English

Black American Literature

Dr. Terrance Donohue 3

X

Charles D. Donohue

Ron Drazan 4/11/75

4/11
3/2

completed

12/24/75

Shirley A. Gay

TO: Senate Curriculum Committee

FROM: Charles T. Donohue

RE: Proposal for graduate English course, Black American Literature

Topic Outline

POETRY--The Folk Tradition; Early Versifiers; The Emergence of the Black Poet; The Harlem Renaissance; Contemporary Poets; The New Black Poet. FICTION--The Fiction of Slavery; The Fiction of Class and Caste; Fiction of the Harlem Renaissance; Contemporary Fiction. DRAMA--Early Black American Folk Drama; Negro Life as Seen by White Playwrights; Plays by Black Writers for the Contemporary Theater; Black Revolutionary Theater.

College Catalogue Description

An intensive study of the development of Black American Literature in its major genres. Specific topics and themes will change from time to time.

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I. Title: Black American Literature

Department: English

Sponsor: Dr. Terrance Donohue

II. Essence

A. Graduate

B. 3 semester hours credit

C. Graduate English elective

D. No prerequisites

E. The course will be worked into the cycle of English electives.

III. Other details

A. The present staff is adequate and no additional resources are needed.

B. The library facilities are adequate.

C. No additional office or classroom space will be required.

D. The course is unique among graduate English offerings since black American authors are treated peripherally, if at all, in other courses.

E. Specific Objectives:

1. To develop in the graduate student a sensitivity of and appreciation of the literary values of a body of American literature too frequently neglected at the graduate level.

2. To acquaint the student with the most important works of such major twentieth-century black writers as Charles Chesnutt, W.E.B.DuBois, Langston Hughes, Richard Wright, Gwendolyn Brooks, Ralph Ellison, and James Baldwin.

3. To acquaint the student with the particular thematic and formal concerns of Black American literature and with aspects of the social, cultural and political life it reflects.

4. To give the student instruction and practice in the use of the tools of literary research and criticism.

IV. Rationale

The diversity and richness of Black American literature, its unique thematic and formal characteristics, can be better understood and appreciated when the literature is studied as the central concern of a course rather than incidentally or peripherally in a broader based course in American literature.