

AML 2070: Survey of American Literature

Course Section: 0481
Course Time: MWF Period 6 (12:50pm-1:40pm)
Location: PSY 129 (Psychology Hall)

Instructor: Maurice Evers
Email: mauriceanthony1@ufl.edu
Office: TUR
Office Hours: M & W, Period 7 (1:55-2:45 PM), and by appointment.

From Realism to the Black Arts Movement: Race and Gender in African American Literature

Course Description:

This survey will introduce students to major writers, issues and forms found in the history of American literature through an examination of influential African American authors from the middle of the 20th century to the present. It will look at some key texts vis-a-vis their engagements with race, gender, and sexuality. The texts will be in dialogue with each other through both paradox and complementarity. The course will also trace a broad outline of various political movements and strains within African American literature and politics over the 20th and 21st centuries.

Course Objectives:

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- demonstrate critical thinking, reading, and writing skills by analyzing a variety of African American literary and artistic themes.
- evaluate the relationship between form and content in literature.
- demonstrate the connections between a culture and the literature it produces.
- identify the social, political, and racial challenges unique to African Americans in America.
- challenge traditionally inaccurate views of African American literature.

Required Course Texts:

Baldwin, James. *The Fire Next Time*. 1st Vintage International ed. New York: Vintage International, 1993. ISBN: 067974472X

Coates, Ta-Nehisi. *Between the World and Me*. The Text Publishing Company, 2015. ISBN: 1925240703

Gates, Henry Louis, Jr, et al. *The Norton Anthology of African American Literature*. Third edition. Vol. 2. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2014. ISBN: 0393923703

Rankine, Claudia. *Citizen: An American Lyric*. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Graywolf Press, 2014. ISBN: 9781555976903

Shange, Ntozake. *For Colored Girls Who have Considered Suicide, when the Rainbow is Enuf: A Choreopoem*. 1st Scribner poetry ed. New York: Scribner Poetry, 1997. ISBN: 0684843269

Assignment Descriptions (Total Points Possible: 1000)

Reading Quizzes: 20% (200 points)

There will be weekly quizzes in order to ensure students have read and understood the readings. Quizzes will take place during the first ten minutes of class, and will be on the reading assigned for that day. They can be both open and closed book, and they can be both announced and unannounced.

Textual Analysis: 3,000 words, 40% (400 points)

You will construct a formal textual analysis of one of the texts read in Unit One. This paper will not cite outside research; instead, it should be a detailed close reading of *one* text. Textual analyses (close readings) require the reader/writer to identify the various parts of a text and then to consider how these pieces work together to create a whole text. Your textual analysis will focus on a specific element (character, setting, motif, or conflict) and will use *a few* (2-3) examples of that element to support your argument. Your argument should consider the major themes or overall effect of the text.

Contextual Analysis: 3,000 words, 40% (400 points)

You will choose a text from Unit Two and write a contextual analysis. This paper *must* cite outside research. Contextual analyses work to fully understand a literary text by considering the work's social, cultural, and/or political contexts. You will create an argument about the relationship between your selected text and its contexts. Some productive questions to initiate your contextual analysis are: How is this text a *product or reflection* of its historical or cultural context? How does the text *comment* upon recent history or *influence* future historical events/inspire social change? Ultimately, you will want to think about whether this text is conservative and confirming the status quo *or* progressive and challenging the status quo. *Avoid basing your entire argument on the author's biography.*

Participation

Class participation and discussion of the readings is crucial in this course. You should be prepared to discuss the text at hand; therefore, you must complete the required reading for the day prior to coming to class. In addition, you are required to bring the reading (book, printed hardcopy of an article, etc.) to the assigned class period. Participation includes: regularly asking questions, responding to classmates, and contributing ideas to a

discussion.

Total points for this course = 1000 points

Total word count for this course = 6000 words

Grading Scale

A	4.0	93-100	930-1000	C	2.0	73-76	730-769
A-	3.67	90-92	900-929	C-	1.67	70-72	700-729
B+	3.33	87-89	870-899	D+	1.33	67-69	670-699
B	3.0	83-86	830-869	D	1.0	63-66	630-669
B-	2.67	80-82	800-829	D-	0.67	60-62	600-629
C+	2.33	77-79	770-799	E	0.00	0-59	0-599

Grade Meanings

- A → Student did what the assignment asked at a high quality level, meeting all of the composition objectives required of the assignment. Additionally, his or her work shows originality, creativity, and demonstrates that the student took extra steps to be original or creative in developing content, solving a problem, or developing a style. Since careful editing and proofreading are essential in writing, papers in the A range must be free of typos and grammatical or mechanical errors.
- B → Student did what the assignment asked at a quality level, meeting most of the composition objectives required of the assignment. Work in this range needs revision; however, it is complete in content, is organized well, and shows special attention to style.
- C → Student did what the assignment asked, but overlooked some of the composition objectives. Work in this range needs significant revision, but it is complete in content and the organization is logical. The style is straightforward but unremarkable.
- D → Student neglected some basic requirements of the assignment, and completed it at a poor quality level. Work in this range needs significant revision. The content is often incomplete and the organization is hard to discern. Attention to style is often nonexistent or chaotic.
- E → An E is usually reserved for students who do not do the work or do not come to class. However, if work is shoddy, shows little understanding of the needs of the assignment, and/or an inability to meet the composition objectives, he or she will receive a failing grade.

You must pass this course with a “C” or better to satisfy the CLAS requirement for Composition (C) and to receive the 6,000-word University Writing Requirement credit (E6). You must turn in all papers totaling 6,000 words to receive credit for writing 6,000

words. **NOTE ALSO:** a grade of “C-” **will not** confer credit for the University Writing Requirement or the CLAS Composition (C) requirement.

GRADE APPEALS: Students may appeal a final grade by filling out a form available in the English Department Offices. You will need to contact Carla Blount, Program Assistant to the Director of Writing Programs, for details if you wish to file an appeal.

Course Schedule (Tentative)

Week 1: January 5 - 8

Introduction: Introduction to Course, Movements, Theory

Wed: Syllabus Review and Course Requirements/Due Dates

Fri: Introduction: Talking Books; Critical Race Theory

Unit 1: Realism, Naturalism, Modernism—Black Arts Movement

Week 2: January 11-15

Mon: Realism, Naturalism, Modernism; Black Arts Movement—defining terms and placing them in historical contexts (Read Introductions to each movement in *Norton Anthology*)

Wed: Richard Wright, “Blueprint for Negro Writing”; “The Ethics of Living Jim Crow, an Autobiographical Sketch”

Fri: *Black Boy*, Chapter XIII [Booklist] Chapter XVI [Chicago]

Week 3: January 18 - 22

Mon: *No Class – Holiday*

Wed: Gwendolyn Brooks, *Maud Martha*

Fri: *Maud Martha*

Week 4: January 25 – 29

Mon: *Maud Martha*

Wed: James Baldwin, *The Fire Next Time*

Fri: *The Fire Next Time*

Week 5: February 1 – 5

Mon: *The Fire Next Time*

Wed: Lorraine Hansberry, *A Raisin in the Sun*

Fri: *A Raisin in the Sun*

Week 6: February 8 - 12

Mon: Adrienne Kennedy, *Funny House of a Negro*

Wed: *Funny House of a Negro*

Fri: Audre Lorde (All selections in *Norton Anthology*)

Week 7 February 15 - 19

Mon: Lorde contd.

Wed: Amiri Baraka, *Dutchman*

Fri: *Dutchman*

Week 8: February 22 – 26

Mon: Stokely Carmichael, “Toward Black Liberation” (Excerpt); Draft Due: Peer Review

Wed: Carmichael contd.; Peer Review/Conferences

Fri: **Textual Analysis DUE**

Week 9: February 27 – March 5 Spring Break

Unit 2: Contemporary Period

Week 10: March 7 – 11

Mon: Contemporary Period—Introduction; Toni Morrison, “Recitatif”

Wed: Morrison contd.; Selections from *Playing in the Dark*.

Fri: John Edgar Wideman, *Brothers and Keepers* [Robby's Version]

Week 11: March 14 – 18

Mon: Wideman contd.

Wed: Alice Walker, “In Search of Our Mother's Gardens”

Fri: Walker contd.

Week 12: March 21 – 25

Mon: Ntozake Shange, *For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide/When the Rainbow is Enuf*

Wed: *For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide/When the Rainbow is Enuf*

Fri: Rita Dove (All selections in *Norton Anthology*)

Week 13: March 28 – April 1

Mon: Dove contd.

Wed: Suzan-Lori Parks, *Topdog/Underdog*

Fri: *Topdog/Underdog*

Week 14: April 4 – 8

Mon: Claudia Rankine, *Citizen*

Wed: *Citizen*

Fri: *Citizen*

Week 15: April 11 – 15

Mon: Ta-Nehisi Coates, *Between the World and Me*

Wed: *Between the World and Me*

Fri: *Between the World and Me*; Draft Due: Peer Review

Week 16: April 18 – 20

Mon: Peer Review/Conferences

Wed: Contextual Analysis DUE

Course Policies:

Attendance

Attendance is required and will be taken every day. You are allowed three (3) absences. For every absence exceeding this, your final grade will drop by one letter grade. If you miss more than six (6) classes, you will automatically fail the course. The University of Florida exempts from this policy only those absences involving university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band, religious holidays, military duty, and court-mandated responsibilities (e.g., jury duty or subpoena).

Students who participate in athletic or extracurricular activities are permitted to be absent twelve (12) scholastic days per semester without penalty. A scholastic day is defined as any day on which regular class work is scheduled. Absences related to university-sponsored events must be discussed with the instructor **prior** to the date that will be missed.

If you are absent, it is your responsibility to be aware of all due dates. If you are absent due to a scheduled event, you are still responsible for turning assignments in on time.

A note on tardiness: Students who enter class after roll has been taken are late, which disrupts the entire class. Two instances of tardiness count as one absence.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this class are consistent with university policies that can be found at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Paper Maintenance Responsibilities

Students are responsible for maintaining duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course and retaining all returned, graded work until the semester is over. Should the need arise for a resubmission of papers or a review of graded papers, it is the student's responsibility to have and to make available this material.

Final drafts should be polished and presented in a professional manner. All papers must be in 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced with 1-inch margins and pages numbered and correct MLA formatting. All papers will be submitted as MS Word (.doc) to Canvas by noon.

Technology Policy

All electronic devices (with the exception of laptop computers or tablets for note taking purposes ONLY) must be silenced or set to vibrate during class. **Any unsilenced electronic device will result in a recorded absence for that day.**

Printing Policy

Students are required to print out and bring hard copies of all supplemental course

readings to class during the designated class meeting. Currently enrolled students have access to the Printing Lab, located on the ground floor of the Reitz Union next to the Reitz Union Hotel Desk. Lab services are provided by Student Government, and each student may print 250 pages of free printing per semester. The Lab hours for the Fall and Spring Semesters are as follows:

Monday - Thursday: 8:30AM - 10:00PM
Friday: 8:30AM - 5:00PM
Saturday: 12:00PM - 5:00PM*
Sunday: 1:00PM - 8:00PM
* *Closed Saturdays during home football games.*

The Lab is closed on all UF holidays and breaks. You can reach the lab at 352-273-4431.

UF's Statement on Academic Honesty

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the Student Honor Code. The Honor Code prohibits and defines plagiarism as follows:

Plagiarism. A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes (but is not limited to):

- a.) Quoting oral or written materials, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.
- b.) Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student.
(University of Florida, Student Honor Code, 15 Aug. 2007)

University of Florida students are responsible for reading, understanding, and abiding by the entire Student Honor Code.

Important Tip: You should never copy and paste something from the internet without providing the exact location from which it came.

Academic Honesty

All students are required to abide by the Student Honor Code. For more information about academic honesty, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration, see:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/honorcode.php>

UF's Statement on Harassment

UF provides an educational and working environment that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment for its students, staff, and faculty. For more information about UF policies regarding harassment, see: <http://www.hr.ufl.edu/eo/sexualharassment.htm>

Classroom Behavior

Please keep in mind that students come from diverse cultural, economic, and ethnic backgrounds. Some of the texts we will discuss and write about engage controversial topics and opinions. Diversified student backgrounds combined with provocative texts require that you demonstrate respect for ideas that may differ from your own. Disrespectful behavior will result in dismissal, and accordingly absence, from the class.

Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <http://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

Writing Center

The University Writing Center is located in Tigert 302 and is available to all UF students.

Statement of Composition (C) and Humanities (H) credit

This course can satisfy the UF General Education requirement for Composition or Humanities. For more information, see:

<http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/advisinggened.html>

Statement of Writing requirement (WR)—formerly Gordon Rule

This course can satisfy the UF requirement for Writing. For more information, see:

<http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/advisinggordon.html>

Students with Disabilities

The Disability Resource Center in the Dean of Students Office provides information and support regarding accommodations for students with disabilities. For more information, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>