**ESSEX COUNTY COLLEGE**

**Humanities Division**

**ENG 237 – Survey of African American Literature**

**Course Outline**

**Course Number & Name:** ENG 237 Survey of African American Literature

**Credit Hours:**  3.0 **Contact Hours:**  3.0 **Lecture:** 3.0 **Lab:**  N/A **Other:**  N/A

**Prerequisites**: Grade of “C” or better in ENG 102

**Co-requisites:** None **Concurrent Courses:** None

**Course Outline Revision Date:**  Spring 2011

**Course Description**: This course offers a complete survey of American literature from the perspective of African American writers beginning with the literature of slavery and freedom dating from the 1700s, including the Vernacular Tradition, through the protest writings of modern times, presented with an emphasis on the literature’s historical development.

**General Education Goals**: ENG 237 is affirmed in the following General Education Foundation Categories: **Humanistic Perspective** and **Global and Cultural Awareness of Diversity**. The corresponding General Education Goals are respectively as follows: Students will analyze works in the field of art, music, or theater; literature; and philosophy and/or religious studies; and will gain competence in the use of a foreign language; and Students will understand the importance of global perspective and culturally diverse peoples.

**Course Goals:** Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to do the following:

1. discuss fundamental concepts utilized in the study of African American literature; and

2. apply critical and analytical analysis techniques to literary works.

**Measurable Course Performance Objectives (MPOs)**: Upon successful completion of this course, students should specifically be able to do the following:

1. Discuss fundamental concepts utilized in the study of African American literature:

* 1. *define basic terms and concepts used in literary discussion;*
  2. *discuss how these literary terms and concepts function in each literary work studied;* and
  3. *recognize and describe individual writers and their work from each period that help explain universal and diverse themes in the literature*

**Measurable Course Performance Objectives (MPOs)** (continued):

2. Apply critical and analytical analysis techniques to literary works:

2.1 *discuss the implications of literary criticism of African American texts;*

2.2 *write several short critical and analytical essays about selected works studied;*

2.3 *write a longer critical literary research essay about a work relevant to the course;*

2.4 *use the library, Internet, and other resources to find relevant, scholarly source material in support of the thesis in the critical literary research essay;*

2.5 *write in one’s own voice in the essays while properly incorporating primary and secondary material;* and

2.6 *use appropriate citations from the source to support the development of the thesis idea following Modern Language Association (MLA) style format in the critical essay and in the critical literary research essay*

**Methods of Instruction**: Instruction will consist of lectures, discussions, and the development of critical and analytical essays, one of which is a critical literary research essay.

**Outcomes Assessment:** Quiz questions are blueprinted to course objectives.Checklist rubrics will be used to evaluate critical and analytical essays for MLA documentation and the various elements of African American literary thought for the presence of course objectives. Rubrics will be used to evaluate recognition of literary terms and concepts specific to African American literature in sampled writing assignments. Data is collected and analyzed to determine the level of student performance on these assessment instruments in regards to meeting course objectives. The results of this data analysis are used to guide necessary pedagogical and/or curricular revisions.

**Course Requirements:** All students are required to:

1. Complete the reading and analysis of selected texts.

2. Write three multi-page critical and analytical essays using MLA style format.

3. Write one multi-page critical literary research essay with documentation in MLA style format.

4. Take at least three quizzes as scheduled.

**Methods of Evaluation:** Final course grades will be computed as follows:

**% of**

**Grading Components final course grade**

* **3 or more Multi-page Critical and Analytical Essays 50%**

(to be assigned by instructor)

Essays will provide evidence of the extent to which students meet course objectives including, but not limited to, recognizing how literary terms and concepts function in African American literature, using appropriate citations in MLA style to support the development of the thesis, and maintaining one’s own voice throughout the essay while properly incorporating primary and secondary source material into the critical essay. In addition, the student will consider the implications of literary criticism of African American texts.

* 1 Critical Literary Research Essay (to be assigned by instructor) 30%

The critical literary research essay will provide evidence of the extent to which students meet course objectives including, but not limited to, writing a longer critical research essay about a work relevant to the course, using citations appropriately from the source work to support the thesis of the critical research essay, using the library, internet, and other resources to find scholarly secondary source material, writing in one’s own voice, and using MLA style formatting for documentation.

* 3 or more Quizzes (dates specified by instructor) 20%

Quizzes will provide evidence of the extent to which students meet course objectives including, but not limited to, defining basic terms and concepts used in literary discussion, recognizing individual writers and their works from each period that help explain universal and diverse themes in African American literature, recognizing how these themes function in each literary work studied, and using those terms, concepts, and themes as the basis for literary analysis.

**Academic Integrity:** Dishonesty disrupts the search for truth that is inherent in the learning process and so devalues the purpose and the mission of the College. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following:

* plagiarism – the failure to acknowledge another writer’s words or ideas or to give proper credit to sources of information;
* cheating – knowingly obtaining or giving unauthorized information on any test/exam or any other academic assignment;
* interference – any interruption of the academic process that prevents others from the proper engagement in learning or teaching; and
* fraud – any act or instance of willful deceit or trickery.

Violations of academic integrity will be dealt with by imposing appropriate sanctions. Sanctions for acts of academic dishonesty could include the resubmission of an assignment, failure of the test/exam, failure in the course, probation, suspension from the College, and even expulsion from the College.

**Student Code of Conduct:** All students are expected to conduct themselves as responsible and considerate adults who respect the rights of others. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. All students are also expected to attend and be on time for all class meetings. No cell phones or similar electronic devices are permitted in class. Please refer to the Essex County College student handbook, *Lifeline*, for more specific information about the College’s Code of Conduct and attendance requirements.

**Course Content Outline:** based on the text (required for adjunct instructors/optional for full-time faculty) by Gates, Jr, Henry Louis and Nellie Y McKay. *The Norton Anthology of African American Literature, 2nd Edition.* New York: WW Norton & Company, 2004. ISBN #: 0-393-97778-1

**Week Content/Topics**

1 Course Introduction/Class Syllabus Review

The Vernacular Tradition: Spirituals, Gospel, the Blues, Jazz, Secular Rhymes and Songs; Ballads and Work Songs; Songs of Social Change, Rhythm and Blues, Hip Hop, Sermons and Prayers, Folktales

2 The Vernacular Tradition: Listening to Selections Included on the Audio Companion; the Literature of Slavery and Freedom, 1746 – 1865: Jupiter Hammon, Venture Smith, Lucy Terry, Olaudah Equiano, Phillis Wheatley, David Walker, George Moses Horton, Sojourner Truth

3 The Literature of Slavery and Freedom: Maria W Stewart, Martin R Delaney, Harriet Jacobs, William Wells Brown, Elizabeth Keckley, Frederick Douglass, Frances E W Harper, Harriet E Wilson

**First Quiz**

4 **First** **Critical and Analytical Essay Due**

Literature of the Reconstruction to the New Negro Renaissance, 1865 – 1919: Charlotte Forten Grimke, Booker T Washington, Charles W Chesnutt, Anna Julia Cooper, Ida B Wells-Barnett, W E B Du Bois, James Weldon Johnson, Paul Laurence Dunbar, William Stanley Braithwaite

5 Harlem Renaissance, 1919 – 1940: Arthur A Schomburg, Angelina Weld Grimke, Anne Spencer, Jessie Redmon Fauset, Alain Locke, Georgia Douglas Johnson, Marcus Garvey, Claude McKay, Zora Neale Hurston, Nella Larsen

6 Harlem Renaissance: Jean Toomer, Rudolph Fisher, Marita Bonner, Sterling A Brown, Gwendolyn Bennett, Arna Bontemps, Langston Hughes, Countee Cullen, Helene Johnson

7 **Second** **Quiz**

Realism, Naturalism, Modernism, 1940 – 1960: Melvin B Tolson, Dorothy West, Richard Wright, Chester B Himes, Ann Petry, Robert Hayden

8 Realism, Naturalism, Modernism: Ralph Ellison, Margaret Walker, Gwendolyn Brooks, James Baldwin, Bob Kaufman, Lorraine Hansberry

**Second Critical and Analytical Essay Due**

9 The Black Arts Era, 1960 – 1975: Mari Evans, Hoyt Fuller, Malcolm X, John A Williams, Martin Luther King Jr, Etheridge Knight, Addison Gayle Jr, Audre Lorde, Amiri Baraka, Sonia Sanchez

**Week Content/Topics**

10 The Black Arts Era: Ed Bullins, Eldridge Cleaver, A B Spellman, June Jordan, Lucille Clifton, Jayne Cortez, Larry Neal, Ishmael Reed, Michael S Harper, Toni Cade Bambara, Maulana Karenga, Haki R Madhubuti, Nikki Giovanni

Critical Literary Research Essay Preparation Begins

11 **Third Quiz**

Literature since 1975: Maya Angelou, Paule Marshall, Toni Morrison, Ernest J Gaines, Clarence Major, Leon Forrest, John Edgar Wideman, Samuel R Delaney, Sherley Anne Williams, Alice Walker

Critical Literary Research Assignment: Evaluating Critical Essays about Black Texts

12 **Third** **Critical and Analytical Essay Due**

Literature since 1975: August Wilson, Octavia Butler, Charles Johnson, Ntozake Shange

Research Preparation: Evaluating Internet and Other Sources

13 Literature since 1975 (continued): Gayl Jones, Jamaica Kincaid, David Bradley, Gloria Naylor, Rita Dove

Research Review: Documenting Research Materials using MLA Style Format

14 Literature since 1975 (continued): Walter Mosely, Harryette Mullen, Essex Hemphill

Research Preparation: Review of the Works Cited Page

15 Literature since 1975 (continued): Caryl Phillips, Edwidge Danticat, Colson Whitehead

**Critical Literary Research Essay Due**