

**Carleton University  
Winter 2023  
Department of English**

**ENGL 4976 A: *Issues in Postcolonial Literature***

**Topic: *Modern African Drama***

**Prerequisites: fourth-year standing or permission of the department**

**Preclusions: ENGL 4906 (no longer offered)**

**Friday / 8:35 am – 11:25 am**

**Location: *Please confirm location on Carleton Central***

**Format: In-person**

**Instructor: Adam Barrows**

**Email: *adambarrows@cunet.carleton.ca***

**Office: DT 1901**

**Phone: 613-520-2600 x 4093**

**Office Hours: Friday 1-4 pm**

**Important note:**

For information on deadlines for withdrawal from courses, please consult the Academic Year section of the Undergraduate Calendar (<https://calendar.carleton.ca/academicyear/>).

**Course description:** This course introduces students to the rich tradition of modern and contemporary African drama. We will situate works by playwrights across the African continent within their national contexts, exploring the ways in which African theatre has served as a medium to address the legacies of slavery and colonialism, recuperate pre-colonial histories and traditions, and dramatize ongoing battles for economic freedom and gender equality. In the first half of the course, we will read classic modern plays from the 1960s and 1970s. In the second half, we will read plays by African women written and staged within the last fifteen years. Primary texts include works by playwrights from Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda, and Zimbabwe.

**Learning Outcomes:** In this course students will learn to: identify and discuss key themes and formal features of representative theatrical works by a range of African writers; independently research the work of one African playwright of their choice; place theatrical works by African writers within their respective national, cultural, political and historical contexts; conduct secondary research in the service of original literary analysis and argumentation.

**Required Texts: (all texts are available through Octopus Books: [octopusbooks.ca/students](http://octopusbooks.ca/students)):**

*Modern African Drama* (edited by Biodun Jeyifo), New York: W.W. Norton, 2002.

*Contemporary Plays by African Women* (edited by Yvette Hutchison & Amy Jephtha), London: Methuen, 2019.

**Course Calendar** (This schedule is subject to change at my discretion. Reading assignments should be completed BEFORE the date they are listed):

- Jan 13** Introduction and Syllabus Overview
- Jan 20** Aidoo, *The Dilemma of a Ghost*  
**Response Paper #1 Due**
- Jan 27** Al-Hakim, *Fate of a Cockroach*  
**Response Paper #2 Due**
- Feb 3** Soyinka, *Death and the King's Horseman*  
**Response Paper #3 Due**
- Feb 10** Ngũgĩ, *I Will Marry When I Want*  
**Response Paper #4 Due**
- Feb 17** Adong, *Silent Voices*  
**Response Paper #5 Due**
- Feb 24** BREAK
- Mar 3** Moyo, *I Want to Fly*  
**Essay Proposal Due (by 11:59pm on Brightspace)**
- Mar 10** Shaarawi, *Niqabi Ninja*  
**Response Paper #6 Due**
- Mar 17** Niala, *Unsettled*  
**Response Paper #7 Due**
- Mar 24** Putuma, *Mbuzeni*  
**Response Paper #8 Due**
- Mar 31** Jobi-Tume, *Not That Woman*
- Apr 7** BREAK

**April 12      Writing Workshop**

**Final Essay Due (by 11:59 pm on CULearn)**

**Evaluation:**

**Attendance:** 10%

**Response Papers:** 40%

**Essay Proposal:** 10%

**Final Essay:** 40%

(Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean).

**Attendance:** You are expected to attend every course on time and to bring a copy of the required text(s).

**Response Papers:** You will submit 8 short reading response papers, as indicated on the course calendar. Topics will be distributed one week before the papers are due. They will ask you for a short response to, or meditation on, a particular aspect of the week's reading (theme, character, plot, staging, context, etc). These should be treated as formal writing assignments; however, they require no outside research and need not be formatted like an essay (no title is required, no works cited, etc.). Please DO include page references for every citation from the plays, and make a note in the footer if you are using an edition that differs from the assigned versions of the texts. Some topics may ask you to take a position on a particular issue, but generally these will be exploratory not argumentative papers. Minimum length is 500 words, maximum 800 (please try not to exceed the maximum limit). Papers will be evaluated on the following criteria (in order of importance from most to least important): evidence of careful close reading, originality of thought, effective use of primary evidence, style, and mechanics. Papers must be handed in by Friday morning at 8:35 am as indicated on the course calendar. NO LATE PAPERS will be accepted.

**Paper Proposal and Final Essay:** You will submit one final essay of 3,000 to 4,000 words (around ten double-spaced pages) on the work(s) of one 20<sup>th</sup> or 21<sup>st</sup> century African playwright of your choice who is not already represented on the syllabus. You need not provide an exhaustive account of the playwright's work: one representative text is sufficient, although you may choose to discuss more than one work. Essays should introduce readers to the playwright and their work: its major themes, style, and any critical conversation that it has inspired (in academia, mass media, or social media). It should situate the author's work within its national, cultural, historical, and/or political contexts. It should make an argument as to how the playwright's work is similar to or different from one or more of the texts on the syllabus. For our purposes, an "African" playwright is a writer born in an African country (or colony, in the case of older writers) and whose work represents or is concerned with Africa and/or Africans. Essays will be evaluated on the following criteria (in order of importance from most to least important): evidence of effective research skills, originality of thought, effective use of primary evidence, effective use of secondary evidence, style, and mechanics. The paper is due at 11:59 pm on

Brightspace on the last day of classes for the term (April 12). Late papers will be accepted with a deduction of one full letter grade for every 24 hours (or portion of 24 hours) that the paper is overdue. Six weeks before the essay due date (at 11:59 pm on March 3), students will submit a 250 to 500 word proposal of the essay which explains why the student has chosen his or her particular author as well as the student's proposed research methodology. These proposals will be evaluated based on the logic of the proposal and the appropriateness/feasibility of the research methodology. Late proposals will be accepted with a deduction of one full letter grade for every 24 hours (or portion of 24 hours) that the proposal is overdue.

## **PLAGIARISM**

The University Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one's own.” This includes reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one's own without proper citation or reference to the original source. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to: books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, artworks, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, material on the internet and/or conversations.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another's data or research findings without appropriate acknowledgement;
- submitting a computer program developed in whole or in part by someone else, with or without modifications, as one's own; and
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's work and/or failing to use quotations marks.

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the course's instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of “F” for the course.

## **Statement on Student Mental Health**

As a University student you may experience a range of mental health challenges that significantly impact your academic success and overall well-being. If you need help, please speak to someone. There are numerous resources available both on- and off-campus to support you. Here is a list that may be helpful:

**Emergency Resources (on and off campus):** <https://carleton.ca/health/emergencies-and-crisis/emergency-numbers/>

**Carleton Resources:**

- Mental Health and Wellbeing: <https://carleton.ca/wellness/>
- Health & Counselling Services: <https://carleton.ca/health/>
- Paul Menton Centre: <https://carleton.ca/pmc/>
- Academic Advising Centre (AAC): <https://carleton.ca/academicadvising/>
- Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS): <https://carleton.ca/csas/>
- Equity & Inclusivity Communities: <https://carleton.ca/equity/>

**Off Campus Resources:**

- Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region: (613) 238-3311 or TEXT: 343-306-5550, <https://www.dcottawa.on.ca/>
- Mental Health Crisis Service: (613) 722-6914, 1-866-996-0991, <http://www.crisisline.ca/>
- Empower Me: 1-844-741-6389, <https://students.carleton.ca/services/empower-me-counselling-services/>
- Good2Talk: 1-866-925-5454, <https://good2talk.ca/>
- The Walk-In Counselling Clinic: <https://walkincounselling.com>

**Statement on Pandemic Measures**

It is important to remember that COVID is still present in Ottawa. The situation can change at any time and the risks of new variants and outbreaks are very real. There are [a number of actions you can take](#) to lower your risk and the risk you pose to those around you including being vaccinated, wearing a mask, staying home when you're sick, washing your hands and maintaining proper respiratory and cough etiquette.

**Feeling sick?** Remaining vigilant and not attending work or school when sick or with symptoms is critically important. If you feel ill or exhibit COVID-19 symptoms do not come to class or campus. If you feel ill or exhibit symptoms while on campus or in class, please leave campus immediately. In all situations, you should follow Carleton's [symptom reporting protocols](#).

**Masks:** Masks are no longer mandatory in university buildings and facilities. However, we continue to recommend masking when indoors, particularly if physical distancing cannot be maintained. We are aware that personal preferences regarding optional mask use will vary greatly, and we ask that we all show consideration and care for each other during this transition.

**Vaccines:** While proof of vaccination is no longer required to access campus or participate in in-person Carleton activities, it may become necessary for the University to bring back proof of vaccination requirements on short notice if the situation and public health advice changes. Students are strongly encouraged to get a full course of vaccination, including booster doses as soon as they are eligible and submit their booster dose information in [cuScreen](#) as soon as possible. Please note that Carleton cannot guarantee that it will be able to offer virtual or hybrid learning options for those who are unable to attend the campus.

All members of the Carleton community are required to follow requirements and guidelines regarding health and safety which may change from time to time. For the most recent information about Carleton's COVID-19 response and health and safety requirements please see the [University's COVID-19 website](#) and review the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#). Should you have additional questions after reviewing, please contact [covidinfo@carleton.ca](mailto:covidinfo@carleton.ca).

### **Requests for Academic Accommodations**

Please include the following text, provided by Equity and Inclusive Communities, on all course outlines, and read it at the beginning of your first few classes to remind students. For details, see the [accommodations section](#) and the [Course Outline Information on Academic Accommodations](#).

### **ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION**

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

**Pregnancy:** write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For accommodation regarding a formally scheduled final exam, you must complete the Pregnancy Accommodation Form ([click here](#)).

**Religious obligation:** write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details [click here](#).

**Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or [pmc@carleton.ca](mailto:pmc@carleton.ca) for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally scheduled exam (if applicable).

### **Survivors of Sexual Violence**

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and where survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: <https://carleton.ca/equity/sexual-assault-support-services>

**Accommodation for Student Activities**

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation will be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>