

**STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY
CANTON, NEW YORK**



MASTER SYLLABUS

ENGLISH 225 – AFRICAN-AMERICAN LITERATURE

CIP Code: 230101

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**SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND LIBERAL ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND HUMANITIES
April 2020**

A. **TITLE:** African-American Literature

B. **COURSE NUMBER:** ENGL 225

C. **CREDIT HOURS:**

Credit Hours: 3

3 lecture hours per week

Course Length: 15 weeks

D. **WRITING INTENSIVE COURSE:** Determined by Semester

E. **GER CATEGORY:** 7

F. **SEMESTER(S) OFFERED:** Fall, Spring

G. **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course focuses on African American authors between the Colonial Era to the present. Topics include recurring themes and concerns, cultural pressures, historical contexts, intellectual currents and literary innovations. Students study major African American writers such as Zora Neale Hurston, Richard Wright, Langston Hughes, Rita Dove, Toni Morrison, Alice Walker, James Baldwin and others.

H. **PRE-REQUISITES/CO-REQUISITES:** (List courses or indicate “none”)

a. Pre-requisite(s): ENGL 101 (Expository Writing) or ENGL 102 (Oral and Written Expression)

b. Co-requisite(s): None.

I. **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

KEY	<u>Institutional Student Learning Outcomes [ISLO]</u> 1 – 5
ISLO #	ISLO & Subsets
1	Communication Skills Oral [O], Written [W]
2	Critical Thinking <i>Critical Analysis [CA], Inquiry & Analysis [IA], Problem Solving [PS]</i>
3	Foundational Skills <i>Information Management [IM], Quantitative Lit./Reasoning [QTR]</i>
4	Social Responsibility <i>Ethical Reasoning [ER], Global Learning [GL], Intercultural Knowledge [IK], Teamwork [T]</i>
5	Industry, Professional, Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

<u>Course Student Learning Outcome [SLO]</u>	<u>PSLO</u>	<u>GER</u>	<u>ISLO</u>
a. Construct oral or written responses that integrates knowledge of African American literature with knowledge of American cultural and social history	1		1 [O,W]
b. Define common elements of literary study and demonstrate ability to identify and analyze those elements within works studied	2	7	2 [CA]
c. Compare and contrast common themes among African-American authors and the time period in which they were writing	2		2 [CA]
d. Evaluate historical and sociological events as they are reflected in and impact the development of African-American literature	2	7	2 [IA]

*Include program objectives if applicable. Please consult with Program Coordinator

J. APPLIED LEARNING COMPONENT: Yes _____ No X _____

K. TEXTS:

(Representative texts; texts chosen by instructor)

- Baldwin, James. *No Name in the Street*. New York: Vintage, 2007.
- Bambara, Toni Cade. *The Salt Eaters*. 1980. New York, Vintage, 1992.
- Crafts, Hannah. *The Bondswoman's Narrative*. 1855-59. Ed. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. New York: Warner Books-Hachette, 2003.
- Douglass, Frederick. *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave*. 1845. Ed. Ira Dworkin. New York: Penguin Classics, 2014.
- Ellison, Ralph. *Invisible Man*. New York: Vintage International, 1995.
- Gates, Henry Louis, Jr. and Nellie McKay, eds. *The Norton Anthology of African-American Literature*. New York: Norton, 2004.
- Gilyard, Keith, and Anissa Wardi, eds. *African American Literature* (Penguin Academic Series). New York: Longman, 2004. (or another African-American Literature anthology)
- Haley, Alex. *Roots: The Saga of an American Family*. 1976. New York: Vanguard, 2006.
- Hurston, Zora Neale. *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. 1937. New York: HarperCollins, 2000.
- Jacobs, Harriet. *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, Written by Herself*. 1861. Ed. Jean Fagin Yellin. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2000.
- Lorde, Audre. *Collected Poems of Audre Lorde*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2000.
- Morrison, Toni. *Beloved*. 1987. New York: Vintage, 2004.

Northrup, Solomon. *12 Years a Slave*. 1853. Ed. Sue Eakin. Eakin Films & Publishing, 2013.
Toomer, Jean. *Cane*. 1969. New York: Liveright-W. W. Norton, 2011.
Truth, Sojourner. *Narrative of Sojourner Truth*. 1850. Ed. Nell Irvin Painter. New York: Penguin Classics, 1988.
Walker, Alice. *The Color Purple*. 1982. Mariner Books-Houghton Mifflin, 2003.
Wright, Richard. *Black Boy*. 1945. New York: Harper Perennial, 2008.

L. REFERENCES:

Bloom, Harold, ed. *American Renaissance*. Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 2004.
Clarke, Deborah. "'The Porch Couldn't Talk for Looking': *Voice and Vision in Their Eyes Were Watching God*." *African American Review* 35.4 (Winter 2001): 599- 613.
Fiedler, Leslie. "Come Back to the Raft Ag'in, Huck Honey!" *American Literature, American Culture*. Ed. Gordon Hutner. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999. 312-16.
Franklin, John Hope and Loren Schweninger. *In Search of the Promised Land: A Slave Family in the Old South*. New York: Oxford UP, 2006.
------. *Runaway Slaves: Rebels on the Plantation*. New York: Oxford UP, 2000.
Morrison, Toni. *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination*. New York: Random House, 1993.
Painter, Nell Irvin. *Creating Black Americans: African-American History and Its Meanings, 1619 to the Present*. New York: Oxford UP, 2006.

M. EQUIPMENT: Technology enhanced-classroom

N. GRADING METHOD: A-F

O. SUGGESTED MEASUREMENT CRITERIA/METHODS:

- Exams
- Quizzes
- Papers
- Participation
- Creative Projects (including digital projects)

P. DETAILED COURSE OUTLINE: (must use the outline format listed below)

I. Introduction

A. Diversity of African American Heritage

1. African Homeland
2. Immigration & the Middle Passage
3. Slavery in America
4. History of African American English

B. Common Elements of Literature & Terminology

1. Fiction
2. Poetry
3. Drama

C. Criticism of Literature

1. Defining Literary Criticism

- a. Toni Morrison
- b. Henry Louis Gates, Jr.
- 2. Writing about Literature
 - a. MLA Documentation

II. Traditions in African American Literature

- A. The Oral Tradition
- B. Spirituals
- C. Folktales
- D. Blues & Jazz
- E. Hip hop

III. The Literature of Slavery and Freedom

- A. Defining the Time Period (1746-1865)
 - 1. Slave Narratives
 - 2. Gender & Class Issues

- B. Representative Authors
 - 1. Phyllis Wheatley
 - 2. Sojourner Truth
 - 3. Harriet Jacobs
 - 4. Frederick Douglass
 - 5. Francis E. W. Harper

IV. New Negro Renaissance vs. Harlem Renaissance

- A. Defining the Time Period
 - 1. New Negro Renaissance (1865-1919)
 - 2. Harlem Renaissance (1919-1940)
 - 3. Shades of Color & the 'Passing' Trope

- B. Representative Authors
 - 1. Booker T. Washington
 - 2. W. E. B. Du Bois
 - 3. Paul Laurence Dunbar
 - 4. Zora Neale Hurston
 - 5. Jean Toomer
 - 6. Wallace Thurman
 - 7. Langston Hughes
 - 8. Countee Cullen

V. Realism, Naturalism, Modernism

- A. Defining the Time Period (1900-1960)
 - 1. Realism vs. Naturalism
 - 2. 'Modern' Concerns
 - a. confronting racism
 - b. race and invisibility
 - c. promoting social change

- B. Representative Authors
 - 1. Richard Wright
 - 2. Ralph Ellison
 - 3. Gwendolyn Brooks

4. James Baldwin
5. Lorraine Hansberry
6. Percival Everett

VI. The Black Arts Movement

A. Defining the Period (1960-1975)

1. Challenging Assumptions
 - a. role of the text
 - b. timelessness of art
 - c. responsibility of artists to their communities
2. Civil Rights Movement
3. Binaries: Assimilation vs. Separatism
4. Protest Novels & Black Nationalism

B. Representative Authors

1. Malcolm X
2. Martin Luther King, Jr.
3. Audre Lorde
4. Amiri Baraka
5. Toni Cade Bambara
6. Nikki Giovanni

VII. The Contemporary Period

A. Defining the Period (1965—present)

1. Black Identity
2. Old Issues/Concerns vs. New Issues/Concerns

B. Representative Authors

1. Toni Morrison
2. Alice Walker
3. Charles Johnson
4. Rita Dove
5. Alex Haley
6. Zora Neale Hurston
7. Jasmyn Ward

VIII. Conclusion

A. Literary Innovations in African American Literature

1. Historical and Contemporary
2. Reinterpretation and Reevaluation

Q. LABORATORY OUTLINE: none.