E376R: African American Literature Through the Harlem Renaissance

Instructor: H. Woodard, Associate Professor
Unique # 34780; Cross-lists: AFR 372E 4; #29400
Semester: Spring 2016; 10-11am (MWF); Par 204
Flags: Cultural Diversity; writing component

Prerequisites: A) Completion of at least thirty semester hours of coursework, including E 603A, RHE 306, 306Q, or T C 603A, and a passing score on the reading section of the Texas Higher Education Assessment (THEA) test. B) English 316K, 603B, Comparative Literature 315, or Tutorial Course 603B. C) Nine semester hours of coursework in English or rhetoric and writing.

Description:
This course is an introduction to select African-American literature—slave narratives, poetry, novels, essays—in a tripartite format that extends from slavery to Reconstruction through the Harlem Renaissance. The course proposes two primary objectives rooted in past and present literary representations of slavery. Thematizing “the trope of the talking book,” (Henry Louis Gates, Jr.’s The Signifying Monkey), the course first examines seminal slave narratives, e.g. the literature of the enslaved as discursive strategies, from self-actualization and resistance to early formations of a black literary discourse. The course historicizes issues pertinent to the development of an African-American literary tradition, such as critical race theory, double consciousness or the struggle for self-identity, as complicated by issues pertaining to class, race, and gender. These paradigms are presented through stylistic forms that include the oral vernacular tradition, blues ideology, and folk culture. In the third and final unit, the course examines an unprecedented flourishing of seminal literature, art, music, and culture produced throughout the Harlem Renaissance.

REQUIRED READING:
Classic Slave Narratives, Henry Louis Gates, Jr.
Complete Writings, Phillis Wheatley.
The Marrow of Tradition, Charles Chesnutt.
Autobiography of an Ex Colored Man, James Weldon Johnson
Their Eyes Were Watching God, Zora Neale Hurston
The Portable Harlem Renaissance Reader, David Levering Lewis

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:
.75 Three critical essays (25% each; 5-6 pages per essay,
   typed, double spaced)
   One major critical essay revision; see separate handout.
.15 Response papers, (1-2 pages; typed, ds, based on course readings)
   reading quizzes; class participation
.10 Group presentations (TBA)

ATTENDANCE:
Regular attendance is required. More than four absences will be sufficient grounds for failure in the course. The four allowed absences would include illness, deaths of relatives, and other emergencies. If you are more than five minutes late or leave before class ends (without permission), you will be counted absent for that class. You are responsible for all work covered in your absence.

CLASS POLICIES:
The course contains select readings from African American literature from slavery through the Harlem Renaissance. Three lecture hours a week for one semester. The subject of each class meeting may be determined from the assigned reading for the day (see course schedule). The instructor retains the right to vary this syllabus. Absolutely no make-up for reading quizzes. In exchange, the lowest quiz grade will be dropped. Except under extreme emergencies, and then only with the permission of the professor, late assignments will not be accepted. I reserve the right to make these decisions on a case by case basis. You must bring your books to class and complete all reading assignments by the first day of class discussion for that text. Students are expected to turn in all required assignments on the agreed upon due date at the beginning of class. Papers turned in during or after class on the due day will be considered late. Use the MLA (Modern Language Association) Handout for all papers. Type papers on white, 8.5" x 11" paper, using one side only. Bind pages with a paper clip.

ADDITIONAL POLICIES:
Documented Disability Statement: The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259 (voice) or 232-2937 (video phone), or visit http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd.

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Honor Code: The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

Academic: Any work submitted by a student in this course for academic credit will be the student's own work. For additional information on Academic Integrity, see http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acadint.php.

Religious Holy Days: By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of a pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, I will give you an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Web Site: Canvas.

GRADING SCALE: Final grades will be determined on the basis of the following rubric. Please note that to ensure fairness, all numbers are absolute, and will not be rounded up or down at any stage. Thus, a B- will be inclusive of all scores of 80.000 through 83.999. The University does not recognize the grade of A+.

A (94-100); A- (90-93); B+ (87-89); B (84-86); B- (80-83); C+ (77-79); C (74-76); C- (70-73); D+ (67-69); D (64-66); D- (60-63); F (0-59).
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<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>1/20</td>
<td>Introduction to course; policies, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri</td>
<td>1/22</td>
<td>Olaudah Equiano, Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano or Gustavus Vassa, Ch 1-3.</td>
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<td>Mon</td>
<td>1/25</td>
<td>Equiano. Ch 4-5.</td>
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<td>Fri</td>
<td>1/29</td>
<td>Equiano, Ch 8-10.</td>
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<td>Mon</td>
<td>2/1</td>
<td>Equiano, Ch 11-12.</td>
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| Wed  | 2/3    | Narrative of Frederick Douglass. Introduction, Ch 1-3.  
**CRITICAL ESSAY I DUE (TBA).** |
| Fri  | 2/5    | Narrative of Frederick Douglass. Ch 4-6                                  |
| Mon  | 2/8    | Narrative of Frederick Douglass. Ch 7-9                                  |
| Wed  | 2/10   | Narrative of Frederick Douglass. Ch 10-11.                               |
| Fri  | 2/12   | Mary Prince, History of Mary Prince.  
**Response paper I due (TBA).** |
| Mon  | 2/15   | History of Mary Prince.                                                  |
| Wed  | 2/17   | History of Mary Prince.                                                  |
| Fri  | 2/19   | History of Mary Prince.                                                  |
| Mon  | 2/22   | Poems of Phillis Wheatley, Introduction.  
“To the University of Cambridge”  
“On Being Brought From Africa To America.”  
“[Letter] To Samson Occom” |
| Wed  | 2/24   | Phillis Wheatley, Complete Writings  
“To the University of Cambridge  
“To the Right Honourable William, Earl of Dartmouth”  
“On the Death of the Rev. George Whitefield”  
“On the Death of General Wooster” |
| Fri  | 2/26   | Wheatley, Complete Writings  
“A Farewell To America”  
“To His Excellency General Washington”  
“[Letter and Reply] To George Washington”  
“[Letters] To the Countess of Huntingdon” |
| Mon  | 2/29   | **Group I presentation: TBA.** |
Unit II: RECONSTRUCTION

Wed 3/2 Charles Chesnutt, The Marrow of Tradition. (Chaps 1-9).

   Critical essay II TBA.

Mon 3/7 Charles Chesnutt, The Marrow of Tradition. (Chaps 20-29).


Fri 3/11 Charles Chesnutt, The Marrow of Tradition. (Chaps 30-37).

[MARCH 14-19 (MONDAY – SATURDAY) SPRING BREAK]

Mon 3/21 James Weldon Johnson, Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man


Fri 3/25 James Weldon Johnson, Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man

Mon 3/28 James Weldon Johnson, Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man

Wed 3/30 James Weldon Johnson, Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man
   Response paper II: TBA.

UNIT III: THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE

Fri 4/1 Lecture and discussion, introduction to The Portable Harlem Renaissance.
   Defining The Harlem Renaissance through performance aesthetics.
   “Photographer James Van Der Zee and ‘the book of the Dead.’”


Wed 4/6 Langston Hughes, “The Negro Speaks of Rivers, 257
   Countee Cullen, “Heritage,” 244.

Fri 4/8 Hughes, “I too Sing America,” 257; “Mulatto,” 262.
   Cullen, “Yet Do I Marvel,” 244; Claude McKay, “If We Must Die,” 290.

   Helene Johnson, “Sonnet To a Negro in Harlem,” 277.
   CRITICAL ESSAY III DUE (TBA).

   Helene Johnson, “The Harlem Dancer.”


Mon 4/18 Group IV, Visual artists: “Aaron Douglass, Romare Bearden, Augusta Savage & Jacob Lawrence.”
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<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 4/20</td>
<td>Zora Neale Hurston, Their Eyes Were Watching God, conclusion.</td>
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<td>Fri 4/22</td>
<td>Zora Neale Hurston, Their Eyes Were Watching God</td>
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<td>Mon 4/25</td>
<td>Zora Neale Hurston, Their Eyes Were Watching God</td>
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<td>Wed 4/27</td>
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<td>Fri 4/29</td>
<td>Zora Neale Hurston, Their Eyes Were Watching God</td>
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<td>Mon 5/4</td>
<td>Zora Neale Hurston, Their Eyes Were Watching God Response paper III TBA.</td>
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MAJOR REVISIONS FOR CRITICAL ESSAY I or II DUE LAST CLASS DAY |