

ENGL 4381/5381
 Major African/African American Writers:
 William Wells Brown, Martin Delany, and Frances Ellen Watkins Harper
 Fall 2014
 MWF 12-12:50
 Irby Hall 304
 Course Number: 19436/19473

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COURSE OVERVIEW

This course will focus on nineteenth-century texts by three authors: William Wells Brown, Martin Delany, and Frances Ellen Watkins Harper. Taken together, their literary output was extensive, and we will consequently encounter a wide range of texts over the course of the semester, including a slave narrative, play, novels, poems, letters, and speeches. Moving largely chronologically, considering the works of one author before moving on to the next one, we will work toward an understanding of African American literature of the period more broadly. Secondary sources (by Goddu, Ernest, Chiles, and McGill) will help us situate the texts within the larger networks of nineteenth-century African American print culture. In considering how contemporary readers encountered the texts on our reading list, we will give particular attention to the venues of their publications. Specifically, we will give thought not only to the material form of the book but also to the periodical, for some of the texts appeared in newspapers and literary journals. Serialization (the publication of texts in installments over a period of time) and ephemeral print (publications such as newspapers that, in their material forms, were not intended to last) will thus be key concepts. Part of our inquiry involves interrogating the terms comprising the course title. How does one define a “major” writer? As a modifier of “writer,” “African American” seems to imply authorial identity, but might it be a more complicated cultural marker? Related questions follow: What avenues to reading, authorship, and publishing were available to African Americans in the nineteenth century? What were some of the defining concerns and aesthetic forms of African American literature of the period, and what do they illuminate about American literary history?

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- To become familiar with the work of three important writers of the nineteenth century.
- To recognize some of the historical, political, and cultural forces relevant to the production of literature and to the development of a print culture among African Americans.
- To think critically about the formation of literary histories.
- To become adept at implementing the principles of literary analysis.
- To hone reading, writing, analytical, and research skills.

TEXTS

- William Wells Brown, *Clotel; or, The President's Daughter*. Penguin.
- William Wells Brown, *The Escape; or, A Leap for Freedom*. Cosimo.
- William Wells Brown, *My Southern Home; or, The South and Its People*. Dodo.
- Martin Delany. *Blake; Or, the Huts of America*. Random.
- Frances E. W. Harper, *Iola Leroy; or, Shadows Uplifted*. Dover.
- Frances E. W. Harper, *A Brighter Coming Day: A Frances Ellen Watkins Harper Reader*. Feminist Press.
- Electronic texts available on Blackboard—to be printed and brought to class.

ATTENDANCE, PREPARATION, PARTICIPATION, CIVILITY

Attendance. More than three absences/instances of tardiness is considered excessive. Three absences (for whatever reason) will not alter one's grade; however, each subsequent absence/tardiness will result in the deduction of five points from the forty total participation points. Please be aware that seven absences,

regardless of the reasons, will result in a grade of WF/F for the course. To be counted as present, arrive on time and bring to class the readings to be discussed. A few texts—primarily secondary works of scholarship—have been placed on Blackboard (indicated with “**BB**” on the day-by-day schedule) and must be printed and brought to class. (Reading from an iPad or similarly-sized flat device is permitted; reading from a smart phone or laptop is not permitted.)

Preparation: To prepare for class, read the assigned material, take notes, post to Blackboard, read your classmates’ discussion questions, and arrive prepared to contribute thoughtful ideas.

Participation and Civility: This course is discussion-based, its success depending on the contributions of the participants. If a full schedule or personal matters will prevent full participation, please take the course another time. Extend respect and courtesy to one another and to the literature. In this spirit, remain engaged for the duration of the class. Take care to power down and put away all electronic devices before class begins. Make it a point to voice comments and questions every class while being respectful and considerate of others so that no one person dominates the discussion.

REQUIREMENTS

The course is designed so that each assignment builds on the previous one. Twice a week, you will post to Blackboard questions generated by the readings to be discussed in the upcoming class. Idea papers provide an opportunity to expand on those questions. Halfway into the semester, you will submit an abstract that details the focus of your upcoming short paper and subsequent expanded paper. Reading and talking with one another no doubt will contribute to the development of our ideas, and the structure of the course—discussion-based with several small writing assignments, culminating in a larger research paper and presentations—is intended to facilitate that development.

Blackboard Questions: On Sundays and Tuesdays by 11 p.m., submit to Blackboard one discussion question provoked by the readings assigned for the following day’s class. (You need not post on days for which a Workshop is scheduled or a paper is due—unless a new reading has also been assigned.) These questions will help structure the lecture and discussion. Late submissions will not be accepted.

Five Writing Workshops: Writing workshops provide the opportunity to offer feedback on your classmates’ writing and receive feedback on your own. A complete draft of the upcoming paper is required for admittance to the workshops, and participation is assessed according to quality of offered feedback.

Three Idea Papers (2 pages): These short papers provide the opportunity to develop ideas generated from the course readings, discussion, and Blackboard posts. Late Idea Papers will not be accepted.

Abstract (1-2 pages): The abstract should articulate the basic questions that your short paper will address, preview how your argument will unfold, and situate your argument among critical conversations.

Short Paper (4-5 pages): Follow through on the argument described in the abstract. Incorporate 3-4 secondary sources. Late papers are marked down half of a letter grade for each day they are late. **(Graduate students: Prepare a short paper 7-8 pages in length, and incorporate 4-5 secondary sources.)**

Expanded Paper (8-10 pages): This paper will build on the short paper. It should demonstrate that feedback on the short paper has been addressed and that additional research has shaped the argument (citing 7-8 total secondary sources). Late papers are marked down half of a letter grade for each day they are late. Submit the short paper with comments along with the expanded paper. **(Graduate students: Prepare expanded papers 12-14 pages in length with 10-12 secondary sources.)**

Presentations On the days that the short paper and long paper are due, each student will deliver a short presentation.

Essay Exams: Successful exams will demonstrate a thorough understanding of the texts, place them within cultural and historical contexts, and incorporate literary terminology covered in class. **(Graduate students: In lieu of the exams, prepare an annotated bibliography [8 sources, each annotation 150-200 words] along with an introductory essay [7-8 pages].)**

POINT DISTRIBUTION

Undergraduate		Graduate	
Blackboard Questions (20 @ 2 points each)	= 40	Blackboard Questions (20 @ 2 points each)	= 40
Workshops x 5 (5 @ 6 points each)	= 30	Workshops x 5 (5 @ 6 points each)	= 30
Idea Papers x 3 (3 @ 20 points each)	= 60	Idea Papers x 3 (3 @ 20 points each)	= 60
Abstract	= 20	Abstract	= 20
Short Paper	= 50	Short Paper	= 50
Expanded Paper	= 100	Expanded Paper	= 100
Presentations (2 @ 10 points each)	= 20	Presentations (2 @ 10 points each)	= 20
Exams (2 @ 40 points each)	= 80	*Annotated Bibliography + essay	= 75
		*Discussion Lead	= 30
Total Points	= 400	Total Points	= 450
		(Asterisk denotes distinction from undergraduate requirements.)	

Points will be converted to percentages to yield final grades according to the following scale:

90% - 100%	= A
80% - 89%	= B
70% - 79%	= C
60% - 69%	= D
Below 60%	= F

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The University of Central Arkansas affirms its commitment to academic integrity and expects all members of the university community to accept shared responsibility for maintaining academic integrity. Students in this course are subject to the provisions of the university's Academic Integrity Policy, approved by the Board of Trustees as Board Policy No. 709 on February 10, 2010, and published in the Student Handbook. Penalties for academic misconduct in this course may include a failing grade on an assignment, a failing grade in the course, or any other course-related sanction that the instructor determines to be appropriate. Continued enrollment in this course affirms a student's acceptance of this university policy.

THE WRITING CENTER is eager to help you work on your writing at any stage of development. To make an appointment, submit a paper for online tutoring, or to find out about drop-in hours, visit <http://www.uca.edu/writingcenter/appointment.php>. They also offer useful online resources at http://www.uca.edu/writingcenter/online_resources.php. **The Academic Success Center** is also available to help you with all aspects of college work. Please check them out at <http://www.uca.edu/ucollege/asc.php>.

EVALUATIONS

Student evaluations of a course and its professor are a crucial element in helping faculty achieve excellence in the classroom and the institution in demonstrating that students are gaining knowledge. Students may evaluate courses they are taking starting on the Monday of the twelfth week of instruction through the end of finals week by logging in to myUCA and clicking on the Evals button on the top right.

Title IX disclosure: If a student discloses an act of sexual harassment, discrimination, assault, or other sexual misconduct to a faculty member (as it relates to "student-on-student" or "employee-on-student"), the faculty member cannot maintain complete confidentiality and is required to report the act and may be required to reveal the names of the

parties involved. Any allegations made by a student may or may not trigger an investigation. Each situation differs and the obligation to conduct an investigation will depend on those specific set of circumstances. The determination to conduct an investigation will be made by the Title IX Coordinator. For further information, please visit: <https://uca.edu/titleix>. *Disclosure of sexual misconduct by a third party who is not a student and/or employee is also required if the misconduct occurs when the third party is a participant in a university-sponsored program, event, or activity.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES SUMMARY An Emergency Procedures Summary (EPS) for the building in which this class is held will be discussed during the first week of this course. EPS documents for most buildings on campus are available at <http://uca.edu/mysafety/bep/>. Every student should be familiar with emergency procedures for any campus building in which he/she spends time for classes or other purposes.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

If you have questions about the university's academic policies, guidelines regarding sexual harassment, or any other matters, please consult the relevant sections of the UCA Student Handbook. UCA adheres to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you need an accommodation under this Act due to a disability, contact the UCA Office of Disability Services at 450-3135.

Day-By-Day Syllabus

F Aug. 22	Introduction to the class
Week One	
M Aug. 25	Goddu, "The Slave Narrative as Material Text" (BB)
W Aug. 27	Brown, "Introduction" + "Narrative" (5-40)
F Aug. 29	Goddu and Brown, Continued
Week Two	
M Sept. 1	Labor Day, No Class
W Sept. 3	Writing Workshop #1 ; Discuss thesis statements
F Sept. 5	Idea Paper #1 Due ; Graff and Birkenstein, "So what? Who cares?" (BB)
Week Three	
M Sept. 8	Brown, <i>Clotel</i> (43-91)
W Sept. 10	<i>Clotel</i> (92-171)
F Sept. 12	<i>Clotel</i> (172-209)
Week Four	
M Sept. 15	<i>Clotel</i> , continued, and Ernest, "The Profession of Authorship and the Cultural Text: William Wells Brown's <i>Clotel</i> " (BB)
W Sept. 17	Brown, <i>The Escape</i> (3-48)
F Sept. 19	Dr. Leavell's attending a conference, No Class
Week Five	
M Sept. 22	<i>The Escape</i> , Continued and Ernest, "Introduction" (ix-li) (BB)
W Sept. 24	Writing Workshop #2
F Sept. 26	Idea Paper #2 Due ; Research Methods; <u>Meet in Torreyson #117</u>
Week Six	
M Sept. 29	Delany, <i>Blake</i> (Introduction + 1-55)
W Oct. 1	Delany, <i>Blake</i> (55-108)
F Oct. 3	Delany, <i>Blake</i> (108-59)

Week Seven

M Oct. 6	Delany, <i>Blake</i> (159-214)
W Oct. 8	Delany, <i>Blake</i> (214-63)
F Oct. 10	Delany, <i>Blake</i> (263-313)

Week Eight

M Oct. 13	Writing Workshop #3 ; Review for Midterm
W Oct. 15	Idea Paper #3 Due ; “Within and Without Raced Nations: Intratextuality, Martin Delany, and <i>Blake; or the Huts of America</i> ” (BB)
F Oct. 17	Fall Break, No Class

Week Nine

M Oct. 20	Midterm
W Oct. 22	Harper, Introduction (3-39), Poems: “The Soul” (56-7), “Eliza Harris” (60-61), “The Slave Mother” (58-59), “Tennessee Hero” (79-81)
F Oct. 24	Harper, Poems (TBD); McGill, “Frances Ellen Watkins Harper and the Circuits of Abolitionist Poetry” (BB)

Week Ten

M Oct. 27	Harper, Poems (TBD)
W Oct. 29	Harper, <i>Iola Leroy</i> (7-72)
F Oct. 31	Harper, <i>Iola Leroy</i> (73-138)

Week Eleven

M Nov. 3	Abstracts Due ; Harper, <i>Iola Leroy</i> (139-204)
W Nov. 5	Harper, <i>Iola Leroy</i> (205-281);
F Nov. 7	Research Methods; <u>Meet in Torreyson #117</u>

Week Twelve

M Nov. 10	Research Methods; <u>Meet in Torreyson #117</u>
W Nov. 12	Writing Workshop #4
F Nov. 14	Short Paper Due; Presentations

Week Thirteen

M Nov. 17	Brown, <i>My Southern Home</i> (1-53)
W Nov. 19	Brown, <i>My Southern Home</i> (54-116)
F Nov. 21	Brown, <i>My Southern Home</i> (117-73)

Week Fourteen

M Nov. 24	Brown, <i>My Southern Home</i> (174-208)
W Nov. 26	Thanksgiving, No Class
F Nov. 28	Thanksgiving, No Class

Week Fifteen

M Dec. 1	Writing Workshop #5
W Dec. 3	Expanded Paper Due; Presentations ; Review for Final Exam
F Dec. 5	Study Day, No Class
Final Exam: Wednesday, Dec. 10 (11 am – 1 pm)	