

**ENGLISH 1113 SYLLABUS**  
**Literature of Slavery**  
*Spring 2010; 2-3:30 TTH; Par 208*

Professor Gretchen Murphy  
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**Texts and Supplies**

*Slave Narratives* Eds. Andrews and Gates  
Stowe *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (Penguin)  
Morrison *Beloved* (Vintage)

Reed *Flight to Canada* (Atheneum)  
Styron *Confessions of Nat Turner* (Vintage)

Required reading packet available at Jenn's Copy and Binding, 2200 Guadalupe St.

**Course Description**

Why read about slavery in a literature class? One reason is that such works raise questions that are central to understanding the power of literature. Much of this work is autobiographical or based on real-life events: where do we draw the line between fact and fiction or reality and representation? Much of this work was written to address or change real-life political situations: how do stories serve as arguments, and how do writers use language to motivate readers to change their minds about an issue? And much of this work deals with painful personal and cultural experiences, the unthinkable horror of being denied identity and self-ownership: how have writers attempted to make readers comprehend experiences far removed from their everyday lives? Throughout our method will be to read these works slowly and carefully, paying close attention to the language used and choices made by these authors.

**Grading:** Final grades will be determined on the basis of the following rubric. The University does not recognize the grade of A+.

A = 94-100	C = 74-76
A- = 90-93	C- = 70-73
B+ = 87-89	D+ = 67-69
B = 84-86	D = 64-66
B- = 80-83	D- = 60-63
C+ = 77-79	F = 0-60

**Assignments:** Students will write three papers practicing literary analysis of these works. Paper assignments will be distributed at least one week in advance of the draft due date. Drafts and revisions are required. (25%, 30%, 30% of total course grade).

**Late penalties:** Papers (including drafts) turned in late will be penalized. Papers will lose one third of a grade (A to A-, A- to B+, etc.) per day late, counting all weekdays). This is a harsh late policy, so please contact me in advance if you know you'll be unable to meet a deadline.

**Class participation.** Active participation makes up the remaining 15% of the final course grade. See the rubric below for class participation grades.

An A in class participation is earned by students who come to class consistently, are prepared for class by completing all reading and writing assignments, and regularly and voluntarily participate in large and small group discussion. Students who receive an A in class participation benefit the class in several ways. They not only express opinions on relevant subjects and answer questions posed by the professor, but they also listen, pose questions and address remarks to other students. If necessary, sometimes they hold back from speaking first to encourage others to speak up before they speak their minds.

An *A-/B+* in class participation is given to students who come to class consistently, are almost always prepared for class by completing most reading and writing assignments, and occasionally voluntarily participate in large and small group discussion.

A *B* in class participation is given to students who rarely participate voluntarily, but still come to class consistently, are prepared for class by completing most reading and writing assignments, and appear engaged by class discussion.

A *C* in class participation is earned by coming to class inconsistently, and by partially or inconsistently completing reading and writing assignments or completing them with evidence of little effort. “*C*” students may sometimes speak up in discussion, but because they aren’t always there and haven’t always done the reading, their contributions don’t outweigh the negative impact that their lack of engagement has on the class.

A *D* in class participation is earned by seldom coming to class (more than two weeks of unexcused absences –that’s four class sessions – over the course of the semester is grounds for a *D*) and coming to class consistently unprepared.

An *F* is earned for not coming to class for a major portion of the semester and not completing required reading and writing assignments.

Occasionally I will give pop **quizzes** to make sure that everyone is keeping up with the reading.

**How are we doing?** Once during the semester I’ll ask you to e-mail me a short letter responding to the class, including your reaction to the material we’ve read, your assessment of your own learning, and any suggestions you have for improving the class. But don’t wait for these letters to talk to me if you have an idea, comment or problem regarding the class – my office hours are set aside for you.

Readings are due on the day they appear. Readings marked *SN* appear in *Slave Narratives* (Andrews and Gates). Readings marked “packet” appear in the course packet.

1/19 Introductions	1/21 Douglass “Narrative of the Life,” <i>SN</i> 267-311
1/26 Douglass <i>SN</i> 311-368	1/28 Jacobs “Incidents in the Life” <i>SN</i> 745-782
2/2 Jacobs <i>SN</i> 782-863	2/4 Jacobs <i>SN</i> 863-947
2/9 Fitzhugh, from <i>Southern Thought</i> , Gibson “Douglass, Jacobs and the Slavery Debate” (packet)	2/11 Writing Workshop
2/16 Draft 1 due. Peer review	2/18 Stowe <i>Uncle Tom’s Cabin</i> 41-174
2/23 Revision 1 due. Self analysis.	2/25 Stowe <i>Uncle Tom’s Cabin</i> 174-370
3/2 Stowe <i>Uncle Tom’s Cabin</i> 370-466	3/4 Stowe <i>Uncle Tom’s Cabin</i> 466-end
3/9 James Baldwin, “Everybody’s Protest Novel,” Elizabeth Ammons “Heroines in Uncle Tom’s Cabin”; Langston Hughes “Uncle Tom” (packet)	3/11 “The Confessions of Nat Turner” <i>SN</i> 245-266
3/16 <b>Spring Break</b>	3/18 <b>Spring Break</b>
3/23 Styron <i>The Confessions of Nat Turner</i> 1-115	3/25 Styron <i>The Confessions of Nat Turner</i> 119-253
3/30 Styron <i>The Confessions of Nat Turner</i> 257-429	4/1 Styron <i>Afterward</i> , 431-455, Harding “You’ve taken my Nat and Gone,” Thelwell “Back with the Wind” (packet)
4/6 Draft 2 due. Peer review.	4/8 Morrison <i>Beloved</i> 1-59
4/13 Revision 2 due. Morrison <i>Beloved</i> 60-124	4/15 <i>Beloved</i> 125-195; Harper “The Slave Mother,” May “Margaret Garner and Seven Others” (packet)
4/20 Morrison <i>Beloved</i> 196-324; Moyers, “A Conversation with Toni Morrison” (packet)	4/22 Reed <i>Flight to Canada</i> 1-41
4/27 Reed <i>Flight to Canada</i> 142-137	4/29 Reed <i>Flight to Canada</i> 138-179; Reed “Neo-HooDoo Manifesto” (packet)
5/4 Draft 3 due. Peer review	5/6 Course conclusion; Revision 3 due.

There is no final exam for this course.