

African American Literature
English 285 section 01 (3) credits M-W-F 10-10:50 a.m.

Course prerequisites

Instructor: Ann E. Eskridge

annesk@ameritech.net

Office Hours by appointment after class

To contact instructor about class call the Liberal Arts Office: 313-993-1166

Textbook requirement: The Norton Anthology of African American Literature 2nd Edition. Other text will be given in handout form.

Course description: English 285 is designed to introduce you to African-American literature written from its earliest beginnings through the 1990's. By reading text in a range of genres spanning three centuries,

- You will attain a foundation in African American written tradition
- Explore oral tradition through the analysis of African American folktales
- Gain a sense of how African American writers have addressed issues of race, gender, identity, and citizenship
- Understand and recognize how censorship has marginalized some African American writing
- Understand some of the prevailing race philosophy and political discourse of the times
- Put into context some of the historical and cultural influences that influenced the writer
- Write logical, persuasive essays on specific aspects of the writer's life or work.
- Create original writing

“Student course evaluations are an important source of information for curricular and teaching improvement in the College of Liberal Arts and Education. As such, all students enrolled in CLAE courses are required to complete an online course evaluation. You will receive e-mails explaining how to complete the evaluation online. In addition, your instructor will remind you of the deadline for completing this course requirement.”

Attendance: Attendance is important. I will be taking attendance. Students have three unexcused absences. After three absences REGARDLESS of the reason, -5 will be taken off for each absence. If there is a persistent problem of getting to class on time, I begin taking points off (-3) points each time a student is more than ten minutes late.

Late papers. Papers are considered late when they are not turned in during class time. Specific days will be designated to turn in any late assignments. Any late assignments will be marked down by -5 points.

Grading:

Oral Presentations 30 pts	Written Essays 40 pts	Group Projects 100 pts
Memoir	Worksheet 1	Timeline
Folktales	Worksheet 2	
Salon	Worksheet 3	
Contemporary authors	Worksheet 4	
Oral History	Worksheet 5	
150 points	200 points	100 points

450-420 = A

419-389 = B

388-359 = C

358-328 = D

327- = F

Class Schedule for African American Literature

Course Philosophy: This course attempts to answer the questions: How does an African American writer articulate African American identity? This course will look at selective writers and their works within the context of the writers' influences whether they are personal or historic. In your last worksheet paper, you will be answer this question.

Week 1 and 2: Jan 8-12 and January 15-19**-1850's**

African American Identity in Slavery: What is it to be a slave?

Monday:

Readings:

Equiano Chapter 1-2

Harriet Jacobs 283-297

Frederic Douglass* on line <http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/Literature/Douglass/autobiography>

Chapter 5,6,7

Auxiliary Readings:

Other slave narratives online or in the book <http://docsouth.unc.edu/neh>

Reading from Harriet Jacobs

Discussion: Read over syllabus and grading

Classroom Activity:

15 minutes Black is...black Ain't Movie

Homework: Develop a time line of influences for Equiano, Jacobs, and Douglass.

Wednesday:

Reading from Text: Harriet Jacobs: 283-297

Slavery in America arguments about moral suasion, African Colonization Movement and Emancipation

Discussion: The memoir or autobiography.

What impressed you about these memoirs and autobiographies?

Who is the audience?
 What is the purpose of these memoirs?
 Did the authors/succeed in accomplishing their purpose?
 How did cultural ideologies of the time work to censor what details Jacobs could include.

Friday:

Readings: Equiano Chapter 1

Classroom Activity: In groups of three's (you'll be staying in these groups the entire semester.) Put together your timeline of influences.
 Classroom Activity: 15 minutes of Frederick Douglass video

Homework: Write a 3 page memoir, typewritten and double spaced, as if you were a slave. Before you write you must decide who your audience is and what purpose your memoir serves.

Readings: Henry Highland Garnet 345-352
 Sojourner Truth 245-246
 Frederick Douglass Fifth of July speech 462-470

Monday:

No Class January 15

Wednesday:

Discussion: 1850 Fugitive Slave Act, Abolitionist Movement, and authenticity. Look at the language of the speeches and why decide why they are so moving.

Classroom activity: Memoirs will be presented in class and continue to Work on the timeline of influences

Friday:

Reading from Sojourner Truth 245-246
 Continue with Memoirs
 15 minutes Frederick Douglass movie

Homework:

Readings:
 Harriet Tubman <http://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/bradford/menu>
 Nat Turner: <http://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/turner/turner.html>
 John P. Parker <http://www.duke.edu/~njb2/history391/parker/parker/html>
 * Worksheet 2 page essay. Worksheets handed out on Friday are due on Monday.

Week 3: January 22-26

1850's-1860's

Runaway, Stay or Fight and authenticity and identity

Monday

Discussion: Continue discussion of 1850 Fugitive Slave Act, Abolitionist Movement, and authenticity.
 Discussion: The Essay and analysis and construction

Reading from John Parker's biography
 Classroom Activity: Add Tubman, Turner, Sojourner Truth, Parker and Garnet to your timeline.

Wednesday

Reading: From Garnet
 Discussion: Look at the language of the speeches and decide why they are so moving. What does a good speech contain?
 Classroom Activity: 15 minutes Harriet Tubman video

Friday

Classroom Activity: Frederick Douglass (Reconstruction) Video

Homework:

Homework: W. E. B. Dubois: The Souls of Black Folks, 694-699
 Booker T. Washington: Up From Slavery, 594-600
 Marcus Garvey: Africa for the Africans, 997-1003
 Richard Wright: Blueprint for Negro Writing p.1403-1409

Week 4: Jan 29-Feb 2**1865-1900**

Reconstruction: In Search of Home

Monday

Discussion: What was Reconstruction and what was its reality?
 The philosophies of W.E.B. Dubois, Booker T. Washington and Marcus Garvey.
 Reading: Margaret Walker, Jubilee p. 272-273

Classroom Activity: What is...what ain't. Black Land
 Marcus Garvey: video

Wednesday

Classroom Activity: Timeline Dubois, Washington,
 Video: Echoes Across the Prairie

Friday

Classroom Activity: W.E.B. Dubois: A Biography video

Homework: Ida Be Wells A Red Record 677-680 and James Weldon Johnson
 and Autobiography of an Ex-Coloured Man 803-811
 * Worksheet on Reconstruction

Week 5: February 5-9

Reconstruction: Finding Home—Integrate, Segregate, Disappear

Monday

Discussion: Passing and what it meant?
 Timeline: Ida B. Wells, James Weldon Johnson
 Classroom Activity: Pinky

Wednesday:

Discussion: Playwright August Wilson and his 10 cycle plays. In
 particular King Hedley II
 Classroom Activity: Pinky

Friday:

No morning class. Class will meet promptly at 6:45 p.m. at the City
 Theatre to see King Hedley II

Homework:

Folktales 130-131
 Charles W. Chesnut, The Passing of Grandison, The
 Goophered Grapevine 604
 The Wonderful Tar Baby Story by Joel Chandler Harris 144-145
 Other folk tales

Homework:

Students will choose an African American folk story and
 analyze it for its meaning. Make a presentation of the story and its
 meaning to the class.

*Worksheet on folklore

Week 6: February 12-16

Monday

Discussion: A storyteller will discuss what is folklore and its importance to
 the African American oral tradition. What is a storyteller?

Homework: What is the difference between Chestnuts' stories and Joel Chandler Harris' stories?

Wednesday

Discussion of story teller assignment and
Classroom Activity: Zora Neal Hurston video

Friday

Classroom Activity: Zora Neal Hurston video
Homework: All late papers and presentations due in February 16

Week 7: February 19-23

Monday

Student Storytelling

Wednesday

Student Storytelling

Friday

Student Storytelling

Homework: Choose a writer and lead a "salon" discussion of readings about the life of the artist and his/work. How were/weren't they influenced by Dubois for Friday February 2. Ten minutes per reading and discussion. You may bring in props, costumes, refreshments, pictures, music, to illustrate your discussion.

Readings:

Dubois Art and Propaganda 777-784
Zora Neal Hurston: How it Feels to be Colored.
James Weldon Johnson, The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man.
Re-read Richard Wrights Blueprint for Negro Writing 1403-1409
Alain Locke, The New Negro 984-993

Week 8: February 26-2

1900-1940's

Harlem Renaissance

Monday

Discussion of the Harlem Renaissance / Censorship
Classroom Activity: Timeline for Hurston, Alain Locke, Charles Chestnutt
James Weldon Johnson, Richard Wright

Video: The Harlem Renaissance and the Harmon Foundation

Readings: Jean Toomer

Wednesday

Discussion Jean Toomer
Video: Zora Neale Hurston

Friday

"Salon" presentations

Homework: Ralph Ellison, p, 1548 Invisible Man (preface and chapter 1)
James Baldwin,
Richard Wright, Long Black Song, 1414 and
The Man Who Lived Underground 1436
*Worksheet on Harlem Renaissance.

Week 9: Winter Break 5-9

Week 10: March 12-16**1930's-1950's**

The Color of My Skin: Invisibility, Expatriation, Migration

Monday

Visit to the Black Abolitionist Archives

Discussion: On the Great Migration

Classroom Activity: Goin' South portion on the 2nd Great Migration

Classroom Activity: Migration Ellison, Toomer, Wells, Wright, Hurston, Johnson in your timeline

Wednesday

Discussion: Expatriation

Classroom Activity:

Classroom Activity: The Rage Within 50's: The Road to the 60's video

Friday

Lecturer

Homework: Oral history find someone who relocated from the south to the north between 1920's and 1960's and do an oral history of them

Homework: Students will choose a contemporary author whose writings span from the 1975 to the present and make a presentation. You will be presented with a worksheet to outline your presentation. No students will have the same author. Presentations will begin. **All students are responsible for incorporating the authors into their timeline.**

Readings: Lorraine Hansberry, A Raisin in the Sun

Week 11: March 19-23**1960's-1977**

Civil Rights or Civil Disobedience

The Black Arts

Monday

Visit to the Dudley Randle Archives

Classroom Activity: Video Goin' South and What is...What ain't...

(Block Busting)

Wednesday Video: A Raisin in the Sun

Friday

Homework: The Autobiography of Malcolm X, Speeches of Martin Luther King Jr.,

Week 12: March 26-30

Monday

Wednesday

Friday

Start Presentations

Week 13: April 2

Monday- Wednesday

Presentations

*Worksheet Question about African American Identity.

Friday: **Easter Break April 6**

Week 14: April 9-13Monday: **Turn in Timeline Books****Presentations**

Wednesday

Presentations

Friday (**last day of class**)

Presentations

Week 18: April 16**Monday All Late assignments Due**

Some Contemporary authors/playwrights/poets:

August Wilson

Charles Fuller

Ntozake Shange

Alice Childress

Amari Baraka

John E. Wideman

Rita Dove

bell Hooks

Walter Mosley

Chester Himes

Ernest Gaines

Haki Madhubuti (Don L. Lee), poetry

Sonia Sanchez, poetry

Eldridge Cleaver, *Soul on Ice*

Nikki Giovanni, poetry

Gloria Naylor

Toni Morrison

Edward P. Jones

Charles Johnson

Octavia Butler

...as well as those others mentioned in your book or you can include someone who is not mentioned on this list or in the book, but get permission first.

If you are having trouble with your essays, the writing center is available to help students work on their organizational writing skills. Available support services including the location of libraries, media centers, tutoring and writing centers with detailed information encouraging the use of Learning and Writing Centers

University's Policy on Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

As members of an academic community engaged in the pursuit of truth and with a special concern for values, students are expected to conform to a high standard of honesty and integrity in their academic work. The fundamental assumption under which the University operates is that work submitted by a student is a product of his/her own efforts.

Among the most serious academic offenses is plagiarism, submitting the style of another author or source without acknowledgment or formal documentation. Plagiarism occurs when specific phrases or entire passages, whether a sentence, paragraph or longer excerpt, are incorporated into one's own writing without quotation marks or documentation. One also plagiarizes by paraphrasing the work of another, that is, retaining another writer's ideas and structure without documentation.

Students are advised always to set off another writer's exact words by quotation marks, with appropriate references. Students avoid plagiarism by concentrating on their own words and ideas and by fully

crediting others' words and ideas when they find their way into the writing. Whenever in doubt, cite the source.

Students who purchase essays from other students or agencies or who copy from one another or from prohibited sources, commit the most serious type of academic dishonesty.

The consequences of plagiarism, or any act of academic dishonesty, may range from failure on an assignment or in a course to dismissal from the University.