

Fall 8-15-2007

ENG 2705-001: African American Literature

Michael Loudon
Eastern Illinois University

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2705-001

Michael Loudon
English 2705.001
W 1800-2230 CH3150
Office: CH3361 (314D)
Fall 2007

Office Hours
(in the English Dept-see below):
M 1-2; TR 11-12;
or by appointment
E-mail: mdloudon@eiu.edu

African American Literature

Description: This course provides an overview of African-American literature, using selected representative texts of fiction, poetry and drama. We shall begin with a brief consideration of the oral tradition and slave narratives, then we shall move rapidly to the reading of several modern and contemporary authors. While I shall introduce primary literary concerns and suggest issues of thematic consequence, class discussions will determine the direction of our analytical focus from text to text. Finally, one central course objective will be to discover and to define the patterns that constitute the development of a cohesive literary tradition that is rich in cultural heritage and diverse in literary innovation. The course format will be lecture and discussion.

Prerequisite and Electronic Writing Portfolio Submissions: Students must have completed English 1002G or its equivalent before enrolling in ENG 2705, a "writing intensive" course. Sophomores and juniors may elect to submit an essay from ENG 2705 to their portfolios.

Requirements: These are: two six-to-eight-page essays (40%); a midterm essay examination (15%); a final essay examination (25%); and, active preparation and participation in the course—including exercises, reading quizzes (20%).

Required texts:

Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man*
H. L. Gates, Jr., ed., *The Norton Anthology of African-American Literature* (2nd ed.)
Zora Neale Hurston, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*
Handouts as distributed in class

English Office Hours: Phone: 6312 / Office: Coleman Hall 3361(314D)
mdloudon@eiu.edu; M 1-2; TR 11-12; or by appointment

African American Studies Office Hours: Phone: 5719
Office: Blair Hall 3165 MWF: 10-11 and or by appointment

(I prefer appointments at both offices; necessary attendance at meetings that are as yet unscheduled will probably require, from time to time, my absence during office hours at both offices. Please avoid inconvenience by checking before just showing up. Voice mail works at both phone numbers, and both the Department and the Program have secretaries who will take messages. Thanks for your patience.)

General Policies:

Grading Standards: I shall follow the EIU English Department Guidelines, distributed in class. In all cases, I shall use a plus and minus system to distinguish, say, a high *B* from a low one.

Attendance: I do take roll, and I evaluate attendance only indirectly in the context of your participation in the course.

Conferences: These are at your request unless I ask to see you. Please ask for help as soon as you feel you need it; please don't wait until the last couple of weeks of class.

Submission of work: Essays should be typed, double-spaced, on one side of the paper only, titled and indicate the following: name, date, course and section number. Exercises and quizzes must be legible.

Late Essays: For each day that the essay is late, the letter grade will fall by one full grade: an *A* essay due on Thursday will be an *F* by the next Thursday. If there are particular difficulties, please see me.

Plagiarism: The English Department Policy

Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism--"The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and the representation of them as one's own original work" (*Random House Dictionary of the English Language*)--has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office.

Information for students with disabilities:

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Student Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

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African American Literature: (REVISED) Course Syllabus

October

W 10: W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (686-766; Chapters 1,3,5,14 for class discussion)

Harlem Renaissance (953-962)

W. E. B. Du Bois, "Criteria of Negro Art" (777-784);
 Schomburg (962-967); Locke (983-993); Garvey (995-1003)

W 17: McKay (1003-1010, especially "Africa" and "America");
 Schuyler (1220-1223: "The Negro-Art Hokum"); Hughes (1288-1291;
 1311-1314: "The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain"); Hughes
 (1291-1311, especially "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" and "Christ
 in Alabama"); Countee Cullen (1339-1351, especially "Heritage");
 Brown (1248-1266, especially "Odyssey of Big Boy" and "Strong
 Men"); Blues (30; 45; 48-63); *Audio Companion-Disc #1*: 11-18;
Audio Companion-Disc #2: 24; Handouts: video *Lightin' Hopkins*,
 time permitting...

Take-home midterm examination assigned

W 24: Zora Neale Hurston, (1019-1022; 1041-1053)
Their Eyes Were Watching God

Take-home midterm examination DUE

W 31: **Realism, Naturalism, Modernism** (1355-1368)
 Jean Toomer, *Cane* (1168-1219: "Karintha," "Becky," "Esther" and
 "Blood-Burning Moon"); Richard Wright (1399-1410) & (1471-1487);
 Robert Hayden (1516-1534, especially 1525-1528); Gwendolyn Brooks
 (1623-1649, especially 1633-1638: "The Children of the Poor" and
 "The Lovers of the Poor")
Essay #1 DUE; Essay #2 assigned

November

W 7: Ralph Ellison (1535-1548; 1570-1578)
 Ellison, *Invisible Man* ("Prologue" through Chapter 13, 3-296)

W 14: (continued: complete the novel)

Thanksgiving Recess

W 28: James Baldwin (1696-1713, especially "Stranger in the Village")
 and "Sonny's Blues" (1728-1749)

December

W 5: **Black Arts Movement** (1831-1850)
 Martin Luther King, Jr., "I Have a Dream" and Malcolm X, "The
 Ballot or the Bullet," *Audio Companion-Disc #2*: 22-23

Read all selections below, but see these two especially:

Larry Neal (2038-2050), "The Black Arts Movement"
Maulana Karenga, (2086-2090), "Black Art: Mute Matter Given Force
and Function"

Be prepared to compare and contrast the two views of:

Hoyt Fuller (1852-1859), "Towards a Black Aesthetic"
Addison Gayle, Jr. (1911-1918), "The Black Aesthetic"

*Select as you prefer for comment and discussion any three poems
from the following:*

Mari Evans (1850-1852), "I Am a Black Woman" (1851)
Etheridge Knight (1908-1911), all three poems
Audre Lorde (1919-1926), especially "Poetry Is Not a Luxury"
Amiri Baraka (1937-1946), "Black Art" and "Wailers" (1943-46)
Sonia Sanchez (1963-1967), from *A Blues Book for Blue Black
Magical Women* (1966-1967)
Michael Harper (2070-2075), all poems
Haki Madhubuti (2090-2096), all poems

Essay #2 DUE

Final examination: Wednesday, December 12, 7:30-9:30 pm

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