Metropolitan State University

LIT 361 : African-American Literature

A. Course Description

Credits: 4

Prerequisites: WRIT 131 Writing I or have instructor's permission.

Lab Hours/ Weeks: Corequisites: None

Lecture Hours/ Week :

MnTC Goals: Goal LS - Upper Division Liberal Studies , Goal 06 - Humanities/Fine Arts , Goal 07 - Human Diversity

Through films, poetry, autobiography, novels, lyrics, and short essays, this intermediate-level survey course explores African-American literature from a historical perspective ranging from the works of enslaved authors to contemporary spoken-word poetry. The course celebrates the historical and aesthetic development of African-American literary arts in the face of (often legalized) racial oppression. Students learn techniques and theories for critical reading to explore literary issues related to culture, race, and social history. Significant focus is given to issues of race and racism in this literature course.

B. Course Effective Dates: 09/06/1999 - 08/16/2017 08/17/2017 - Present

C. Outline of Major Content Areas:

See Course Description for major content areas.

D. Learning Outcomes (General)

1. Conduct literary analysis that is responsive to details and to complexities of text and themes in African-American literature (i.e., race as a social and learned construction, micro and macro examples of racism, effects of white supremacy on individual and ethnic group experiences; responses to personal and institutionalized racism) at a level consistent with the analytical and expressive complexity and sophistication that are distinctly characteristic of upper-division courses at comprehensive universities.

2. Articulate substantial and clearly presented responses to examples of agency, resistance, self-determination and resiliency in the works of African-American literature at a level consistent with the analytical and expressive complexity and sophistication that are distinctly characteristic of upper-division courses at comprehensive universities.

3. Contextualize themes, perspectives, and elements of African-American literature within the evolution of U.S. social issues, from enslavement to Jim Crow, Civil Rights struggles to the end of the Obama era, to contemporary American discourse on race, at a level consistent with the analytical and expressive complexity and sophistication that are distinctly characteristic of upper-division courses at comprehensive universities.

4. Demonstrate familiarity with genres and subgenres of African-American literature and understand the development and characteristics of these subgenres (i.e., the neoclassical poetry of the enslaved; fugitive slave autobiography; animal fable and other folktales; spirituals; romantic, sentimental and modern poetry; novels; short stories; oratory, gospel, and blues; cinema of the black middle classes and radical blaxploitationists; funkifiers; dramatists; memoirists; rappers and pop stars; break beat poets; and post-soul novelists) at a level appropriate for upper-division courses.

5. Interpret works of African-American literature, applying an understanding of biographical and/or cultural grounding in racialized constructs depicted in the texts (i.e., enslavement, emancipation, passing, double-consciousness, colorism, segregation, enfranchisement, Civil Rights, discrimination, institutionalized racism, etc.) at a level consistent with the analytical and expressive complexity and sophistication that are distinctly characteristic of upper-division courses at comprehensive universities.

6. Know the historical and aesthetic development of African-American literary arts (i.e., slave narratives, Harlem Renaissance, Black Arts Movement, hip hop, contemporary) at a level consistent with the analytical and expressive complexity and sophistication that are distinctly characteristic of upper-division courses at comprehensive universities.

7. Become highly proficient integrating literary evidence in the student's own writing, including standard MLA formatting and citation practices, at a level consistent with the analytical and expressive complexity and sophistication that are distinctly characteristic of upper-division courses at comprehensive universities.

8. Read and respond to African-American literature with intelligence and sensitivity to the legacy of racism over time and the lingering effects of white supremacy on the shape, hopes, fears, themes, freedoms, constraints, and challenges to artistic, educational, and political institutions at a level consistent with the analytical and expressive complexity and
9. Understand and apply literary terms, theoretical concepts, reading strategies, and analytical methods connected to the study of African-American literature (i.e., critical race theory, intersectionality, post-colonialism, place in the African diaspora, white supremacy, white privilege) at a level consistent with the analytical and expressive complexity and sophistication that are distinctly characteristic of upper-division courses at comprehensive universities.

E. Learning Outcomes (MN Transfer Curriculum)

Goal LS - Upper Division Liberal Studies
None

Goal 06 - Humanities/Fine Arts
1. Articulate an informed personal reaction to works in the arts and humanities.
2. Understand those works as expressions of individual and human values within an historical and social context.
3. Engage in the creative process or interpretive performance.
4. Demonstrate awareness of the scope and variety of works in the arts and humanities.
5. Respond critically to works in the arts and humanities.

Goal 07 - Human Diversity
1. Demonstrate an awareness of the individual and institutional dynamics of unequal power relations between groups in contemporary society.
2. Analyze their own attitudes, behaviors, concepts and beliefs regarding diversity, racism, and bigotry.
3. Understand the development of and the changing meanings of group identities in the United States' history and culture.
4. Describe and discuss the experience and contributions (political, social, economic, etc.) of the many groups that shape American society and culture, in particular those groups that have suffered discrimination and exclusion.
5. Demonstrate communication skills necessary for living and working effectively in a society with great population diversity.

G. Special Information

Racial Issues Graduation Requirement