

Image of Women in African American Literature- Syllabus

Instructor	Dr. Maurice A. Lee	E-mail	mauricel@uca.edu
Phone	Tel. No. 501, 450-5137 Fax. No. 501, 450-5185	Office Hours	11:00am-12:00 Noon: TWTh. and by Appointment
Office	Room 120 Irby Hall	COURSE NUMBERS CRN NUMBERS	4304, 5304 23562, 23832

Text:

Texts: 1) *Cane*, Jean Toomer; 2) *Sula*, Toni Morrison; 3) *Quicksand and Passing*, Nella Larsen; 4) *Uncle Tom's Children*, Richard Wright; 5) *A Raisin in the Sun*, Lorraine Hansberry, and 6) *The Color Purple*, Alice Walker.

Description:

Course Description: This course will examine the period in literary history from the end of the 19th century until the period known as the Civil Rights movement, in which the emergence of African/African-American culture impacted on the society profoundly through art, music, literature, theatre, politics, religion, and education. For this course, the emphasis will be on the literature, primarily, with references to the other areas as the texts dictate. Although Blacks were migrating to many areas of the country from the South, Harlem in New York became the mecca for most of the writers to get published and hone their skills. We will examine the various themes that emerged from the end of the Civil War until the start of the Vietnam War, focusing on both the forces that led to the development of the Black culture; the emergence of a period known as the "Harlem Renaissance," the development of modernism and post-modernism and its impact on the literature, as well as the issues which fed and fueled the emergence of what Alain Locke described as "the new Negro." Key to the discussion will be developing an understanding of the "Black aesthetic" pertinent to writers, critics, and readers, and the concept of how African/African-American Literature strove to become a universal literature. Students should view their discussion, scholarship, and writing as an ongoing progression to understanding, knowledge, and insight, rather than a fact finding mission for a permanent or "correct" answer.

Underscoring much of this new identity were stereotypes associated with the Black culture. In particular, the Black female became a subject of much interest as writers attempted to codify her identity in the larger scheme of the Black image. This course will examine those many images with an attempt to better understand how they were structured in the texts; what role they played in the plot development of the novels as well as the impact of the Black female on the Black culture during the period in question. The emergence of the Black female writer was critical during the sixty to seventy years of our study, and much of the class will be spent in examining and discussing and evaluating this emergence.

Course Objectives: The objective of this course is for students to demonstrate their command of the humanities' skills pertinent to an understanding of the material and its contents. Students must develop sufficient knowledge of the culture (period and times), the literature, and writers in order to do scholarly work reflecting the period of the renaissance. Such knowledge is demonstrated through examinations, quizzes, class discussions, and research papers. Accordingly, students must have the appropriate writing skills for courses at the 4000, 5000 level. Finally, the objective is for students to come to a point of informed and intelligent discourse on the various literary and scholarly issues related to African/African-American Literature in general and more specifically to the image of women in this literature.

Requirements:

Students are required to attend class, to prepare the material before class, i.e., to read the assigned texts, to be prepared to discuss material for that class period, and to behave in a manner befitting serious college students. Classes will start and end on time and students are required to be seated by the start of class at 9:25am. **No eating or drinking of any kind is allowed in class.** Roll is taken at each class and students must check with the professor during the semester, if there is any question about absences or tardiness. Students are allowed two unexcused absences and two times for tardiness before the grade is reduced for these infractions. Students are required to review all of the policies in the Student Handbook pertinent to classroom behavior and policies, in particular the **Sexual Harassment Policy**, and the **Academic Policies**. Please note that the use of cell phones, beepers, pagers, and all other electronic devices not associated with the class is prohibited. Since it is impossible to list the assortment of behaviors that may impact on the intellectual atmosphere in the classroom, as a general rule, students should deport themselves in such a manner as to reflect positively on the learning experience. If there is uncertainty in this area, it is the responsibility of the student to confer with the professor for clarity.

Plagiarism is the willful use of the thoughts, words, ideas, language, and material of someone else as your own. Such behavior, the worst violation of academic principles, will not be tolerated and may result in suspension from the class as well as the university. Students who plagiarize on an assignment will receive an F for that assignment plus a drop of one letter in the overall grade. Students who plagiarize more than once will be suspended from class and will be recommended to the disciplinary committee for dismissal from the university. Students are advised that much of the material on the internet is not reliable; so students should check these resources before using them in their research papers. The professor will discuss this in more detail in class.

Evaluation:

Students will be graded on the following: 1) Attendance and Preparation; 2) Discussion; 3) Four Fifty (50) point quizzes: Two Announced, Two Unannounced; 4) One Mid-Term: One Hundred (100) points; 5) One Final (100) points; 6) One Research Paper: One Hundred (100) points. Percentages of these grades for the course are as follows:

Attendance, Preparation, and Discussion: 25%; Quizzes: 10%; Mid-term: 20%; Final: 25%; Research Paper: 20%. There will be two additional assignments, by student request only, and if time permits, for extra grading. Please note that quizzes may not be made up regardless of reason for absence and missing them. The mid-term and final may be made up if the appropriate excuse is presented to the professor prior to the examinations, unless there is an emergency of such nature as to prevent this request. Research papers must be handed in on time. There are no extensions of the research paper deadline unless there is a request to the professor in writing to which he agrees.

Disabilities Statement: “The University of Central Arkansas adheres to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you need accommodation under this act due to a disability, contact the Office of Disability Support Services at 450-3135.”

Image of Women in African-American Literature-- Course Schedule

Week	Day	Date	Assignment
1	Th.	Jan. 15 th	Introduction to the Course and Images
2	Tu.	Jan. 20 th	<i>Cane</i> : Jean Toomer (Focus on female images in first half of text)
2	Th.	Jan. 22 nd	<i>Cane</i> : Discussion Continues
3	Tu.	Jan. 27 th	<i>Cane</i> : Discussion Continues (Focus on second half of text)
3	Th.	Jan. 29 th	<i>Cane</i> : Discussion Ends
4	Tu.	Feb. 3 rd	<i>Sula</i> : Toni Morrison (Discussion on female adolescent versus adult images)
4	Th.	Feb. 5 th	<i>Sula</i> : Discussion Continues
5	Tu.	Feb. 10 th	<i>Sula</i> : Discussion Continues
5	Th.	Feb. 12 th	<i>Sula</i> : Discussion Ends Quiz over both <i>Cane</i> and <i>Sula</i>
6	Tu.	Feb.17 th	<i>Quicksand and Passing</i> : Nella Larsen: Discussion of Stereotypes of Images
6	Th.	Feb.19 th	<i>Quicksand and Passing</i> : Discussion Continues
7	Tu.	Feb. 24 th	<i>Quicksand and Passing</i> : Discussion Continues
7	Th.	Feb. 26 th	<i>Quicksand and Passing</i> : Discussion Continues
8	Tu.	March 3 rd	<i>Quicksand and Passing</i> : Discussion Continues.
8	Th.	March 5 th	<i>Quicksand and Passing</i> : Discussion Continues
9	Tu.	March 10 th	Mid-Term Examination on the four books read to date.
9	Th.	March 12 th	<i>Uncle Tom's Children</i> : Richard Wright (Discussion on male writer and female images)
10	Tu.	March 17 th –	<i>Uncle Tom's Children</i> : Discussion Continues Mid-Term Exam. Returned
10	Th.	March 19 th	<i>Uncle Tom's Children</i> : Discussion Continues
10 & 11	Sat - Sun.	Mar.21 st – 29 th	Spring Break: Be prepared to discuss <i>A Raisin in the Sun</i> on the 31st upon your return.

12	Th.	March 31 st	<i>A Raisin in the Sun</i> : Lorraine Hansberry (Discussion) Discussion of research paper guidelines – Attendance Required
12		April 2 nd	<i>A Raisin in the Sun</i> : Discussion Continues
13	Tu.	April 7 th	<i>A Raisin in the Sun</i> : Discussion Continues
13	Th.	April 9 th	<i>A Raisin in the Sun</i> : Discussion Continues Quiz
14	Tu.	April 14 th	<i>The Color Purple</i> : Alice Walker. Discussion. First draft of Research Paper due.
14	Th.	April 16 th	<i>The Color Purple</i> : Discussion Continues
15	Tu.	April 21 st	<i>The Color Purple</i> : Discussion Continues.
15	Th.	April 23 rd	<i>The Color Purple</i> : Discussion Continues
16	Tu.	April 28 th	Course Review and/or Catch up on any texts if needed.
16	Th.	April 30 th	Research Papers Due: Continuation of Course Review, if needed.
16 and 17		May 1st Friday is Study Day, known as “Dead Day.” Your Exam is scheduled for May Tuesday May 5th in this room from 8:00 to 10:00 AM.	May 4-8 is Final Examination Week. Please bring examination Blue Books. The Examination is given as scheduled. Note: students who want their papers should pick them up in the professor’s office after May 15 th or leave a self addressed envelope on the day of the examination. Please put enough postage on envelope for mailing. All examinations are kept on file for three to five years.

Because the professor for this class is also the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts, there may be the rare occasion when he will have to be absent to attend to other business associated with the university. On such occasions another professor will be in charge of the class; you will be informed well in advance of such occasions, but your attendance will be required as is the norm for this class.

Professor Maurice A. Lee