I. **Locator Information:**

- Course Number and Name: THEA 420 African American Theatre
- # Credit hours: 3
- Semester __ Year: 20__
- Class time: [Blank]
- Room/Bldg: [Blank]
- Instructor’s name: [Blank]
- Office location: [Blank]
- Phone: [Blank]
- Office hours: [Blank]
- Email: [Blank]
- Web site: [Blank]

FSU Policy on Electronic Mail: Fayetteville State University provides each student, free of charge, an electronic mail account (username@uncfsu.edu) that is accessible via the Internet. The university has established FSU email as the primary mode of correspondence between university officials and enrolled students. Inquiries/requests from students pertaining to academic records, grades, bills, financial aid, and other matters of a confidential nature must be submitted via FSU email. Inquiries or requests from personal email accounts are not assured a response. The university maintains open-use computer laboratories throughout the campus that can be used to access electronic mail. Rules and regulations governing use of FSU email are found at [http://www.uncfsu.edu/PDFs/EmailPolicyFinal.pdf](http://www.uncfsu.edu/PDFs/EmailPolicyFinal.pdf)

II. **Course Description:** A study of the theory and practice of African American Theatre, focusing on its evolution as well as the contemporary African American Theatre. Work with FSU Theatre company productions is required.

III. **Disabled Student Services:** In accordance with Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ACA) of 1990, if you have a disability or think you have a disability to please contact the Center for Personal Development in the Spaulding Building, Room 155 (1st Floor); 910-672-1203.


Additional Required Reading: Plays, excerpts of books, articles, and other materials may be required. They may be placed on reserve in the Chesnutt Library, required for student to locate, or provided by the instructor.

V. **Specific Course Objectives:** Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Discuss the origins and the influences of African American Theatre on American and world theatre.
2. Recognize the functions of African American Theatre, historically, as well as in the present.
3. Display basic acting, directing, and designing skills in this specific genre of theatre.
4. Analyze theatre as a social, political, economic, and cultural institution.
5. Discuss major concepts, debates, processes of inquiry and ways of knowing that are central to African American Theatre.

VI. **COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION CRITERIA:** Grading procedures and scale are as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>92 – 100</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84 – 91</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>76 – 83</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>68 – 75</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>67-0</td>
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Class activity grades will be **averaged** for a grade total and may consist of any combination of the following:

- Quizzes/tests
- Oral presentations/scenes/monologues
- Research paper
- Journal
- Observation Project
- Peer Critique
- Final Exam

The evaluation of individual activities will be based on the criteria explained in your textbook, in lecture and developed in class discussions. Since this is a ‘performance’ class, grading will be subjective. The research paper will be evaluated according to the standards used in freshman English classes for research papers.

At the very minimum, students are required to do the following.

1. Have and use a copy of the textbook.
2. Complete all practice exercises.
3. Fully participate in classroom activities with an open attitude.
4. Every class is a ‘test’ and as such each test will ultimately affect your overall grade.
5. Be on time for class and ready to begin work. Latecomers, enter quietly and wait until you understand what’s in progress before you join.
6. Socialize outside of class. While we do expect to have fun, we’re here to work. Give your work the serious attention it deserves.

You will be graded on progress and understanding of basic underlying concepts of performance in this genre. You will read and discuss material dealing with concepts and techniques and then put them into practice.
Description of assignments:
A. Scene from a play, written 1847-1950, utilizing acting and directing skills gained (1 minute per number of persons)
B. Paper/Presentation #1 on a play, playwright, actor, producer, historical period, movement, company, or genre of the period, 1820-1950 (Paper: 5-6 pages, research/documentation required and Presentation: 10-15 minutes, based on paper, documentation required, delivered extemporaneously with visual support)
C. Paper/Presentation #2 on a play, playwright, actor, producer, historical period, movement, company, or genre of the period, 1850-present (Paper: 5-6 pages, research/documentation required and Presentation: 10-15 minutes, based on paper, documentation required, delivered extemporaneously)
D. Final performance of a scene from any play not read/analyzed in class, with director, designer, actors, technicians in dual/multiple roles, utilizing acting, directing, and designing skills gained due before or on the day of the Final Examination.
E. Work in/on an aspect of a dramatic production of the FSU Theatre Company.
F. Two reviews of at least two FSU Theatre Company's, departmental, and/or community productions.

1. Prepare a 10 page research paper that demonstrates in-depth knowledge and understanding of some basic theory of acting, directing, or design in the African American theatre. Subject must be approved by instructor. No contractions are permitted. The student should reference a minimum of three outside sources and footnote those in the paper. Papers should be typed and double-spaced with bibliography included.
2. Perform a scene as assigned from contemporary African American theatre.
3. Tests, quizzes, movement, pantomime, mask work, oral presentations, and/or special assignments.
4. You will turn in typed critiques of any production seen.

FSU Policy on Disruptive Behavior in the Classroom (Optional)

The Code of the University of North Carolina (of which FSU is a constituent institution) and the FSU Code of Student Conduct affirm that all students have the right to receive instruction without interference from other students who disrupt classes.

FSU Core Curriculum Learning Outcome under Ethics and Civic Engagement (6.03): All students will “prepare themselves for responsible citizenship by fulfilling roles and responsibilities associated with membership in various organizations.” Each classroom is a mini-community. Students learn and demonstrate responsible citizenship by abiding by the rules of classroom behavior and respecting the rights of all members of the class.

The FSU Policy on Disruptive Behavior (see FSU website for complete policy) identifies the following behaviors as disruptive:

1. Failure to respect the rights of other students to express their viewpoints by behaviors such as repeatedly interrupting others while they speak, using profanity and/or disrespectful names or labels for others, ridiculing others for their viewpoints, and other similar behaviors;
2. Excessive talking to other students while the faculty member or other students are presenting information or expressing their viewpoints.
3. Use of cell phones and other electronic devices
4. Overt inattentiveness (sleeping, reading newspapers)
5. Eating in class (except as permitted by the faculty member)
6. Threats or statements that jeopardize the safety of the student and others
7. Failure to follow reasonable requests of faculty members
8. Entering class late or leaving class early on regular basis
9. Others as specified by the instructor.

The instructor may take the following actions in response to disruptive behavior. Students should recognize that refusing to comply with reasonable requests from the faculty member is another incidence of disruptive behavior.

1. Direct student to cease disruptive behavior.
2. Direct student to change seating locations.
3. Require student to have individual conference with faculty member. At his meeting the faculty member will explain the consequences of continued disruptive behavior.
4. Dismiss class for the remainder of the period. (Must be reported to department chair.)
5. Lower the student’s final exam by a maximum of one letter grade.
6. File a complaint with the Dean of Students for more severe disciplinary action.

Students who believe faculty has unfairly applied the policy to them may make an appeal with the faculty member’s department chair.

VII. Academic Support Services: Blackboard and the FSU Writing Center

VIII. Course Outline: TBA

IX. Teaching Strategies:
Teaching strategies include class discussions based on textbook readings, in class and out of class scene studies, oral presentations, and quizzes on key definitions. Also included will be student presentations and cooperative learning groups for exploration of various acting techniques.
X. Bibliography/Suggested reading:


NOTE: TURN OFF YOUR CELL PHONES IN CLASS! Nothing is more rude or distracting than a cell phone going off in the middle of a scene or oral presentation. Be considerate of your fellow actors, please! No one will be excused from class to respond to a page or cell call unless they a licensed medical or rescue employee. Apprise me of special instances or family emergencies if necessary.

*No food, tobacco, snuff, cigarettes, or chewing gum will be allowed in class.*

My responsibilities...

You have invested a lot of time and money into getting the best education you can get at FSU. It’s my responsibility to give you clear, accurate information and plenty of opportunities to ask questions as you try out your new skills.

It’s also my responsibility to treat you with the respect to which you are entitled as an adult. I expect you to afford this course, your classmates, and me the same consideration.

In order to facilitate a positive learning environment for all students, a minimum level of mutual respect and decorum is necessary. One example is to turn off all cell phones. Another is to be prepared with your work when it is due. And finally it is to be honest in your feedback to each other. Telling someone how ‘wonderful’ they are to avoid hurting their feelings isn’t helping anyone to grow! But neither is saying “I didn’t like it.” Tell them WHY! Use specific examples.

Wishing or studying? Which will get you an A?