

THTR 456 – Latinx Theatre

63210R/Units: 4

Fall 2020 — TUES, THURS — 10:00-11:50pm

Location: ONLINE

Instructor: Boni B. Alvarez

Office Hours: by appointment via Zoom

Contact Info: bbalvare@usc.edu

(I will reply as soon as I can, but please allow 36 hours for a response.)

Course Assistant: Lena Ford

Contact Info: lenaford@usc.edu

Office Hours: by appointment

Course Description

This course explores the range and genealogy of Latinx Theatre and performance across political, historical, and theatrical contexts. Plays surveyed are from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries of American theatre with an emphasis on playwrights and plays of the last twenty-five years.

Learning Objectives

- This course broadens students' dramatic literacy of contemporary Latinx plays and playwrights.
- Through readings of plays and research projects, students will expand their knowledge of Latinx American cultures and diaspora.
- Students will investigate how aspects of Latinx culture are integrated into dramatic works and identify trends and tropes of Latinx plays.
- The course will cultivate students' abilities for dramatic analysis and critical thinking via in-class close readings & discussion and active engagement on a literary committee.
- Students will sharpen skills on how thematic elements of a play can be highlighted in production via a 'first day of rehearsal' presentation.

Required Readings

Texts marked with an asterisk (*) have been ordered through the USC Bookstore and can be purchased at usctext.com. All other texts will be distributed via Blackboard.

- Alfaro, Luis. *Oedipus El Rey*
- Benne, Benjamin. *Alma*
- Christopher, J. Julian. *Bruise & Thorn*

- *Diaz, Kristoffer. *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity*
- Diaz, Noah. *Richard & Jane & Dick & Sally*
- *Hudes, Quiara Alegria. *Elliott, A Soldier's Fugue*
- Padilla, Lily. *How to Defend Yourself*
- *Rivera, Jose. *Cloud Tectonics*
- Scheer, Alexis. *Our Dear Dead Drug Lord*

Description and Assessment of Assignments

The quality of work in this class is largely determined by the thoroughness of your effort, the ongoing process, and the imagination/critical thought displayed.

Participation – 15%

Students must actively participate in in-class readings and discussion topics. Students will be evaluated on eagerness to be involved in class activities, and the quality of contributions to discussion. Many ideas, positions, and opinions will arise; students should be respectful in the ensuing dialogue, practicing active listening & engagement, and employ empathy.

Research Presentation – 25%

Students will curate and present 20-30 minute group research projects on Latinx culture. The presentations will serve as an overarching backdrop as we investigate the worlds of each individual play. Topics will be assigned to each group: Latinx Culture overview; Latinx families; Magical Realism & the tropes of Latinx Machismo. This is a group assignment – all members of a group will receive the same grade. A more detailed prompt with guidelines will be distributed.

Literary Committee – 30%

A literary committee will be assigned to each play studied. The committees will take on the role of a theater's literary manager and/or director of new play development. The committee is the expert on its respective play and will advocate for/argue against inclusion of the play in a theater's season. Committees will give a 15-20 minute in-class presentation and field the theater's questions and concerns. Each student on the committee will receive the same grade for the assignment. More specific directives will be distributed.

Final Presentation – 30%

Students will be divided into groups for the final presentation. Each group will be assigned a play. Simulating the first day of rehearsal, the group will serve as the directorial/design team, presenting approach, process, and design. This is a creative assignment – design of materials and presentation is determined by the group and can implement visual aids, renderings, video, music, etc. Students will work as a creative team and will earn the same grade for the assignment. A more detailed prompt with guidelines will be distributed.

Grading Breakdown

ASSIGNMENT	% of grade
Participation	15
Research Project	25
Literary Committee	30
Final Presentation	30
TOTAL	100

Grading Scale for SDA: **A** indicates work of excellent quality; **B** of good quality; **C** of average quality; **D** of below average quality; and **F** indicates inadequate work.

A+: 100-98	A: 97-94	A-: 93-90
B+: 89-87	B: 86-84	B-: 83-80
C+: 79-77	C: 76-74	C-: 73-70
D+: 69-67	D: 66-64	D-: 63-60
F: 59-0		

When a student's mathematical GPA falls between two grades, the final grade will be weighted towards the higher end of the scale for students whose attendance and participation in class have been excellent or good and toward the lower end for those with average or poor attendance and participation.

Assignment Submission Policy

NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

Additional Policies

Attendance is compulsory. Unexcused absences will affect your grade adversely – if you are not in class, you are not participating in the class discussion.

Technology

Camera Policy

This course has a “camera-on” policy. Class dynamics are substantially compromised without the ability to see the people in class. For privacy concerns, students may use virtual backgrounds. If there are other challenges and concerns, please contact the professor regarding other accommodations.

Time Zone Accommodations

USC consider the hours from **7:00am to 10:00pm**, in the local time zone for each student, as reasonable times for students to attend synchronous sessions. Students facing obstacles to their learning as a result of time zone differences should contact the professor.

Recording Online Classes

USC policy requires that all classes conducted online be recorded. ITS has set up Zoom to automatically record and transcribe class sessions, which are then made available in Blackboard. Students should review their responsibilities towards the appropriate use and handling of these recordings under existing SCampus policies regarding class notes (<https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-c/>). Students are not permitted to create their own class recordings. Violations of these policies will be met with the appropriate disciplinary sanction. Zoom recordings will be retained in the cloud until the submission of Fall grades, at which point they will be deleted.

<u>WK</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>WEEKLY SCHEDULE</u>
1	TUES 8/18	Introductions; Syllabus Review
LA FAMILIA		
	<u>THURS 8/20</u>	Hudes' <i>Elliott, A Soldier's Fugue</i>
2	TUES 8/25	Hudes' <i>Elliott, A Soldier's Fugue</i>
	<u>THURS 8/27</u>	Hudes' <i>Elliott, A Soldier's Fugue</i>
3	TUES 9/1	Benne's <i>Alma</i> Presentation – Latinx Culture
	<u>THURS 9/3</u>	Benne's <i>Alma</i>
4	TUES 9/8	Diaz's <i>Richard & Jane & Dick & Sally</i> Presentation – Latinx Families
	<u>THURS 9/10</u>	Diaz's <i>Richard & Jane & Dick & Sally</i>
5 MAGICAL REALISM		
	TUES 9/15	Rivera's <i>Cloud Tectonics</i>
	<u>THURS 9/17</u>	Rivera's <i>Cloud Tectonics</i>
6	TUES 9/22	Christopher's <i>Bruise & Thorn</i> Presentation – Magical Realism
	<u>THURS 9/24</u>	Christopher's <i>Bruise & Thorn</i>
7	TUES 9/29	Christopher's <i>Bruise & Thorn</i>
	<u>THURS 10/1</u>	Literary Committee Presentations - I
8 MACHO MEN & WOMEN		
	TUES 10/6	Alfaro's <i>Oedipus El Rey</i>
	<u>THURS 10/8</u>	Alfaro's <i>Oedipus El Rey</i>
9	TUES 10/13	Alfaro's <i>Oedipus El Rey</i>
	<u>THURS 10/15</u>	Diaz's <i>Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity</i> Presentation – Machismo
10	TUES 10/20	Diaz's <i>Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity</i>
	<u>THURS 10/22</u>	Diaz's <i>Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity</i>
11	TUES 10/27	Scheer's <i>Our Dear Dead Drug Lord</i>
	<u>THURS 10/29</u>	Scheer's <i>Our Dear Dead Drug Lord</i>
12	TUES 11/3	Scheer's <i>Our Dear Dead Drug Lord</i>
	<u>THURS 11/5</u>	Padilla's <i>How to Defend Yourself</i>
13	TUES 11/10	Padilla's <i>How to Defend Yourself</i>
	<u>THURS 11/12</u>	Literary Committee Presentations - II
FINAL	TUES 11/24	8:00-10:00am FINAL ASSIGNMENT DUE

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct:

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

Statement for Students with Disabilities

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Website for DSP and contact information: (213) 740-0776 (Phone), (213) 740-6948 (TDD only), (213) 740-8216 (FAX) ability@usc.edu.

Emergency Preparedness/Course Continuity in a Crisis

In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies. See the university’s site on Campus Safety and Emergency Preparedness.

Support Systems:

Student Counseling Services (SCS) – (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – 1 (800) 273-8255

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) – (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp

Sexual Assault Resource Center

For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: sarc.usc.edu

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance – (213) 740-5086

Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. equity.usc.edu

Bias Assessment Response and Support

Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support

The Office of Disability Services and Programs

Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. dsp.usc.edu

Student Support and Advocacy – (213) 821-4710

Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. studentaffairs.usc.edu/sssa

Diversity at USC

Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. diversity.usc.edu

USC Emergency Information

Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible. emergency.usc.edu

USC Department of Public Safety – UPC: (213) 740-4321 – HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24-hour emergency or to report a crime.

Provides overall safety to USC community. dps.usc.edu