

AML3607

African American Literature 1945 to Present

Summer A 2021

Instructor Name

Ashley D. Clemons

Course locations

Zoom Meeting Link

<https://ufl.zoom.us/j/94560489602?pwd=NFU5QkFRMC9UTEF4Y0tYMGtUUXk4UT09>

Password: UFS A21

Course Meeting Times

Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays Period 3

11:00am-12:15pm

Tuesdays & Thursdays Period 3

Asynchronous sessions

Office Location and Hours

Mondays & Wednesdays Period 2

9:45am-10:45am

Zoom Meeting Link

<https://ufl.zoom.us/j/96363473449>

Course website

UF Canvas

Instructor Email adclemmons@ufl.edu

AML 3607 Course Guide

Course Description	2
COVID Statement	2-3
Required/Recommended Texts	4
Assignments	5-6
Course Policies and Student Resources	6-8
Grading Rubric	8
Syllabus/ Course Schedule	9-11



Course Description

From Gwendolyn Brooks to Kendrick Lamar, the African American vernacular tradition continues to shape American culture. Historically, these oral and musical storytellers retain African Americans' experiences, and often critique conditions within United States society. Accordingly, this course pays special attention to what Amiri Baraka calls, "the score, the actually expressed creative orchestration, reflection, of Afro-American life, our words, the libretto, to those actual, lived lives" (*Blues People*, x). Students will survey significant periods such as Realism, Naturalism, Modernism, The Black Arts Era, and the contemporary. We will consider both prominent and understudied contributions to poetry, gospel, sermon, songs of social change, jazz, hip-hop/rap, and the American theatre. Students will think about historical, social, and cultural contexts to develop critical perspectives on issues related to social justice, race, gender, and sexuality. This course will consist of novels, critical texts/lectures, music, and other multimedia.

Minor Note: Students will be asked to find their *voices* in discussion, writing, and collaboration. To accomplish this goal, they will be expected to demonstrate patience, respect, thoughtfulness, and open-mindedness throughout the entire course. Some materials may contain religious references, violence, and brutality. Ultimately, students have the opportunity to hear new and familiar sounds in African American literature. We will approach all texts, poems, short stories, sermons, seminal U.S. documents/ speeches, films, and music with an open mind. This is a collaboration-centered course, so class participation and discussions are critical to the thinking and writing processes. Be prepared to share your work (in presentations, large groups and small groups) and provide thorough feedback to peers. This particular class will also prepare students for conducting independent research and writing an extended research paper.

COVID Statement

We will hold three synchronous days each week remotely on Zoom on Mondays, Wednesdays, and select Fridays. Students will be responsible for keeping up with readings, watching film clips, viewing PowerPoints, and watching the films for the class. While this class was originally meant to take place in-person, due to the impact of the current global circumstance to our students and communities, that is no longer possible. Please be sure to download Zoom on your personal computer before the start of the class and familiarize yourself with how it works. Our Zoom days will consist of lectures with PowerPoints, clips from films, your participation in discussion, and I will be monitoring the chat as well.

Synchronous sessions = meet live via Zoom

Asynchronous sessions = activities/assignments completed on your own by end of day for credit & attendance

If you as an individual have any COVID-related hardships which may obstruct your performance in this class--unexpected work or family obligations, financial struggles, mental or physical health issues, or lack of technological access--please communicate with me as well as making use of all UF resources available to you. (See course policies section for more information)

Required Texts

- Go Tell It on the Mountain* (1953) by James Baldwin**
 ISBN: 9780345806543
 272 pages
- “Ballad of Birmingham” (1968) by Dudley Randall**
 Online: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/46562/ballad-of-birmingham>
- Booker T. and W.E.B. (1969) by Dudley Randall**
 Online: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/47690/booker-t-and-web>
- “Elegies for Paradise Valley” (1977) by Robert Hayden**
 Online: https://www.jstor.org/stable/25088757?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents (JSTOR)
- “Still I Rise” (1978) by Maya Angelou**
 Online: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/46446/still-i-rise>
- Caged Bird” (1983) by Maya Angelou**
 Online: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/48989/caged-bird>
- “On the Pulse of Morning” (1993) by Maya Angelou**
 Online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=59xGmHzxtZ4>
- Paris is Burning* (1990) directed by Jennie Livingston**
 Available on UF Kanopy: <https://ufl.kanopy.com/video/paris-burning-0>
- Jazz* (1992) by Toni Morrison**
 ISBN: 9781400076215
 256 pages
- What Happened, Miss Symone?* (2015) directed by Liz Garbus**
 Online: available on *Netflix* (In-class viewing)
- The Detroit Project* (2018) by Dominique Morisseau**
 ISBN: 9781559365383
 240 pages
- Dirty Computer: An Emotion Picture* (2018) by Janelle Monáe**
 Online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jdH2Sy-BINE>

Articles and Chapters

All articles are available on UF Smathers Library One Search: cms.uflib.ufl.edu

- “Utopia/Dystopia” (2011) by Vivien Greene p. 2
- “Introduction” from “*Who Set You Flowin’?*” *The African American Migration Narrative* (1995) by Farah Jasmine Griffin pp. 3-12
- “‘Sth, I Know That Woman’: History, Gender and the South in Toni Morrison’s *Jazz*” (1998) by Angelyn Mitchell pp. 49–60

Recommended Texts

- The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*- 4th Edition (2015) by Chris Baldick (ISBN: 978-0198-71544-3)
- They Say/ I Say* (2018) by Cathy Birkenstein and Gerald Graff (ISBN: 978-0393-63167-8)
- Style: Lessons in Clarity and Grace* by Joseph M. Williams and Joseph Bizup
- I3th* (2016) by Ava DuVernay

Assignments			
<i>(All papers should include proper MLA format-8th edition, see below for Grading Rubric)</i>			
Assignment	Description	Points	Due
Close Reading Discussion Posts and Peer Responses	<p>Class participation begins with each student's individual thoughts and questions from the course materials. Every Monday, students will post a discussion based on the readings for the week. First, students will write argument-centered, close reading journals on Canvas. These entries should include a reaction to the reading by analyzing specific themes addressed in the material. While students can draw from previous class lectures and peer discussions, there needs to be a clear and original argument. To receive credit for the assignment, journal entries and responses should not be free-responses; instead, they should be mini-arguments that state a claim and analyze textual evidence to support the claim. These discussions will include 1 text-based question that will guide class discussion. Students can be creative and thoughtful. Peer responses should thoughtfully build on their classmate's post. Responses are due on the Thursday following each outlined date.</p> <p>100 Points/ Post & Response</p>	300	05/17 05/24 06/07
Peer Review Workshop	<p>Peer review aids in the writing process by offering evaluations and feedback for revision before students submit the final drafts of their papers to the instructor. During this semester, there will be one peer review workshops. Students will read papers from an assigned partner and offer feedback based on a review guide. These set of questions will help peers offer thorough feedback to one another. Once the review is complete, students will upload completed peer reviews on Canvas and email a copy to their partner for credit. Students are expected to offer thoughtful and thorough feedback with the assistance of the guide. Peer reviews are comprised of three parts: 10pts for timely submission to peer, up to 10 pts. for draft, and 10 pts. for uploading peer review.</p>	30	06/11- 06/14
Asynchronous Activities	<p>Every Thursday, students will be assigned an activity based on the week's assigned novel, article, film, etc. Active participation is expected. Participation will be demonstrated through preparation for the following, but not limited to: Writing skills workshops, reflection discussion posts, book/ film reviews, and collaborative activities.</p> <p>60 Points/ Activity</p>	300	05/13 05/20 05/27 06/03 06/10
Final Paper	<p>Students will write a close literary analysis for their final paper. Although students may pick the same texts, they are expected to create an original argument. In this final paper, students will have the opportunity to research and write about their own theme/ topic and analyze critical elements such as literary and rhetorical devices, historical context, and social context. Drawing from a specific frame of reference, students will annotate 3-5 textual instances in the novel(s) where race, gender, and sexuality are made not in abstract or symbolic ways, but in direct connection to the chosen theme. Students are expected to utilize some course material in addition to relevant scholarship you find on your own (3-5 scholarly sources required).</p>	190	06/16
Participation, Quizzes, & 1-on-1 Conferences	<p>Library resource days, writing skills workshops, 1-on-1 conferences, pop quizzes, collaborative activities, and a variety of in-class work.</p> <p>Participation: 20 points/week</p>	180	
Course Total	1000		

Course Policies

1. You must complete all *assignments* to receive credit for this course.
2. *Attendance*: Attendance is required. Attendance includes being present in class through participation and preparation. Your course grade will **drop one letter grade** upon after **three** 50-minute absences (or equivalent) + automatic failure if you miss **2 weeks** of class (failure at the sixth 50-minute absence). Excepted from this policy are only those absences involving university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band, and religious holidays. Absences related to university-sponsored events must be discussed with the instructor prior to the date that will be missed. 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>

Please note: If students are absent, it is their responsibility to make themselves aware of all due dates. If absent due to a scheduled event, students are still responsible for turning assignments in on time.

3. *Tardiness*: If students enter class after roll has been taken, they are late, which disrupts the entire class. **Three instances of tardiness count as one absence.**
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>
4. *UF's policy on Sexual Harassment*: The University of Florida is committed to providing a safe educational, working, and residential environment that is free from sexual harassment or misconduct directed towards any and all members of the community: <https://titleix.ufl.edu/policy-statement/>
5. *Paper Format & Submission*: All papers must be submitted on time on Canvas (MS Word- .doc or .docx). Papers should be written in accordance to the Modern Language Association guidelines- 8th Edition (MLA format). This includes, but is not limited to 12point font, Times New Roman, double-spaced, 1-inch margins, numbered pages, in-text citations, and works cited page. Failure of technology is not an excuse.
6. *Late Papers/Assignments*: **Late work will not be accepted.** Failure of technology is not an excuse. Students must be present and prepared for all peer review workshops, conferences, and library resource days; as they cannot be made-up.
7. *Paper Maintenance Responsibilities*: Keep duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course. Save all returned, graded work.
8. *Classroom behavior and netiquette*: You are important to the class, so please be present and prepared. You are expected to have all required readings completed and necessary materials on the day indicated on the syllabus. While laptops are permitted in class, net-surfing is disrespectful and unacceptable. **Cellphone use is strictly prohibited**, and constant offenses will result in a participation or grade penalty. If there is an emergency, please leave the learning environment and handle your business quickly.
9. *Academic Honesty and Definition of Plagiarism*: UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge: "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: 'On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.'" The Honor Code (<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions.
Definition of plagiarism from the current UF Student Honor Code:
A Student must 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. Stealing, misquoting, insufficiently paraphrasing, or patch-writing.
 - b. Self-plagiarism, which is the reuse of the Student's own submitted work, or the simultaneous submission of the Student's own work, without the full and clear acknowledgment and permission of the Faculty to whom it is submitted.
 - c. Submitting materials from any source without proper attribution.
 - d. Submitting a document, assignment, or material that, in whole or in part, is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment the Student did not author.
10. *Students with disabilities*: Who are requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565; <https://disability.ufl.edu>), which will provide appropriate documentation to

give your instructor early in the semester. It is important that students know that I am dedicated to accommodating students' individual needs.

11. *Students who are in distress*: For guidance during distressing situations please contact umatter@ufl.edu, <https://umatter.ufl.edu/>, or 352392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to you. Below, are additional resources:
 - a. Dean of Students: <https://dso.ufl.edu/>, 202 Peabody Hall, (352) 392-1261
 - b. Counseling & Wellness Center: <https://counseling.ufl.edu/>, 3190 Radio Road, (352) 392-1575
 - c. Field and Fork Pantry: <https://fieldandfork.ufl.edu/>, located near McCarty B, 352-294-2208
 - d. Student Health Care Center: <http://shcc.ufl.edu/>, multiple locations, (352) 392-1161
12. For information on UF Grading policies, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>
13. *Grade Appeals*: In 3000-level courses, students may contact Dr. Kenneth Kidd, Undergraduate Coordinator and Associate Chair, kbkidd@ufl.edu. Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.
14. *Course Evaluations*: Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations. Toward the end of the semester, you will receive email messages requesting that you do this online: <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/evals/Default.aspx>
15. *Policy on environmental sustainability*. Whenever possible, I will use paper-sparing electronic media to distribute our course materials. Consider purchasing electronic editions of assigned texts when they are available or used copies of print texts. If you do not elect to keep your print books, consider sharing them with others after the semester ends. (For example, you could donate them to the Alachua County [Friends of the Library](#) annual book sale.)
16. *Multicultural and Diversity* As your instructor, I honor and celebrate diversity. Harkening James Baldwin, I believe that the purpose of education “is to create in a person the ability to look at the world for himself, to make his own decisions...to ask questions of the universe, and then learn to live with those questions, is the way he achieves his own identity” (“A Talk to Teachers,” 1963). Thus, students are safe to navigate the course no matter their background, identity, or circumstance. Please feel free to use resources offered by the university on <https://multicultural.ufl.edu>.
17. *LGBTQ+ Resources* For community resources, feel free to check out <http://gainesvillepride.org/lgbtq-resourceguide/>.

Grading/Assessment Rubric

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

SYLLABUS

Schedule is subject to change in consideration of the instructional pace and general needs of the class

	Week 1: <i>Black Arts Era</i> May 10-May 14	Week 2: <i>Jazz and Improvisation</i> May 17-May 21	Week 3: <i>Call and Response</i> May 24-May 28	Week 4: <i>Spoken Word & Hip-Hop</i> May 31-June 04	Week 5: <i>The Theatre</i> June 07-June 11	Week 6: <i>The Contemporary & BIQTPOC</i> June 14-June 18
Monday	<p>Classes Begin</p> <p>Review of Syllabus and Course Policies</p> <p>In-Class Reading of Gwendolyn Brooks Gil Scot Heron</p>	<p><i>Jazz</i> (1992) by Toni Morrison pp. 28-51</p> <p>Respond to Two Peers Discussion Post #1—due @8am</p>	<p><i>Go Tell It on the Mountain</i> (1953) by James Baldwin “The Seventh Day” pp. 1-30</p> <p>Listen to Mahalia Jackson and Stevie Wonder</p> <p>Respond to Two Peers Discussion Post #2—due @8am</p>	<p>Finish <i>Go Tell It on the Mountain</i> (1953) by James Baldwin “The Threshing Floor” pp. 225-269</p> <p>Respond to Two Peers Discussion Post #3—due @8am</p>	<p><i>Paradise Blue</i> (2015) by Dominique Morisseau Front Matter/ Prologue-Act 1, Scene 7 pp. 1-58</p> <p>Respond to Two Peers Discussion Post #4—due @8am</p>	<p><i>Paris is Burning</i> (1990) directed by Jennie Livingston</p> <p>Respond to Two Peers Discussion Post #5—due @8am</p>
*Tuesday	<p><i>Asynchronous Activity #1:</i> Listen to Marvin Gaye’s “What’s Going On” or Michael Jackson’s “Earth Song” (Include chosen song in the title)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦Make a list of some of the issues mentioned in the lyrics (at least 10) ◦From that list, choose one problem that still exists today ◦Discuss the problem in context of today’s society, government, systems, etc. ◦Think about possible causes/ effects of the problem. ◦Reply to at least two peers' posts ◦Approach this assignment objectively. Prepare appropriate comments based on the lyrics and first-hand evidence. Avoid bias 	<p><i>Asynchronous Activity #2:</i> <i>Read & Post Discussion Response:</i></p> <p><i>Jazz</i> (1992) by Toni Morrison—pp. 53-112</p> <p>“‘Sth, I Know That Woman’: History, Gender and the South in Toni Morrison’s <i>Jazz</i>” (1998) by Angelyn Mitchell pp. 49–60</p>	<p><i>Asynchronous Activity #3:</i> <i>Read & Post Discussion Response:</i></p> <p><i>Go Tell It On the Mountain</i> (1953) by James Baldwin “The Seventh Day” pp. 31-66</p>	<p><i>Asynchronous Activity #4:</i> <i>Read & Post Discussion Response:</i></p> <p>Listen to Martin Luther King’s “I Have a Dream”</p> <p>&</p> <p>Read Malcolm X’s “Message to the Grassroots”</p>	<p><i>Asynchronous Activity #5:</i> <i>Read & Post Discussion Response:</i></p> <p><i>Paradise Blue</i> (2015) by Dominique Morisseau Act 2, Scene 1-Scene 5 pp. 59- 97</p>	<p>Finish <i>Paris is Burning</i></p> <p>Work on Final Paper</p>

Wednesday	In-class viewing <i>What Happened, Miss Symone?</i> (2015)	<i>Jazz</i> (1992) by Toni Morrison—pp. 117-135	<i>Go Tell It On the Mountain</i> (1953) by James Baldwin “The Prayers of the Saints” pp. 67-101		<i>Skeleton Crew</i> (2016) by Dominique Morisseau Front Matter Act 1, Scene 4 pp. 199-243	1-on-1 Conferences Peer Review Workshop Due @8am
*Thursday	Read & Post Discussion Response #1: “Ego-Tripping” and “Mars” by Nikki Giovanni “Aint that Bad?” “Pickin Em Up and Layin Em Down,” “Still I Rise” (1978), “Caged Bird” (1983), and “On the Pulse of Morning” (1993) by Maya Angelou viewing “Ballad of Birmingham” (1968) and “Booker T. and W.E.B.” (1969) by Dudley Randall “Elegies for Paradise Valley” by Robert Hayden “Blues People Looking Both Ways” (1963) by Amiri Baraka	Read & Post Discussion Response #2: <i>Jazz</i> (1992) by Toni Morrison—pp. 137-164	Read & Post Discussion Response #3: <i>Go Tell It On the Mountain</i> (1953) by James Baldwin “The Prayers of the Saints” pp. 102-132	Read & Post Discussion Response #4: Barack Obama Lecture	Read & Post Discussion Response #5: <i>Skeleton Crew</i> (2016) by Dominique Morisseau Act 1, Scene 5- Act 2, Scene 1 pp. 244-264	Watch <i>Dirty Computer</i> (2018) 1-on-1 Conferences
Friday	In-class viewing <i>What Happened, Miss Symone?</i> (2015) <i>Jazz</i> (1992) by Toni Morrison pp. <i>Forward</i> -24	<i>Jazz</i> (1992) by Toni Morrison—165-229	*Go Tell It On the Mountain (1953) by James Baldwin “The Prayers of the Saints” pp. 133-177	Tupac Def Poetry	<i>Skeleton Crew</i> (2016) by Dominique Morisseau Act 2, Scene 2- Act 2, Scene 5 pp. 265-290	Course Review Classes End Submit Peer Review to Peer on Canvas by 8am Final Paper due Saturday 06/19

***Asynchronous Sessions**

SATISFACTORY (Y)

UNSATISFACTORY (N)

AML 3607 Clemons Course Guide 9

CONTENT	Papers exhibit evidence of ideas that respond to the topic with complexity, critically evaluating and synthesizing sources, and provide an adequate discussion with basic understanding of sources.	Papers either include a central idea(s) that is unclear or off- topic or provide only minimal or inadequate discussion of ideas. Papers may also lack sufficient or appropriate sources.
ORGANIZATION AND COHERENCE	Documents and paragraphs exhibit identifiable structure for topics, including a clear thesis statement and topic sentences.	Documents and paragraphs lack clearly identifiable organization, may lack any coherent sense of logic in associating and organizing ideas, and may also lack transitions and coherence to guide the reader.
ARGUMENT AND SUPPORT	Documents use persuasive and confident presentation of ideas, strongly supported with evidence. At the weak end of the satisfactory range, documents may provide only generalized discussion of ideas or may provide adequate discussion but rely on weak support for arguments.	Documents make only weak generalizations, providing little or no support, as in summaries or narratives that fail to provide critical analysis.
STYLE	Documents use a writing style with word choice appropriate to the context, genre, and discipline.	Documents rely on word usage that is inappropriate for the context, genre, or discipline. Sentences may be
	Sentences should display complexity and logical structure.	overly long or short with awkward construction. Documents may also use words incorrectly.
MECHANICS	Papers will feature correct or error-free presentation of ideas. At the weak end of the satisfactory range, papers may contain a few spelling, punctuation, or grammatical errors that remain unobtrusive and do not obscure the paper’s argument or points.	Papers contain so many mechanical or grammatical errors that they impede the reader’s understanding or severely undermine the writer’s credibility.

Score	Key Traits/ Qualities
“A-level” Paper	<p>Follows and meets all the requirements in the assignment guidelines</p> <p>The thesis (or argument) is clearly articulated, original, and well-supported; the argument is analytical rather than descriptive. *Important note: An “A” paper usually goes beyond analyses and ideas shared in class.</p> <p>Subsequent paragraphs build on and support the paper’s central thesis or argument</p> <p>Examples and evidence from the texts back up (but do not subsume) your own critical analysis</p> <p>The writing is clear and dynamic with varied sentence length and structure.</p> <p>The paper is free of most grammatical and spelling errors.</p> <p>MLA formatting is uniformly (and correctly) followed throughout.</p> <p>Should have a distinct and strong conclusion that does not simply rehash the paper’s original thesis</p>
“B-level” Paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follows and meets most of the requirements in the assignment guidelines Has a good thesis, but the wording might be less clear and/or fluid or weaker in its argumentation Still builds up and supports the paper’s main argument but does not create compelling nor strong connections between the ideas presented in each paragraph • Does not analyze textual evidence as critically or as in depth as the “A” paper Puts forth a solid argument but may have unclear language, spelling, or grammatical errors and superficial or vague analysis in a few places MLA formatting is uniformly (and correctly) followed throughout • Conclusion is strong
“C-level” Paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follows and meets some of the requirements in the assignment guidelines Does not clearly articulate or fully develop thesis; it is more descriptive rather than analytical Does not wholly engage with or defend the paper’s key argument throughout The writing is largely incoherent and disorganized but may have instances of proper analysis and clear argumentation Does not incorporate sufficient textual evidence to support the main argument and claims MLA formatting is not uniformly (nor correctly) followed throughout • Lacks a clear conclusion

“D-level” Paper and below	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does not meet any of the requirements in the assignment guidelines• Lacks a clearly articulated and well-developed thesis• Does not engage with or defend the paper’s key argument throughout• Does not successfully incorporate any textual evidence to support the main argument and claims• Shows blatant disregard of proper grammar and punctuation• The writing is vague and has several errors in analysis and argumentation• Does not follow MLA formatting guidelines • Lacks a conclusion
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