

Fall 8-15-2000

ENG 2705-001: African American Literature

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2705-001

Michael Loudon
English 2705.001 MWF 1200-1250 CH310
Fall 2000

Office Hours:
MW 10-11; TR 11-12
or by appointment

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.

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 (20%).

Required texts:

James Baldwin, *Go Tell it on the Mountain*
Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man*
H. L. Gates, Jr., ed., *The Norton Anthology of African-American Literature*
Zora Neale Hurston, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*
Toni Morrison, *Song of Solomon*

Reserve materials: (Booth Library)
Copies of the *Audio Companion* for the Norton anthology are on reserve.

Office Hours: Michael Loudon Phone: 6312 Office: CH 314D
MW 10:00-11:00; TR 11:00-12:00 or by appointment

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.

Conference: 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 Friday 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: Course Syllabus

August

M 21: Course introduction

W 23: African American literature and the literary canon ("Preface")

F 25: The Vernacular Tradition (1-69)

(All page numbers are from *The Norton Anthology*...unless otherwise noted. Read the introductory prose and scan the songs. Copies of the *Audio Companion* are on reserve in the Self-Study Materials area; these are labeled ENG 2705 Audio Exts. The call # is A104, and five copies—located on the shelf to the right of ordinary cassette storage—in their cases are available for one-day check out. Read all prefaces to the individual authors.)

M 28: (continued)

W 30: (continued)

September

F 1: **Slavery and Freedom** (127-136)

Frederick Douglass, *Narrative*... (302-369)

M 4: Labor Day—no class

W 6: (continued)

F 8: (continued)

M 11: Frederick Douglass, "What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?" (379-391)

W 13: **Reconstruction** (461-472)

Booker T. Washington, *Up from Slavery* (488-521)

F 15: (continued)

M 18: W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (613-740; selections TBA for class discussion)

W 20: (continued)

F 22: (continued)

M 25: **Harlem Renaissance** (929-936)

Schomburg (937-942); Locke (960-970); Garvey (972-980)

W 27: McKay (981-996)

F 29: (continued) **Essay #1 assigned**

October

M 2: Zora Neale Hurston, (996-999; 1019-1041)

W 4: (continued) *Their Eyes Were Watching God*

F 6: (continued)

M 9: Jean Toomer, *Cane* (1087-1170)

W 11: (continued)

F 13: Schuyler (1170-1174); Hughes (1251-1254; 1267-1271)

Take-home midterm examination assigned

M 16: Hughes (1254-1267)

W 18: (continued) **Take-home midterm examination DUE**

F 20: No class—EIU Fall Break

M 23: Countee Cullen (1303-1315)

W 25: Brown (1210-1226); video *Lightin Hopkins*

F 27: Blues (22-36); Audio Companion #11-15 (on reserve) **Essay #1 DUE**

M 30: **Realism, Naturalism, Modernism** (1319-1328)
Richard Wright (1376-1396)

November

W 1: Wright (1414-1450) **Essay #2 assigned**
F 3: Robert Hayden (1497-1515)

M 6: Gwendolyn Brooks (1577-1596)
W 8: Ralph Ellison (1515-1518; 1541-1571)
F 10: Ellison, *Invisible Man*

M 13: (continued)
W 15: (continued)
F 17: (continued)

Thanksgiving Recess

M 27: James Baldwin (1650-1670); *Go Tell it on the Mountain*
W 29: (continued); "Sonny's Blues" (1694-1719)

December

F 1: **Black Arts Movement** (1791-1806)
Mari Evans (1806-1807), "I Am a Black Woman" (1808)
Hoyt Fuller (1809-1816), "Towards a Black Aesthetic"
Etheridge Knight (1866-1869), all three poems
Addison Gayle, Jr. (1869-1877), "The Black Aesthetic"
Amiri Baraka (1877-1879), "Black Art" (1883-1884)
Sonia Sanchez (1902-1903), from *A Blues Book for Blue Black
Magical Women* (1905-1906)
Haki Madhubuti (1977-1982), all poems

Read the above but especially see:

Larry Neal (1959-1972), "The Black Arts Movement"
Maulana Karenga, (1972-1977), "Black Art: Mute Matter Given Force and Function"

M 4: (continued)
W 6: Toni Morrison, *Song of Solomon* **Essay #2 DUE**
F 8: (continued)

Final examination: Tuesday, December 12, 12:30-2:30 pm