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Course Outline for ENG 42

LITERATURE OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORA IN AMERICA

Effective: Fall 2019

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

ENG 42 — LITERATURE OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORA IN AMERICA — 3.00 units

Form, development, and cultural and historic insights of literature of the African diaspora in America and the United States, including some or all of the following: short fiction and novels, oral history and memoir, poetry, plays, songs, popular culture, and nonfiction; exploration of particular themes or periods as reflected in the literature of people of the African diaspora created in America.

3.00 Units Lecture

Prerequisite

ENG 1A - Critical Reading and Composition
with a minimum grade of C

Grading Methods:

Letter or P/NP

Discipline:

- English

	MIN
Lecture Hours:	54.00
Expected Outside of Class Hours:	108.00
Total Hours:	162.00

II. NUMBER OF TIMES COURSE MAY BE TAKEN FOR CREDIT: 1

III. PREREQUISITE AND/OR ADVISORY SKILLS:

Before entering the course a student should be able to:

- A. ENG1A

IV. MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:

- demonstrate familiarity with a variety of techniques and methods used by writers
- demonstrate familiarity with the structure of the works studied and discuss the works using appropriate literary terms such as metaphor, plot, point of view, and character development
- explain the works studied in relation to and as expressions of cultural and historical influences
- identify and explain common topics and themes in diverse works written by African Americans, African and African-descended immigrants, or African Americans living abroad
- analyze and evaluate critical responses to the works studied
- bring various critical approaches to bear on the interpretation of fiction in take-home and in-class written work, including at least two take-home essays
- analyze an author's use of literary techniques to develop a theme
- understand African American literature in terms of other cultures' influence on it, whether those cultures are of the African diaspora or outside of it, for example the influence of Parisian culture on the Harlem Renaissance

V. CONTENT:

- Reading and analysis of at least two novels
- Reading and analysis of a sampling of at least three of the following additional genres: short fiction, creative nonfiction, memoir, poetry, drama, and/or film, with attention to relevant literary elements, potentially including characterization, plot, point of view, imagery, setting, staging, poetic form, symbolism, and theme
- Potential supplemental materials and genres including oral histories, song lyrics, film, visual art, and popular culture
- Instruction and practice writing critical responses to literature
- Exposure to author's personal, cultural, historical background along with literary context of works studied
- Application of various critical approaches to works studied, including ethnic studies, historical, formalist, feminist, and other approaches as relevant
- Discussion of the treatment of common themes, potentially including:

1. transnational understanding of black identity (required)
2. folk culture
3. experience/legacy of slavery
4. migration
5. assimilation/group separatism
6. passing
7. rural/urban divide
8. resistance to stereotypes
9. cultural nationalism/Pan Africanism/Afrocentrism
10. class mobility
11. racial profiling/discrimination
12. mixed-race identity/hybridity
13. invisibility/color-blind racism
14. racial terror
15. utopia/dystopia
16. intersectionality

VI. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

- A. **Field Trips** - Field trips to see African-American plays, art, readings, museum exhibits; virtual field trips of famous African-American communities.
- B. **Research** - In-class visits to Internet sites related to writers and their works, at-home and/or group research for solo or group presentations.
- C. **Student Presentations** - Presentations on an author or work that is being studied, important authors or artistic movements that will not be covered by the class. Best practices for group presentations (group contract, rubric, student self- and group-assessment, rehearsal, instruction in MLA citation for slides) should be followed.
- D. **Guest Lecturers** - Possible guest lecturers from on campus (for example, a lecture from an LPC historian on Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. DuBois) or off campus to provide a particular expertise or artistic performance that will enhance students' learning.
- E. **Audio-visual Activity** - Films based on works studied in the course, films that extend a theme in the reading, portions of documentaries, influential music videos, videos of slam poetry
- F. **Discussion** - Whole-class and small-group discussion.
- G. **Lecture** - Short lectures interspersed with classroom activities.
- H. **Written exercises and case studies** - In-class writing to respond to a reading or prepare for an essay, for example.
- I. **Projects** - Projects could use multiple modalities to meet a measurable objective of the course. This could substitute for one essay.

VII. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:

- A. Using Kendrick Lamar's poetry as models, describe your neighborhood by using poetry, spoken word, or straightforward descriptions. Plan to share your description at our next class.
- B. In thinking about black writers' relationship to the American dream, we have seen Langston Hughes declare that "America never was America to me" and Ralph Ellison's protagonist in *Invisible Man* struggle to secure an education and livelihood because whites conspire against him. Many figures in rap (Jay-Z, T.I., Young Jeezy, Rick Ross, The Game, The Notorious B.I.G.) use story-telling to depict their rise from the bottom to the top: from lives of crime and bleak opportunities to financial success, having families/becoming fathers, and participating in legal hustles like rapping, producing, and becoming moguls and entrepreneurs. In other words, many of these rappers seem to be living the American dream. Research "American dream" using campus library databases and the Internet. What exactly is it, who invented it, and what are its values and concerns? Write a composition based on our class readings as well as your research that A) defines the American dream and B) argues whether or not three or more rap figures of your choice qualify as living the American dream.
- C. Finish Nnedi Okorafor's *Who Fears Death* and come to class with three questions for class discussion.
- D. Find and read a critical essay on the neo-slave narrative, summarize it for the class, and suggest ways in which the slave narrative form applies to Ishmael Reed's *Flight to Canada*.
- E. Review Mat Johnson's essay "You Can Kiss My Mulatto Ass" and make notes to prepare for a discussion of his use of the word and riffs on it (referring to the M lange Center charter school as a "Mulattopia," for example) in *Loving Day*.
- F. Write an essay on how the experience of "intersectionality" accounts for Helga's tragedy in Nella Larsen's *Quicksand*.

VIII. EVALUATION:

A. **Methods**

1. Exams/Tests
2. Quizzes
3. Research Projects
4. Portfolios
5. Papers
6. Oral Presentation
7. Projects
8. Field Trips
9. Group Projects
10. Class Participation
11. Class Work
12. Home Work
13. Other:
 - a. Reading and annotation for a theme, use of literary element, comparison to another text.
 - b. Reading Responses
 - c. Preparation of questions for discussion

B. **Frequency**

1. One midterm exam and one final exam or presentation
2. Daily or weekly reading quizzes
3. One individual or group research project per semester, possibly combined with oral presentation in lieu of a final exam
4. Portfolio submitted once per semester
5. Two 3-5 page essays per semester
6. One oral presentation per semester, possibly in lieu of a final exam
7. One or two field trips per semester
8. Daily class participation and class work such as in-class writing
9. Daily, or at least weekly, homework, often reading and annotation
10. Reading responses weekly, perhaps alternating with preparation of questions for discussion

IX. TYPICAL TEXTS:

1. Johnson, James. *Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*. reprint ed., Barnes and Noble, 2007.
2. Johnson, Mat. *Loving Day*., Spiegel & Grau-Random House, 2016.
3. Jacobs, Harriet. *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*. reprint ed., Skyhorse Publishing, 2015.
4. Ellison, Ralph. *Invisible Man*. 2nd ed., Vintage, 1995.
5. Packer, Z.Z.. *Drinking Coffee Elsewhere*., Riverhead Books, 2004.
6. Hughes, Langston. *The Ways of White Folks*. reprint ed., Vintage, 1990.
7. Baldwin, James, and Raoul Peck. *I Am Not Your Negro: A Companion Edition to the Documentary*., Vintage International, 2017.
8. Gates, Henry Louis, ed. *The Norton Anthology of African American Literature*. 3rd ed., W. W. Norton, 2017.
9. Morrison, Toni. *The Bluest Eye*. reprint ed., Vintage International, 2007.
10. Senna, Danzy. *Caucasia*., Riverhead Books, 1999.
11. Jacobs-Jenkins, Brandon. *Appropriate and Other Plays*., Theatre Communications Group, 2018.
12. Hansberry, Lorraine. *A Raisin in the Sun*. Rep Rei ed., Vintage, 2004.
13. Dungy, Camille. *Black Nature: Four Centuries of African American Nature Poetry*., University of Georgia P, 2009.
14. Neri, G.. *Yummy: The Last Days of a Southside Shorty*. 3rd ed., Lee & Low, 2010.
15. Harper, Michael. *The Vintage Book of African American Poetry*., Vintage, 2000.
16. Reed, Ishmael. *Flight to Canada*. reprint ed., Scribner-Simon and Schuster, 1998.
17. Harper, Frances. *Iola Leroy; or, Shadows Uplifted*. 2nd ed., Dover, 2010.
18. Danticat, Edwidge. *The Dew Breaker*. reprint ed., Vintage, 2005.
19. Okorafor, Nnedi. *Who Fears Death*. reprint ed., DAW-Penguin, 2011.
20. Diaz, Junot. *Drown*. 1st ed., Riverhead, 1996.

X. OTHER MATERIALS REQUIRED OF STUDENTS: