University of Gdańsk

Subject card

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| Subject name and code | American Gothic Now: Domestic Spaces, Violence, and the Uncanny, PG_00205053 | | |
| Field of study | American Studies | | |
| Date of commencement of studies | October 2025 | Academic year of realisation of subject | 2026/2027 |
| Education level | Bachelor's studies | Subject group | Obligatory subject group in the field of study<br>Optional subject group |
| Mode of study | full-time studies | Mode of delivery | at the university |
| Year of study | 2 | Language of instruction | English<br>English, elements of Spanish, Spanglish |
| Semester of study | 3 | ECTS credits | 2.0 |
| Learning profile | academic | Assessment form | credit |
| Conducting unit | | | |
| Name and surname of lecturer (lecturers) | Subject supervisor | dr Grzegorz Welizarowicz | |
| | Teachers | dr Grzegorz Welizarowicz | |

| Lesson types | Lesson type | Lecture | Tutorial | Laboratory | Project | Seminar | SUM |
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| | Number of study hours | 0.0 | 30.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 30 |
| | E-learning hours included: 0.0 | | | | | | |

| Learning activity and number of study hours | Learning activity | Participation in didactic classes included in study plan | Participation in consultation hours | Self-study | SUM |
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| | Number of study hours | 30 | 2.0 | 18.0 | 50 |

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| Subject objectives | This course provides an introduction to the history and key contemporary trends in Latino theater in the United States. The goal is to familiarize students with analytical methods and to contextualize the Latino plays discussed, as well as to encourage them to independently explore trends in American theater. Topics include issues of theatrical representation, "American" identity, social movements, space, and genre-related questions (parody, verbatim theater), etc. The reading of source texts is supplemented by elements of drama theory, theater history, and critical literature.<br>Translated with DeepL.com (free version) |

Learning outcomes

| Course outcome | Subject outcome | Method of verification |
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| [AMERL3_U06] Is able to communicate orally and in writing on issues related to American culture and literature, using specialized terminology in cultural and religious studies and literary studies. | Can communicate effectively in speech and writing about the history, aesthetics, and contemporary developments of Latinx theater and its place within American culture, using specialist terminology from cultural studies, religious studies, literary studies, theatre studies, and performance studies. | [SU1] oral statement/conversation/ discussion<br>[SU2] presentation/project/paper/ report |
| [AMERL3_W05] Has advanced knowledge of the basic conceptual and terminological apparatus of cultural and religious studies applicable to the study of cultural phenomena and processes in North America. | Possesses advanced knowledge of the conceptual and terminological framework used in the study of Latinx and American theater, particularly in the fields of performance studies, theater studies, drama theory, genre theory, cultural representation, ethnic identity, and social movements. | [SW1] oral statement/ conversation/discussion<br>[SW2] presentation/project/paper/ report |
| [AMERL3_W07] Has detailed knowledge of selected issues concerning cultural phenomena and processes in North America. | Possesses detailed knowledge of the history, major movements, institutions, practitioners, and selected phenomena of Latinx theater, as well as their connections with cultural, social, and political processes in the United States and, more broadly, North America. | [SW1] oral statement/ conversation/discussion<br>[SW2] presentation/project/paper/ report |
| [AMERL3_K01] is ready to critically evaluate his knowledge and skills, especially in American cultural and literary studies, as well as the basic contextual knowledge of American studies concerning history, social sciences, geography, linguistics and art and English. | Is prepared to critically evaluate their knowledge and skills concerning the history, aesthetics, and contemporary developments of Latino theater in the United States and to apply knowledge from cultural studies, literary studies, history, social sciences, and theatre studies in the analysis of plays, performances, and phenomena related to Latinx theater. | [SK1] oral statement/conversation/ discussion<br>[SK2] presentation/project/paper/ report |
| [AMERL3_U03] is able to use acquired subject knowledge to identify, analyze, interpret and explain cultural phenomena and processes in North America, using concepts and methods from cultural and religious studies. | Is able to apply the knowledge gained about the history and phenomena of Latino theater to identify, analyze, interpret, and explain the phenomena and processes occurring in Latino theater and American theater, using concepts and methods from the fields of cultural and religious studies, including theater studies, genre theory, theater history, and critical analyses of Latino theater and its history. | [SU1] oral statement/conversation/ discussion<br>[SU2] presentation/project/paper/ report |

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| Subject contents | Introduction to the history and development of Latinx theater in the United States. Definitions and cultural implications of the terms Latino, Latina, Latinx, and Latine, and the place of Latinx theater within the broader history of American theater. Historical origins and development of Hispanic theater traditions in the United States.<br><br>Chicano theater and the work of **El Teatro Campesino**. Analysis of the plays and theatrical practice of **Luis Valdez**, socially engaged theater, epic theater, and the influence of **Bertolt Brecht**. Issues of ethnic representation, stereotyping, parody, satire, and political performance in Latinx theater. Study of selected works including *Las dos caras del patroncito*, *Los Vendidos*, *El Corrido*, and *Zoot Suit*. Historical and cultural contexts of the Chicano Movement, pachuco culture, and the Zoot Suit Riots.<br><br>Contemporary Latinx drama and its major playwrights. Analysis of selected plays by **Carlos Morton**, **María Irene Fornés**, **Miguel Piñero**, **Nilo Cruz**, **Josefina López**, and **John Leguizamo**. Examination of themes such as ethnic identity, gender, migration, violence, family, cultural memory, and the experiences of Latinx communities in the United States.<br><br>Theater and performance as forms of social, cultural, and political expression. Study of Nuyorican theater, autobiographical performance, solo performance, and community-based theater. Analysis of the work of **Culture Clash** and exploration of documentary theater, verbatim theater, radio drama, and political performance.<br><br>Introduction to key concepts and methods in theater and performance analysis relevant to Latinx theater, including theories of parody, genre, epic theater, cultural representation, ethnic identity, and the relationship between theater and social movements.<br><br>Development of students' skills in analyzing and interpreting dramatic texts and theatrical performances within their historical, social, and cultural contexts through close reading of plays, engagement with audiovisual materials, critical scholarship, class discussions, oral presentations, and performance-based activities. |
| Prerequisites and co-requisites | no entry requirements |

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| Assessment methods and criteria | Subject passing criteria | Passing threshold | Percentage of the final grade |
| | Assessment of ongoing participation in discussions, dramatic text analysis, interpretive exercises, and individual or group activities conducted during class. Evaluation is based on regular preparation, critical engagement with course materials, analytical skills, and active contribution to group work. | 0.0% | 10.0% |
| | An individual or group presentation of two selected scenes or monologues from texts studied during the course. Assessment criteria include preparation, interpretation of dramatic material, application of knowledge acquired during the course, quality of analysis, and effectiveness of the performance. | 0.0% | 30.0% |
| | A group presentation of a selected scene or scenes from the dramatic works discussed in class, performed in a staged reading format. Assessment is based on interpretation of the text, understanding of its cultural and theatrical context, collaboration within the group, quality of performance, and the introduction explaining the rationale for the selection. | 51.0% | 20.0% |
| | Brief presentations (approximately 5 minutes) introducing selected authors, texts, or issues related to Latinx theater. Assessment criteria include content knowledge, appropriate use of specialist terminology, presentation skills, and engagement with class discussion. | 51.0% | 10.0% |
| | Four short quizzes assessing knowledge of the assigned readings, topics discussed in class, and audiovisual materials (4 × 7.5%). The quizzes evaluate students' familiarity with course content and terminology, as well as their ability to interpret dramatic texts and theatrical phenomena. | 51.0% | 30.0% |
| | Attendance is mandatory. Students are allowed two unexcused absences. Each additional unexcused absence results in a 0.5-point reduction of the final grade. Three instances of tardiness are counted as one unexcused absence. | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Recommended reading | Basic literature | Primary Texts<br>• Cruz, Nilo. *Anna in the Tropics*.<br>• Fornés, María Irene. *The Conduct of Life*.<br>• Leguizamo, John. *Mambo Mouth*.<br>• López, Josefina. *Real Women Have Curves*.<br>• Morton, Carlos. *El Jardín*.<br>• Piñero, Miguel. *Short Eyes*.<br>• Valdez, Luis. *Zoot Suit*.<br>• Valdez, Luis. "Las dos caras del patroncito."<br>• Valdez, Luis. "Los Vendidos."<br>• *El Teatro Campesino Actos*. Introduction by Luis Valdez. | |

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| | Supplementary literature | Secondary Reading<br><br>• Huerta, Jorge. *Chicano Theater: Themes and Forms.*<br>• Hutcheon, Linda. *A Theory of Parody: The Teachings of Twentieth-Century Art Forms* (selected chapters).<br>• Kanellos, Nicolás. “An Overview of Hispanic Theater in the United States.”<br>• Kanellos, Nicolás. “Two Centuries of Hispanic Theater in the Southwest.”<br>• Kanellos, Nicolás. *A History of Hispanic Theater in the United States: Origins to 1940* (selected chapters).<br>• Rossini, John D. *Contemporary Latina/o Theater: Wrighting Ethnicity* (selected chapters)<br>• Welizarowicz, Grzegorz. "Teatr Latinx A.D. 2024" Teatr: pismo Stowarzyszenia Polskich Artystó Teatru i Filmu ZASP. 2, 2025. 73-76. |
| | eResources addresses | |
| Example issues/ example questions/ tasks being completed | • Who are Latino, Latina, Latine, and Latinx communities, and what social, cultural, and political meanings are associated with these terms?<br>• What is the place of Latinx theater within the history of American theater?<br>• How has Hispanic and Latinx theater developed in the United States?<br>• How does theater represent the experiences of Latinx communities in the U.S.?<br>• Analysis of selected plays by Carlos Morton, Luis Valdez, María Irene Fornés, Miguel Piñero, Nilo Cruz, Josefina López, and John Leguizamo.<br>• The role of El Teatro Campesino and Chicano theater in the social movements of the 1960s and 1970s.<br>• The influence of Bertolt Brecht’s epic theater on Latinx theatrical practices.<br>• Pachuco culture and the significance of the Zoot Suit Riots in American cultural history.<br>• Representations of ethnicity, social class, gender, and migration in Latinx theater.<br>• Parody, satire, and humor as strategies of social and political critique.<br>• Documentary theater, verbatim theater, and radio drama as forms of representing social experience.<br>• The relationship between theater, ethnic identity, and cultural memory.<br>• Comparative analysis of dramatic texts and their stage or film adaptations.<br>• Preparation and delivery of short presentations on selected authors, texts, or theatrical phenomena.<br>• Preparation and performance of staged readings of selected dramatic scenes.<br>• Individual and group analysis of dramatic texts using basic tools of theater and performance studies.<br>• Discussions concerning the social and cultural functions of theater in contemporary United States society. | |
| Work placement | Not applicable | |

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