What makes dramas written by Black American playwrights and theater collectives different from those written and performed by such dramatists and collectives as Arthur Miller, Sam Shepard, Richard Foreman, Laurie Anderson, Judith Malina and Julian Beck's Living Theatre and Peter Brook's International Centre of Theater Research? Using recent theoretical and political debates on performance and the construction of identity, the class will trace the historical trajectory of African American theater from the 1950s to the present.

The course covers representative works from the Theater of the Black Experience, the Black Arts Movement, the Free Southern Theatre, and the African American avant-garde and experimental stage. Assigned readings may include works by Amiri Baraka, Ed Bullins, P. J. Gibson, Lorraine Hansberry, Langston Hughes, Adrienne Kennedy, Lynn Nottage, Suzan-Lori Parks, Stew, August Wilson, Tracey Scott Wilson, George C. Wolfe, and such performance artists as Fred Holland, Robbie McCauley, John O'Neal, Whoppi Goldberg, and Anna Deavere Smith.

In writing the analytical group-paper or in the group-dramatic performance, student-groups must create a gumbo-like analysis/performance of the lived, imagined, and performed elements found in the assigned dramas.

I. REQUIRED TEXTS:
Lorraine Hansberry A Raisin in the Sun (NY: Signet, 1959)
LeRoi Jones (Amiri Baraka), Dutchman and The Slave (NY: William Morrow, 1964)
Lynn Nottage. Crumbs From the Table of Joy and Other Plays (NY: Theatre Communications Group, 2004)

Note: Assigned and recommended texts and readings are held at the Reserve Desk on the second floor of Library West. Check the Reserve List for this course to see if any assigned essays or plays are available as PDF files on ARES (ELECTRONIC RESERVE) section on the Smathers Library Website. Look under Reid and this course’s section number.

II. COURSE REQUIREMENTS:
1) Pop Quizzes on weekly readings as well as film(s) screened in the previous class [10 points@ 2pts - 3pts each)
2) Individual 5-minute oral presentation and 5 min Q&A. Instructor assigns each student their oral presentation of a required reading (5 minutes) Due Week 3 (21 JAN) – Week 11 (17 MAR) (10 points)

The grade on the presentation is based on the following criteria:
A. The importance of the material presented to the class. Students must make brief references to primary scenes in a particular literary work (or film) to illustrate important issues and support their argument.
B. The clarity of the written and oral work. Here, "clarity" refers to smooth oral delivery, correct use of descriptive terminology and grammar.
C. The student’s ability to pose important questions to the class at the end of their oral presentation.

Students must introduce the argument/thesis of their oral presentation based on their assigned section.
3) Students are responsible for a typed 1-page outline of their 5-minute discussion. [10 points]

The outline is due on the day when the student presents her/his 5-minute discussion.
4) MIDTERM EXAM TUESDAY 25 FEBRUARY 50 MIN [20 points]
5) 15-MINUTE GROUP Dramatic Performance Tues. 14 and Thurs. 16 April (WEEK 15)
GROUP DRAMATIC PRESENTATION
20 points
5-minute Q&A on the DRAMATIC PRESENTATION 10 points
LIT 3043 Black Drama T 5-6 (11:45 AM - 1:40 PM) LIT 0127, R 6 (12:50 PM - 1:40 PM) TUR 2303

III. ATTENDANCE

The only excusable absence is one that results from an illness that is documented by a written and signed physician report. Two non-excused absences lower the student's cumulative grade by minus 10 points. Three non-excused absences give the student an E, a failing grade for the course.

IV. LATE WORK

All written work and oral presentations are due during the class period. Students receive minus 2 points for EACH DAY (INCLUDING WEEKENDS AND HOLIDAYS) when any assignment is late. NOTE: A medical excuse will not be accepted to explain the late delivery of any written assignment or film/video project.

V. GRADING SCALE

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Cumulative Performance student presentation presentation presentation ten or more quizzes worth 10pts, MIDTERM 20pts outline 10pts 1-3pts for a total of 10pts

VI. COURSE OUTLINE and READINGS:

READINGS LISTED ON A PARTICULAR DAY SHOULD BE READ BEFORE THAT CLASS MEETS. POP QUIZZES WILL COVER THESE ASSIGNED READINGS AS WELL AS ANY FILMS SCREENED IN THE LAST CLASS. ALL READINGS FOR WEEK TWO MUST BE READ BEFORE CLASS MEETS.

* Denotes that Readings are held on RESERVE IN LIBRARY WEST AT CHECK OUT DESK OR ON ARES E-RESERVE AS DOWNLOADABLE ‘PDFs’ [ACROBAT READER FILES]

WK 1

JAN 07 T -- Course Introduction and INTEGRATIONIST DRAMAS WITH A WOMANIST TWIST
- Lorraine Hansberry, A Raisin in the Sun (1959); Samuel A. Hay, African American Theatre, introduction and chap. 1. ON RESERVE IN LIBRARY WEST

JAN 09 R -- NO CLASS VIEW IN LIBRARY
- Woody King, Jr., Black Theatre: The Making of A Movement (1978) 114mins

WK 2 THE BLACK ARTS MOVEMENT


JAN 16 R -- Hay, African American Theatre, chap. 2. ON RESERVE IN LIBRARY WEST and Leslie Catherine Sanders, The Development of Black Theater in America, chap. 3 (on electronic reserve in library see ARES PDF)

--- Analysis of Play and its screen adaptation. Dramatic Form and Politics of Production and Distribution

WK 3 THEATER OF THE BLACK FEMALE EXPERIENCE

JAN 21 T -- Lynn Nottage, Crumbs From the Table of Joy and Other Plays, Act 1, sc 1- 6

JAN 23 R -- Crumbs From the Table of Joy and Other Plays, Act 2, sc. 1- 4 and epilogue

WK 4 MUSICAL DRAMA, AFRICAN AMERICAN EX-PAT & SELF-DISCOVERY

JAN 28 T -- Stew and Heidi Rodewald, Passing Strange: The Complete Book and Lyrics of The Broadway Musical

SCREEN: PASSING STRANGE (dir. Spike Lee, 2010) 135mins

JAN 30 R -- SCREEN: PASSING STRANGE (dir. Spike Lee, 2010) 135mins remaining scenes

WK 5 TELLING A BLACK STORY: ‘THE BLOOD’S MEMORY’ – JAMES BALDWIN

FEB 04 T -- James Baldwin, Blues for Mister Charlie (1964), pp. xiii- Act 1

FEB 06 R -- Blues for Mister Charlie, Act 2
**LIT 3043 Black Drama**

**T 5-6 (11:45 AM - 1:40 PM)**  
**LIT 0127, R 6 (12:50 PM - 1:40 PM)**  
**TUR 2303**

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<td>FEB 27</td>
<td><strong>SCREEN:</strong></td>
<td><strong>A CONVERSATION WITH AUGUST WILSON</strong> (1992) 22 minutes. <strong>August Wilson articles on E-RESERVE;</strong></td>
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<td><strong>SPRING BREAK MONDAY 2 March – FRIDAY 6 March</strong></td>
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<td><strong>THE SIXTIES</strong></td>
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<td>MAR 12</td>
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<td><strong>The Taking of Miss Janie,</strong></td>
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<td>MAR 17</td>
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<td><strong>BLACK PERFORMANCE</strong></td>
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<td>MAR 19</td>
<td><strong>R—</strong></td>
<td><strong>Fires in the Mirror,</strong></td>
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<td>MAR 24</td>
<td><strong>T—</strong></td>
<td><strong>Anna Deavere Smith, Fires in the Mirror,</strong> and articles on Anna Deavere Smith (ARES).</td>
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<td>MAR 26</td>
<td><strong>R—</strong></td>
<td><strong>Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992,</strong></td>
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**WEEK 6**

**FEB 11**

**T—** **Blues for Mister Charlie**, Act 3

**FEB 13**

**R—SCREEN:**

**TELLING A BLACK STORY: 'THE BLOOD'S MEMORY' – AUGUST WILSON**

**FEB 18**

**T—August Wilson, The Piano Lesson** (1987, Act 1, sc. 1–2).


**FEB 20**


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**WEEK 7**

**TELLING A BLACK STORY: 'THE BLOOD'S MEMORY' – AUGUST WILSON**

**FEB 25**

**T—**

**R—**

**MIDTERM EXAMINATION (50mins, 20pts)**

**FEB 27**

**SCREEN:**

**A CONVERSATION WITH AUGUST WILSON** (1992) 22 minutes. **August Wilson articles on E-RESERVE;**

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**WEEK 8**

**SPRING BREAK MONDAY 2 March – FRIDAY 6 March**

**THE SIXTIES**

**FEB 29**

**R—**

**THE SIXTIES**

**MAR 10**


**MAR 12**

**R—**

**The Taking of Miss Janie,**

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**WEEK 9**

**BLACK PERFORMANCE**

**MAR 24**

**R—**

**BLACK PERFORMANCE**

**MAR 26**

**R—**

**Black Performance**

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**WEEK 10**

**T—**

**R—**

**THE SIXTIES**

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**WEEK 11**

**T—**

**R—**

**THE SIXTIES**

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**WEEK 12**

**T—**

**R—**

**BLACK PERFORMANCE**

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**WEEK 13**

**T—**

**R—**

**GROUPS MEET IN CLASSROOM TO PREPARE THE FINAL DRAMATIC PROJECT**

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**WEEK 14**

**T—**

**R—**

**GROUPS MEET IN CLASSROOM TO PREPARE THE FINAL DRAMATIC PROJECT**

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**WEEK 15**

**T—**

**R—**

**GROUPS MEET IN CLASSROOM TO PREPARE THE FINAL DRAMATIC PROJECT**

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**WEEK 16**

**T—**

**R—**

**LAST CLASS MEETING**