

THEA – V243: Black Theatre: 1940-present  
Time:  
Loyola University New Orleans

Professor: Dr. Laura Hope  
LLhope@loyno.edu  
Office phone: 865-358  
Office: Marquette Hall 303

Fall Semester, 2012

## **Black Theatre: 1940-present**

Black Theatre 1940-present fulfills a course requirement for the Advanced Common Curriculum. It also fulfills the Theatre Literature requirement for Theatre Arts majors. In addition, this course fulfills a requirement for the Interdisciplinary Minors in:

African and African American Studies  
American Studies  
New Orleans Studies

**Course Description & Goals:** This class focuses on giving you a comprehensive knowledge of African-American playwrights, plays, and cultural movements in the United States from approximately 1940-present. The course employs an intersectional approach to theatre, drama and performance, considering how theatrical material and practices intersect with the civil rights movement, and issues of gender, class, sexuality, and regionalism. You will be required to read at least one play a week, along with supporting essays and articles. This course is first and foremost an academic class in which reading, writing, and critical thinking are emphasized.

**Expected Learning Outcomes:** Students will develop knowledge of African-American theatre and its major players in the time period from 1940 to the present. Students will also continue to develop their skills in critical thinking and writing on a range of social justice issues such as race, class, gender, and sexuality. This class encourages students to embrace the motto of Loyola University New Orleans: "Think Critically. Act Justly."

### **Requirements regarding on-time attendance to class**

Black Theatre 1940-present strictly follows the attendance policy dictated by the Department of Theatre Arts and Dance for all departmental classes.

**Attendance:** On-time attendance at all classes is required. Attendance will be taken at each class via roll call or a sign-in sheet. **After three absences, a student's final grade for the course will be lowered by one full letter grade. Each subsequent absence results in the lowering of a student's grade by half a letter grade.** Learning to show up on time is the first rule of being a successful adult and a successful member of the professional theatre and film community. I expect you to be a successful adult. When you exceed the three allowed absences, you will be required to come to my office to discuss time management skills. There is no difference between an excused and unexcused absence as far as this attendance policy goes, so use your three free absences sparingly, if at all.

**Late to class and/or early departures: Don't do it.** Do **NOT** be late for class or leave early. **Two late arrivals and/or early departures equal one absence.** Repeat offenders will be required to come to my office and discuss time management skills.

**Participation:** Your **active** participation in the daily discussions of the reading material is required.

You are strongly encouraged to ask any questions you have about the readings, lectures or other class business.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** If for any reason, I determine you are not awake, aware, and alert in class, and/or you are not prepared to participate in the classroom discussions and activities, you will be asked to leave class and you will be marked as absent for the day.

**Attitude:** You are expected to remain positive about your work in this class and your colleagues. Keeping a positive attitude helps you succeed in any endeavor you undertake. Negative thinking spreads like a virus. Leave bad attitudes and negative thinking at the door. If you are having a problem that is adversely affecting your ability to remain positive with a healthy attitude, come see me during office hours, or make an appointment to see me at another time.

**Classroom Decorum and Performance:** You will respect your colleagues and Dr. Hope by listening and paying attention to the person who officially “has the stage,” and you will not engage in secondary conversations.

Turn off your cell phones and any other electronic device that beeps, buzzes, chirps, wails, sings, etc. Please do this **before** class begins. Indeed, your phone should be an invisible, silent entity in this class. You may use your personal computer in this classroom **ONLY** for taking notes and looking at required texts on blackboard when directed to do so. Text messaging, IMing, checking email, Facebooking, MySpacing, or otherwise goofing off on your computer or phone during class is an example of “performing” badly. It is disrespectful to me and to your fellow colleagues. It is unacceptable behavior as a scholar and colleague in this class. Doing homework for other classes while in this class is also unacceptable for the previously stated reasons.

All of the infractions above are examples of “performing” rudeness, disconnectedness, and apathy. Such infractions cause me to “perform” the role of “exceedingly annoyed professor.” Let’s agree not perform these roles in class, so we can all have a positive experience, and a good time.

Showing up prepared and with a positive attitude equal success in anything you do in life. Start doing this now.

### **Course Requirements:**

**Reading Assignments:** Readings must be completed by the date assigned (the date we will be referring to them in class.) **Bring the readings for the day to class. If you come to class without the required readings, you are absent, and will be recorded as absent for the day.**

#### **Production Attendance:**

You are required to attend the Theatre Arts and Dance department's fall productions:

**You will either be quizzed or have writing assignments on these productions.**

**Quizzes & Class participation:** I will give regular quizzes to check reading completion and comprehension. Most quizzes are scheduled, however, I reserve the right to give spontaneous pop quizzes

should class participation lapse, or a suspicion arises that assigned readings have not been completed. These quizzes help comprise the study guide for the final exam. Quizzes and class participation account for 20% of your grade.

**Reflection Essays:** Two to three short reflection essays on an assigned topic in Black Theatre will be due throughout the course of the semester. Guidelines will be distributed separately. Reflection Essays are worth 20% of your overall grade.

**Midterm & Final Exams:** The midterm exam will cover all materials covered prior to the midterm exam. The midterm exam is worth 15% of your overall grade. The final exam will cover all of the materials covered in class readings, lectures, films, plays, and essays since the midterm exam. The final Exam is worth 20% of your grade.

**Service Learning:** You are required to do 20 hours of service learning in conjunction with community partners selected especially for this class. Those hours and your journal about the experience constitute 25% of your overall grade.

**Due Dates:** I do not accept late work, ever. I do not offer make-up quizzes or exams. If you foresee a problem, talk to me well in **advance** and I will work something out with you at my discretion. Emergencies must be documented.

**Grading:** The final course grade will be calculated as follows:

Quizzes/Participation:	20%	A= 95% - 100%	A- = 90% - 93%	
Service Learning:	25%	B+= 87% - 89%	B = 84% - 86%	B- = 80% - 83%
Midterm Exam:	15%	C+= 77% - 79%	C = 74% - 76%	C- = 70% - 73%
Final Exam:	20%	D+= 66% - 69%	D = 60% - 65%	
Reflection Essays:	20%	F= 0% - 59%		

**Disability Statement:** A student with a disability that qualifies for accommodations should contact Sarah Mead Smith, director of Disability Services at 865-2990 (Academic Resource Center, room 405, Monroe Hall). A student wishing to receive test accommodations (e.g. extended test time) is responsible for providing the instructor with an official Accommodation Form from Disability Services at least 48 hours before the scheduled test date. Additionally, it is the student's responsibility to inform the supervising faculty or staff member if there are any physical hindrances to being able to execute a requested assignment.

**Hurricane / Emergency Evacuation Plan:** Students must log on to the College emergency web site ([www.loyno.la](http://www.loyno.la)) and the University Blackboard site (<http://loyno.blackboard.com/>) within 48 hours of any University evacuation to receive further information regarding contacting course instructors for assignments, etc. University courses will continue to be taught via Blackboard. Students will be required to do assigned course work for any evacuation. Students should also monitor the University site ([www.emergency.loyno.edu](http://www.emergency.loyno.edu)) for general information. In the event of an evacuation, make sure you take

your computers, textbooks and important paperwork with you to your evacuation location.

**Statement on Intellectual Honesty:** "Intellectual honesty is simply acknowledging, through documentation, all those sources that the writer has used in preparing any written work. Plagiarism, the obverse of intellectual honesty, is the use of any form of material, whether written or verbal, without formal indebtedness through documentation. The paraphrasing of any work, either written by other students or found in print or in electronic form, without acknowledgement, is plagiarism. Not properly identifying the source of a quotation, even though the quotation is enclosed in quotation marks is also plagiarism. Not only the exact language of a sentence or phrase, but any material falsely presented as one's own—an idea, a concept, data, graphs, or a line of argument—constitutes plagiarism. Any material that neither originates with the student nor is common knowledge among educated persons must be formally acknowledged. It must be remembered that written work stands on its own, not on the intention of the writer. The burden of intellectual honesty rests on the student, not on the instructor. If students have any doubts about what is required, they should inquire before the work is submitted. Otherwise, they open themselves to charges of plagiarism. The penalties for plagiarism are severe: a student who is found to have plagiarized or to have assisted another student in plagiarizing may be given a failing grade for the course on the first violation; a second offense may result in exclusion or dismissal from the university." (For the complete details on standards, penalties, and appeals procedures, see "Integrity of Scholarship and Grades," *Loyola Undergraduate Bulletin*)

Plagiarism is cheating. A student who cheats on an assignment in any way, shape, or form will receive an "F" on that assignment, and will be reported to their faculty advisor, department chair, and college dean for further sentencing.

Cheating also means allowing somebody else to copy your work, or doing their work for them. Cheating is using assignments done by other students in previous semesters of this class to support or enhance your own. Cheating is also turning in work that is not original for this class (i.e. an assignment written for another class). In such incidents, the students involved in the cheating will receive an "F" on that assignment, and will be reported to their faculty advisor, department chair, and college dean for further sentencing.

**Required Text:** The following are available in the campus bookstore. You may find cheaper copies at online bookstores such as Amazon.com, Borders.com, or barnesandnoble.com.

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR HAVING FINDING ACCESS TO ALL READINGS. THE STATEMENT: "I COULDN'T FIND IT IN THE BOOKSTORE, LIBRARY, etc." IS NOT A VALID EXCUSE.

1. Black Theatre U.S.A (1935-Today)(Rev & Exp)

AUTHOR:Hatch

COPYRIGHT YEAR:1996

PUBLISHER:Simon & Schuster

ISBN:9780684823072

2. The Fire This Time

AUTHOR:Elam

COPYRIGHT YEAR:2004

PUBLISHER:Theatre Communications Group, Incorporated

ISBN:9781559362054

3. Caroline, or Change  
AUTHOR:Kushner  
COPYRIGHT YEAR:2004  
PUBLISHER:Theatre Communications Group, Incorporated  
ISBN:9781559362481

5. Fires in the Mirror  
AUTHOR: Smith  
COPYRIGHT YEAR:1997  
PUBLISHER:Dramatists Play Service, Incorporated  
ISBN:9780822213291

6. Ruined  
AUTHOR:Nottage  
COPYRIGHT YEAR:2010  
PUBLISHER:Dramatists Play Service, Incorporated  
ISBN:9780822223900

Assorted articles available on Blackboard

**Extra Credit Policy:**

**A note on Extra Credit:** I strongly encourage you to see, as an audience member, as much theatre as possible. I offer up to 20 extra credit points for each play you see and write about in a 2-3 page review paper. Guidelines for these will be distributed separately in class. Elementary and High School productions are not eligible for extra credit papers.

\*\*\***Extra Credit** cannot be used to make up absences, or for the failure to turn in an assignment. Extra credit is just that: extra. It absolutely may not be used in the place of any required course assignments. \*\*\*\*

## Classroom Contract

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read the Fall 2012 syllabus for Black Theatre: 1940-present (THEA-V243), taught by Dr. Laura Hope.

I understand that the syllabus for this class constitutes my contract with Dr. Hope, my classroom colleagues, and myself as a student in this class.

I agree to abide by the policies, procedures, and all other guidelines set forth in this syllabus, and to complete all work on time and to the best of my ability.

I will respect myself, my colleagues and Dr. Hope with my attitude, my words, and my behavior at all times.

I am aware that I alone am responsible for my success in this class. I must earn my grade in Black Theatre, whatever that grade may be. I fully accept responsibility for my work, my actions, and my attitude in and about this class.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Print Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)