

**THE 4223: Latin American and US Latinx Theatre**  
**T 3:00-3:50 & TH 3:00-4:55pm**  
**MCCB3124**

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Office Hours: T/TH 1:30-2:30 and by appointment

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Theatre created by Latin American and US Latinx playwrights and performers has served as a vehicle for both artistic expression and social and political change. Organized geographically, this course considers themes and trends in Latin American and US Latinx Theatre in light of issues such as hybridized identities, language, immigration, oppression and generational conflict. Representative works by Latin American and US Latinx playwrights will be examined and will be supplemented by critical texts, film and recordings of live performance. Through analysis of these works and supplemental material students will gain an understanding of common themes and distinct styles of Latin American and US Latinx performance.

**College of the Arts Meta-Strategy 2021-2025: Systemic Resilience**

The University of Florida College of the Arts intends to be a transformative community, responding to and generating paradigmatic shifts in the arts and beyond. We do so by:

- Embracing the complexity of our evolving human experience and seeking to empower our students and faculty to shape that experience fearlessly through critical study, creative practice, and provocation.
- Collaborating effectively with the forces of change.
- Preparing students to access and unsettle centers of power in a radically changing world.
- Facilitating an arts education that will position emerging artists and researchers as catalysts for equity on local and global levels.

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

By the completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify common major themes in plays/performances of Latin American and US Latinx theatre artists.
- Analyze and explain structures of power, privilege and disenfranchisement that have led to the creation of particular styles of theatre associated with Latin American and US Latinx artists.
- Explain the development of Latin American and US Latinx Theatre as a mode of social justice and change.
- Explain the contributions of Latin American and US Latinx theatre artists to Theatre of the Americas.
- Synthesize learning through the creation of a dramatic piece for presentation

**REQUIRED PLAYS\***

- Nilo Cruz, *Anna in the Tropics* (Dramatists Play Service, 2005)
- Griselda Gambaro *Information for Foreigners* (Northwestern University Press, 1992)
- Quiara Alegria Hudes, *Elliot a Soldier's Fugue* **OR** *Water By the Spoonful* **OR** *Happiest Song Plays Last* **AND** *Yemaya's Belly* (Dramatists Play Service, 2004)
- Dominique Morisseau, *Blood at the Root* (Samuel French, 2017)
- Alvaro Saar Rios, *Carmela Full of Wishes* (Unpublished; Posted on Canvas with permission of the playwright)
- Kristoffer Diaz, *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity* (Samuel French, 2011)

**REQUIRED LISTENING\***

Arthur Laurents, Leonard Bernstein, Jerome Robbins and Stephen Sondheim, *West Side Story* (OBC)  
Paul Simon and Derek Walcott, *The Capeman*  
Lin-Manuel Miranda and Quiara Alegría Hudes, *In the Heights* (OBC)

### **REQUIRED VIEWING\***

*Zoot Suit* (1981)

*Y no había luz* video clips

**\*PLEASE NOTE:** In this course, we will cover content and materials that some may find difficult. Many of the plays we will study have been written in response to systems of oppression. As such, they contain difficult material, including but not limited to gendered & sexual violence, racial & ethnic violence, and depictions of PTSD. It is important that in a theatre/performance course we do not shy away from engaging with materials that may be controversial or challenging. I will do my best to give you advance notice when specific materials or content covered may contain images, language or perspectives that some may find difficult, and I encourage you to reach out to me if you are struggling with the course materials. In class, if you need to step away for a period of time as we are covering particular content, you may do so without penalty, but I ask that you remember that you are responsible for any information covered in your absence.

### **ADDITIONAL REQUIRED READINGS, VIEWINGS, LISTENING**

Additional Readings, Viewings, and Listening are listed in the schedule on the syllabus. Readings and/or links will be posted on Canvas.

### **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Students are expected to be in attendance daily and to be on time. Students are allowed 2 “unexcused” absences that do not require documentation and do not conform to the UF “acceptable reasons for absence.” Any other “unexcused” absence **will result in a penalty of a full letter grade from the final grade per “unexcused” absence.** To be considered “excused” an absence must be accompanied by appropriate official documentation. Religious observances do not require documentation.

- Any absence from class for the following reasons must be supported by official acceptable documentation to avoid a grade penalty:
  - Illness—doctor's note must be on official letterhead with signature
  - Serious family emergencies
  - Special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences)
  - Military obligation
  - Severe weather conditions
  - Participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition or debate
  - Court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena)

### **LATE WORK POLICY**

Things happen. There is one “Make Up Day” listed on the schedule. You may submit up to two missed/late assignments on Make Up Day for up to full credit. There is a limit of two Make Up Day submissions.

### **ASSIGNMENTS AND COURSE EXPECTATIONS:**

**Participation** (20% of final grade) is required. Discussion and on-our-feet activities will be an integral part of our class meetings, and the extent to which you participate will impact your grade. Your

meaningful contributions to discussion and active engagement support our collaborative community. Please come to class prepared, having read/completed the daily assignments.

Participation Rubric (adopted from Carnegie Mellon Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence):

	<b>Exemplary (90%-100%)</b>	<b>Proficient (80%-90%)</b>	<b>Developing (70%-80%)</b>	<b>Unacceptable (&lt;70%)</b>
<b>Frequency of participation in class</b>	Student initiates contributions more than once in each recitation.	Student initiates contribution once in each recitation.	Student initiates contribution at least in half of the recitations	Student does not initiate contribution & needs instructor to solicit input.
<b>Quality of Comments</b>	Comments always insightful & constructive; uses appropriate terminology. Comments balanced between general impressions, opinions & specific, thoughtful criticisms or contributions.	Comments mostly insightful & constructive; mostly uses appropriate terminology. Occasionally comments are too general or not relevant to the discussion.	Comments are sometimes constructive, with occasional signs of insight. Student does not use appropriate terminology; comments not always relevant to the discussion.	Comments are uninformative, lacking in appropriate terminology. Heavy reliance on opinion & personal taste, e.g., "I love it", "I hate it", "It's bad" etc.
<b>Listening Skills</b>	Student listens attentively when others present materials, perspectives, as indicated by comments that build on others' remarks, i.e., student hears what others say  & contributes to the dialogue. Student does not use computer/phone during class.	Student is mostly attentive when others present ideas, materials, as indicated by comments that reflect & build on others' remarks. Occasionally needs encouragement or reminder from T.A of focus of comment.  Does not use computer/phone during class	Student is often inattentive and needs reminder of focus of class. Occasionally makes disruptive comments while others are speaking. Uses computer/phone during class	Does not listen to others; regularly talks while others speak or does not pay attention while others speak; detracts from discussion; sleeps, etc. Uses computer/phone during class

**Presentation** (20% of final grade) on a topic listed in the syllabus (**You will submit your top three choices in the first week of class**). Your ten-to-fifteen-minute presentation should be thoughtful, well-organized, show your understanding of the topic, and clearly communicate to & enhance your audience's understanding of the material. You should be prepared to respond to questions from the class. Feel welcome to get creative, use visual/audio aids or performance. Your presentation, along with a bibliography of your sources will be due to Canvas on the day of and prior to your presentation. Specific guidelines and grading rubric will be posted to Canvas.

**50 Playwrights Day (10%)** The 50 Playwrights Project gives us access to as-yet unproduced plays by Latinx playwrights. We will support them through this assignment while expanding our library of Latinx plays. Select a play from the 50 Playwrights Project and read it. Note the following: (1) What notable themes or trends are present in the play, (2) what is the playwrights' contribution to Latin American/US Latinx Theatre, (3) how this play might be in dialogue with other materials we have read/studied, and (4) your reactions to the play. On your assigned 50 Playwrights Day, we will discuss your findings as a group and you will submit your notes to Canvas. **You will submit your top three choices of due date** for this assignment in the first week of class, **along with your top three choices of play.**

**Read (or Watch or Listen) & Respond (25%)** Over the course of the semester, you will read plays, articles and posts; view a film and video clips and listen to three musicals. The listed readings/viewings/listening are required and you should be prepared to engage in discussion about each of them. You will be asked to respond in various forms: through short written responses, through Flipgrid videos and in Perusall. For play responses, one-half will be in essay form. For the other half, you may choose between essay and a Flipgrid video response. Specific guidelines and a rubric for each Read & Respond will be posted to Canvas but bear in mind that you will be graded on the efficacy of your argument. Are you analyzing and synthesizing ideas? Are you covering the questions posed in the assignment? Making a thoughtful and meaningful contribution that can inform our group discussion?

**Group Final Project (25% of final grade)** Here is a chance to get creative! You will work in a small group. (1) **choose a topic surrounding Latinx Theatre that interests you.** Perhaps it is a playwright, a performer, a theatre company, a style of performance or a particular play. (2) Prepare a creative piece to share with the class in conjunction with this topic. For example, if you chose a particular play or playwright, you might take roles of director and designers and prepare a concept for your production. You may direct or perform in a short scene that demonstrates a particular concept. You may choose to write a short performance piece in the style of an *acto*. Whatever you choose, your project should demonstrate your knowledge of concepts and material that we have covered in class and should explore new connections. A brief proposal explaining what you plan to do will be due prior to the final presentation. A 750 to 1000-word "connection and reflection" paper will accompany your project. If you have an idea that excites you, check in with me and we will work together to develop your final project! Additional guidelines will be posted on Canvas. Please note that each student in a group will receive an individual grade for this project and will be assessed on the following criteria: 1) your element of this project clearly demonstrates an understanding of concepts/material we have covered in class (25%); 2) your element of this project explores connections between the material you present and material we have covered in class (25%); your element of this project uses appropriate terminology (25%); 4) your element of this project demonstrates creative techniques developed by Latinx theatre artists (25%).

**Examples of past final presentations:**

- An analysis of three different actresses who have played Evita, with a student's performative interpretation of each approach
- A discussion of the use of food in Latinx plays as the student led the class through preparing (and eating!) guacamole
- A short documentary film discussing performative aspects of Día de los Muertos
- A discussion with Frida Kahlo (Latinx-identifying student in-role as Frida)
- A student directed and acted scene by a Latinx playwright
- A children's theatre activity focusing on a Latinx folktale

**Overview of Assignments with Grading Percentages**

Participation	20%
Presentation	20%
50 Playwrights Paper	10%

Read & Respond	25%
Group Final Project	25%

**Grades & Grading Policies:**

Information on current UF grading policies for assigning grade points:  
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

**University Policies:**

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:  
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

**Accommodations:**

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, <https://disability.ufl.edu>) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

**Online Course Evaluation Process:**

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/publicresults/>.

**UF Honesty Policy:**

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code.” On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-studentconduct-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

**Campus Resources:****Health and Wellness:**

U Matter, We Care: If you or a friend is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu) or 352 392-1575 so that a team member can reach out.

- Counseling and Wellness Center: <https://counseling.ufl.edu/>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.
- Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS) Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.
- University Police Department, 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies). <http://www.police.ufl.edu/>

**Academic Resources:**

- E-learning technical support, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to [Learningsupport@ufl.edu](mailto:Learningsupport@ufl.edu). <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>.
- Career Connections Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601. <https://career.ufl.edu/>
- Library Support <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>.
- Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. <http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>
- Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>

### Student Complaints

- On-Campus: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honorcode-studentconduct-code/>
- On-Line: <http://distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process/>

### SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

(readings/assignments are **DUE** on the date listed. **This schedule is subject to change**)

Tuesday 1/9 Introduction to course

Thursday 1/11 Latinx Geography and Culture

Latinx Representation in US Theatre; Translation

**Due:** Top Three Presentation Choices

**Due:** Preferred 50 PP Day & Play

Tuesday 1/16 How to Read a Latinx Play

Read & Respond (Flipgrid): Hudes, *Elliot: A Soldier's Fugue* **OR** *Water by the Spoonful*  
**OR** *Happiest Song Plays Last*

Read & Respond (Perusall): Ybarra, "How to Read a Latinx Play in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century"

### THE CARIBBEAN (Part I)

Thursday 1/18 Cuban Representation

Read & Respond: The Cuban Revolution

Tuesday 1/23 Cuban Representation

Possible Presentations: Ybor City/Cigar Industry  
Baseball & Cuba

**50 PP Day #1**

Thursday 1/25 Cuban Representation

Read & Respond: Cruz, *Anna in the Tropics*

Possible Presentations: Carmelita Tropicana

Coco Fusco

Yoruba and Santeria Practices in the Caribbean

**50 PP Day #2**

Tuesday 1/30 Cuban Representation

Read & Respond (Perusall): Meyer-Garcia, <https://howlround.com/dreaming-body-exile>  
**A Visit From Nilo Cruz!!!**

Thursday 2/1 Puerto Rican Representation

Watch & Respond: Y no había luz videos  
**50 PP Day #3:**

Tuesday 2/6 Puerto Rican Representation Continued  
**50 PP Day #4:**

Thursday 2/8 Puerto Rican Representation  
Read & Respond: *Yemaya's Belly*  
**50 PP Day #5:**

### **CHICANX THEATRE**

Tuesday 2/13 Chicax Theatre & the Worker's Movement  
Read & Respond (Perusal): Valdez, "What is Chicano Theatre," "Actos" and "Preface"  
Possible Presentations: Cesar Chavez & Robert Kennedy  
Hugo Salcedo  
Luis Valdez

Thursday 2/15 Chicax Theatre  
El Teatro Campesino Workshop  
Watch & Respond: *Zoot Suit*  
**50 PP Day #6:**

Tuesday 2/20 El Teatro Campesino Continued  
Possible Presentations: Frida Kahlo  
Sor Juana de la Cruz  
Lowrider Culture

Thursday 2/22 A Visit From Alvaro Saar Rios!  
Read & Submit Two Questions for the Playwright: Rios, *On the Wings of a Mariposa*  
**50 PP Day #7:**

### **BRAZIL**

Tuesday 2/27 Brazil: Theatre of the Oppressed  
Read & Respond (Perusal): Boal, "Theatre of the Oppressed"  
**50 PP Day #8:**

Thursday 2/29 Theatre of the Oppressed  
Possible Presentations: Julian Boal  
Theatre of the Oppressed in the US  
**50 PP Day #9:**

### **LATINX PLAYS & POPULAR CULTURE**

Tuesday 3/5 Stereotypes and Popular Entertainment  
Possible Presentations: Lucha Libre

Popular Music in Mexico  
Contemporary Latinx figures in film & television

- Thursday 3/7 Read & Respond: Diaz, *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity*  
**50 PP Day #10:**
- Tuesday 3/12 **Spring Break**
- Thursday 3/14 **Spring Break**
- Tuesday 3/19 Read & Respond (Perusall): Jorge Huerta, “Looking for the Magic”  
Possible Presentations: Popular music in the Caribbean  
Miguel Pinero  
Elian Gonzalez  
**50 PP Day #11:**

**THE SOUTHERN CONE**

- Thursday 3/21 Argentina & Chile: the Dirty Wars & the Pinochet Regime  
Possible Presentations: Víctor Jara  
Egon Wolff  
Los Desaparecidos  
Amazonas Network  
#niunamenos
- Tuesday 3/26 Immersive Theatre Techniques in Latinx Performance  
Read & Respond: Gambaro, *Information for Foreigners*  
**50 PP Day #12:**
- Thursday 3/28 Southern Cone Continued  
Read & Respond (Perusall): Gartner, The Rise of Women in Chilean Theatre  
<https://howlround.com/rise-women-chilean-theatre> taylor  
**50 PP Day #13:**

**THE CARIBBEAN (Part II)**

- Tuesday 4/2 Haitian Representation  
Possible Presentations: Duvalier Dictatorship  
Bond Street Theatre  
2010 Haiti Earthquake  
**50 PP Day #14:**
- Thursday 4/4 Haitian Representation Continued  
Read & Respond: Morisseau, *Blood at the Root*  
**50 PP Day #15:**
- Tuesday 4/9 Haitian Representation  
Read & Respond (Perusall): Johnson, “The Artist-Activist: History and Healing Through Art”  
Due: Final Topic Proposal



**50 PP Day #16:  
Make Up Day**

**MUSICAL THEATRE**

Thursday 4/11 Latinx Representation in American Musical Theatre (focus: back to Puerto Rico)  
Listen & Respond: *West Side Story*; *The Capeman*; *In the Heights*  
Possible Presentations: *On Your Feet*  
NYC Barrio Culture

**50 PP Day #17:**

Tuesday 4/16 Latinx Representation in American Musical Theatre  
Read & Respond (Perusall): Elena Machado Saéz, “Bodega Sold Dreams”  
**50 PP Day #18:**

Thursday 4/18 Final Project Presentations

Tuesday 4/23 Course wrap-up

**Check Out These Additional Resources:**

100 Latinx Plays!

<https://howlround.com/101-plays-new-americans-or-latinidad>

Pajaritos: A Chicago Latinx Theatre Podcast

<http://altachicago.org/pajaritos>

HowlRound Latinx Theatre Commons

<https://howlround.com/ltx>