

E376M/AFR 374: The Harlem Renaissance

Spring 2010

MW: Please see course catalog

CAL: Please see course catalog

Instructor: Dr. Jennifer Wilks

Office: PAR 108

Office hours: Available upon request

Course Description

Long before the late-twentieth century arrival of Starbucks and Clintons, there was another Harlem Renaissance, a time during the 1920s and 1930s when African American artistic and cultural life flourished with Harlem as its epicenter. In this course we will draw upon nonfiction, fiction, and poetry not only to remember the Renaissance as traditionally portrayed in literary history, but also to *re-member* the movement, to piece together our own impressions of its people, places, and passions. Who were the leading figures of the Renaissance? What are the forgotten but no less important names? How did the movement's influence extend beyond the confines of upper Manhattan? In addition to these questions, we will also address how literary production complemented and contrasted with the politics, music, and fine art of the period. Our ultimate goal is not only to emerge with a broader picture of the Harlem Renaissance, but also to understand the period's significance as a pivotal transition in African American literary expression, one bridging the gap between Reconstruction literature of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries and urban literature of the mid-twentieth century.

Texts

Nella Larsen, *Passing*

George Samuel Schuyler, *Black No More*

Jean Toomer, *Cane*

Venetria Patton and Maureen Honey, *Double-Take: A Revisionist Harlem Renaissance Anthology (DT)*

Requirements

Course requirements include:

***Papers:** Two short papers, the first of which will be turned in as a complete, 4-page rough draft, revised, and resubmitted for a final grade, and a final critical essay. All papers must be formatted according to the guidelines of the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, available in libraries and bookstores.

***Reading responses:** Short responses on assigned readings. In most cases, I will provide questions or guidelines for each response, which you may be asked to share with the class. I will collect them at the end of class, and they will be graded with a **check-plus** (you are really *thinking* and *asking* questions), **check** (you completed the response), or **check-minus** (did you really read the assignment?). Responses will not be accepted late, and they should be typed (1-2 double-spaced pages).

If you are too ill to attend class on the day that an assignment is due, you may e-mail it to me as an attachment provided that I receive the e-mail and am able to open the attachment before class begins.

***Prompt, regular, and engaged attendance:** Attendance is required. Your participation in class discussion and group activities is just as important as the timely completion of written assignments.

Grading

Two short papers (4 pages each)

40%

Final critical essay (5-7 pages)	35%
Reading responses	15%
Rough draft (4 pages)	10%

Plus/minus grading will be used. The grading scale can be found on the course Blackboard site.

University Policy Notes

* Academic Integrity

“A fundamental principle for any educational institution, academic integrity is highly valued and seriously regarded at The University of Texas at Austin, as emphasized in the standards of conduct. More specifically, you and other students are expected to ‘maintain absolute integrity and a high standard of individual honor in scholastic work’ undertaken at the University (**Sec. 11-801**, *Institutional Rules on Student Services and Activities*). This is a very basic expectation that is further reinforced by the University's **Honor Code**. At a minimum, you should complete any assignments, exams, and other scholastic endeavors with the utmost honesty, which requires you to:

- acknowledge the contributions of other sources to your scholastic efforts;
- complete your assignments independently unless expressly authorized to seek or obtain assistance in preparing them;
- follow instructions for assignments and exams, and observe the standards of your academic discipline; and
- avoid engaging in any form of academic dishonesty on behalf of yourself or another student.”

This passage quoted from and additional information available at http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint_student.php

* Disabilities

Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, by calling 471-6259.

* Religious holidays

A student who misses an examination, work assignment, or other project due to the observance of a religious holy day will be given an opportunity to complete the work missed within a reasonable time after the absence, provided that he or she has properly notified the instructor. It is the policy of the University of Texas at Austin that the student must notify the instructor at least 14 days prior to the classes scheduled on dates he or she will be absent to observe a religious holy day. For religious holy days that fall within the first two weeks of the semester, the notice should be given on the first day of the semester. The student will not be penalized for these excused absences, but the instructor may appropriately respond if the student fails to complete satisfactorily the missed assignment or examination within a reasonable time after the excused absence.

Schedule
(subject to change)

Week One January 20	Introduction and course description
Week Two January 25 January 27	Introduction (<i>DT</i> xix-xxxix); Locke, "The New Negro" (Bb) Response 1 McDougald, "The Task of Negro Womanhood" (<i>DT</i> 103-108); Bonner, "On Being Young—a Woman—and Colored" (<i>DT</i> 109-12)
Week Three February 1 February 3	Schuyler, "The Negro-Art Hokum" (<i>DT</i> 36-9); Hughes, "The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain," (<i>DT</i> 40-4) Du Bois, "Criteria for Negro Art" (<i>DT</i> 47-51); Wright, "Blueprint for Negro Writing" (<i>DT</i> 52-60)
Week Four February 8 February 10	Peer Review Paper 1 (draft) Documentary screening
Week Five February 15 February 17	Library Instruction Session Paper 1 (final) <i>Cane</i> , "Karintha" - "Blood-Burning Moon"
Week Six February 22 February 24	<i>Cane</i> , "Seventh Street" - "Bona and Paul" Response 2 <i>Cane</i> , "Kabnis"
Week Seven March 1 March 3	<i>Passing</i> , Part One: Encounter Cullen, "Heritage" (<i>DT</i> 555-8) <i>Passing</i> , Part Two: Re-encounter
Week Eight March 8 March 10	<i>Passing</i> , Part Three: Finale Response 3 <i>Black No More</i> , Preface, Ch. 1-4
Week Nine March 15-19	Spring Break
Week Ten March 22 March 24	<i>Black No More</i> , Ch. 5-8 Response 4 <i>Black No More</i> , Ch. 9-13
Week Eleven March 29	Peer Review Paper 2 (draft)

March 31 Hughes, "The Negro Speaks of Rivers," "The Weary Blues" (*DT* 460, 464-5)

Week Twelve

April 5
April 7

Paper 2 (final)

McKay, "The Harlem Dancer," "If We Must Die," (*DT* 272-3)

Week Thirteen

April 12
April 14

Bennett, "Heritage," "To a Dark Girl," "Hatred" (*DT* 508-9)
Dunbar-Nelson, "Violets"; Georgia Douglas Johnson, "The Heart of a Woman"; Helene Johnson, "Bottled" (*DT* 147, 153, 602-3)

Response 5

Week Fourteen

April 19
April 21

Presentations

Presentations

Week Fifteen

April 25
April 27

Presentations

Presentations

Week Sixteen

May 3
May 5

Instructor-student conferences

Wrap-up, evaluations

*****Critical essay due Friday, May 11, at 5pm*****