

Fall Interim 2008

English 219—301C  
African American Literature  
MTWRF 9:30 – 12:30  
Swart 302

**Liz Cannon**

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**Department WebPage:** [www.english.uwosh.edu](http://www.english.uwosh.edu)

**Office Hours:** By appointment—Please don't hesitate to set up an appointment. I'll be on campus T, W, and Th afternoons

**Office:** LGBTQ Resource Center

**Office Phone:** 3462

**Home Phone:** 920-382-4533

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### Course Description

This course will explore the development of African American literature from works written during the time of slavery through works written today, as well as explore significant historical aspects of African American culture. Specifically, we will focus on what struggles and choices African American men and women have had to make while facing the racism of the U.S. and how these choices differ according to gender. The practical goals of the course are to improve reading, writing, and analytical skills.

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### Required Texts

Excerpt e-reserve Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave, Written by Himself* (1845)

Excerpt e-reserve Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, Written by Himself* (1791)

Octavia Butler, *Kindred* (1979)

Ernest J. Gaines, *A Lesson Before Dying* (1993)

Excerpt e-reserve Langston Hughes, *Selected Poetry* (1990)

Gloria Naylor, *The Women of Brewster Place* (1980)

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### Course Requirements

**Two 3-5 page analytical papers:** —30%

**3 Reading Assignments: Questions/Answers:** You will hand in an interpretative question on the reading for the day the assignment is due and an answer to the question. The question is typed at the top of the page. The answer should be a substantial paragraph: use at least one quote in your answer and make sure you give the page number. —15%

**Poet Presentation**—15%

**Group Discussion Leader**—10%

Group A: Jan 8; Group B: Jan 9; Group C: Jan 13; Group D: Jan 15; Group E: Jan 20;

Group F: Jan 21; Group G: Jan 22

**Midterm**—10%

**Final**—10%

**Participation**—10%\*\*

\*\*Your participation grade is based on your attendance and your contributions to class discussion. Attendance is required—you must be here mentally as well as physically. You are allowed one free absence. After that, your participation grade will be lowered. I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences, unless you have an official note from the university requiring your absence from class. If you miss more than 6 classes, you may fail the course. If you do miss a class, please talk to me.

**Plagiarism** is defined as using the language OR ideas of someone else without correct and complete bibliographic citation. It is a breach of academic conduct and will be reported to the University for official sanction, which may include failure of the course or (if repeated) expulsion.

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Please do not hesitate to come see me if you have any questions or concerns about this class. My office hours are listed above, but we can make an appointment if these are not convenient for you. Students with disabilities needing a reasonable accommodation should inform me immediately.

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## Calendar

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- Jan 5 M: Introduction  
Background: *Cultural Influences, The Vernacular Tradition*  
Poetry Assignment
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- 6 T: Background: *Slavery and Freedom: 1746-1865*  
Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*  
Selections from Chpts 1 and 2 (e-reserve)  
Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass: An American Slave*, Chpts 5, 6, 7, and 10  
READING ASSIGNMENT DUE
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- 7 W: Film: Quest for Freedom  
Butler, 9-107 (Prologue, The River, The Fire, The Fall)  
(Poets)  
READING ASSIGNMENT DUE
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- 8 Th: Butler, 108-188 (The Fight)  
Discussion A  
(Poets)
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- 9 F: Butler, 189- 264 (The Storm, The Rope, Epilogue)  
Discussion B  
Background: *Reconstruction to the New Negro Renaissance: 1865-1919*  
( Poets)
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- 12 M: Background *Harlem Renaissance: 1919-1940*  
Selections from Hughes, *Montage of a Dream Deferred* (e-reserve)  
Gaines, 3-58 (Chpt 1-7)  
(Poets)  
BUTLER PAPER DUE
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- 13 T: Gaines, 59 -124 (Chpts 8-16)  
Discussion C: Chpt 8-12  
(Poets)
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- 14 W: Gaines, 125- 194 (Chpts 17-24)  
Film: Ernest Gaines' "The Sky is Gray"  
(Poets)  
READING ASSIGNMENT DUE
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- 15 Th: Gaines, 195-256 (Chpts 25-30)  
Discussion D  
(Poets)  
Midterm Review

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16 F: MIDTERM

Background: *Realism, Naturalism, Modernism: 1940-1960*

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19 M: MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY NO CLASS

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20 T: Naylor, Mattie Michael

Discussion E

(Poets)

GAINES PAPER DUE

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21 W: Naylor, Etta Mae Johnson, Kiswana Browne, Luciellia Louise Turner,

Cora Lee

Discussion F

Background: *The Black Arts Movement*

(Poets)

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22 Th: Naylor, The Two

Discussion G

Multiple Choice Questions for Final Due

(Poets)

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23 F: FINAL

(Poets)

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