

Fayetteville State University
College of Arts and Sciences
Department of English
English 223-02: African American Literature

I. Locator Information

Semester: Spring 2012

Course No. & Name: ENGL 223 – African American Literature II

Semester Hours of Credit: 3

Time Classes Meet: MWF 11:00-11:50

Instructor: Joyce A. Russell, Ph.D.

Office Location: Butler 132

Office Hours: MWF 9:00-9:50; 12:00-12:50

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II. Course Description

African American Literature is a continuation of an historical and critical exploration of African Americans' contributions to American fiction, poetry, drama, and non-fiction, beginning with the 1900s and proceeding to the present.

Overview and Introduction:

This course is reading course which will require you to concentrate on selections written from 1900 to the present. Our emphasis will be upon six distinct literary periods, all of which will be explored against a backdrop of the social, cultural, and political realities of American life. The six divisions are (1)Pre-World War I, (2) the New Negro Movement, (3) the Black Chicago Renaissance, (4) the Black Arts Movement, (5) the Black Women's Arts Movement, and (6) the New Black Renaissance, which is underpinned by Afrocentric thought and ritual.

Becoming acquainted with underread writers will be important to us. Hence, a broader and more diverse range of writers than one might otherwise study in African American literature will be offered. And finally, in keeping with contemporary Afrocentric emphases—

which attempt to unite, not divide—the literary contributions of African American men and women will receive equal attention.

The modes of instruction will be expository and discovery. Put another way, knowledge will be **exposed** through lectures, readings, films; knowledge will be **discovered** through your own research and inquiries. There will be some online collaboration.

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*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2002.

hooks, bell. *Ain't I A Woman*. Cambridge, MA: South End, 1999. (optional)

Porgy by Du Bose Heyward

Supplementary Texts

The Great Debaters (film directed by Denzel Washington)

Porgy and Bess by Gershwin

V. Course Objectives

--To enable students to develop a sense of the chronology of African American literature;

--To enable students to understand the theories of Gates, Fanon, and other major critics;

--To encourage students to evaluate the merits of Afrocentric thought and ritual; and

--To enable students to appreciate the contributions that women made to the African American literary canon.

VI. 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.

VII. FSU Student Learning Outcomes –

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- 1) Arrange African American literature between 1900 and 2010 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.

VIII. Course Requirements and Evaluation Criteria -

- 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 Calendar

Week 1

Introduction: Maafa; European and American slave trade; 18th century beginnings; spirituals, blues and hop, sermons; Ebonics; 19th century literature of protest.

Week 2 Booker T. Washington, W.E. B. DuBois, Anna J. Cooper, Pauline Hopkins

Week 3 Charles W. Chesnutt, Sutton Griggs, Ida B. Wells, Charles White

Week 4 Paul Laurence Dunbar, Alice Dunbar-Nelson, Arthur A. Schomberg
Hooks' Ain't I A Woman.

Week 5 Alain Locke, Marcus Garvey, Claude McKay

Porgy by Heyward and folk opera *Porgy and Bess* by Gershwin

Week 6 Langston Hughes, Sterling Brown, Melvin B. Tolson

Film: *The Great Debaters*

Week 7 Examination

Richard Wright, Ann Petry, Waters Turpin, Frank Yerby

Week 8 Ralph Ellison, Gwendolyn Brooks

Week 9 James Baldwin, Lorraine Hansberry

Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* (selected portions)

Week 10 Amiri Baraka, Maulana Karenga, Sonia Sanchez

Week 11 Haki R. Madhubutti, Malcolm X, Eldridge Cleaver, Nikki Giovanni

Week 12 Audre Lorde, Maya Angelou, Ntozake Shange, Alice Walker

Week 13 Molefi Asante, Ernest J. Gaines, Charles S. Johnson

Week 14 Gil Scott

Week 15 Presentations and Review

Week 16 Final Exam

X. Bibliography

Here are a few important sources on the Harlem Renaissance. This was obtained from the Notable Names Database, a production of Soylent Communications.

Harold Bloom (editor). *The Harlem Renaissance*. Chelsea House. 2004. 336pp.

Raphael Comprone. *Poetry, Desire, and Fantasy in the Harlem Renaissance*. University Press of America. 2005. 309pp.

Caroline Goeser. *Picturing the New Negro: Harlem Renaissance Print Culture and Modern Black Identity*. University Press of Kansas. 2007. 360pp.

George Hutchinson (editor). *The Cambridge Companion to the Harlem Renaissance*. Cambridge University Press. 2007. 272pp.

John O. Perpener. *African-American Concert Dance: The Harlem Renaissance and Beyond*. University of Illinois Press. 2001. 284pp.

Cherene Sherrard-Johnson. *Portraits of the New Negro Woman: Visual and Literary Culture in the Harlem Renaissance*. Rutgers University Press. 2007. 210pp.

Joyce Moore Turner; W. Burghardt Turner. Caribbean Crusaders and the Harlem Renaissance. University of Illinois Press. 2005. 291pp.

Cary D. Wintz; Paul Finkelman (editor). Encyclopedia of the Harlem Renaissance. Taylor & Francis. 2004. (2 vols.) 1341pp.