

Collegiate School of Medicine and Bioscience
African American Literature - SY22-23

Instructor: Chandra Alford

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Office Hours: Monday/Wednesday (during Advisory period)

Course Title: African American Literature

Course Days/Time: A- Days (MWF)/ 12:16-1:33pm

I. Introduction/Philosophy

This course is intended to provide a grounding in African American Literature. Rather than focusing specifically on regurgitating detailed information, this course emphasizes the acquisition and application of skills in literary analysis, particularly the consideration of historical context and its impact on authors and their works. We will pay special attention to the cultural, political, and economic forces that help to shape the ideas and voices that form what we read, looking closely at a rich history of various periods, influences, and movements in African American Literature. To guide us in our exploration, this course is organized around the investigation of the definition and development of the African American self. We will attempt to organize what we learn by providing a framework according to which we can define – and refine – our conclusions as we progress in our literary analysis. With the help of these tools and your ambition, enthusiasm, dedication, and confidence, we will strive to:

- Critically read a variety of writing genres
- Critically analyze a variety of writing genres
- Identify and employ textual evidence in support of assertive thesis statements
- Learn and consciously evaluate paper construction
- Employ textual citation according to MLA format
- Locate and utilize valuable sources of secondary research in literature
- Apply quintessential slave theory to classic and modern African American texts
- Appreciate and understand a body of American Literature and its origins
- Investigate structures of power that enabled a system of chattel slavery and continue to operate today
- Effectively and confidently communicate our own informed ideas on a given work
- Passionately capture and convey a perspective that reflects our own personal identities

African American Literature fulfills the English 4 graduation requirement.

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II. Overview

Required Text:

The Norton Anthology of African American Literature, Vol. 1 & 2, Third Edition

Course Outline:

Unit 1: Oral Traditions; The Literature of Slavery and Freedom (1746-1865) []

Unit 2: Literature of the Reconstruction and the New Negro Renaissance

Unit 3: The Harlem Renaissance (1919-1940)

Unit 4: Realism, Modernism, Naturalism (1940-1960)

Unit 5: The Black Arts Era (1960-1975)

Unit 6: The Contemporary Period (1975-present)

Course Objectives:**Reading**

- understand more from and make fuller use of written materials, including using a wider range of evidence to support an analysis
- make more connections about how complex ideas interact and develop within a book, essay, or article
- evaluate arguments and specific claims; assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is sufficient; and as appropriate, detecting inconsistencies and ambiguities
- analyze the meaning of foundational U.S. documents (the Declaration of Independence, the Preamble to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights)

Writing

- make an argument that is logical, well-reasoned, and supported by evidence
- write a literary analysis, report, or summary that develops a central idea and a coherent focus and is well supported with relevant examples, facts, and details
- conduct several research projects that address different aspects of the same topic, using more complex books, articles, and other sources

Speaking and Listening

- respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesizing comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; and resolving contradictions when possible
- share research, findings, and evidence clearly and concisely

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- make strategic use of digital media (e.g., animations, video, websites, podcasts) to enhance understanding of findings and to add interest

Student Outcomes:

After successfully completing this course, the student will be able to:

- Understand the progression of historical African American literature to contemporary African American literature.
- Examine the use and relevance of oral tradition, folklore, poetry, music, and prose found in African American literature.
- Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research by choosing one of the following:
 - Utilize the course texts as well as other resources to create an argumentative essay involving Lyndon Johnson's Great Society.
 - Utilize the course texts to create an explanatory essay that discusses the impact that African American authors have had on contemporary pop culture.
 - Utilize the course texts the course texts as well as other resources to create an essay that attempts to explain the progress in America's diverse population.

Course Policies:**Attendance**

Attendance will be taken during the first 5 minutes of each class period. It is imperative that each student is present during this timeframe, or they will be marked tardy or absent. A student's attendance is a imperative to their success in this course.

Course Participation

To get the most out of this course, you will need to be an active participant and learner. The content of this course will be accelerated to address all of the course goals and objectives. Being prepared and engaging with the coursework is essential.

Submitting Work

- Course work must be submitted in print or electronically via Teams or Norton Online. Assignments must be formatted using MLA guidelines.
- **Completion vs. Best Work:** the instructional goals of this course are to address the learning standards specified for this course and are grade-level specific. The assignments given are based on these standards, and student's performance will be assessed based on the mastery of these standards. Assignments will not be graded on completion but on the level of mastery reflected. The grades received on all assignments are not on completion but must reflect the best work of the student to show level of mastery.

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Late Work Submission:

All assignments must be complete and meet the expectations provided in the assignment details to be reviewed for a grade. Assignments must be submitted on the designated due dates.

Otherwise, there will be a **20% deduction** on all late assignments (see breakdown below). **Late work will not be accepted nor graded after the assignment closes. Assignments close 7 days from the original due date. Please be sure to observe ALL the assignment details provided in Teams.**

- 1-2 days late: 5% penalty
- 3-4 days late: 10% penalty
- 5-6 days late: 15% penalty
- 7 days late: 20% penalty

Assignment Feedback

In this course, getting feedback on your writing is a critical component to learning. Therefore, you will receive feedback on the majority of your writing assignments. More specifically, you will see feedback on two levels: the microlevel and macrolevel of writing.

- **Microlevel:** On this level of feedback, I will help you learn to identify and fix errors in grammar and mechanics. I will highlight patterns of error (but not every error in your writing) with the goal of getting you to spot and correct these errors in future writing. These errors may include comma mistakes, pronoun errors, subject-verb agreement, sentence structure, citation, and more.
- **Macrolevel:** On this level, you will receive feedback on what I consider “higher-order” writing concerns. These include issues surrounding the organization and development of ideas, thesis/main idea construction, depth of research, clarity, audience, and more.

Academic Integrity

Collegiate School of Medicine and Bioscience expects all students to abide by ethical academic standards. Academic dishonesty—including plagiarism, cheating or copying the work of another, using technology for illicit purposes, or any unauthorized communication between students for the purpose of gaining advantage during an examination—is strictly prohibited. Collegiate’s Academic Integrity Policy covers all school-related tests, quizzes, reports, class assignments, and projects, both in and out of class. The purpose of Collegiate’s Academic Integrity Policy is to prepare students for the reality created by the technology explosion, for the world of college and beyond, where cheating and plagiarism have dire consequences.

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III. Course Schedule – Fall Semester 2022

All dates are subject to change, if needed by the instructor. The instructor reserves the right to alter the class schedule at her discretion. All assignment sheets will be uploaded to Microsoft Teams. Please remember to review the Course Policy section guidelines.

Week	Reading Assignments	Writing Assignments
1 8/22	Introductory Activities	In-Class writing assignments
1 8/24	Introductory Activities	In-Class writing assignments
1 8/26	Introductory Activities	In-Class writing assignments
2 8/29	Oral Traditions	
2 8/31	Oral Traditions	
3 9/05	<u>Equiano</u> : <i>The Interesting Narrative...</i> ; <u>V. Smith</u> : <i>A Narrative of the Life and Adventures of Venture</i>	
3 9/07	<u>Hammon</u> : <i>An Evening Thought, An Address to Phyllis Wheatley</i>	
3 9/09	<u>Wheatley</u> : “ <i>On Being Brought from Africa...</i> ,” “ <i>To S.M...</i> ,” “ <i>To His Excellency George Washington</i> ”	
4 9/12	<u>Douglass</u> : <i>Narrative</i>	
4 9/14	<u>Vernacular</u> : Spirituals “ <i>Go Down, Moses</i> ,” “ <i>Been in the Storm So Long</i> ”)	
4 9/16	Secular Rhymes and Songs (“ <i>Promises of Freedom</i> ”)	
5 9/19	<u>Jacobs</u> : <i>Incidents in the Life a Slave Girl</i>	
5 9/21	<u>Harper</u> : “ <i>A Double Standard</i> ,” “ <i>The Two Offers</i> ”	
6 9/26	<u>Keckley</u> : from <i>Behind the Scenes . . .</i> ; <u>C.F. Grimke</u> : <i>Journals</i>	
6 9/28	<u>Wells-Barnett</u> : <i>A Red Record</i> (ch. I)	
6 9/30	<u>Hopkins</u> : “ <i>Letter from Cordelia A. Cordict</i> ”	
7 10/3	<u>Dunbar</u> : “ <i>An Ante-Bellum Sermon</i> ,” “ <i>We Wear the Mask</i> ,” “ <i>Dinah Kneading Dough</i> ,” “ <i>The Poet</i> ”	
7 10/5	<u>Chesnutt</u> : “ <i>The Goophered Grapevine</i> ”; <u>Vernacular</u> : Folktales (“ <i>How Mr. Rabbit Was Too Sharp for Mr. Fox</i> ”)	

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8 10/10	<u>Washington</u> : <i>Up from Slavery</i>	Analyze – <u>Vernacular</u> : Spirituals (“Swing Low, Sweet Chariot”)
8 10/12	<u>Du Bois</u> : <i>The Souls of Black Folk</i> (forethought, chs. I, III, IV, VI, X)	Analyze – <u>Vernacular</u> : Spirituals (“God’s a-Gonna Trouble the Water”)
10/14	Quarter 1 Ends No school on Friday, 10/14	
9 10/17	<u>Dunbar Nelson</u> : “I Sit and Sew”; <u>Spencer</u> : “Before the Feast of Shushan	
9 10/19	<u>McKay</u> : “If We Must Die”; <u>Locke</u> : “The New Negro”	
10 10/24	<u>Nugent</u> : “Smoke, Lilies, and Jade”	
10 10/26	<u>Hurston</u> : “Sweat,” “How It Feels to Be Colored Me”	
11 10/31	<u>Garvey</u> : “Africa for the Africans”; <u>Robeson</u> : “I Want to Be African”	
11 11/2	<u>Maran</u> : <i>Batouala</i> ; <u>Walrond</u> : “The Wharf Rats”	

Week	Reading Assignments	Writing Assignments
12 11/7	<u>Guillen</u> : poems; <u>S. A. Brown</u> : “Slim in Atlanta,” “Slim Greer,” “When de Saints Go Ma’ching Home”	
12 11/9	<u>Hughes</u> : “Trumpet Player,” “The Weary Blues,” “Homesick Blues”	
13 11/14	<u>Larsen</u> – <i>Passing</i> (Norton Anthology)	
13 11/16	Film Analysis – <i>Passing</i>	
13 11/18	Film Analysis – <i>Passing</i>	
11/21-11/25	Thanksgiving Break – District Closed	
15 11/28	<u>Cullen</u> : “Yet Do I Marvel,” “Heritage”	
15 11/30	<u>Vernacular</u> : The Blues	
16 12/5	<u>Hughes</u> : <i>The Big Sea</i>	
16 12/7	<u>Hughes</u> : “The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain”	
16 12/9	<u>Schuyler</u> : “The Negro-Art Hokum”	

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17 12/12	Final Exam Review	Final Project
17 12/14	Final Exam Review	
17 12/16	Final Exam Review	Final Project
18 12/19-12/20	Final Exam Days	
	Winter Break: 12/21/22-01/03/23	

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