

ENG4936 sec. 1MR1: (H) Langston Hughes-Novel, Essay, Autobiography, and Film T 5-6 (11:45am-1:40pm), R 6 (12:50pm-1:40pm) TUR 2322, Office 4318 TUR Hours: TR 1:55-2:45pm by appointment

This course employs an interdisciplinary approach that requires students to familiarize themselves with Langston Hughes' literary and sociopolitical writings, and apply critical race theory, which scholars as Frank B. Wilderson III, Jared Sexton, Saidiya Hartman, Calvin Warren, and essayists like Ta-Nehisi Coates and James Baldwin employ, that signal a burgeoning Afro-Pessimism and or postNegritude moment where the post-racial fantasy of neoliberal gestures have evaporated with the departure of President Barack Hussein Obama.

Lectures and class discussions will explore how artists, using Black vernacular and various other literary and visual strategies, dramatize social and psychological conflicts that occur when individuals and groups resist societal pressures to conform to hegemonic beliefs about race, sexuality, and gender. (To describe a hegemonic belief formation is not to say that a majority supports this belief system about race, sexuality, and gender, but to say that there appears to be no other alternative to this singular racialized, sexualized, and gendered vision of society.)

Discussion topics include the Harlem Renaissance, African American literature, the blues tradition in poetry and life, and the international sociopolitical climate of our quotidian life. In discussing the literary work and political life of Langston Hughes, the seminar participants will critically assess how Hughes fared as an American writer and social critic and how critical race theory might reveal or deny the persistence of anti-Black violence in words and deeds. How does Hughes' writings symbolically expose and fervently articulate a "Black Lives Matter" awareness and endgame.

1. REQUIRED TEXTS:

Berry, Faith. *Langston Hughes: Before and Beyond Harlem* (New York: Lawrence Hill & Company, 1983).

ISBN 0-88208-157-8

Berry, Faith, ed. *Good Morning Revolution: Uncollected Writings of Langston Hughes*. (Secaucus, N.J. Citadel Press, 1992). ISBN 0-8065-1308-X

Hughes, Langston. *The Big Sea: An Autobiography*. (New York: Putnam Berkeley Group West, 1993). ISBN 0-8090-1549-8

_____. *I Wonder as I Wander: An Autobiographical Journey*. (New York: Hill & Wang, 1993) ISBN 0-80901-5501

_____. *Selected Poems of Langston Hughes*. (New York: Vintage/Random House, 1990) ISBN 0-679-72818-X

_____. *Five Plays by Langston Hughes*. (Bloomington, IN: Indiana UP, 1968) ISBN 0-253-20121-7

_____. *The Ways of White Folks*. (New York: Vintage/Random House, 1990) ISBN 0-679-72817-1

_____. *The Panther and the Lash.: Poems of Our Times*. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1967)

_____. *Good Morning Revolution: Uncollected Writings of Langston Hughes*. Ed. Faith Berry. (New York: Citadel Press/Carol Publishing Group, 1992) ISBN 0-8065-1308-X (*If sold out, photocopy pages from the copy that is held on RESERVE in the library*)

Note: Assigned and recommended texts and readings are available on Electronic Reserves (ARES) are held at the Reserve Desk of Library West. Check ARES and the Reserve List for this course to see if any assigned readings are available as PDF files on ARES (ELECTRONIC RESERVE) section on Library West Website. Look under Reid and this course's section number.

1. COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Student must submit all assignments on Canvas by 9 am on the day before the assignment is due.

1. Five 600-word Reaction Papers on weekly assigned readings and film screenings. (@4pts each = 20pts) **Submit on CANVAS, at 9 am the day before the reaction paper is due. (@20pts each= 40pts).**
2. Two 15-minute oral presentations and two typed 1-page outlines of the presentations. An **outline that describes the presentation is due the day before the student presents their 15-minute discussion, and the script/PDF of their oral presentation is due on the day of the presentation.**

Instructor assigns each student two oral presentation on an assigned reading or film screening.

The grade on oral presentations and 600-word reaction paper is based on the following criteria:

1. The importance of the material presented to the class. Students must make brief references to primary scenes in a particular literary work (or film) to illustrate critical issues and support their argument.
2. The clarity of the written and oral work. Here, "clarity" refers to smooth oral delivery, correct use of descriptive terminology and grammar.
3. The student's ability to pose important questions to the class at the end of their oral presentation. Students must introduce the argument/thesis of their oral presentation based on their assigned section.
4. A **2000-word Midterm Paper** (12 font, 1.5 spaces sentences) and a one-page bibliography of three articles that the instructor did not assign for course reading. **Submit on CANVAS, Monday 26 February at 9 am: Midterm Paper & Bibliography (20 points).**
5. A **4000-word Final Paper** (12 font, 1.5 spaces sentences) and a one-page bibliography of three articles or books that the instructor did not assign for course reading. **Submit on CANVAS, Monday 15 April at 9 am: Midterm Paper & Bibliography (20 points).**

MIDTERM PAPER and 1-page Bibliography is due Monday 26, February at 9 am (18 Points)

The paper should be 2000-words, 12-inch font.

Students must critically analyze three essays, a poem, and the two films assigned for the weeks 1-9. Paper topics should reflect any of the themes and issues treated in the literature and films. If you would like to draft a paper that concerns any other theme or issue, you must get the instructor's permission.

THE MIDTERM PAPER (20 POINTS)

Midterm Paper ABSTRACT (2 pts)

Students deposit on CANVAS an Abstract of their Midterm Paper, which describes the subject of their 2000-word paper and provide a one-page tentative bibliography on Monday 12 February at 9 am. (2 points).

FINAL PAPER and 1-page Bibliography is due Monday 8, April at 9am (18 POINTS)

The paper should be 4000 words, 12-inch font, with one-inch side and top/bottom margins.

Students must critically analyze two assigned books and one film from weeks 11-15. Paper topics should reflect any of the weekly titles and or themes listed for any week. If you would like to draft a paper that concerns any other theme or issue, you must get the instructor's permission.

FINAL PAPER ABSTRACT Students deposit on CANVAS a paper abstract of their Final Paper, which describes the subject of their ten-page paper and supply a tentative bibliography due Monday 25 March at 9 am. (2 points).

1. ATTENDANCE

The only excusable absence is one that results from an illness that a nurse or physician documents in writing. Two non-excused absences lower the student's cumulative grade by minus 10 points, three non-excused absences give the student an E, a failing grade for the course.

1. LATE WORK

All written work and oral presentations are due during the class period. Students receive minus 2 points for EACH DAY (INCLUDING WEEKENDS AND HOLIDAYS) when any assignment is late. NOTE: A medical excuse does not excuse any late written assignment.

GRADING SCALE

Cumulative	40pts	Midterm/Final (40)	2 Oral Presentations (40)	Reaction Papers 4pts (20)	
A	100.00-93.00	40.00-37.20	20.00-18.60	10.00-09.30	4.00-.3.72
A-	92.00-90.00	36.80-36.00	18.40-18.00	09.20-09.00	3.71-3.60
B+	89.00-86.00	35.60-34.40	17.80-17.20	08.90-08.60	3.59-3.44
B	85.00-83.00	34.00-33.20	17.00-16.60	08.50-08.30	3.43-3.32
B-	82.00-80.00	32.80-32.00	16.40-16.00	08.20-08.00	3.31-3.20
C+	79.00-76.00	31.60-30.40	15.80-15.20	07.90-07.60	3.19-3.04
C	75.00-73.00	30.00-29.20	15.00-14.60	07.50-07.30	3.03-2.92
C-	72.00-70.00	28.80-28.00	14.40-14.00	07.20-07.00	2.91-2.80

D+	69.00-66.00	27.60-26.40	13.80-13.20	06.90-06.60	2.79-2.64
D	65.00-63.00	26.00-25.20	13.00-12.60	06.50-06.30	2.63-2.52
D-	62.00-60.00	24.80-24.00	12.40-12.00	06.20-06.00	2.51-.2.40
E	59.00-00.00	23.60-00.00	11.80-00.00	05.90-00.00	2.39-20.00

1. Course Outline and Readings:

READINGS assigned for the class meeting day must be read **BEFORE** the class meets. Will randomly give a pop quiz even if a reaction paper has been submitted for the same assigned ***Books and assigned essays and articles in PDF format are on reserve in Library West or available on electronic reserve. Review the CANVAS course reserve page for this course.***

WEEK 1 COURSE INTRODUCTION

JAN 9 T --Course Introduction, Requirements, Questions on Assignments.

SCREEN: *VOICES AND VISIONS 6: Langston Hughes: Dream Keeper* 60mins.

JAN 11 R --READ:

WEEK 2 RETURNS: A TRAVELOGUE OF ANECDOTES: "TWENTY-ONE" AND "BIG SEA"

JAN 16 T --READ: Langston Hughes, *The Big Sea* (1940) Section 1: *Twenty-One* and Section 2: *The Big Sea*

JAN 18 R --PRESENTATIONS ON READINGS:

REACTION #1: DUE Monday 22, January at 9:00 am on Weeks 1 & 2 readings assigned readings and the film *Langston Hughes: Dream Keeper* (4pts)

WEEK 3 AUTOBIOGRAPHY AS HISTORY 1902 TO 1930

JAN 23 T --READ: Langston Hughes, *The Big Sea* (1940) Section 3: *Black Renaissance*

JAN 25 R--PRESENTATIONS ON READINGS:

WEEK 4 POST-WORLD WAR I, THE TWENTIES and THE NEW BLACK PERSON

JAN 30 T --READ: Hughes, Selected Poems: "Dream Variations" (14), "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" (4), "Cross" (158),

"Harlem Night Song" (61), "When Sue Wears Red" (68), "Natcha" (72), "Mother to Son" (187).

****READINGS ON ELECTRONIC RESERVE in PDF format:** (1) George Schuyler, "Negro Hokum" *The Nation* (6/16/1926): 662-663. (2) Hughes, "The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain" *The Nation* (6/23/1926): 692. Hughes, "American Art or Negro Art" *The Nation* (8/18/1926): 151. 4) Hughes, "Harlem Literati in the Twenties", *Saturday Review* (6/22/40): 13-14.

PRESENTATIONS ON READINGS:

FEB 01 R --READ: Hughes, *The Weary Blues* (1926) [CP, 17-46]: ****"Introducing Langston Hughes To the Reader,"** and ****"Poem," "Dream Variation," "The Negro Speaks of Rivers (To w. .E. B. Du Bois)," "Cross," **"The Jester," "Harlem Night Song," **"Songs To The Dark Virgin," "When Sue Wears Red," **"Pierrot," "Natcha," **"Sick Room," **"To The Dark Mercedes of `El Palacio De Amor'," **"Poem,"**"Lament For Dark Peoples," **"Afraid," **"Disillusion," **"The White Ones," "Mother To Son," and **"Epilogue." "Water-Front Streets", "Port Town", "Young Sailor," and "Poem (To F.S.)," pp. 71, 74, 77, 95. ****Berry, Langston Hughes: *Before and Beyond Harlem*, pp. 185-6, and p. 347, fn. 10.****

PRESENTATIONS ON READINGS:

REACTION #2: DUE Monday 5, February at (9:00 am on Weeks 3 & 4 assigned readings (4pts)

WEEK 5 THE BLUES TRADITION: The Sacred and the Profane

FEB 06 T --READ: Langston Hughes, "*Blessed Assurance*" (1963) in *Black Like Us-A Century of Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual African American Fiction*, eds. Devon W. Carbado, Dwight A. McBride, and Donald Weise. San Francisco, Cleis Press, 2002, pp. 56-62

.SCREEN: *LOOKING FOR LANGSTON* (Isaac Julien, 1989) 45mins.:

PRESENTATIONS ON READINGS:

FEB 08 R --OPEN DISCUSSION ON Midterm Abstract and annotated bibliography

*****--Due Monday 12 February at 9:00 am - Midterm Paper Abstract & bibliography. SUBMIT ON CANVAS**

WEEK 6

FEB 13 T --READ: Hughes, *Selected Poems*: "The Weary Blues" (33) and "Bound No'th Blues" (174)

*****READINGS ON RESERVE:** Amritjit Singh et al., *The Harlem Renaissance: Revaluations*, read essays by Kathy J. Ogren "Controversial Sounds" pp. 159-184 and Joseph McLaren, "Early Recognitions" pp. 195-208.

*****POEMS AND ARTICLES ON ELECTRONIC RESERVE:** (1) Hughes, "Songs Called the Blues", *Pylon* (Summer 1941): 143-145. (2) *Fine Clothes to the Jew* (1927): *****"Homesick Blues", ***"Listen Here Blues", ***"Po' Boy Blues."**

FEB 15 R READ: *The Weary Blues* (1926): pp. 23-39, 105: "The Weary Blues," *****"Jazzonia," ***"Negro Dancers," **"The Cat and the Saxophone," ***"Young Singer," ***"Cabaret," ***"To Midnight Nan At Leroy's," ***"To A Little Lover-Lass, Dead," ***"Harlem Night Club," ***"Nude Young Dancer,"**

***"Young Prostitute," ***"To A *Black Dancer In 'The Little Savoy'," ***"Song For a Banjo Dance," ***"Blues Fantasy," ***"Lenox Ave: Midnight," and ***"Danse Africaine".

PRESENTATIONS ON READINGS:

WEEK 7 **SHORT STORIES**

FEB 20 T --READ: Hughes, *The Ways of White Folks* (1934):

FEB 22 R --READ: Hughes, *The Ways of White Folks* (1934):

PRESENTATIONS ON READINGS:

*****--Due Monday 26 February at 9:00 am - Midterm Paper & Bibliography Due Today (20 points).
SUBMIT ON CANVAS**

WEEK 8 **CREATING Theater for the Black Audience, Social Drama and African American Satire**

FEB 27 T --READ: Hughes, *Five Plays by Langston Hughes*: 'Mulatto' (1935) and 'Soul Gone Home' (1937)

***ON RESERVE: Abramson, *Negro Playwrights in the American Theatre*: "The Thirties" ch. III, pp. 44-88.

FEB 29 R --READ: *Five Plays by Langston Hughes*: 'Little Ham' (1935)

PRESENTATIONS ON READINGS:

REACTION #3: DUE: Friday 30, March at 9:00 am on Weeks 6, 7 & 8 assigned readings (4pts)

WEEK 9 SPRING BREAK MARCH 2 - 10

WEEK 10 **URBAN FOLK COMEDY: SPEECH AS INVENTIVE, PLAYFUL AND COMBATIVE**

MAR 12 T --READ: *Five Plays by Langston Hughes*: 'Simply Heavenly' (1956) and 'Tambourines to Glory' (1956)

MAR 14 R --READ: Hughes, *Selected Poems*: 'Note on Commercial Theatre', p. 190.

PRESENTATIONS ON READINGS:

WEEK 11

MAR 19 T --READ: Hughes, *I Wonder as I Wander* (1956) 1-2, 6-8

MAR 21 R --READ: Hughes, *I Wonder as I Wander* (1956) 3-5

WEEK 12 SCOTTSBORO, INTERNATIONALISM AND THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR

MAR 26 T --SCREEN: *Scottsboro: An American Tragedy* (2001, Barak Goodman) 1h30mins

--READ: ***READINGS ON RESERVE: Faith Berry, *Langston Hughes: Before and Beyond Harlem*. 154-234.

MAR 28 R --READ: Hughes, *The Panther and the Lash*: "Christ in Alabama", "Justice", "Ku Klux", "Merry-Go-Round", Frank B. Wilderson, III, "The Vengeance of Vertigo: Aphasia and Abjection in the Political Trials of Black Insurgents," *InTensions Journal* 5 (Fall / Winter 2011).

PRESENTATIONS ON READINGS:

REACTION #4: DUE: Monday 1, April at 9:00 am on Weeks 12 & 13 assigned readings and the film *Scottsboro: An American Tragedy* (4pts)

WEEK 13 1940-1950: HUAC, THE RED SCARE and BANNING

APR 02 T --READ: ***READINGS ON RESERVE: James O. Young, **Black Writers of the Thirties*, pp. 172-180; Faith Berry, ed., *Good Morning Revolution*, chapters 12-14, pp. 135-161.

CLASS PRESENTATIONS ON READINGS:

APR 04 R --READ: *ON ELECTRONIC RESERVE*: Hughes, "Negro Writers Have Been on a Blacklist"

Masses and Mainstream July 1957:46-8, *Sexton, Jared, "Ante-Anti-Blackness- Afterthoughts", *Lateral* Issue 1 (Spring, 2012). <http://www.yorku.ca/intent/issue5/articles/pdfs/frankbwildersoniiiarticle.pdf>

WEEK 14 THE SIXTIES: THE RACIAL POLITICS OF THE SECOND BLACK RENAISSANCE

APR 09 T READ: ON RESERVE: Hughes, *The Panther and the Lash*: "Angola Question Mark," "Bible Belt," "Birmingham Sunday," "Black Panther," "Bombings in Dixie," "Death in Yorkville," "Dinner Guest: Me," "Dream Deferred," "Final Call," "Frosting," "Go Slow," "Impasse," "Junior Addict,"

CLASS PRESENTATIONS ON READINGS:

APR 11 R READ: ON RESERVE: Hughes, *The Panther and the Lash*: "Last Prince of the East," "Lenox Ave Bar," "Militant," "Mother in Wartime," "Northern Liberal," "Office Building: Evening,"

"Official Notice," "Slum Dreams," "Special Bulletin," "Stokeley Malcolm Me," "Sweet Words On Race," "The Backlash Blues," "Undertow," "War," and "Words Like Freedom."

REACTION #5: DUE: Monday 15, April at 9:00 am on Week 14 assigned readings (4pts)

APR 14 MONDAY: Eight-Page Final Paper DUE Monday 15 April at 9AM: Midterm Paper & Bibliography (20 points).

WEEK 15 **FINAL PAPER PRESENTATIONS: APRIL 16-18**

APR 16 T **PRESENTATIONS**

APR 18 R **PRESENTATIONS**