

Fayetteville State University
College of Arts and Sciences
Department of English
English 220-01: African American Literature
Fall 2011

I. Locator Information

Professor: Joyce Russell, Ph.D.
Course Title: ENGL 220-01 (African American Literature I)
Office Location: Butler 132
Semester Credit Hours: 3
Office hours: MWF 9:00 -10:00and MWF 12:00-1:00
Office Phone: 672-1589
Total Contact Hours for Class: 45
Email address: jrussell@uncfsu.edu

The following statement should appear on the first page of each course syllabus:

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

African -American Literature is an exploration of the prose and poetry, fiction and nonfiction of the African Diaspora. While examining multiple genres, it also investigates the spiritual, historical, philosophical, political, and gender-racial forces that influenced the form of this literature. This course offers a survey not only of African American texts of the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries, but it also provides the students with another way of viewing the traditional canon of American Literature.

The course will be divided into parts that focus on two specific periods: **The Colonial Period** and **The Antebellum Period**. And, we will conclude the course by touching upon W.E.B. Du Bois and Booker T. Washington because their activism benchmarks African American literary and social progress.

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 to please contact the Center for Personal Development in the Spaulding Building, Room 155 (1st Floor); 910-672-1203.

IV. Textbooks:

Fanon, Frantz. *Black Skin, White Masks*. New York: Grove, 1994 (optional)

Gates, Henry Louis and Nellie McKay. *The Norton Anthology of African American Literature*. W.W. Norton, 2004.

Greenberg, Kenneth, ed. *The Confessions of Nat Turner*: New York: Bedford, 1996. (optional)

Hurmen, Belinda, ed. *My Folks Don't Want Me to Talk About Slavery*. Winston – Salem, NC: John F. Blair, 1984. (optional)

V. FSU Student Learning Outcomes –

Upon completion 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) Defend the view that some of the early African American literature had at its center political empowerment.
- 4) Question the promise of the documents on which this country is founded, particularly as these documents relate to African Americans.
- 5) Write a researched analytical paper on a topic related to African American up through 1945.

VI. COURSE OBJECTIVES:

By the end of the semester, students will have met specific objectives.

Student will be able to do the following:

A. Decode language used in the traditional sense to discuss African American Literature. The following terms will acquire new connotations: *maafa*, minority, majority, canon, American, African American Literature, white, black, race, culture, and myth.

B. Decode figurative speech used to characterize American Literature and

apply the traditional figurative language to African American Literature;
C. Construct a literary canon that is counter to that of the traditional American canon in that the old canon is based on a different cultural base; outdated references as opposed to postmodernist ones of the Africanist culture.
D. Compose definitions, informal and formal, for African American Literature, in particular, and African American aestheticism in general

VII. COMPETENCIES

Students will demonstrate knowledge of the following, as recommended by the Department of Public Instruction and stated in “Guidelines and Competencies for Undergraduates in the English/Communication Skills Preparation Program”:

- 2.2 Basic information concerning the English language: its structure, standards, and variations;
- 2.6 Various modes of discourse (narration, exposition, description, and persuasion) and their appropriate use in all areas of experience: personal, social, educational, business, and vocational;
- 2.7 Elements of literature and how these elements affect interpretation;
- 2.8 The genres common to oral, written, and visual expression.

This course will also develop knowledge and competencies consistent with

the standards recommended by the National Council of Teachers of English.

Specifically, students will be able to do the following:

- 1.1 Complete a specific language arts course of study;
- 2.6 Recognize the impact that culture, societal events and issues have on teachers, students, the English language arts curriculum, and education in general;
 - 3.1.2 Demonstrate how reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing, and things are interrelated;
 - 3.1.3 Recognize the impact of cultural, economic, political, and social environments upon language;
 - 3.1.4 Show a respect for and an understanding of diversity in language use,

patterns, and dialects across cultures, ethnic groups, geographic regions, and

social roles;

3.1.5 Show an understanding of the evolution of English language and the historical influences on its various forms;

3.1.8 Show various purposes for which language is used;

3.2.2 Use writing, speaking and observing as major forms of inquiry, reflection, and expression;

3.2.5 Apply knowledge of language structure and conventions of creating and critiquing print and non-print texts;

3.3.1 Demonstrate how to respond to and interpret what is read in different

ways;

3.3.2 Demonstrate how to discover and create meaning from texts;

3.3.3 Use a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and

appreciate texts;

3.4.3 Demonstrate how written discourse can influence thought and action;

3.5.3 Show knowledge of a broad historical and contemporary spectrum of

United States, British, and world literature, including:

3.5.1.1 works from a range of cultures;

3.5.1.2 works from a range of genres.

VIII. Course Requirements and Evaluation Criteria -

A.. Grading Scale – The class grading scale must be consistent with the university catalog.

Final Grades – This policy becomes effective on August 16, 2007

Final grades are calculated on a four-point system and affect a student's grade point average as indicated below. Faculty members will delineate in each class syllabus the methods and evaluative criteria for determining final grades in the class.

Grade Credit Hours Quality Points Meaning

A Hours attempted and earned

4 per credit hour; Exceptionally high

B Hours attempted and earned

3 per credit hour Good

C Hours attempted and earned

2 per credit hour Satisfactory

D Hours attempted and earned

1 per credit hour Marginally passing

F Hours attempted – Not earned

0 per credit hour Failing

FN Hours attempted – Not earned

0 per credit hour Failing due to non-attendance.
(Student registered, but never attended.)

W Hours attempted – Not earned

No impact on GPA Class withdrawal prior to deadline
(see Academic Calendar)

P Hours attempted and earned

No impact on GPA Satisfactory - Assigned only in classes specified as Pass/Fail

WU Hours attempted – Not earned

No impact on GPA Withdrawal from all classes for semester or term

AU Hours attempted – Not earned

No impact on GPA Auditing

B. Attendance Requirements: Fayetteville State University no longer has a WN grade. So, for this course, **if you miss more than five (5) classes you will receive an F for the course.** If you miss a class when an assignment is due, not only will that count as an absence, but also there will be a lateness penalty attached to the assignment. If something important occurs, *negotiate with the instructor as soon as possible*, preferably in advance: maybe something can be worked out. Missing your conference appointment will count as **THREE** absences.

Graded Assignments:

--Two (2) unit examinations 25% each (50)

--Miscellaneous in-class and homework assignments (10)

--Final paper (10)

--Final examination (30)

If you fail to complete any of the above assignments, your grade will be adversely affected. Also, you must check your e-mail and your Blackboard daily, as announcements, instructions, and course updates will sometimes be given electronically.

IX. Course Calender, Readings, and Assignments

Week 1 Introduction
Maafa; spirituals, jazz, blues, gospel; black talk or Ebonics; sermons

The Colonial Period

Week 2 Lucy Terry and “Bars Fight”
The Slave Narrative and Olaudah Equiano

Week 3 Phillis Wheatley--various poems; various prose selections
Jupiter Hammon, “ An Evening Thought. . .”
Richard Allen and Absalom Jones
Benjamin Banneker, “Letter to Thomas Jefferson”
George Moses Horton : Read all of his poems. (Note the North Carolina connection.)

The Antebellum Period

Week 4 David Walker and *David Walker’s Appeal* (Note the North Carolina connection.) *Nat Turner and My Folks Don’t Want. . . Slavery*
John Chavis (Note the North Carolina connection.)

Week 5 Sojourner Truth, “Ar’n’t I a Woman?”

bell hooks’s (film on hooks)
Maria Stewart: All selections
Test # 1

Week 6 Harriet Jacobs (Linda Brent): pp. 207-45 (North Carolina connection)
William Wells Brown: *Narrative of William Wells Brown and Clotel*
Note the Thomas Jefferson connection. DOMESTIC FICTION will be Introduced.

Weeks 7-8 Frederick Douglass: *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (1845)

Week 9 Douglass’s *My Bondage and My Freedom* (1855)

Week 10 Douglass’s *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass* (1881)

- Week 11 **Test # 2**
James M. Whitfield: "America," "Yes! Strike Again That Sounding String"
- Week 12 Francis Watkins Harper: various poems; "Two Offers"; *Iola Leroy*"
- Week 13 Harriet E. Wilson: *Our Nig*
Hannah Craft: *The Bondwoman's Narrative* (North Carolina connection)
- Week 14 Charlotte Forten Grimke: *Journals*
- Week 15 Du Bois and Washington and Wrap -up

Note that from time-to-time commercial or independent films will be used to supplement instruction. *Amistad* and *Jim Crow Museum* are two examples of the kinds of films that we will be screening.

X. The following bibliography was compiled by Donna M. Campbell and may be helpful when we discuss **Domestic Fiction in African American Literature**. Many of these texts are considered standard sources and therefore must be included in the study of novels of domesticity.

Armstrong, Nancy. "The Rise of the Domestic Woman." Rpt. in *The Ideology of Conduct: Essays on Literature and the History of Sexuality*, ed. Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse. New York: Methuen, 1987.

Armstrong, Nancy. *Desire and Domestic Fiction : A Political History of the Novel*. New York: Oxford University Press 1989, 1987.

Bauermeister, Erica R. "The Lamplighter, The Wide, Wide World, and Hope Leslie: Reconsidering the Recipes for Nineteenth-Century American Women's Novels." *Legacy* 8.1 (Spring 1991): 17-28.

Baym, Nina. "Melodramas of Beset Manhood: How Theories of American Fiction Exclude Women Authors." *American Quarterly* (1981); rpt. in *Feminism and American Literary History*. New Brunswick, N. J. : Rutgers U P, 1992. 3-18.

---. *Novels, Readers, and Reviewers: Responses to Fiction in Antebellum America*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984.

---. *Woman's Fiction: A Guide to Novels by and about Women in America, 1820-1870*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978.

Boudreau, Kristin. *Sympathy in American Literature: American Sentiments from Jefferson to the Jameses*. Gainesville: U of Florida P, 2002.

- Brodhead, Richard. "Sparing the Rod: Discipline and Fiction in Antebellum America." *Representations* 21 (1988): 67-96; rpt. in *Cultures of Letters*. PS201.B68 1993
- Brown, Gillian. *Domestic Individualism: Imagining Self in Nineteenth-Century America*. Berkeley: U of California , 1990.
- Brown, Herbert Ross. *The Sentimental Novel in America, 1789-1865*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1989.
- Buell, Lawrence. "Circling the Spheres: A Dialogue." *American Literature* 70 (1998): 465-490.
- Burgett, Bruce. *Sentimental Bodies: Sex, Gender, and Citizenship in the Early Republic*. Princeton: Princeton U P, 1998.
- Carby, Hazel V. *Reconstructing Womanhood: The Emergence of the Afro-American Woman Novelist*. New York: Oxford UP, 1987.
- Chapman, Mary, and Glenn Hendler, eds. *Sentimental Men: Masculinity and the Politics of Affect in American Culture*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1999.
- Chandler, Marilyn R. *Dwelling in the Text : Houses in American Fiction*. Berkeley : University of California Press, 1991.
- Clark, Suzanne. *Sentimental Modernism: Women Writers and the Revolution of the Word*. Bloomington: Indiana U P, 1991.
- Cogan, Frances B. *All-American Girl: The Ideal of Real Womanhood in Mid-Nineteenth-Century America*. Athens: U of Georgia , 1989.
- Cott, Nancy. *The Bonds of Womanhood: "Woman's Sphere" in New England, 1780-1835*. New Haven: Yale U P, 1977.
- Coultrap-McQuin, Susan. *Doing Literary Business: American Woman Writers in the Nineteenth Century*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990.
- Cutter, Martha J. *Unruly Tongue: Identity and Voice in American Women's Writing, 1850-1930*. Jackson : University Press of Mississippi, 1999.
- Davidson, Cathy N. *Reading in America : Literature & Social History*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989.
- Dobson, Joanne. "The American Renaissance Reenvisioned." in *The (Other) American Traditions: Nineteenth-Century Women Writers*. Ed. Joyce W. Warren. New Brunswick, N J: Rutgers UP, 1993. 164-82.
- . "Reclaiming Sentimental Literature." *American Literature* 69 (1997): 263-288.
- Douglas, Ann. *The Feminization of American Culture*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1977.
- Elbert, Monika M., ed. and introd., ed. *Separate Spheres No More: Gender Convergence in American Literature, 1830-1930*. Tuscaloosa, AL: U of Alabama , 2000.,

- Fetterley, Judith. "Commentary: 19th Century American Women Writers and the Politics of Recovery." *American Literary History* 6.3 (Fall 1994): 600-11.
- . Introduction to *Provisions: A Reader from Nineteenth-Century American Women*.
- . "'My Sister! My Sister!': The Rhetoric of Catharine Maria Sedgwick's *Hope Leslie*." *American Literature* 70 (1998): 491-516.
- . *The Resisting Reader: A Feminist Approach to American Fiction*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1978.
- Fisher, Philip. *Hard Facts: Setting and Form in the American Novel*. New York: Oxford U P, 1987.
- Goshgarian, G. M. *To Kiss the Chastening Rod: Domestic Fiction and Sexual Ideology in the American Renaissance*. Ithaca: Cornell U, 1992.
- Habegger, Alfred. *Gender, Fantasy, and Realism in American Fiction*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1982.
- Halttunen, Karen. *Confidence Men and Painted Women: Study of Middle Class Culture in America, 1830-70*. Yale UP., 1986.
- Handley, William R. *Marriage, Violence, and the Nation in the American West*. Cambridge Studies in American Literature and Culture. Cambridge, England: Cambridge UP, 2002.
- Harris, Susan K.. "'But is it any good?': Evaluating Nineteenth-Century American Women's Fiction." *American Literature* 63 (March 1991): 42-61.
- . *19th-Century American Women's Novels: Interpretive Strategies*. Cambridge: Cambridge U P, 1990.
- Hendler, Glenn. "The Limits of Sympathy: Louisa May Alcott and the Sentimental Novel." *American Literary History* 3 (Winter 1991): 685-706.
- Hoeller, Hildegard. *Edith Wharton's Dialogue with Realism and Sentimental Fiction*. UP of Florida Gainesville, FL, 2000.
- Howard, June. *Publishing the Family*. Duke UP Durham, NC, 2001. (Ch. 5 is an expanded version of "What is Sentimentality?")
- . "What is Sentimentality?" *American Literary History* 11.1 (Spring 1999): 62-81.
- Kaplan, Amy. "Manifest Domesticity." *American Literature* 70 (1998): 581-606. Also in Kaplan, Amy, and Donald E. Pease. *Cultures of United States Imperialism*. New Americanists. Durham: Duke University Press, 1993.
- Kelley, Mary. "The Sentimentalists: Promise and Betrayal in the Home." *Signs* 4.3 (Spring 1979): 434-446.
- . *Private Woman, Public Stage: Literary Domesticity in Nineteenth-Century America*. New York: Oxford U P, 1984.

- Kerber, Linda K. "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place: The Rhetoric of Women's History." *No More Separate Spheres! A Next Wave American Studies Reader*. Eds. Cathy N. Davidson and Jessamyn Hatcher. Next Wave: New Directions in Women's Studies. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2002. 29-65.
- Kilcup, Karen L. *Nineteenth-Century American Women Writers: A Critical Reader*. Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 1998.
- Lauter, Paul. *Canons and Contexts*. New York: Oxford U P, 1991.
- Machor, James L. "Historical Hermeneutics and Antebellum Fiction: Gender, Response Theory, and Interpretive Contexts." *Readers in History: Nineteenth-Century American Literature and the Contexts of Response*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins U P, 1993. 54-84.
- Merish, Lori. *Sentimental Materialism: Gender, Commodity Culture, and Nineteenth-Century American Literature*. Durham: Duke U P, 2000.
- Noble, Marianne. *The Masochistic Pleasures of Sentimental Literature*. Princeton: Princeton U P, 2000.
- Park, You-Me, and Gayle Wald. "Native Daughters in the Promised Land: Gender, Race, and the Question of Separate Spheres." *No More Separate Spheres! A Next Wave American Studies Reader*. Eds. Cathy N. Davidson and Jessamyn Hatcher. Next Wave: New Directions in Women's Studies. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2002. 263-87.
- Penner, Louise. "Domesticity and Self-Possession in *The Morgesons* and *Jane Eyre*." *Studies in American Fiction* 27.2 (1999): 131-47.
- Reynolds, David S. *Beneath the American Renaissance: The Subversive Imagination in the Age of Emerson and Melville*. Cambridge: Harvard U P, 1988.
- Romero, Lora. *Home Fronts: Domesticity and its Critics in the Antebellum United States*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1997.
- Romines, Ann. *The Home Plot: Women, Writing, and Domestic Ritual*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1992.
- Samuels, Shirley, ed. *The Culture of Sentiment: Race, Gender, and Sentimentality in Nineteenth-Century America*. New York : Oxford University Press, 1992.
- Shamir, Milette. "Divided Plots: Interior Space and Gender Difference in Domestic Fiction." *Genre: Forms of Discourse and Culture* 29.4 (1996): 429-72.
- Showalter, Elaine. *Sister's Choice: Tradition and Change in American Women's Writing*. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1991.
- Tate, Claudia. *Domestic Allegories of Political Desire: The Black Heroine's Text at the Turn of the Century*. New York : Oxford University Press, 1992.
- Thomson, Rosemarie Garland. "Crippled Girls and Lame Old Women: Sentimental Spectacles of Sympathy in Nineteenth-Century American Women's Writing." *Nineteenth-Century American Women Writers: A Critical Reader*. Ed. Karen L. Kilcup: Blackwell, Malden, MA, 1998. 251.

- Todd, Janet M. *Sensibility: An Introduction*. London and New York: Methuen, 1986.
- Tompkins, Jane P. "The Other American Renaissance." *The American Renaissance Reconsidered*. Ed. Walter Benn Michaels and Donald E. Pease (ed. & introd.). Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1985. 34-57.
- . Afterword. *The Wide, Wide World*. 1850. New York: Feminist Press, 1987.
- . *Sensational Designs: The Cultural Work of American Fiction 1790-1860*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985. PS374.S7T66 1986
- Tracey, Karen. *Plots and Proposals: American Women's Fiction, 1850-90*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000.
- Warren, Joyce W., ed. *The (Other) American Tradition: Nineteenth-Century Women Writers*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers U P, 1993.
- Welter, Barbara. "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860." *American Quarterly* 18 (Summer 1966): 151-174. [Note: If you read Welter, be sure to read also Mary Kelley's essay "Commentary on Barbara Welter" in Lucy Maddox's *Locating American Studies : The Evolution of a Discipline*. Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999 and Frances B. Cogan's *All-American Girl: The Ideal of Real Womanhood in Mid-Nineteenth-Century America*.]
- Wexler, Laura, and Werner Sollors. "Seeing Sentiment: Photography, Race, and the Innocent Eye." *American Literary Studies: A Methodological Reader*. Eds. Michael A. Elliott and Claudia Stokes: New York UP, New York, NY, 2003. vii, 349.
- Warhol, Robyn R. *Having a Good Cry: Effeminate Feelings and Pop-Culture Forms*. Columbus, OH: Ohio State UP, 2003.
- Zboray, Ronald J. *A Fictive People: Antebellum Economic Development and the American Reading Public*. New York, 2003.