

**Fayetteville State University**  
**College of Arts and Sciences**  
**Department of English**  
**ENGL 220 African American Literature I**  
**Fall Semester 2011**

**I. Locator Information:**

Instructor: Dr. Marlene Allen

Office Location: Butler 136

Email Address: mallen16@uncfsu.edu

Office Phone: 910-672-2150

Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays: 10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

                  Thursdays: 12:30-2:30 p.m.

                  Fridays: 10:00-11:00 a.m. (and by appointment)

Day and Time Class Meets: 6:00-8:50 p.m. T

Semester Credit Hours: 3

Total Contact Hours for Class: 3

**FSU Policy on Electronic Mail:** Fayetteville State University provides to each student, free of charge, an electronic mail account (username@uncfsu.edu) that is easily accessible via the Internet. The university has established FSU email as the primary mode of correspondence between university officials and enrolled students. Inquiries and requests from students pertaining to academic records, grades, bills, financial aid, and other matters of a confidential nature must be submitted via FSU email. Inquiries or requests from personal email accounts are not assured a response. The university maintains open-use computer laboratories throughout the campus that can be used to access electronic mail. Rules and regulations governing the use of FSU email may be found at <http://www.uncfsu.edu/PDFs/EmailPolicyFinal.pdf>.

**II. Course Description from University Catalog:** This course is an historical and critical exploration of African American writers' contributions to American fiction, poetry, drama, and nonfiction, beginning with the writers of the 1700s and continuing through 1900.

Prerequisite: ENGL 110 and ENGL 120

**III. Disabled Student Services:** In accordance with Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ACA) of 1990, if you have a disability or think you have a disability, please contact the Center for Personal Development in the Spaulding Building, Room 155 (1st Floor); 910-672-1203.

#### **IV. Textbook and Required Materials:**

Gates, Henry Louis Jr., and Nellie Y. McKay, eds. *The Norton Anthology of African American Literature*. 2nd ed. New York: W.W. Norton, 2004. ISBN: 978-0-393-97778-3.

5x8 inch index cards

#### **V. Student Learning Outcomes:**By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Arrange African American literature between 1700 and 1900 in a chronology.
2. Understand characteristics of the genres used in African American literature, such as political speeches, essays, autobiographies, sermons, testimonies, riddles, proverbs and cinema.
3. Understand key ideas and terms related to African American literature, such as slave narrative tradition, social death, tragic mulatto figure, vernacular tradition, trickster figure, Middle Passage, typology, racial uplift, jeremiad, sentimentalism, Fugitive Slave Law, community, plantation tradition, and apply these terms to the literary works.
4. Defend the view that some of the early African American literature had at its center political empowerment.
5. Question the promise of the documents on which this country is founded, particularly as these documents relate to African Americans.
6. Write a researched analytical paper on a topic related to African American literature before 1900.
7. Gain a fuller understanding of what it has meant historically and what it still means to be African American and to be an African American writer.

This course will also help students achieve the following program outcomes for the English major:

1. Describe characteristics of literature from diverse literary historical periods and cultures. *Introduce skill*
2. Correctly apply literary terminology for narrative, poetic, and dramatic genres. *Introduce skill*
3. Use literary critical perspectives to generate original analyses of literature. *Introduce skill*
4. Compose diverse researched and/or original texts in varied genres and formats, using various composing processes, technologies, and/or multimodal formats. *Introduce skill*

#### **VI. Course Requirements and Evaluation Criteria:**

a. Grading Scale: This class will use the university's "10-point" scale as follows:

90-100=A      80-89=B      70-79=C      60-69=D      59 and below=F

<b>Assignments</b>	<b>Percentage of Final Grade</b>
Reading Quizzes and Review Notes	20%
Exam 1	15%
Exam 2	15%
Group Poetry Presentation	10%
Research Paper (including prospectus, Smarthinking submission, and conference attendance)	20%
Final Exam	15%
Class Participation (including attendance)	5%

**Quizzes:** Students will be given quizzes to measure how well they are keeping up with the readings and their comprehension of the readings and class discussions. In addition to covering the readings, questions will be drawn from the biographical material for the authors and the period introductions. These quizzes cannot be made up; however, I will drop your lowest quiz grade at the end of the semester. Quizzes will be given at the beginning of the class period. ***Questions will not be repeated for students who are late.*** You should expect a quiz every class period.

**Exams:** Students will be given three exams, including the final exam, in this course. The exams will cover all biographical material in the textbook, the period introductions, any assigned readings, class discussions, and lecture notes. Students will not be allowed to make up exams except in the case of an extreme emergency. You must provide documentation to excuse your absence ***before*** you will be allowed to take the test. You must take the exam by the next class period after your return or you forfeit the right to make up the exam (except in cases of extreme emergency, which will be determined by the instructor).

**Review notes:** Students will be asked to write review notes for each individual work on a 5x8-inch index card. Each card should list the following information about the literary work: the author; date of publication; a brief summary of what the work is about; and a listing of the work's major themes and issues. Students will also be required to create cards for terminology related to African American literature as designated by the instructor. Since this class meets only once a week, these cards will be a portable study guide that students can refer to in preparation for class discussions and exams. They will be collected periodically throughout the semester unannounced and therefore should be brought to each class session.

**Research Paper:** Students will write a 5-6 page research paper on a literary work written by an African American writer between 1700 and 1920. They will also be

required to submit both a prospectus outlining their ideas for the paper and a list of sources they plan to use for the paper. Papers must be typed and double-spaced, using 10- or 12-point font with one-inch margins on all sides. Your paper should use MLA-style documentation for your sources and should include a properly formatted Works Cited page. The Works Cited page should list both your primary sources (the text[s] you're writing about) as well as any secondary sources (journal articles, books, etc.) that you consult while writing your paper. **Points will be deducted from your grade for failure to follow MLA style correctly.** You must always cite any sources you consult while writing your paper with both an in-text parenthetical citation and an entry on your Works Cited page. Failure to do so is plagiarism and will be penalized accordingly. All papers should be submitted in both hard copy form and to Turnitin.com on Blackboard by class time on the date indicated on the syllabus.

**Group Poetry Presentation:** Each student will be required to do a group oral presentation on the work on an early African American poet. Further information on this assignment will be given later in the course

b. Attendance Requirements: Regular class attendance is expected and essential to doing well in this course. Students are expected to attend all class meetings and conferences in this course. Students will be allowed only **one** absence without penalty. **Two** absences will result in a lowering of your final grade by a letter grade. On your **third absence, you will fail this course.** Please note that attendance is factored into your class participation grade. There are no "excused" absences in this course, so use your absences wisely in case you get ill. Please schedule all doctors' appointments, meetings with advisors, etc., during your free time, not during class time. If you have a job that may interfere with your attendance in this course, I suggest that you take this class at another time. No exceptions will be made for work obligations. If you decide that you no longer wish to take this course, you are responsible to withdrawing from the course, not the instructor. Failure to do so will result in an F for nonattendance. **THERE WILL BE NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS POLICY AND THIS POLICY WILL BE STRICTLY ENFORCED.** (If you must miss class due to a university-sponsored event, such as for a sporting or other event, it is your responsibility to let me know of the reason for your absence so that I don't count it against you).

c. Policy on Plagiarism: You are expected to adhere to the policies regarding academic honesty outlined in the FSU Student Handbook. **Cheating and plagiarism on any assignment will result in a failing grade for this course.** Students guilty of academic dishonesty will also not be recommended for admission to Teacher Education, Nursing, Graduate School, or other programs. All work submitted for credit in this class must be original and may not be submitted for credit in any other course at Fayetteville State University or other university. Resubmitting course work that was submitted for credit in another course will result in a failing grade in this course.

## **VII. FSU Policy on Disruptive Behavior in the Classroom:**

The *Code of the University of North Carolina* (of which FSU is a constituent institution) and the *FSU Code of Student Conduct* affirm that all students have the right to receive instruction without interference from other students who disrupt classes.

FSU Core Curriculum Learning Outcome under Ethics and Civic Engagement (6.03): All students will “prepare themselves for responsible citizenship by fulfilling roles and responsibilities associated with membership in various organizations.” Each classroom is a mini-community. Students learn and demonstrate responsible citizenship by abiding by the rules of classroom behavior and respecting the rights all members of the class. The FSU Policy on Disruptive Behavior (see FSU website for complete policy) identifies the following behaviors as disruptive:

1. Failure to respect the rights of other students to express their viewpoints by behaviors such as repeatedly interrupting others while they speak, using profanity and/or disrespectful names or labels for others, ridiculing others for their viewpoints, and other similar behaviors;
2. Excessive talking to other students while the faculty member or other students are presenting information or expressing their viewpoints.
3. Use of cell phones and other electronic devices
4. Overt inattentiveness (sleeping, reading newspapers)
5. Eating in class (except as permitted by the faculty member)
6. Threats or statements that jeopardize the safety of the student and others
7. Failure to follow reasonable requests of faculty members
8. Entering class late or leaving class early on regular basis
9. Others as specified by the instructor.

The instructor may take the following actions in response to disruptive behavior. Students should recognize that refusing to comply with reasonable requests from the faculty member is another incidence of disruptive behavior.

1. Direct student to cease disruptive behavior.
2. Direct student to change seating locations.
3. Require student to have individual conference with faculty member. At his meeting the faculty member will explain the consequences of continued disruptive behavior.
4. Dismiss class for the remainder of the period. (Must be reported to department chair.)
5. Lower the student’s final exam by a maximum of one-letter grade.
6. File a complaint with the Dean of Students for more severe disciplinary action.

Students who believe the faculty member has unfairly applied the policy to them may make an appeal with the faculty member’s department chair.

***Other points of class etiquette:***

- If you send me an email, please do not begin with “Hey” or other informal forms of address. Use capital letters and punctuate your sentences correctly. Use my correct title (Dr. or Professor). In other words, write as you would any professional correspondence, which means your email should be courteous and respectful in tone. Also, please sign your name at the end of the email; I probably will not know who you are based on your email address alone. . I will not respond to emails that do not follow these requirements.
- Do not expect an immediate answer via email (normally, I will respond to your email within 2 business days [i.e., weekdays]). If you send your email at the last minute, I may not be able to answer your email before an assignment is due.
- Please allow a sufficient amount of time after taking tests or turning in papers (at least a week) before inquiring when graded work will be returned to you.
- ***Come to class on time!*** If you come after the classroom door is closed, ***close the door behind you.*** Do not leave until class is dismissed. If you must leave class early for an important reason, please let me know in advance. During exams, ask permission to leave to use the restroom (but please try to use the restroom *before* class).
- Acquire the textbooks and always ***bring them*** to class with you. Do not expect to borrow my or other students’ books for exams or other assignments if you do not bring yours.
- ***If you are a graduating senior, it is your responsibility to arrange a time to take your final exam early well in advance of the end of the semester.***
- Please do not ask to take your final exam early unless you are a graduating student. I will not be able to accommodate any such requests.

**VIII. Academic Support Resources:** Please feel free to drop by my office during office hours (or make an appointment to see me) if you need help with any assignments. You can also receive help on papers at the Writing Center and through the Smarthinking website.

## IX. Course Outline and Assignment Schedule

**Note 1:** *This is a tentative outline of the course schedule. Changes will be made as needed and will be announced in class or on Blackboard. Therefore, it is important that you check Blackboard on a daily basis.*

**Note 2:** *You are responsible for reading the biographical material for each author. You will be tested on this biographical material on the quizzes and the exams.*

**Week 1:** Tuesday, August 23: Introduction to the course

**Week 2:** Tuesday, August 30: The Vernacular Tradition, pp. 3-8: "City Called Heaven," "Ezekiel Saw de Wheel," "Go Down Moses," "Been in the Storm So Long," "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot," "Steal Away to Jesus," "Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel?," "God's a-Gonna Trouble the Water," and "Soon I Will Be Done," pp. 10-18; Folktales, pp. 130-147; Phillis Wheatley, "To the University of Cambridge, in New-England," p. 219; "On Being Brought from Africa to America," pp. 219-220; "To the Right Honorable William, Earl of Darmouth," p. 221-222

**Week 3:** Tuesday, September 6: Olaudah Equiano, "The Interesting Narrative," pp. 189-213; David Walker, "Appeal," pp. 228-238; Martin Delany, "The Condition, Elevation, Emigration, and Destiny of the Colored People," pp. 258-278

**Week 4:** Tuesday, September 13: Harriet Jacobs, "Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl," pp. 280-315; review for exam 1

**Week 5:** Tuesday, September 20: **Exam #1**

**Week 6:** Tuesday, September 27: William Wells Brown, *Clotel*, pp. 325-45; Victor Séjour, "The Mulatto," pp. 353-65; Elizabeth Keckley, "Behind the Scenes," pp. 366-86

**Week 7:** Tuesday, October 4: Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, Preface-Chapter IX, pp. 385-421

**Week 8:** Tuesday, October 11: Douglass, *Narrative*, Chapters X-Appendix, pp. 421-452; **research paper prospectus due (turn in on Blackboard)**; review for exam 2

**Week 9:** Tuesday, October 18: Fall break—no class

**Week 10:** Tuesday, October 25: **Exam #2**

**Week 11:** Tuesday, November 1: Booker T. Washington, "Up from Slavery," pp. 572-602; W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, The Forethought-Chapter V, pp. 692-720; Charles Chesnutt, "The Wife of His Youth," pp. 624-632

**Week 12:** Tuesday, November 8: Poetry presentations

**Week 13:** Tuesday, November 15: Research paper conferences—bring draft of paper to conference and also submit draft to Smarthinking

**Week 14:** Tuesday, November 22: **Research paper due**

**Week 15:** Tuesday, November 29: Last day of class—review for final exam

**Final Exam: Tuesday, December 6, 6:00-7:50 p.m.**

**IX. Teaching Strategies:** This course will utilize a variety of teaching strategies, including lecture, large and small group discussions; quizzes; in-class writing assignments; and individual conferences.