



SYLLABUS

DRAM 3123-Contemporary Theatre 21684-Spring 2017

Instructor: YharNahKeeShah *Ya-Ya* Smith

Section # and CRN: P01-21684

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Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday-12:30-2:30 PM Tuesday 12:30-4:30 PM Thursday 12:30-2:30 PM

Mode of Instruction: Face to Face

Course Location: Hobart Taylor 1A108

Class Days & Times: Monday and Wednesday 2:30 AM-3:50 PM

Catalog Description: The study and analysis of contemporary plays and playwrights

Prerequisites: None

Co-requisites: None

Required Texts: The following play scripts:

- 1) *Streetcar Named Desire* (1947) by Tennessee Williams
- 2) *Waiting for Godot* (1953) by Samuel Beckett
- 3) *For Colored Girls* (1975) by Ntozake Shange
- 4) *Broken Eggs* (1993) by Eduardo Machado
- 5) *Rent* (1996) by Jonathan Larson
- 6) *Laramie Project* (2001) by Moises Kaufman
- 7) *King Hedley II* (2001) by August Wilson
- 8) *The Vagina Monologues* (2001) by Eve Ensler
- 9) *Fat Pig* (2004) by Neil LaBute
- 10) *Yellow Face* (2009) by David Henry Hwang
- 11) *The Mountaintop* (2013) by Katori Hall

Recommended Texts: None

Student Learning Outcomes: This course explores trends and genres in contemporary theatre through an analysis of writings by playwrights from all over. Plays written by playwrights from all over will be examined and studied to provide the student with an overview of the development of contemporary theatre. The selection of plays include dramas, comedies, musicals, and plays of various genres by men and women.

	Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:	Program Learning Outcome # Alignment	Core Curriculum Outcome Alignment
1	Analyze theatrical works perceptively and evaluate them critically in speaking and writing. [NASTB.(3A1)]	Theatre Outcome 1/3	Core Curriculum Outcome 1
2	Articulate and defend informed judgements about theatre based on reading and script analysis. [NAST B.(3a4)]	Theatre Outcome 1/3	Core Curriculum Outcome 1

3	Identify works of theatre in historical and stylistic contexts and have a basic understanding of their cultural milieu in which they were created. [NAST B.(3a3)].	Theatre Outcome 1/3	Core Curriculum Outcome 1
4	Demonstrate a basic working knowledge of the development and evolution of theatre history as reflected in various cultures and societies. [NAST B.(3a)].	Theatre Outcome 1/3	Core Curriculum Outcome 1

Major Course Requirements

Method of Determining Final Course Grade

Course Grade Requirement	Value	Total
1) Attendance & Participation	10%	10
2) Script Notes	20%	20
3) Quizzes	20%	20
4) Mid-Term	10%	10
5) Leading Discussion	15%	15
6) Final Paper	25%	25
Total:	100%	100

Grading Criteria and Conversion:

A = 100-90
 B = 89-80
 C = 79-70
 D = 69-60
 F = under 60

Detailed Description of Major Assignments:

Assignment Title or Grade Requirement

Description

Attendance and Participation

1. Attendance is required. Attend class regularly and be on time. You will be allowed to make-up the Final and/or quizzes only with an official university excuse. If you accumulate 3 unexcused absences your grade will be dropped a letter. Three tardies equal one unexcused absence. Students must adhere to the University Policy on Attendance to pass this class. Please do not try to submit an excuse that is not official. You must have written proof to present for approval. An official University excuse for being absent is obtained from the Division for Student and Enrollment Services on the 3rd Floor of Evans Hall.
2. Keep up with readings and assignments. Come prepared and give your best. Take part in class discussions and ask questions for clarity. Share insights and thoughts with the class to enhance the discussion and learning.
3. Cell phone usage during my class will result in a loss of the full participation grade for that day.

Script Notes

Script Notes are a one-two page paper addressing the following:

1. Identify the protagonist
2. Who is the antagonist
3. State the conflict
4. How is the conflict resolved
5. What does the play mean, i.e., Theme?

Write a summary of each play using the five areas above as your guide. Script Notes are due on the day a play is discussed in class. There will be one completed for every play assigned this semester. Please bring it to class in paper format so that you may

use it to discuss the production. If you do not have it, you will receive a 0 in participation for that day because you can't participate if you did not read.

Quizzes

Quizzes will be given over the reading assignments, lectures, performances and class discussions. Quizzes are not allowed to be made up without an official university-excused absence. The professor also reserves the right to give quizzes without prior notice. The lowest quiz grade will be dropped.

Mid-Term Exam

The mid-term exam will be a cumulative scantron exam over all of the information covered prior to mid-term.

Leading Discussion

Each student will be assigned a playwright that we cover in class. They will read a play written by this playwright other than the one discussed in class. They will prepare a 15-20 minute presentation about the play to the class immediately following the discussion of the class assigned piece. Additionally, you will prepare a powerpoint/prezi to go with your presentation.

Please consider the following guidelines for your presentation:

1. Read the play closely, then analyze the play critically. Use tools for play analysis to deeply examine the play and its meanings, i.e. antagonist, protagonist, otherness, play title, character names, life themes, etc.

2. Summarize the basics of the production.

3. Research the original production. How well was it received?

4. What was going on in the world/society at the time the play was written that the play could be in response to or connected to? Think of the themes, stereotypes, concepts of the time period. What might the playwright be trying to use the play to do? To challenge? To raise awareness? To change public policy?

5. What was an important story or the most memorable part of the play for you? Why? What did it make you think of? Want to do and/or say? What was your biggest take-away?

Final Paper

Each student will pick a play that has been adapted into a film from an approved list provided by the instructor. The student will read and analyze the script. In addition, they will watch and analyze the film. The student will write an 8-10 page paper that will compare and contrast the script and film. The paper should include background on the playwright and the film's writer/director/producer and what you felt like they wanted you to get from their pieces. Additionally the student needs to discuss how true the film was to the script and what that means as a whole.

Course Procedures or Additional Instructor Policies

Taskstream

Taskstream is a tool that Prairie View A&M University uses for assessment purposes. One of your assignments may be considered an "artifact," an item of coursework that serves as evidence that course objectives are met. More information will be provided during the semester, but for general information, you can visit Taskstream via the link in eCourses.

1. Read and follow the syllabus. Students are encouraged to bring their syllabus with them to each class to make note of any changes or clarifications that may be given.
2. Complete all assigned readings from the text and other sources (class handouts, library reserves of texts and videos, and/or online reading). Reading should be completed before the related topic is started in class.

3. **Late Work:** Acceptance of late assignments is up to the instructor's discretion. When late work is accepted, it will lose points accordingly: Next day loses a 10%, Two day 20%. After two days, late work is not accepted. Acceptance of late assignments is up to the instructor's discretion.
4. **Submitting Documents:** Unless specified by the professor, all written assignments must be typed, double-spaced, using a 12 point font and 1-inch page margins. Microsoft Word is the standard word processing tool used at PVAMU. If you're using other word processors, be sure to use the "save as" tool and save the document in either the Microsoft Word, Rich-Text, or plain text format. These assignments must be uploaded to Taskstream before the beginning the class period that it is due.
5. **Quiz & Exam Policy:** Quizzes and Exams must be taken as scheduled. No make-up examinations will be allowed except under documented emergencies (See Student Handbook for proper documentation procedures.) On quiz and exam days, you must come to class with a number 2 pencil and a scantron. Not having them will result in a loss of ten points from your quiz for each. Quizzes will be given during the first 20 minutes of class. Please arrive on time. If you are not there during the first 20 minutes and you do not have a university excuse, you will not be allowed to make it up.

PLEASE NOTE: If necessary and/or to enhance the syllabus based on student interests or progress, the professor may modify this syllabus including assignments and due dates. However, all changes will be given to the students in writing OR via eCourses and no changes will significantly alter course requirements.

Semester Calendar

Week One: Jan. 16-20	Intro to Course/Syllabus
Topic Description	
Readings:	M-No Class MLK Day W-None
Assignment (s):	M-No Class MLK Day W-Introduction to the Course/Syllabus
Week Two: Jan. 23-27	Background/Synopsis
Topic Description	
Readings:	M-None W-None
Assignment (s):	M-None W-None
Week Three: Jan. 30-Feb. 3	Early Contemporary American Theatre
Topic Description	
Readings:	M-Out on Stage (ecourses) W- <i>Streetcar Named Desire</i>
Assignment (s):	M-None W- <i>Streetcar Named Desire</i> Script Notes Due
Week Four: Feb. 6-10	Early Contemporary American Theatre
Topic Description	
Readings:	M- None W- <i>Waiting for Godot</i>
Assignment (s):	M-None W- <i>Waiting for Godot</i> Script Notes Due
Week Five: Feb. 13-17	Current Trends in Contemporary Theatre/Feminism and Theatre
Topic Description	
Readings:	M-None/ <i>Feminism and Theatre</i> (eCourses) W- <i>For Colored Girls</i>
Assignment (s):	M- Quiz #1

W-For Colored Girls Script Notes Due

Week Six: Feb. 20-24 Feminism and Theatre
Topic **Description**
Readings: M- *Vagina Monologues*
 W-None
Assignment (s): M- ***Vagina Monologues* Script Notes Due**
 W-None

Week Seven: Feb. 27-Mar. 3 African-American Theatre: August Wilson
Topic **Description**
Readings: M- *King Hedley II*
 W-Chapter 6-*Production Team*
Assignment (s): M- ***King Hedley II* Script Notes Due**
 W-None

Week Eight: Mar. 6-10 Mid-Terms
Topic **Description**
Readings: M-None
 W-None
Assignment (s): M-Mid-Term Review
 W-Mid-Term Exam

Week Nine: Mar. 13-17 Spring Break
Topic **Description**
Readings: M-None
 W-None
Assignment (s): M-None
 W-None

Week Ten: Mar. 20-24 African-American Theatre: Katori Hall
Topic **Description**
Readings: M- *The Mountaintop*
 W-None
Assignment (s): M- ***The Mountaintop* Script Notes Due**
 W-None

Week Eleven: 27-31 Hispanic American Theatre
Topic **Description**
Readings: M- *Broken Eggs*
 W-Chapter 8-*Middle Stages*
Assignment (s): M- ***Broken Eggs* Script Notes Due**
 W-None

Week Twelve: Apr. 3-7 Asian American Theatre
Topic **Description**
Readings: M- *Yellow Face*
 W-None
Assignment (s): M- ***Yellow Face* Script Notes Due**
 W-None

Week Thirteen: Apr. 10-14 Gender Issues Theatre
Topic **Description**
Readings: M- *Out on Stage* (ecourses)/*Rent*
 W-None
Assignment (s): M- **Quiz#2/*Rent* Script Notes Due**
 W-None

Week Fourteen: Apr. 17-21 Devised Theatre
Topic **Description**
Readings: *M-Laramie Project*
 W-None
Assignment (s): **M-Laramie Project Script Notes Due**
 W-None

Week Fifteen: Apr. 24-28 Issues Theatre
Topic **Description**
Readings: *M-Fat Studies Reader (eCourses)/Fat Pig*
 W-None
Assignment (s): **M-Fat Pig Script Notes Due**
 W-None

Week Sixteen: May 1-2 Chitlin' Circuit
Topic **Description**
Readings: M-None
Assignment (s): **M-Quiz #3**

Student Support and Success

John B. Coleman Library

The library and its partners have as their mission "to provide resources and instructional material in support of the evolving curriculum, as a partner in Prairie View A&M University's mission of teaching, research, and service" and to support the University's core values of "access and quality, diversity, leadership, relevance, and social responsibility" through emphasis on ten key areas of service. It maintains library collections and access both on campus, online, and through local agreements to further the educational goals of students and faculty.

Center for Academic Support

The Center for Academic Support (CAS) offers Tutoring via peer tutoring. The services include workshops (i.e., Save My Semester, Recalculate Your Route), seminars (i.e., Tools You Can Use: TI-84), group review sessions (i.e., College Algebra Topic Reviews, GRE Preparation), group study opportunities (i.e., TSIA, HESI, Study Break, Exam Cram), and test-taking strategies (How to take Notes, Study Buddy, 5 Day Study Guide). The Tutoring Center is a nationally certified tutoring program through the National Tutoring Association. The peer tutors are trained and certified by the coordinator each semester. Location: J.B. Coleman Library

COMPASS

The Center for the Oversight and Management of Personalized Academic Student Success (COMPASS) is designed to help Prairie View students in their second year and beyond navigate towards graduation by providing the following services: Academic Advisement, Targeted Tutorials for Personalized Learning, Campus-Wide Referrals, and Academic & Social Workshops. Location: J.B. Coleman Library

Writing Center

The Writing Center provides student consultants on all aspects of the writing process and a variety of writing assignments. Writing Center consultations assist students in such areas as prewriting, brainstorming, audience awareness, organization, research, and citation. Location: Hilliard Hall 121

University Rules and Procedures

Disability statement (See Student Handbook):

Students with disabilities, including learning disabilities, who wish to request accommodations in class should register with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) early in the semester so that appropriate arrangements may be made. In accordance with federal laws, a student requesting special accommodations must provide documentation of their disability to the SSD coordinator.

Academic misconduct (See Student Handbook):

You are expected to practice academic honesty in every aspect of this course and all other courses. Make sure you are familiar with your Student Handbook, especially the section on academic misconduct. Students who engage in academic misconduct are subject to university disciplinary procedures.

Forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Cheating: deception in which a student misrepresents that he/she has mastered information on an academic exercise that he/she has not mastered; giving or receiving aid unauthorized by the instructor on assignments or examinations.
2. Academic misconduct: tampering with grades or taking part in obtaining or distributing any part of a scheduled test.
3. Fabrication: use of invented information or falsified research.
4. Plagiarism: unacknowledged quotation and/or paraphrase of someone else's words, ideas, or data as one's own in work submitted for credit. Failure to identify information or essays from the Internet and submitting them as one's own work also constitutes plagiarism.

Nonacademic misconduct (See Student Handbook)

The university respects the rights of instructors to teach and students to learn. Maintenance of these rights requires campus conditions that do not impede their exercise. Campus behavior that interferes with either (1) the instructor's ability to conduct the class, (2) the inability of other students to profit from the instructional program, or (3) campus behavior that interferes with the rights of others will not be tolerated. An individual engaging in such disruptive behavior may be subject to disciplinary action. Such incidents will be adjudicated by the Dean of Students under nonacademic procedures.

Sexual misconduct (See Student Handbook):

Sexual harassment of students and employers at Prairie View A&M University is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Any member of the university community violating this policy will be subject to disciplinary action.

Attendance Policy

Prairie View A&M University requires regular class attendance. Excessive absences will result in lowered grades. Excessive absenteeism, whether excused or unexcused, may result in a student's course grade being reduced or in assignment of a grade of "F". Absences are accumulated beginning with the first day of class.

Student Academic Appeals Process

Authority and responsibility for assigning grades to students rests with the faculty. However, in those instances where students believe that miscommunication, errors, or unfairness of any kind may have adversely affected the instructor's assessment of their academic performance, the student has a right to appeal by the procedure listed in the Undergraduate Catalog and by doing so within thirty days of receiving the grade or experiencing any other problematic academic event that prompted the complaint.

Disability statement (See Student Handbook):

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TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Minimum Recommended Hardware and Software:

- Intel PC or Laptop with Windows 7; Mac with OS X; Smartphone or iPad/Tablet with Wi-Fi
- High speed Internet access
- 8 GB Memory
- Hard drive with 320 GB storage space
- 15" monitor, 800x600, color or 16 bit
- Sound card w/speakers

- Microphone and recording software
- Keyboard & mouse
- Most current version of Google Chrome, Safari, Internet Explorer or Firefox

Note: Be sure to enable Java & pop-ups

Participants should have a basic proficiency of the following computer skills:

- Sending and receiving email
- A working knowledge of the Internet
- Proficiency in Microsoft Word (or a program convertible to Word)
- Proficiency in the Acrobat PDF Reader
- Basic knowledge of Windows or Mac O.S.

Netiquette (online etiquette):

Students are expected to participate in all discussions and virtual classroom chats as directed. Students are to be respectful and courteous to others on discussions boards. Foul or abusive language will not be tolerated.

Technical Support:

Students should go to <https://mypassword.pvamu.edu/> if they have password issues. The page will provide instructions for resetting passwords and contact information if login issues persist. For other technical questions regarding eCourses, call the Office of Distance Learning at 936-261-3283

Communication Expectations and Standards:

Emails or discussion postings will receive a response from the instructor, usually in less than 48 hours. Urgent emails should be marked as such. Check regularly for responses.

Discussion Requirement:

Online courses often require minimal to no face-to-face meetings. However, conversations about the readings, lectures, materials, and other aspects of the course can take place in a seminar fashion. This will be accomplished by the use of the discussion board. The exact use of discussion will be determined by the instructor.

It is strongly suggested that students type their discussion postings in a word processing application and save it to their PC or a removable drive before posting to the discussion board. This is important for two reasons: 1) If for some reason your discussion responses are lost in your online course, you will have another copy; 2) Grammatical errors can be greatly minimized by the use of the spell-and-grammar check functions in word processing applications. Once the post(s) have been typed and corrected in the word processing application, it should be copied and pasted to the discussion board.