

ENG 319/002C and ENG 519/002C: African American Literature II

T/Th, 9:40am-11:10am, Clow 129

Prof. Norlisha Crawford

Office hours, 2:00-3:00pm, T/Th, Radford Hall #209

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Note change in scheduling and class location for November 1, 2007

- Sept. 6: Introduction to course; selections from film, "Ethnic Notions"
- 11: Frederick Douglass, Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave; discussion (recordings)
- 13: Douglass, cont'd, discussion
- 18: Jacobs, Harriet, Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl and "The Cult of True Womanhood (e-reserves)"; discussion (recordings)
- 20: Jacobs, cont'd, discussion
- 25: The influence of the Reconstruction period on 20th century AAm literature, a film, Slavery and the Making of America (The Challenge of Freedom #4); in-class writing exercise
- 27: W.E.B. DuBois, "Of Our Spiritual Strivings" (e-reserves)
- Oct. 2: Alain Locke, "The New Negro" (e-reserves); opening discussion of Harlem Renaissance; first exam
- 4: Guest lecturer
- 9: Langston Hughes, selected poetry (e-reserves); workshop for midterm essay (Bring 4 printed copies of your thesis paragraph to class, one for handing in to Prof. Crawford and the others for your small group members and one for yourself.)
- 11: Zora Neale Hurston, Their Eyes Were Watching God, chapters 1-8, inclusive, discussion
- 16: Hurston, cont'd, chap. 9-17, incl., discussion; in-class writing exercise
- 18: Hurston, cont'd, chapters 18-close of novel
- 23: World War II's influence on AAm literature; film, A Soldier's Story; midterm essay due

- 25: Chester Himes, If He Hollers Let Him Go, chapters 1-8, incl.; discussion
- 30: Himes, cont'd, chapters 9-15, incl.; receive worksheet for symposium
- [Oct 31st: Consider attending Byron Hurt's film showing, *Hip-Hop: Behind the Beats and Rhymes*, and his follow-up talk, 7:00-9:00pm, Reeve Ballroom)**
- Nov. 1: **COME TO REEVE THEATER FOR SYMPOSIUM ON HIP-HOP; NOON-1:30PM; MAKE ARRANGEMENTS FOR SCHEDULE ADJUSTMENTS FOR ATTENDANCE**
- 6: Himes, cont'd, chapters 16-close of novel; in-class writing exercise, based on worksheet.
- 8: The dawning modern Civil Rights Movement and its influence on AAm literature; film, Eyes on the Prize, discussion
- 13: Gwendolyn Brooks, Maud Martha; chapters 1-9, incl, discussion
- 15: Brooks, cont'd, chapters 10-24, incl., discussion
- 20: Brooks, cont'd, chapters 25-close of novel, discussion
- *****Nov. 21-26, 2007: Thanksgiving break*****
- 27: Ralph Ellison, "The World and the Jug" (e-reserves), discussion
- 29: Film, a second renaissance: Voices of Power: African American Women
- Dec. 4: second exam; discussion of workshop expectations
- 6: Workshop: Building your final essay's or project's thesis; bring 4 printed copies to class.
- 8: Toni Morrison, Sula, part I up to "1922"; discussion
- 11: Morrison, Sula cont'd, "1922" up to "1939"; discussion
- 13: Morrison, Sula, "1939" to close of novel; discussion of novel; hand-in final essays/projects

*******The syllabus may change at the discretion of the professor.**

Participation in discussions is strongly advised so that ideas are offered from a variety of perspectives. Participation includes questions you contribute and in-class small group discussion participation.

Attendance is mandatory. Two unexcused absences will result in an automatic reduction in your overall grade by one full letter grade.

Plagiarism is a serious offense at UWO. In order to avoid even the suggestion of an impropriety, you must always use quotation marks within your essays to delineate any words borrowed from any other source other than yourself as well as preparing a works cited page listing any other source at the close of any essay you hand in as your own work. If ever in doubt, ask Prof. Crawford for guidance about how to punctuate any quoted sources to be used in your own written work.

No assigned work will be accepted after the normally due date, unless you have spoken directly with Prof. Crawford and received from her explicit permission to hand in the assignment at another specified date.

If you would like to revise and resubmit an essay, you must first discuss the proposed revisions with Prof. Crawford, and then receive explicit permission from her to re-submit the essay.

About the course: This is a broadly based upper-division survey of a small fraction of the literary works that have been written by black people living in colonial America and later the United States. Today that group is called African Americans. Although researchers have found at least one poem, “Bar Fight,” written by a black woman, Lucy Prince Terry, and published in colonial Massachusetts in 1746, the author who is credited most often with beginning African-American literary traditions is Phyllis Wheatley. First published in 1767, Wheatley’s work was considered well-written but controversial by readers in both colonial America and Europe. (We’ll discuss why in the discussion.) And yet, when one examines closely the issues Wheatley’s works highlight and the creative crafting of her wordplay one finds readily her influence as if it were a thread continuing to connect African-American literary texts with each other even until today. Because readers have had access to these works, a clear coherent picture has been left of the evolution of a very specific set of life experiences that have over time produced a racial/ethnic/cultural group in the United States.

As you read and **think**, and discuss and **think**, and write and **think** about the texts included on this syllabus, you will also come to understand some of the exquisite attributes of literature. Indeed what makes literary studies so enduring and important as a part of the overall university experience is the way it allows one to examine varying perspectives. Reading about characters who seem so “different” from ourselves, in places so unlike where we live, having experiences so unlike anything we may know, helps us as readers to think about the beauty *and* the beastliness of humanity. We also will find that most characters are living in the middle between those two extremes, trying to find happiness and fulfillment no matter their circumstances. Just like you and just

like me. Make the best of your time in this course. Commit to the reading. Come to class prepared to participate, engaging critically with the ideas found in the texts. If you do so, you will sharpen your overall analysis skills.

Grade percentage breakdown for final grade:

Four in-class writing exercises	@5 points each	20
Two exams	@15 points each	30
Midterm essay (5-7 pages)	@20points	20
Final essay (10 pages)/project*	@30 points	<u>30</u>
Final grade		100%

*Final projects are an alternative option to a final essay; you must discuss in advance your proposed project with Prof. Crawford, and it must be approved as a choice.