TO: The Academic Senate
FROM: Committee on Instruction and Curriculum
SUBJECT: Application of Courses for GE Area C4
PURPOSE: For Action by the Academic Senate

ACTION REQUESTED: That the Academic Senate approve the applications of the following courses for General Education (G.E.) for Area C4 for the 04-11 and earlier catalogs.

DANC 3300 Sex, Race, and Body Politics in Dance
PHIL 3404 Mysticism
PHIL 3432 Religion, Monsters, and Horror
THEA 3220 The History of Black Theatre

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: This course was approved by the G.E. Subcommittee at its meeting on January 25, 2010. CIC unanimously approved this course for the G.E. area indicated above at its meeting on February 1, 2010.

All supporting documents (i.e., course syllabus, GE approval form) for these courses are available for review on the 2/1/10 CIC Sharepoint meeting workspace. The web link for this workspace is: https://sharepoint.csueastbay.edu/sites/AcademicSenate/CIC%20Meeting1/CIC%20Meeting%2010/default.aspx?InstanceID=20100201&Paged=Next&p_StartTimeUTC=20091005T210000Z&View=%7b7E41DFE40%2d9625%2d422F%2dA79E%2d54BBB4ABD070%7d

(attachments)
Application for General Education Credit
for Upper Division Humanities Course (Area C4)

Course title: Sex, Race, and Body Politics in Dance  Course number: DANC3300

Courses approved for general education credit must provide students with explicit instruction in the approved student learning outcomes. Please be as specific as possible, pointing to topics, readings, assignments, activities and assessments that illustrate how the course meets the requirements. Attach the course syllabus and any assignments and/or assessments needed to support your explanations.

Please use this template as a guide to address ALL of the following learning outcomes.

Upper-division humanities courses emphasize an advanced writing component and include significant oral communication or manual communication (sign language) and advanced critical thinking skills. Upper-division general education should enable students to master the four Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) listed for lower-division general education humanities.

1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of and ability to apply the principles, methodologies, value systems, and thought processes employed in human inquiries.

This course provides a broad introduction to the world of dance and performance, through the lens of gender, sexuality, body politics, and race issues of contemporary American culture including the intellectual conflict between traditional and emerging views. Students will learn how to talk and write about issues such as ethnic and racial identity, sexual orientation, disability, body image, navigating a dual identity (such as Asian-American, mixed-race, bisexual, Jewish-African-American, etc.), confronting racism, homophobia, sexism, sizism and ableism, and negotiating traditional values within a diverse modern culture. The course will use lectures, films, discussions and written assignments to analyze the role of dance in movements for social change and inclusion, based on an analysis of the dance artists that have been outspoken in regards to these issues throughout the history of modern dance. This course introduces theoretical frameworks from gender studies, queer theory, disability studies, ethnic studies and postmodernism to assumptions that underlie the way diverse cultures view art, beauty, entertainment, censorship and artistic activism.

2. Students will demonstrate in their oral and written work an understanding of the cultural endeavors and legacies of human civilization.

During weeks 1-3 of the course, we will look at the performance work and writing of Bill T. Jones and Rhodessa Jones, incorporating discussions of race in performance, art in the prison system, the notion of “victim art,” and cultural diversity; in weeks 4 – 5 we will examine politically charged and narrative dance around issues of the Japanese-American internment in WWII, attitudes towards aging and death and “coming out” experiences for people of diverse sexual orientations through the work of Dandelion DanceTheater, Joe Goode, Anna Halprin and DV8; in weeks 6-7 we will examine dance and disability through the works of Petra Kuppers, DV8, AXIS Dance Company and more, with a focus on how disability studies has challenged popular notions about the content and form of performance and the nature of who is a proper performer; in weeks 8 – 9 the course will address issues of provocation, censorship, taboo and controversy, particularly in terms of artists and thinkers who have stepped far outside mainstream notions of gender, race or sexuality, looking at the performance and writing of Kate Bornstein, John Cameron, Sean Dorsey, Butoh artists and Sara Shelton Mann. Issues of modernism, postmodernism, economic class, cultural appropriation and censorship will be woven into each week’s content. Students will present their viewpoints orally in small groups throughout the course. Every other week they will write two page response papers, analyzing the point of view of the artists covered and the students’ opinions in relation. Every week students engage in verbal analysis of videos and guest presenters on a range of topics. Written work also includes three worksheets designed to elicit analytical and reflective writing based on the readings; a written midterm and final exam; and a 5-page “Body
Manifesto” Paper, analyzing individual beliefs about body politics in light of themes and critical perspectives introduced in the course.

3. Students will demonstrate their ability to discuss, deliberate, and write about opposing viewpoints in an insightful and logical manner, to present an opposing side fairly, and to criticize the argument rather than attacking the person.

Throughout the course, students will be asked to develop, defend and critique major viewpoints about dance, identity and society recurrent in their readings and video viewings. The positions of dominant vs. oppressed cultures; gender specific vs. gender-neutral, mind-body dualism and appropriate vs. inappropriate expressions of sexuality and identity are just some of the polarizations that illuminate definitions of the body and experimental movement expression. By learning to argue a point of view that one does not agree with, students will learn to distinguish the argument from not only the person, but also the cultural group and political issues in question. Formal and informal modes of discourse will be used as frameworks for these debates. Students will learn to critique the assumptions that underlie specific lines of inquiry.

4. Students will demonstrate their developing intellectual curiosity and a habit of lifelong learning, through choice of research topics, the number and quality of questions asked in class, the application of course concepts or themes to lived experiences or world events, or through other similar means.

Each class meeting incorporates review and revision of reading comprehension; dyad and large group discussions; lectures that combine theoretical analyses and personal stories of both the instructor and students, strategies for posing rich questions; and formulating themes for research that lead to fruitful and relevant discovery. Students will need to incorporate research into the ideas and performance practice of at least two contemporary dance artists in their Body Manifesto papers, and demonstrate how these artists are relevant to issues the students face individually, culturally or through identification with particular communities. By relating the study of dance and performance to body and identity politics students will learn to relate their own lives, global trends and current events to the formation of aesthetic preference.

5. Students will demonstrate the potential for participating in and contributing to a democratic society as an informed, engaged, and reflective citizen.

The history of dance is the story of how we find meaning in our bodies moving in community. Looking at dance through the lens of identity and body image politics therefore engages students and assists in developing individualized approaches to responding to political events, group identity, social interactions and the pursuit of meaning. The course is a step-by-step, artistically guided journey into a greater sense of respect for diversity. Each student will leave the class with a heightened sense of what it means to be an American citizen, and a member of the CSU East Bay community.

Throughout this course, students are encouraged to challenge prevailing ideas about their own bodies, and to explore the origins of those beliefs. They are asked to challenge their assumptions about movement, who does it, where and why. Finally, they are supported in articulating their own aesthetics; a personal way of finding beauty and meaning in everyday life. These engaged and reflective practices will prepare students to make informed choices about culture and society. As the world becomes more deeply and quickly connected across national, cultural and linguistic borders, the power of the body in expressive movement becomes an important tool. Students will learn how to understand this complex body “language” and use it as a vehicle for expanding their knowledge and cross-cultural understanding.
1. Name of department or program which will offer the course:
   Philosophy

2. Alphabetical prefix (all capitals), course number, full title in Catalog, abbreviated title in Course Inventory (maximum 30 spaces), and unit value of course:
   PHIL 3404, Mysticism, MYSTICISM, 4 units

3. Catalog description (40 words maximum)
   a. content:
      Survey of mysticism in religions including Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Taoism. Readings may include works from William James, Rudolph Otto, Carl Jung, Stephen Katz, and Walter Stace, and mystical texts from world religions.
   b. grading pattern (if not A-F):
   c. credit restrictions (if any): None
   d. repeatability (if any): No
   e. cross-listing (if needed-label primary and secondary departments): N/A
   f. prerequisites (if any): None
   g. corequisites (if any): None
   h. miscellaneous course fee (if any): None
   i. hours/week of lecture (if also has act/lab): 4
   j. hours/week of activity or lab (if needed): None

4. Course Inventory data (repeat if course has more than one segment):
   a. instructional format: Lecture and seminar
   b. class hours/week: 4
   c. student credit units: 4
   d. course classification number: C-4
   e. workload K-factor: 1.0
   f. weighted teaching units: 4
   g. normal limit/capacity: 30

5. First quarter and year of offering: Winter 2010
   Course is only to be offered once (check if applicable) _____

6. General Education-Breadth Requirement(s) or U.S. History-Institutions Requirement(s) to be satisfied, if any, with justification (cite applicable criteria):
   This course will apply for C4 GE certification, for the current catalogue and prior catalogues. Please see GE justification attached.

7. Justification for/purpose of the new course including use of course in department programs (major, minor, option, etc.), if any:
a) new courses being added to bolster the Religious Studies Option; b) course will count towards Religious Studies Option; c) university currently has no course in subject area

8. **Resource** implications of the new course (faculty, facilities, equipment, library, etc.):
   Course will be taught out the department’s existing allocation.

9. **Consultation** with other affected departments and program committees, if any.

   a. The following department(s) has (have) been consulted and raise no objections:
      All departments in CLASS have been consulted and raise no objections.
   b. The following department(s) has (have) been consulted and raise concerns:
      Department:
      Concern (quote their comments):

10. Certification of **department approval** by the chair and faculty.
    Chair: ___Jennifer L. Eagan____ Date: _______

11. Certification of **college approval** by the dean and faculty review body and of review by Associate Vice Presidents, Academic Programs/Graduate Studies and Academic Resources/Administration. (May be replaced by cover memo.)
    Dean/Associate Dean: _____________________ Date: ______________
PHIL 3404: Mysticism

Course Description
This course offers a survey of mysticism as encountered in the world religions. Theories for the modern study of mysticism in its various forms will be discussed at length, including discussion of the ideas of such thinkers as William James, Carl Jung, Stephen Katz, and Walter Stace, among others. Following this, students will read passages from an array of mystical texts from several of the world’s religions, and discuss them in class. Religious traditions that will be represented include those of Ancient Greece, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, as well as some discussion of the experiences of those not represented by any specific religious tradition.

Learning Outcomes
Students will learn about the mystical tradition as it appears across religious traditions. They will then be challenged to think critically about the themes in these texts compare and contrast across religions and how they correspond with a phenomenological study of similar experiences. Students will come away with an understanding of mystical experience, its central role in religions of all stripes, and the varieties of its interpretation.

Three core assessment criteria will be used to ensure that these outcomes are reached. 1) Students will be assigned a participation grade based upon in-class discussions and individual seminars. Students will be challenged in these discussions to think critically about their own assumptions about the similarities and differences among religions and will be need to be prepared to lead a seminar discussion relating to a specific religion of their choice. 2) Students will have a written exam that will reinforce their understanding of the ways that mystical experiences are described and interpreted. 3) Students will also have a paper in which they must conduct independent research on any area relating to mysticism that is of particular interest to them. This will allow students some agency in determining the direction of their learning, while also opening up their opportunities for carrying what they learn in the class with them after the class is over.
Application for General Education Credit
for Upper Division Humanities Course (Area C4)

Course title: Mysticism

Course number __PHIL 3404__

Courses approved for general education credit must provide students with explicit instruction in the approved student learning outcomes. Please be as specific as possible, pointing to topics, readings, assignments, activities and assessments that illustrate how the course meets the requirements. Attach the course syllabus and any assignments and/or assessments needed to support your explanations.

Please use this template as a guide to address ALL of the following learning outcomes.

Upper-division humanities courses emphasize an advanced writing component and include significant oral communication or manual communication (sign language) and advanced critical thinking skills. Upper-division general education should enable students to master the four Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) listed for lower-division general education humanities.

1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of and ability to apply the principles, methodologies, value systems, and thought processes employed in human inquiries.

   Students will learn about the nature of mysticism and mystical experience as core of religion. They will then be challenged to think critically about how such experiences are interpreted within various religious traditions and also outside in secular contexts. Students will see how religious value systems have been influenced by mystical experience.

2. Students will demonstrate in their oral and written work an understanding of the cultural endeavors and legacies of human civilization.

   As a central aspect of all religion, understanding mystical experience is crucial to a full understanding of the religions of the world, which themselves are foundational in the history of human civilization. Students will read and discuss mystical texts from a variety of religious traditions, and will prepare and lead seminar discussions on these texts. A research paper will encourage students to develop their interests in mysticism and an exam will reinforce the core concepts presented in class.

3. Students will demonstrate their ability to discuss, deliberate, and write about opposing viewpoints in an insightful and logical manner, to present an opposing side fairly, and to criticize the argument rather than attacking the person.

   Students will learn that multiple perspectives and interpretations are possible as mystical experiences will be found to have core similarities despite the variety of religious interpretations that these have received. Classroom discussions will force students to explore all of these alternate perspectives. The exam will provide a key outlet for students to write about their reactions to these alternative interpretations in an insightful and logical way.
4. Students will demonstrate their developing intellectual curiosity and a habit of lifelong learning, through choice of research topics, the number and quality of questions asked in class, the application of course concepts or themes to lived experiences or world events, or through other similar means.

The paper assignment requires students to choose a topic of personal interest to them. Students must therefore think broadly about the nature of mysticism and the myriad ways it might be understood within both religious and secular frameworks. That the topic will be one of their own choosing will put them on a path to considering similar themes as they appear to them throughout the rest of their lives.

5. Students will demonstrate the potential for participating in and contributing to a democratic society as an informed, engaged, and reflective citizen.

As with all courses in religious studies, students will come away with a better understanding of the pluralism of perspectives that exist not only in America but the world. Specifically, students here will be contrasting the multiplicity of interpretations that exist within religious traditions as these are applied to universal human experiences. Through understanding that such a plurality exists will help students to engage each other more fairly and with less judgment.
12. Name of **department** or program which will offer the course:
   Philosophy

13. **Alphabetical prefix** (all capitals), **course number, full title** in Catalog, **abbreviated title** in Course Inventory (maximum 30 spaces), and **unit value** of course:
   PHIL 3432: Religion, Monsters, and Horror, RELIGIONMONSTERS&HORROR, 4 units

14. **Catalog description** (40 words maximum)
   a. **content:**
   Examination of monsters as they appear in the world’s religions. Discussion of the nature of evil, the fear of death, and the experience of the uncanny. References include religious scriptures, folklore, and popular culture.

   b. **grading pattern** (if not A-F):
   c. **credit restrictions** (if any): None
   d. **repeatability** (if any): No
   e. **cross-listing** (if needed--label primary and secondary departments): N/A
   f. **prerequisites** (if any): None
   g. **corequisites** (if any): None
   h. **miscellaneous course fee** (if any): None
   i. **hours/week of lecture** (if also has act/lab): 4
   j. **hours/week of activity or lab** (if needed): None

15. **Course Inventory data** (repeat if course has more than one segment):
   a. **instructional format:** Lecture and discussion
   b. **class hours/week:** 4
   c. **student credit units:** 4
   d. **course classification number:** C-4
   e. **workload K-factor:** 1.0
   f. **weighted teaching units:** 4
   g. **normal limit/capacity:** 30

16. **First quarter** and **year** of offering: Winter 2010
   Course is only to be offered once (check if applicable) __________

17. **General Education-Breadth Requirement(s)** or **U.S. History-Institutions Requirement(s)** to be satisfied, if any, with **justification** (cite applicable criteria):
   This course will apply for C4 GE certification, for the current catalogue and prior catalogues. Please see GE justification attached.

18. **Justification for/purpose of** the new course including use of course in **department programs** (major, minor, option, etc.), if any:
a) new courses being added to bolster the Religious Studies Option; b) course will count towards Religious Studies Option.

19. **Resource** implications of the new course (faculty, facilities, equipment, library, etc.):
Course will be taught out the department’s existing allocation.

20. **Consultation** with other affected departments and program committees, if any.
   
   a. The following **department(s)** has (have) been consulted and raise **no objections**:
      All departments in CLASS have been consulted and raise no objections.
   b. The following **department(s)** has (have) been consulted and **raise concerns**:
      Department:
      Concern (quote their comments):

21. Certification of **department approval** by the chair and faculty.
   Chair: ___Jennifer L. Eagan___ Date: _________

22. Certification of **college approval** by the dean and faculty review body and of **review by Associate Vice Presidents**, Academic Programs/Graduate Studies and Academic Resources/Administration. (May be replaced by cover memo.)
   Dean/Associate Dean: _______________________________ Date: _______________
PHIL 3432: Religion, Monsters, and Horror

Dr. Christopher M. Moreman

Course Description
This course will examine monsters as they appear in the world’s religions. Monsters can be seen as representing forms of evil which must be overcome, or they may signify repressed fears, especially of death. The sense of the uncanny, or the numinous, is present within horror fiction and film, suggesting the possibility of something other than the material world. References will include religious scriptures, folklore, and popular fiction and film.

Learning Outcomes
Students will learn about key theories in the study of religious experience, and in the study of horror and its effects. They will then be challenged to think critically about the theories as they apply to various religious traditions and to modern popular culture. Students will learn how to think critically about their reactions to horror, and the uncanny in general.

Three core assessment criteria will be used to ensure that these outcomes are reached. 1) Students will be assigned a participation grade based upon in-class discussions based on assigned readings as well as film clips viewed in class. Students will be challenged in these discussions to think critically about their own assumptions about evil and its appearance in popular culture and folklore. 2) Students will have a written exam that will reinforce their understanding of the ways that these themes and theories have been used and interpreted. 3) Students will also have a paper in which they must discuss the appearance of some monster or other form of evil and then apply a variety of theory to it. This will allow students some agency in determining the direction of their learning, while also opening up their opportunities for carrying what they learn in the class with them after the class is over.
Application for General Education Credit
for Upper Division Humanities Course (Area C4)

Course title: Religion, Monsters, and Horror

Course number PHIL 3432

Courses approved for general education credit must provide students with explicit instruction in the approved student learning outcomes. Please be as specific as possible, pointing to topics, readings, assignments, activities and assessments that illustrate how the course meets the requirements. Attach the course syllabus and any assignments and/or assessments needed to support your explanations.

Please use this template as a guide to address ALL of the following learning outcomes.

Upper-division humanities courses emphasize an advanced writing component and include significant oral communication or manual communication (sign language) and advanced critical thinking skills. Upper-division general education should enable students to master the four Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) listed for lower-division general education humanities.

1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of and ability to apply the principles, methodologies, value systems, and thought processes employed in human inquiries.

   Students will learn about key theories in the study of religious experience, and in the study of horror and its effects. They will then be challenged to think critically about the theories as they apply to various religious traditions and to modern popular culture. Students will learn how to think critically about their reactions to horror, and the uncanny in general.

2. Students will demonstrate in their oral and written work an understanding of the cultural endeavors and legacies of human civilization.

   Students will learn to recognize traditional images of evil across various religious traditions, as well as their appearance in modern folklore and popular culture. Classroom discussions will push students to examine the applications of theories on the nature of evil in religion and in relation to notions of God and the divine. Students will further explore these themes in the writing of a paper, and an exam will further reinforce material from readings, classroom discussions, and lectures.

3. Students will demonstrate their ability to discuss, deliberate, and write about opposing viewpoints in an insightful and logical manner, to present an opposing side fairly, and to criticize the argument rather than attacking the person.

   Students will learn that multiple perspectives and interpretations of religious experience and of evil itself are possible through the lens of multiple religious traditions. Classroom discussions will force students to explore all of these alternate perspectives as well as to incorporate academic theories on these themes. The exam will provide a key
outlet for students to write about their reactions to these alternative interpretations in an insightful and logical way.

4. Students will demonstrate their developing intellectual curiosity and a habit of lifelong learning, through choice of research topics, the number and quality of questions asked in class, the application of course concepts or themes to lived experiences or world events, or through other similar means.

   The paper assignment requires students to choose a topic that is of personal interest to them, related to the subject matter of the course but not necessarily covered in class. Students must therefore think independently on the themes of the course. In applying theories from the class to elements of experience, folklore, or popular culture outside of what is covered in the class, students will be well placed on a path to consider similar themes as they appear to them throughout the rest of their lives in myriad contexts.

5. Students will demonstrate the potential for participating in and contributing to a democratic society as an informed, engaged, and reflective citizen.

   As with all courses in religious studies, students will come away with a better understanding of the pluralism of perspectives that exist not only in America but the world. Through understanding that such a plurality exists will help students to engage each other more fairly and with less judgment. Furthermore, religious literacy will assist students in coping with the common usage of religious imagery as it relates to ideas of good and evil in all aspects of our culture, and the course as a whole will help students to think critically about the use of such images.
Course title __The History of Black Theatre______ Course number _THEA 3220_

Courses approved for general education credit must provide students with explicit instruction in the approved student learning outcomes. Please be as specific as possible, pointing to topics, readings, assignments, activities and assessments that illustrate how the course meets the requirements. Attach the course syllabus and any assignments and/or assessments needed to support your explanations.

**Please use this template as a guide to address ALL of the following learning outcomes.**

Upper-division humanities courses emphasize an advanced writing component and include significant oral communication or manual communication (sign language) and advanced critical thinking skills. Upper-division general education should enable students to master the four Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) listed for lower-division general education humanities.

1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of and ability to apply the principles, methodologies, value systems, and thought processes employed in human inquiries.

The History of Black Theatre is a course that examines the influence of the African Diaspora on theatrical practices throughout the world. The primary goal of this class is to give the students an understanding of how African religious and ceremonial traditions and their forced relocation to oppressive societies, was an integral part of the evolution of theatre literature and performance practices in Europe and the United States. Students will be taught how the people from Africa have made enormous social and artistic contributions through the exploration the connection between African mythology and religious ceremony on Greek mythology and playwriting; slave rituals and minstrelsy on American musicals, comedy, film and television; and the Black Arts Movement on theatre, music and politics in the 1960s and beyond. Students will be exposed to the ethnic artisitic theatrical work of folk, classical, contemporary American and African playwrights and artists. The students will demonstrate their intellectual grasp of the course content through the following assignments: 2 papers that analyze the social and political climate concurrent with the evolution of various African infused theatrical periods and styles, field activities, small classroom performance exercises, short essays based on classroom lectures and discussions, a midterm and a final oral and written presentation.

2. Students will demonstrate in their oral and written work an understanding of the cultural endeavors and legacies of human civilization.

The focus of this course is the origins of African and African American theatrical traditions and the role those traditions have played in shaping theatre all over the world. The course will focus on African gods, goddesses and mythology and how they were appropriated into Greek theatre; how Moors were stereotyped in Elizabethan and Shakespearean theatre, the impact of African American music and dance including spirituals, blues, jazz, gospel the cakewalk, Charleston and jitterbug on the Broadway Musical. The class will examine the
ironic role the Black minstrel caricatures: Mammy, Sambo, Zip Coon, Uncle, and Jim Crow played in defining how Whites viewed Blacks and Blacks viewed themselves. How the blurring of authentic traits versus racist stereotypes still influences the way African Americans portray themselves in film and television. The cultural identity affirming theatre, music and poetry that emerged from African Americans during the civil unrest of the 1960s will be studied in conjunction with art from other minorities that became empowered as a result of the Black Arts Movement.

3. Students will demonstrate their ability to discuss, deliberate, and write about opposing viewpoints in an insightful and logical manner, to present an opposing side fairly, and to criticize the argument rather than attacking the person.

Through a series of different assignments, written, oral, field and group, students will demonstrate their understanding of important concepts and methods in the humanities literature of theatre, ethnicity and art. Each quarter their grade in the course will be based on the following assignments: a midterm (20%), 2 research papers discussing a playwright, actor, producer or theatrical style and the impact they or it had on in the past and present (40%), in class short essays based on reading assignments (20%), a final two person oral report (20%). Reading assignments and lectures on the African cultural contribution to theatre history and theatrical styles, viewings of films and videos, and attending live theatrical productions will prepare the students to recognize the importance of theatre as a vehicle to enlighten, empower, educate and entertain.

4. Students will demonstrate their developing intellectual curiosity and a habit of lifelong learning, through choice of research topics, the number and quality of questions asked in class, the application of course concepts or themes to lived experiences or world events, or through other similar means.

As students are exposed to the literature on the evolution of theatre practices influenced by African religion, ceremony, dance and music, particularly in the United States, they will acquire an understanding of the historical overlapping relationship between art, politics, social and cultural concerns. The attention given to African American theatre and the role this ethnic minority played in shaping the content and structure of American theatre and culture is important because in the United States the collective values and conciousness of the masses has been profoundly affected the African American contribution, but it has not always been recognized. “To hold as ’twere the mirror up to nature:” This quote from Shakespeare’s Hamlet sheds light on how important the study of theatre can be in illuminating important cultural schisms, issues and contributions. The theatre is a reflection of the very nature of man and much of mankind’s history is illuminated through theatrical productions. However, many of the monumental historical contributions people of African descent have made socially, politically and artistically have been kept in the dark. This course will shed light on the segregated enclaves of artistic achievement by Africans and African Americans exposing what was hither to unrecognized. Theatre can build solid bridges of understanding and tolerance between people and cultures that we would otherwise not know. The power of theatre to promote human understanding will be analyzed through readings and essays which question how the African Americans found
their artistic voices under a systematic oppression and how once found their voices set them free.

5. Students will demonstrate the potential for participating in and contributing to a democratic society as an informed, engaged, and reflective citizen.

Assignments and lectures on empowerment through theatre and other types of performance art will prepare the students to present a final two person oral report in which the students personal narrative, historical African American theatre repertoire and contemporary theatre trends are analyzed and compared through one provocative thesis statement. The oral report must include the following material:

A. An interview with a professional modern playwright, actor, performance artist or director.
B. Attending and writing reviews of two productions that relate to the thesis statement.
C. Audio and Visual support that support and illuminate the thesis during the oral presentation.
D. References to other works by the playwright or from the same time period that support the thesis statement.
E. How past and present political, cultural and social occurrences resonate within the ideas captured in the thesis statement.

Working with a partner will offer the students an opportunity to discuss, agree and disagree about the subject matter and how it is to be presented, reinforcing skills of collaboration which are essential to producing theatre.