

# Survey of African American Literatures II: From 1945 to the Present

Professor Delia Steverson

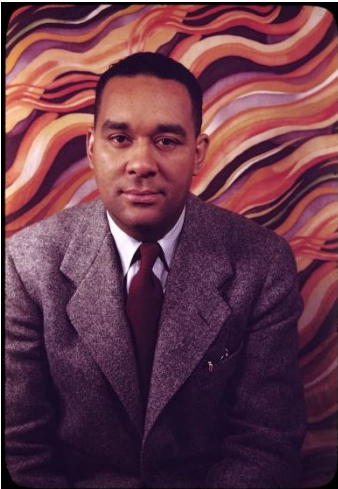
AML 3607 sec 1H62/AFA 3930 sec 3H62

**Office Hours:** T 10am-12pm or by appt.

**Class time/location:** MWF P.4 Turlington 2305

**Office Location:** Turlington 4354

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## Course Description and Objectives

This course is designed as an introductory survey of texts and discourses within the African American literary tradition. As we explore critical works within this tradition, from 1945 until the present, we will frame our close textual readings and literary analyses within the context of critical movements and discourses in social, cultural, and literary history. We will be particularly engaged in examining the manner in which literary works and other forms of African American cultural production reveal and respond to social and cultural ideologies, especially those that impact constructions of difference and the formation of identity, subjectivity, and/or the notion of the self.

## Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of the semester, you should be able to:

- ✚ Produce a literary close reading that addresses both the form and the content of one or more text(s) in the construction of an argument about the text's meaning.
- ✚ Become familiar with critical periods, discourses, and writers in the African American literary tradition and develop an understanding of the historical and cultural contexts that shape that tradition, specifically in the early national, reconstruction and early twentieth-century periods.

- ✚ Gain the confidence and ability to speak in a sophisticated and critical fashion about African American literature.
- ✚ Develop effective written communication skills.

### Required Texts

- ✚ Richard Wright—*Native Son* (1940)
- ✚ Amiri Baraka—*Dutchman & the Slave* (1964)
- ✚ Toni Morrison—*Sula* (1973)
- ✚ J. California Cooper—*Family* (1991)
- ✚ Ta-Nehisi Coates—*Between the World and Me* (2015)
- ✚ Other readings available via Canvas and/or at UF libraries

### Course Requirements and Grades Distribution

#### **Critical Responses (3)—30%**

- ✚ Students will write **THREE 4-5 page (1000-1250 words)** critical responses throughout the semester. These will require close-reading skills and argument analysis. I will create prompts based on your readings and in-class assignments. Critical Responses are due on Canvas by 11pm of the due date. Each day that the paper is late, I will subtract half a letter grade (5 points). No papers will be accepted a week after the due date. Please note that late papers for the final critical response will **not** be accepted.

#### **Evaluations (2)—30%**

- ✚ Evaluations will consist of identification, short answer, and essay questions. No worries, we will review beforehand. Make sure you take sufficient notes in class!

#### **Quizzes and In-Class Assignments—30%**

- ✚ Be prepared to take a short reading comprehension quiz most days that I assign readings (5 points per quiz). In-class assignments will often serve as a place of departure for our discussion and are usually in the form of handouts. You will work individually, with a partner, or with a group. You will also be **required** to attend one UF/community-sponsored event that I will announce throughout the semester.

#### **Attendance and Participation—10%**

- ✚ It should go without saying that attendance and participation are mandatory for your success in this class. It is imperative that you are present and on time. There are no excused or unexcused absences; rather, you are allowed 3 absences. After the third absence, (that means absence number 4 and 5) I will subtract **two** points per absence from your final grade. If you have **6 or more** absences, you will fail the course. Remember that quizzes **CANNOT** be made up, regardless of the circumstance. In-class assignments can be made up, but must be turned in a week after your absence—otherwise it's a zero. Make sure you get with a classmate to catch you up. If you are on

time and have perfect attendance, you will be rewarded **FIVE** extra points on your final evaluation.

### Accommodations Statement

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the UF Disability Resource Center (352.392.8565) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodations. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

### Schedule of Readings

<b>Week 1</b> M 1/7	Introduction, Syllabus review
W 1/9	Review of African American literature through Harlem Renaissance
F 1/11	<b>Realism, Naturalism, Modernism</b> Richard Wright—"The Ethics of Living Jim Crow"
<b>Week 2</b> M 1/14	Richard Wright— <i>Native Son</i> (1940) Pages 1-59
W 1/16	<i>Native Son</i> Pages 60-113
F 1/18	<i>Native Son</i> Pages 114-163
<b>Week 3</b> M 1/21	No Class—Holiday
W 1/23	<i>Native Son</i> 164-270 (End of Book Two)
F 1/25	<i>Native Son</i> Pages 271-325
<b>Week 4</b> M 1/28	<i>Native Son</i> Pages 326-381
W 1/30	<i>Native Son</i> 382-End

F 2/1	Richard Wright—"How Bigger was Born"
<b>Week 5</b> M 2/4	In Class Writing Tutorial
W 2/6	James Baldwin—"Many Thousands Gone" in <i>Notes of a Native Son</i> (1955)
F 2/8	Rough Draft: Critical Response 1 Peer Review
<b>Week 6</b> M 2/11	Lorraine Hansberry— <i>A Raisin in the Sun</i> (1959)
W 2/13	<i>A Raisin in the Sun</i>
F 2/15	<i>A Raisin in the Sun</i> Ossie Davis—"The Significance of Lorraine Hansberry" <b>Final Draft: Critical Response 1 due on Canvas by 11pm</b>
<b>Week 7</b> M 2/18	<b>The Black Arts Era</b> Larry Neal—"The Black Arts Movement" Gil Scot-Heron—"The Revolution will not be Televised" <a href="https://www.historyisaweapon.com/defcon1/herontelevised.html">https://www.historyisaweapon.com/defcon1/herontelevised.html</a> In Class: <i>The Black Power Mixtape</i>
W 2/20	Sonia Sanchez—"TCB" Nikki Giovanni—"For Saundra," "Beautiful Black Men," "Nikki-Rosa" Audre Lorde—"Poetry is Not a Luxury," "Power" Addison Gayle—"Cultural Strangulation"
F 2/22	Amiri Baraka— <i>Dutchman &amp; the Slave</i> (1964)
<b>Week 8</b> M 2/25	Evaluation One Review
W 2/27	<b>Evaluation One</b>
F 3/1	In Class: <i>Dutchman</i> film
<b>Week 9</b>	SPRING BREAK
<b>Week 10</b> M 3/11	Toni Morrison— <i>Sula</i> (1973) Page 1-66 (or beginning through the year 1922)

W 3/13	<i>Sula</i> Page 66-111 (or year 1923 through year 1937)
F 3/15	<i>Sula</i> Pages 112-end (or year 1939—end) Toni Morrison--“The Ancestor as Foundation”
<b>Week 11</b> M 3/18	<b>Black Feminism and Womanism</b> Combahee River Collective—“A Black Feminist Statement” Barbara Smith—“Toward a Black Feminist Criticism” Deborah McDowell—“New Directions for Black Feminist Criticism”
W 3/20	Alice Walker—“In Search of our Mother’s Gardens,” “Everyday Use” Sherley Anne Williams—“Some Implications of Womanist Theory”
F 3/22	No in-class meeting, rather <b>Attend Oral History Symposium</b>
<b>Week 12</b> M 3/25	Rough Draft—Critical Response 2 In Class—Peer Review
W 3/27	<b>The Neo-Slave Narrative</b> J. California Cooper— <i>Family</i> (1991) Chapters 1-3
F 3/29	<i>Family</i> Chapters 4-7
<b>Week 13</b> M 4/1	<i>Family</i> Chapters 8-10 <b>Final Draft: Critical Response 2 due on Canvas by 11pn</b>
W 4/3	<i>Family</i> Chapters 11-12
F 4/5	<i>Family</i> Chapters 13-end
<b>Week 14</b> M 4/8	<b>Black Masculinities</b> James Baldwin—“A Letter to my Nephew” <a href="https://progressive.org/magazine/letter-nephew/">https://progressive.org/magazine/letter-nephew/</a> Richard Wright—“Between the World and Me”
W 4/10	Ta-Nehisi Coates— <i>Between the World and Me</i> (2015) Part 1

F 4/12	<b>No Class—Dr. Dee at a conference</b>
<b>Week 15</b> M 4/15	Ta-Nehisi Coates— <i>Between the World and Me</i> Part 2
W 4/17	Evaluation Two Review
F 4/19	<b>Evaluation Two</b>
<b>Week 16</b> M 4/22	Rough Draft Critical Response 3 Due In-Class Peer Review
W 4/24	In-Class Assignment

**Final Draft: Critical Response 3 due Monday, April 29<sup>th</sup> at 5pm**