The use of ritual, dance, music and story-telling in the lives and world view of each cultural group being studied
- c. The development of theatrical conventions derived from the historical traditions of each cultural group being studied
- d. The analysis and understanding of creative endeavors within their cultural context
- e. The diverse methods of theatrical presentations being used
- f. The synthesis of cultural understanding with artistic interpretation of theatrical productions and play readings
- g. The historical negative stereotypes perpetuated by the entertainment industry
- h. The evolution of common diversity efforts in U.S. theatre such as "colorblind" casting

III. Native American Theatre

A. Brief overview of Native American history

1. Original tribal lands and the impact of colonialism
 - a. Forced relocations and treaties
 - b. Impact of brutality and oppression
2. Assimilation and government control
 - a. Boarding schools
 - b. Cultural and religious suppression
 - c. Bureau of Indian Affairs
3. Changes in the 20th century and beyond
 - a. Civil Rights Movement
 - b. American Indian Movement
 - c. Changes in tribal wealth and resources
 - d. Status and location of tribes today

B. Aspects of Native American culture

1. Tribal society and tribal diversity
2. Storytelling and the oral tradition
3. Rediscovery of traditional spirituality
4. Relationship with the earth and natural world
5. Traditions, customs, and values within different tribes and indigenous communities around the country

C. Introduction to Native American theatre

1. History
2. Characteristics, including themes and conventions
3. Representative plays and playwrights/originating groups
4. Recent developments
 - a. Theatre organizations supporting Native American theatre
 - b. Notable Native American theatre artists

IV. Latinx Theatre

A. Brief overview of Latinx history

1. From colonialism to immigration in Latin America
 - a. Spanish and Portuguese colonialism in the New World and impact on indigenous populations
 - b. Evolution of major powers throughout Latin America
 - c. Intersecting cultures and changing societies
 - d. Labor demands and immigration
 - e. Catholicism
2. Latinx history in the United States (20th century and beyond)

- a. Political, social, and economic events outside the United States impacting Latinx cultural development
- b. Political, social, and economic events inside the United State impacting Latinx cultural development
- B. Aspects of Latinx culture
 - 1. Latinx arts and literature
 - a. Poetic tradition
 - b. Magical realism
 - c. Spanish language and "Spanglish"
 - 2. Traditions, customs, and values within different Latinx communities around the country
- C. Introduction to Latinx Theatre
 - 1. History
 - 2. Characteristics, including themes and conventions
 - 3. Representation plays and playwrights/originating groups
 - 4. Recent developments
 - a. Theatre organizations supporting Latinx theatre
 - b. Notable Latinx theatre artists
- V. African American Theatre
 - A. Broad overview of African American history
 - 1. 17th-19th Century
 - a. Slavery and the Middle Passage
 - i. Minstrel shows
 - ii. Underground railroad
 - iii. Remnants of African cultural traditions
 - b. The Civil War and Reconstruction
 - c. The Northern Migration begins
 - 2. The 20th Century
 - a. Harlem Renaissance
 - b. The Depression and the Federal Theatre Project
 - c. The Civil Rights Movement
 - 3. Into the 21st Century
 - a. President Obama
 - b. Black Lives Matter
 - B. Aspects of African American culture
 - 1. Literature and poetry
 - 2. Oral tradition
 - 3. Music developments and influences
 - 4. Visual arts
 - 5. Traditions, customs, and values within different African American communities around the country
 - C. Introduction to African American Theatre
 - 1. History
 - 2. Characteristics, including themes and conventions
 - 3. Representative plays and playwrights/originating groups
 - 4. Recent developments
 - a. Theatre organizations supporting African American theatre
 - b. Notable African American theatre artists
- VI. Asian American Theatre
 - A. Broad overview of Asian American history
 - 1. History of Asian
 - a. Vast and ancient

- b. Major societies and cultures
 - c. Major events in Asian history
- 2. Asian American History: 17th-19th Century
 - a. International events and immigration
 - b. Labor needs (such as the Transcontinental Railroad and the California Gold Rush)
 - c. Chinese Exclusion Act and other exclusion laws
- 3. Asian American History: 20th Century
 - a. International events and effects of World War II
 - b. Japanese internment camps
 - c. Korean and Vietnam wars
 - d. The Civil Rights Movement
- 4. Into the 21st Century
- B. Aspects of Asian American culture
 - 1. Countries of origin
 - a. Cultural differences
 - b. Cultural similarities
 - 2. Traditions, customs, and values within different Asian American communities around the country
 - 3. Languages
- C. Introduction to Asian American Theatre
 - 1. History
 - a. Traditional Asian theatrical conventions
 - b. Brief history of Asian American theatre
 - 2. Characteristics, including themes and conventions
 - 3. Representative plays and playwrights/originating groups
 - 4. Current developments
 - a. Theatre organizations supporting Asian American theatre
 - b. Notable Asian American theatre artists
- VII. Arab American Theatre
 - A. Broad overview of Arab American history
 - 1. Countries and societies of origin
 - a. Major powers and changes over millennia
 - b. European colonization in North Africa and the Middle East
 - i. Rise and fall of Ottoman Empire
 - ii. Discovery of oil
 - iii. Power shifts and border changes during/following WWI
 - 2. Arab American history
 - a. Prior to 20th century
 - b. 20th century and into 21st century
 - i. Impact of Gulf War
 - ii. 9/11 and aftermath
 - B. Aspects of Arab American culture
 - 1. Countries of origin
 - a. Cultural differences
 - b. Cultural similarities
 - 2. Role of Religion
 - a. Muslim
 - b. Christian
 - c. Other
 - 3. A rich arts heritage
 - a. Literature and poetry

- b. Music
- c. Dance
- d. Visual arts
- e. Limited theatrical heritages and the reasons why

C. Introduction to Arab American Theatre

1. History

- a. Influences of cultural heritage from diverse societies
- b. Limited influence of traditional theatre conventions and related theatrical forms (such as puppetry)
- c. Arab American theatre history prior to late 20th century
- d. The recent emergence of Arab American theatre

2. Characteristics, including themes and conventions

3. Representative plays and playwrights/originating groups

4. Recent developments

- a. Theatre organizations supporting Arab American theatre
- b. Notable Arab American theatre artists

VIII. (optional) Additional units of study may include other representative theatrical movements in the United States, as time allows. Such units may include:

- A. LGBTQIA+ theatre
- B. Theatre celebrating artists with disabilities (such as Deaf theatre)
- C. Religious-based theatre (such as Yiddish/Jewish theatre; Christian theatre)

Assignment:

The student will complete:

1. Weekly reading assignments:

- a. 10-15 representative plays; may also include 5-10 play excerpts of varying lengths
- b. Related material

2. Two-three short 500-word essays

3. 10-15 quizzes on the assigned reading

4. Midterm and Final Exam

Exam questions may include essay questions, short answers, multiple choice, fill in the blank, matching and/or true/false

5. Creative Project

All students will complete a creative project, consisting of one of the following options:

- a. An oral presentation on a multicultural performance group.
- b. An oral presentation on a multicultural theatre artist.
- c. A costume or set design for one of the plays that are assigned for the course.
- d. The design and construction of a culturally-specific production element (i.e. a mask, traditional performance garment, etc.).
- e. A performance of a culturally-specific performance style.
- f. A ten-minute play written by the student that deals with one of the terms of cultural awareness (oppression, privilege, racism, unconscious bias, ethnocentrism, xenophobia, classism, etc.).

Creative Project Research and Written Documentation

While project documentation varies depending on the project focus, all students will complete research and cite their sources. Most projects may also include a 250-500 page written summary.

6. (optional) May include required attendance at one-two SRJC Theatre Arts productions during the semester (voucher for free attendance provided) if relevant to course subject matter.

Methods of Evaluation/Basis of Grade:

Writing: Assessment tools that demonstrate writing skills and/or require students to select, organize and explain ideas in writing.

Written homework; short essays; written production/video response; Creative Project documentation

Writing
20 - 55%

Problem Solving: Assessment tools, other than exams, that demonstrate competence in computational or non-computational problem solving skills.

None

Problem solving
0 - 0%

Skill Demonstrations: All skill-based and physical demonstrations used for assessment purposes including skill performance exams.

None

Skill Demonstrations
0 - 0%

Exams: All forms of formal testing, other than skill performance exams.

Midterm exam; Final exam; Reading quizzes

Exams
25 - 50%

Other: Includes any assessment tools that do not logically fit into the above categories.

Creative Project - oral presentation, performance or playwriting project

Other Category
10 - 30%

Representative Textbooks and Materials:

Three Plays. Wilson, August. University of Pittsburgh Press. 1991 (classic)

Asian American Playwrights: A Bio-bibliographical Critical Sourcebook. Liu, Miles Xian. Greenwood Publishing Group. Westport, Conn. 2002. Ebook <http://www.netlibrary.com/> (Classic text.)

Stories of Our Way: An Anthology of American Indian Plays. Geiogamah, Hanay and Darby, Jaye T. ed. University of California, American Indian Studies Center. 1999 (classic)

New Native American Drama. Geiogamah, Hanay. University of Oklahoma Press. 1980 (classic)

The Land Called Morning: Three Plays. Heath, Caroline, ed. Fifth House. 1986 (classic)

Seventh Generation: An Anthology of Native American Plays. D'Aponte, Mimi Gisolfi, ed. Theatre Communications Group. 1998 (classic)

On New Ground: Contemporary Hispanic-American Plays. Osborn, Elizabeth, ed. Theatre Communication Group. 1987 (classic)

Four Arab American Plays: Works by Leila Buck, Jamal Khoury, Yussef El Guindi, and Lameece Issaq & Jacob Kader. Najjar, Michael Malek, ed. McFarland & Company. 2013 (classic)

The Creative Spirit: An Introduction to Theatre. 6th ed. Arnold, Stephanie. Lewis and Clark College. 2014 (classic)

Instructor prepared materials