

**Library Resource Form Required for New Courses**

Submission Deadlines: Fall - October 11, 2005 Spring - February 14, 2006

**TITLE** African American Literature Since Harlem Renaissance

Sponsor(s) Tanya Clark e-mail: clarkt@rowan.edu  
e-mail:  
e-mail:

**DEPARTMENT** English  
**College** LAS

If LAS-check:  History/Humanities  Social/Behavioral Sciences  
 Math/Science

UNDERGRADUATE

Minor changes  
 Request new or revised course description  
 Writing Intensive  
 Multicultural-Globe  
 Changes to General Education degree or program  
 New or Existing Education Bank:  
 Fine/Performing Arts Humanities  
 LAS: Social Behavior  LAS: Math/Science  
 Communication Studies

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**Signatures Required: representing approval before submission to Office of the Senate**

Department Chair: Cindy Bell Date: 2/10/06  
Department CURRICULUM Chair: Rebecca J. ... Date: 2/9/2006  
Academic DEAN: Diana ... Date: 2-13-06

COLLEGE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE: Open Hearing Date:                       
Approved:                       
Not Approved:                     

Signature: College Curriculum Chair                     

Signature: SENATE CURRICULUM CHAIR                       
Date: 3/27/06

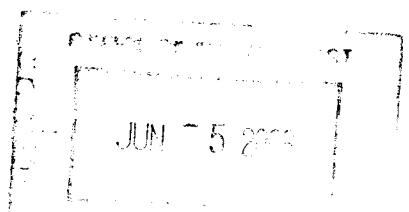
Comments:                       
                    

Signature: Executive Vice President/Provost:                       
Date: 4/21/06

Approved:                       
Not Approved:                     

Signature: REGISTRAR                       
Date: 5/30/06 Course Description Received & Approved  
Hegis Taxonomy & Course # ENGL 02.316

Notification Forward:  SCC CHAIR  Academic Dean  
 IR  Department Chair  
 CAP  VP/Student Affairs



## Course Proposal

### Details

- A. African American Literature Since Harlem Renaissance (1502.316)
- B. Sponsor: Dr. Tanya Clark
- C. Credit Hours: 3
- D. Course Level: Junior (300 level); Non-Gen Ed, M/G
- E. Prerequisites: None
- F. Implementation: Approximately every spring semester beginning Spring 2007

### Curricular Effect

- A. Offerings: Since this course is an elective, no other course will have to be dropped or offered less often if adopted.
- B. Adequacy of Present Resources: Presently, Dr. Tanya Clark is the specialist in African American Literature and would be the primary instructor for this course. However, the Department has three other full-time faculty members who, as specialists in American Literature, are qualified to teach the course—Dr. Catherine Parrish, Dr. Barbara Patrick, and Dr. Joseph Coulombe.
- C. Recommended Library Resources: The current course, Survey of African American Literature (1502.216), has adequate library resources; therefore, this course will be sufficiently supported. See the attached Library Resource Form from Phyllis Meredith, our Library Liaison, for specific details.
- D. Short-term Evaluations: N/A

### Rationale

Implementing the course African American Literature Since Harlem Renaissance (1502.316) will be of tremendous value to our students and the English Department. First, this course will provide students with the opportunity to study the large and important body of African American literature with a depth and range not possible with the current class, Survey of African American Literature, which covers the Colonial Period to the present. The current class needs to be split into two parts: African American Literature Through Harlem Renaissance (1502.216) and African American Literature Since Harlem Renaissance (1502.316). While the body of work known as African American literature is already sizeable, it is constantly growing. Scholars in this field are rediscovering Colonial and 19<sup>th</sup>-Century texts by people of African descent as well as reconfiguring the canon of

African American literature. Also, as the current boom in the market of contemporary African American literature suggests, new writers have enhanced the field tremendously. These trends have opened up new scholarly and pedagogical opportunities. Offering two distinct yet complementary courses in African American literature, would not only give students more time to analyze conventional literary forms, for example studying a representative cross-section of slave narratives or reading novels in their entirety rather than excerpts, but also allow them to explore genres not traditionally considered literary but are of critical importance to African American culture such as slam poetry, spoken word, music, and the visual arts. Additionally, the critical and historical context that is virtually impossible to separate from the literature could be treated adequately. As a result, students who decide to continue their education in graduate school will have a sturdy foundation to build from, especially after taking both classes. They would have the confidence to enter into a field related to African American or American culture, or even one that focuses on issues of race or gender because they would have studied a minority culture extensively.

Second, African American Literature Since the Harlem Renaissance (1502.316) will strengthen the English Department, bringing balance to its offerings. Currently the English Department offers our majors only three classes designated Multicultural/Global, the aforementioned Survey of African American Literature, U.S. Literature of Latino and Hispanic Peoples, and Women in Literature, which are all 200 level courses. A new Multicultural/Global course adds variety and diversity, and the 300-level designation will provide a rigorous study. Overall, this change would reflect the Department's commitment to diversity and align it with other University English Departments, such as Temple, Rutgers, and Columbia that offer African American literature in two parts.

### **Essence of the Course**

- A. Objectives: See the attached sample syllabus with objectives.
- B. Topical Outline/Content: See the attached sample syllabus with content. The sample syllabus identifies a particular theme for the semester. The broad catalog description gives the instructor creative license to specify a certain theme, approach, or focus.
- C. Evaluation of Students and Grading Procedure: See the attached sample syllabus with grading procedures.
- D. Course Evaluation: The assessment of the success of the course in meeting its objectives will be as it is for other courses: student evaluations, Departmental review, class observations, and self evaluation.

**Results of Consultations**

See the attached Letters of Consultation by Diane Ashton, Director of American Studies, and Corann Okorodudu, Director of African American Studies, in support of African American Literature Since Harlem Renaissance (1502.316).

**Catalog Description**

See the attached Catalog Description

**THIS FORM MUST BE COMPLETED FOR ALL CURRICULUM PROPOSALS**

The purpose of this form is to provide a channel of communication between the Campbell Library staff and faculty when changing and designing new courses/programs. The information will be used to assess the resources available in the library, and to identify resources the library should acquire to support the course/program. The information will also provide the rationale for institutional support for library acquisitions. This form should be completed in a coordinated effort between the course sponsor(s) and the academic department liaison librarian.

**Note:** Sponsor(s) complete parts A & B  
If assistance is required to complete, please notify the librarian liaison.  
Forward this form to the librarian who will complete parts C, D & E

**When form is completed, attach to the original curriculum proposal before submitting to the Senate office.**

A. College: Liberal Arts & Sciences

Department: English

Proposed by: Dr. Tanya Clark

Date: 2-1-06

COURSE TITLE: African American Literature ~~Since~~ Harlem Renaissance

Anticipated Date for Course/Program Offering:

**B. List specific resources that should be acquired to support this course.**

The Library's current holdings and databases are adequate for this course.

**C. Describe the resources available in the library to support this course/program, including reference, monographic, electronic databases, audio-visual materials, etc. A summary statement is sufficient.**

See attached

**D. List key periodicals available in the library to support this course/program.**

**E. Librarian comments & recommendations:**

LIBRARIAN LIAISON: Phyllis MEREDITH

Signature: Phyllis Meredith

C. Campbell Library has over 500 monographs under the keyword heading of African American Literature. The library subscribes to many electronic resources that can be used for this course. A few of them include;

- i. Academic Search Premier
- ii. JStor
- iii. MLA International Bibliography
- iv. Project Muse
- v. Cultural Briefings
- vi. Humanities
- vii. First Search
- viii. Communication Studies
- ix. Ethnic News Watch
- x. LitFinder

D. Campbell Library currently subscribes to 25 print periodicals that can be used for the purposed course African American Literature I & II. Students conducting research for this course have access to hundreds of periodicals using electronic journals or participating in the library's inter-library loan program.

E. Campbell Library has sufficient monographs, periodicals and electronic resources to support research for the proposed course. If specialized materials are needed, such as new databases or journal subscription the library's collection development committee will make the decision following the request.

## **African American Literature Since Harlem Renaissance (1502.316)**

### **THE QUEST FOR SELF-ACTUALIZATION: CONSTRUCTING IDENTITY, DEFYING INVISIBILITY, AND RESISTING STEREOTYPES**

#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This is a chronological survey of African American literature published since the Harlem Renaissance that focuses on the theme of identity. The course takes its name from Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*, considered by some scholars to be the quintessential identity novel of the twentieth century. In the novel, the title character fights to be understood by a hostile society that refuses to see beyond the exterior of his black, male self. Only when he is able to understand his invisibility in relationship to society is he able to achieve self-actualization. This journey toward self-discovery and awareness provides a fitting context for the identity theme. We will focus on the oral and written narratives in which people of African descent have attempted to define themselves, either collectively or individually, and in doing so have had to confront their complex cultural heritage, becoming reconciled to the values inherent therein. We will examine how characters like the "Invisible Man" and, as a portion of the texts are autobiographical, the authors themselves, struggle to develop a sense of self and carve out their space in the world. Furthermore, our investigation into African American authorship is not only a literary analysis but also a historical study. While we will analyze a variety of texts, such as songs, sermons, essays, short stories, autobiography, plays, and poetry, to see the various ways in which African Americans have defined themselves, we will not stop at discerning meaning and understanding form. We will also consider how the changing historical milieu impacted, shaped, and influenced the literature. In other words, we will examine the various motifs associated with the theme of identity as they have manifested themselves in the twentieth-century and contemporary eras and across genres. For example, how did the evolving social status of blacks affect their literary activity? And what of other conditions such as race relations, political activism, region, war, and religion? In addition to figuring out what a text means or seeing how blacks negotiated their identity through writing, our goals this semester are to understand how people of African descent came to write what they did and to know why African American literature took on the various shapes it did.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

1. To identify the general historical, social, and political contexts within which the African American literary tradition develops
2. To trace the development of the theme of identity within and across periods of the African American literary tradition
3. To identify the various ways in which the individual and collective search for identity has manifested itself with the literary tradition
4. To understand the connection between the individual and collective processes

5. To identify the African American literary movements and their relationship to the search for cultural identity
6. To engage closely with literary and cultural texts from different genres and eras
7. To develop effective communication and writing skills
8. To develop critical thinking skills through analysis and evaluation of competing arguments and interpretations

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADES**

(To pass this course, all assignments must be completed)

<b>Participation</b> (class discussion, pop quizzes, etc.)	<b>10%</b>
<b>Group Presentation</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>5-7 Page Paper</b> (4 total)	<b>80%</b> (20% each)

I am happy to support the English Department's plan to offer two new courses on African American Literature to replace the single course on that topic the Department previously offered. American Studies students will benefit from the expanded array of courses on this important topic. I am particularly pleased that one of the new courses will be offered at the 300 level. American Studies students must take at least 5 courses at the 300 or 400 level and this new course will help them to meet that requirement. The new courses will be added to the list of courses approved for American Studies as soon as they become available.

Sincerely,

Dianne Ashton

Dr. Tanya Clark  
Assistant Professor  
English Department  
Rowan University

February 10, 2006

Dear Dr. Clark:

Thank you for your email request for consultation regarding curriculum changes, in which you propose to restructure the current course in African American Literature to allow for the offering of two courses: African American Literature Through Harlem Renaissance (covering the colonial period to the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century) and African American Literature Since Harlem Renaissance (covering from the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century to the present). We concur that these changes would better reflect the extensive and significant body of African American Literature that exists and add to the pool of undergraduate courses that can fulfill the University's Multicultural/Global Requirement.

African American Literature is a requirement for the African American Studies Concentration. Since, as proposed, African American Literature Through Harlem Renaissance is not a prerequisite for African American Literature Since Harlem Renaissance, students pursuing the African American Studies Concentration will be able to use either course to fulfill the African American Literature Requirement. In addition, students in the Concentration will have the option of expanding their knowledge of African American Literature by taking both courses.

Therefore, in my role as Coordinator of African American Studies, I am deeply pleased to support the proposed curricular changes.

Sincerely,

Corann Okorodudu, Professor of Psychology &  
Coordinator, African American Studies

**African American Literature Since Harlem Renaissance (1502.316)**  
**Catalog Description**

3 s.h.

This course examines themes and issues commonly found in African American literature published since the Harlem Renaissance. We will analyze such theories of racial consciousness as invisibility, Black Power, and the Black Aesthetic, bearing in mind how certain historical, political, social, and cultural factors influenced the literature. While understanding the complex notions of race will be our focus, we will also consider how (or if) racial identity blends with other key components of the self such as gender, class, and nationality. We will read a variety of texts—from novels and plays to poetry and song lyrics—by authors Richard Wright, Gwendolyn Brooks, Ralph Ellison, Lorraine Hansberry, Malcolm X, August Wilson, Toni Morrison, Edwidge Danticat, Percival Everett and others.