

Instructor: Gaven D. Trinidad  
Theater 130: Contemporary Playwrights of Color  
Course Description and Goals

In this 4-credit course, we will examine the contemporary texts and the social and political contexts of writers of color in the United States. We will look at issues of race and gender as social constructs that have historically served to exclude and oppress people of color and women. Along these lines, the playwrights and the texts that we will engage will serve as artistic commentary regarding images/stereotypes, approaches to similar themes within various communities, and the necessity for different models of both scholarship and aesthetic evaluations. Classroom participation and preparedness are vital to your success in this course. Additionally, it is imperative that you attend the required performances, as they are a significant component of our work.

**In this course, we will work together to develop your ability to**

- read and analyze theatrical work written by people of color
- identify the multiple functions of theater in our society
- consider identity formation on a personal level within a larger social, cultural context
- understand and empathize with artists and writers in the multicultural theater canon
- critically evaluate media representation of people of color
- participate actively and critically in live performance events
- critically analyze and synthesize ideas in your writing

**These goals align with the University's Statement of Purpose for General Education courses in the following areas:**

- Introduce fundamental questions, ideas, and methods of analysis in the humanities and fine arts,
- Apply and integrate methods of analysis to real world problems and contexts;
- Apply creative, analytical and critical thinking through inquiry, problem solving and synthesis;
- Encourage pluralistic perspective-taking and awareness of the relationship between culture, self, and others;
- Develop and practice the skills of critical thinking, reasoning, communication, and integration of knowledge and perspectives, including:
  - Communicating persuasively and effectively orally (in class) and in writing (via papers and research project);
  - Working effectively and collaboratively across perspectives;
  - Developing media and cultural literacy

With the Gen Ed designation of AL (The Arts), this course considers *the production, performance, function, and aesthetic evaluation of the performing arts in relation to one another and to the societies that produce them.*

This course

- *Provokes comparison and critical acuity*
- *Provides participatory experiences through projects, performances, and attendance at plays*
- *Encourages verbal expression through writing exercises*

With the Gen Ed designation of U (Diversity), this course *raises awareness of the various dimensions of human identity with a focus on **race and ethnicity, social class, and gender.***

To achieve this, we

- *Examine the ways in which diverse cultures, communities, histories, and peoples define and express themselves in US society*
- *Discuss how historical, social, political, and/or economic forces have shaped US diversity and the context for equality and inequality*
- *Explore differences in human experiences, perspectives, and expression in US society*
- *Examine theories, concepts, and issues that have influenced the histories and traditions of the United States*