

ENGL 139s - Black American Literature

Section 1 (3 credits)
Spring 2009

“The profound mistake of Reverend Wright's sermons is not that he spoke about racism in our society. It's that he spoke as if our society was static; as if no progress has been made; as if this country - a country that has made it possible for one of his own members to run for the highest office in the land and build a coalition of white and black; Latino and Asian, rich and poor, young and old -- is still irrevocably bound to a tragic past. But what we know -- what we have seen - is that America can change.”

~ "A More Perfect Union" Barack Obama, 2008

Dr. Sandra L. Staton-Taiwo

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Office: 219 ISTC

Office Hours:

- I am always available *by appointment*, and I do schedule mandatory meetings during the semester. Otherwise, my scheduled hours for this Fall 2008 semester are as follows:
 - Tuesday/Thursday 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM
 - Wednesday 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Class Meeting Time

Tuesday/Thursday	112 MAIN	9:20 - 10:35 PM	SECTION 1
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In case of a two-hour delay, refer to the snow schedule: <http://www2.vk.psu.edu/currentstudents/snowsched.shtml>

Description

ENGL 139S (GH;US) Black American Literature (3) Fiction, poetry, and drama, including such writers as Baldwin, Douglass, Ellison, Morrison, and Wright.

Purpose

The purpose of this course is to acquaint students with the literature of Black America in the context of American traditions as well as to incorporate First-Year Seminar (FYS) goals:

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

Expectations

What you can expect of me:

- to help facilitate your learning experience
- to speak clear enough and slow enough for you to understand the lessons, the assignments, and the expectations for the class
- to adhere to the syllabus and the assignments and expectations detailed on it--HOWEVER, I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus as needed, but I will provide ample notice in class of changes to be made
- to answer any question you may have until you have the answer you need
- to respect you and your needs and to treat all students equally and fairly
- to provide opportunities for you to display your maturity and competence as an adult
- to be respectful to each person in the classroom environment

What I expect of you:

- to take responsibility for your learning experience
- to come to class and participate
- to complete required assignments or accept the consequences
- to complete assignments in a manner that showcases your best self
- to know due dates and assignments listed in the syllabus and announced in class
- to communicate to me any issues that you may have with the class or with any expectations BEFORE the end of the semester
- to know that I have office hours outside of class if you need extra help
- to be respectful to each person in the classroom environment

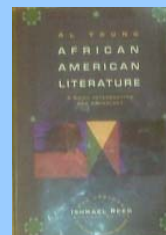
COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To understand certain literary terms when analyzing fiction, drama, and poetry in general
- To read various essays and criticism about black literature and/or black American culture
- To understand the slave narrative and its influence on the protest tradition of black American literature in general
- To apply literary terms and literary criticism to short and long fiction, drama, and poetry
- To analyze poetry and criticism and compose compositions that apply cultural criticism
- To gain confidence while presenting one's thoughts before one's peers
- To satisfy the six FYS objectives:
 1. academic success and survival
 2. critical thinking
 3. communication skills
 4. mentoring
 5. research
 6. computer literacy

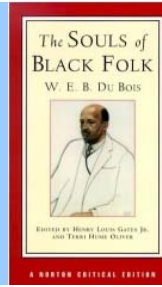
COURSE MATERIALS

Required Texts

Young, Al, Ed. *African American Literature: A Brief Introduction and Anthology*. New York: Addison-Wesley Educational Publishers, 1996.



Du Bois, William E. B. *The Souls of Black Folk*. Norton Critical ed. New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1999.



Other Requirements

- Internet & ANGEL Access (for downloading handouts and uploading assignments)
- Familiarity with ANGEL
- A good handbook of literary terms, such as Abrams, Oxford, or Bedford (or access terms on-line: http://web.cn.edu/kwheeler/lit_terms.html)
- A Good Dictionary--a copy in/for class (When on-line, you may also visit www.Dictionary.com OR www.Webster.com)

COURSE SCHEDULE

TEXTS

AAL - African American Literature
SBF - The Souls of Black Folk

DO = We'll / You'll "DO" it in class | DUE = You'll submit it in the ANGEL drop box by Midnight

DATES	Topic & Reading Assignments	Writing/Speaking Assignments
January 13, 15	<p>TERMS & TOPICS: close reading; feminism/womanism, slave narrative</p> <p>FEATURED WRITERS: Barack Obama, Toni Morrison, Jamaica Kincaid</p> <p>Tuesday: Focus: Obama speech, "A More Perfect Union;" Jamaica Kincaid, "Girl" (AAL, 310-11)</p> <p>Thursday: Focus: Morrison "Recitatif" (AAL, 209-225); introduction to F. Douglass</p>	<p>Tuesday: DO: Introductions</p> <p>Thursday: DUE: Reflection journal entry as QUIZ grade</p>
January 20, 22	<p>TERMS & TOPICS: Post-Traumatic Slave Syndrome, authorial voice, fame-shame culture</p> <p>FEATURED WRITERS: Frederick Douglass, Harriet Jacobs, Charles W. Chestnut</p> <p>Tuesday: Focus: Jacobs "Incidents" (AAL, 17-20); Douglass <i>Narrative</i> (AAL, 21-25)</p> <p>Thursday: Focus: Chestnut "The Wife of His Youth" (AAL, 89-98)</p>	<p>Tuesday: DUE: Nothing REQUIRED</p> <p>Thursday: DO: Announced Syllabus Quiz</p>
January 27, 29	<p>TERMS & TOPICS: symbol, counter-insurgency, coming-of-age story</p> <p>FEATURED WRITERS: Zora Neale Hurston, Richard Wright</p> <p>Tuesday: Focus: Hurston "How It Feels to Be Colored Me:" & "Sweat" (AAL, 99-108)</p> <p>Thursday: Focus: Wright "Blueprint for Negro Writing" & "Almos' a Man" (AAL, 115-125)</p>	<p>Tuesday: DUE: Nothing REQUIRED</p> <p>Thursday: DUE: Nothing REQUIRED</p>
February 3, 5	<p>TERMS & TOPICS: Black Aesthetics, Afrocentricity</p> <p>FEATURED WRITERS: Langston Hughes, W. E. B. Du Bois</p>	<p>Tuesday: DUE: Nothing REQUIRED</p> <p>Thursday: DUE: Nothing REQUIRED</p>

	<p>Tuesday: Focus: Hughes "The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain:"</p> <p>Thursday: Focus: Du Bois "Criteria for Negro Art" Du Bois, <i>The Souls of Black Folk</i> : "Of The Coming of John" (SBF 142-154).</p>	
February 10, 12	<p>TERMS & TOPICS: ideology, signifying, semiotics</p> <p>FEATURED WRITERS: Ernest Gaines, Alice Walker</p> <p>Tuesday: Focus: Gaines "The Sky is Gray" (AAL, 226-249)</p> <p>Thursday: Focus: Walker "Nineteen fifty-five" (AAL, 285-297)</p>	<p>Tuesday: DUE: Nothing REQUIRED</p> <p>Thursday: DUE: Nothing REQUIRED</p>
February 17, 19	<p>TERMS & TOPICS: idelect, dialect, other-mothering</p> <p>FEATURED WRITERS: Gloria Naylor, Toni Cade Bambara</p> <p>Tuesday: Focus: Naylor "Kiswana Browne" (AAL, 312-321)</p> <p>Thursday: Focus: Bambara "The Lesson" (AAL, 270-276)</p>	<p>Tuesday: DUE: Nothing REQUIRED</p> <p>Thursday:</p>
February 24, 26	<p>TERMS & TOPICS: patriarchal, catharsis, dramatic monologue</p> <p>FEATURED WRITER: Bill Ellis</p> <p>Tuesday: Focus: Ellis "He Who Endures" (AAL, 507-521)</p> <p>Thursday: Focus: Ellis "He Who Endures" (AAL, 522-535)</p>	<p>Tuesday: DO: Drama Rama</p> <p>Thursday: DO: Drama Rama</p>
March 3, 5	<p>TERMS & TOPICS: assimilation, paradox, segregation</p> <p>FEATURED WRITER: Booker T. Washington</p> <p>Tuesday: Focus: Washington, "The Struggle for an Education"</p> <p>Du Bois, <i>The Souls of Black Folk</i> : "The Sorrow Songs" (SBF 154-64). Thursday: Focus: Washington, "The Atlanta Exposition Address & "The Secret of Success in Public Speaking"</p>	<p>Tuesday: DUE: Nothing REQUIRED</p> <p>Thursday: DO: Mid-Term and evaluations</p>
March 10, 12	SPRING BREAK!	
March 17, 19	<p>TERMS & TOPICS: double-consciousness, irony, open form</p> <p>FEATURED WRITER: W. E. B. Du Bois, Phillis Wheatley, George Moses Horton, Frances E. W. Harper, James Weldon Johnson</p> <p>Tuesday: Focus: Du Bois, Introduction & "Forethought" (SBF 5-6). Poets: Wheatley ("On Imagination," AAL 360-61); Horton ("On Liberty and Slavery," AAL 362-63); Harper ("The Slave Auction" AAL 364-65)</p> <p>Thursday: Focus: Du Bois, <i>The Souls of Black Folk</i> : "Of Our Spiritual Strivings" (SBF 9-16). Poets: W. E. B. Du Bois ("The Song of the Smoke," AAL 366-67); J. W. Johnson ("Lift Every Voice and Sing" & "The Creation," AAL 368-372)</p>	<p>Tuesday: DUE: Nothing REQUIRED</p> <p>Thursday: DUE: Mid-Term Test Deadline</p> <p>DO: Recitation Presentations</p>
March 24, 26	<p>TERMS & TOPICS: reconstruction, couplet, sonnet</p> <p>FEATURED WRITER: W. E. B. Du Bois, Paul Laurence Dunbar, Claude McKay</p> <p>Tuesday: Focus: Du Bois, <i>The Souls of Black Folk</i> : "Of the Dawn of Freedom" (SBF 17-33). Poet: Dunbar ("Sympathy," "When Malindy Sings," & "We Wear the Mask" AAL 371-376) Thursday: Focus: Du Bois, <i>The Souls of Black Folk</i> : "Of Mr. Booker T. Washington and Others" (SBF 34-45). Poet: McKay ("The Tropics in New York," "The Lynching," & "If We Must Die," AAL 377-378)</p>	<p>Tuesday: DUE: Nothing REQUIRED</p> <p>Thursday: DUE: Nothing REQUIRED</p> <p>DO: Recitation Presentations</p>
March 31, April 2	<p>TERMS & TOPICS: American Dream, enjambment, quatrain</p>	<p>Tuesday: DUE: Nothing</p>

	<p>FEATURED WRITER: W. E. B. Du Bois, Sterling Brown, Langston Hughes</p> <p>Tuesday: Focus: Du Bois, The Souls of Black Folk : "Of the Meaning of Progress" (SBF 46-54). Poet: Brown ("After Winter" & "Foreclosure" AAL 385-87)</p> <p>Thursday: Focus: Du Bois, The Souls of Black Folk : "Of The Wings of Atalanta" (SBF 54-61). Poet: Hughes("Harlem," "The Weary Blues," "The Negro Speaks of Rivers," "I, too, Sing America," Mother to Son," "Havana Dreams," & "Birmingham Sunday," AAL 388-93)</p>	<p>REQUIRED</p> <p>Thursday: DUE: Nothing REQUIRED</p> <p>DO: Recitation Presentations</p>
April 7, 9	<p>TERMS & TOPICS: pre-encounter/encounter, elegy, sestet</p> <p>FEATURED WRITER: W. E. B. Du Bois, Robert Hayden, Countee Cullen, Dudley Randall</p> <p>Tuesday: Focus: Du Bois, The Souls of Black Folk : "Of the Training of Black Men" (SBF 62-74). Poets: Hayden ("Frederick Douglass" & "The Whipping" & "Homage to the Empress of the Blues" AAL 394-96)</p> <p>Thursday: Focus: Du Bois, The Souls of Black Folk : "Of The Black Belt" (SBF 74-88). Poets: Cullen ("The Wise" & "Incident" AAL 397-98); Randall ("Booker T. and W. E. B." & "An Answer to Lerone Bennett's Questionnaire on a Name for Black Americans" AAL 399-401)</p>	<p>Tuesday: DUE: Nothing REQUIRED</p> <p>Thursday: DUE: Nothing REQUIRED</p> <p>DO: Recitation Presentations</p>
April 14, 16	<p>TERMS & TOPICS: immersion/emersion, octave, meter</p> <p>FEATURED WRITER: W. E. B. Du Bois, Margaret Walker, Gwendolyn Brooks, Maya Angelou, Derek Walcott</p> <p>Tuesday: Focus: Du Bois, The Souls of Black Folk : "Of the Quest of the Golden Fleece" (SBF 89-104). Poets: Walker ("Miss Molly Means" & "October Journey" AAL 402-06); Brooks ("First Fight. Then Fiddle," On Lincoln Williams on His Way to Lincoln Cemetary," "The Birth in a Narrow Room," & "We Real Cool" AAL 407-09)</p> <p>Thursday: Focus: Du Bois, The Souls of Black Folk : "Of The Sons of Master and Man" (SBF 105-119). Poets: Angelou ("Willie" AAL 415-16); Walcott ("A Far Cry From Africa" & "Omeros" AAL 417-19)</p>	<p>Tuesday: DUE: Nothing REQUIRED</p> <p>Thursday: DUE: Nothing REQUIRED</p> <p>DO: Recitation Presentations</p>
April 21, 23	<p>TERMS & TOPICS: cultural criticism, rhythm, open form/free verse</p> <p>FEATURED WRITER: W. E. B. Du Bois, Etheridge Knight, Amiri Baraka, Audre Lorde, Sonia Sanchez, Lucille Clifton</p> <p>Tuesday: Focus: Du Bois, The Souls of Black Folk : "Of the Quest of the Golden Fleece" (SBF 89-104). Poets: Knight ("Hard Rock Returns to Prison from the Hospital for the Criminal Insane," "The Idea of Ancestry," & "Haiku" AAL 420-23); Baraka ("Answers in Progress" AAL 250-53, "Preface to a Twenty Volume Suicide Note" AAL 424)</p> <p>Thursday: Focus: Du Bois, The Souls of Black Folk : "Of The Sons of Master and Man" (SBF 105-119). Poets: Lorde ("125th Street and Abomey" AAL 425-26); Sanchez ("A Letter to Dr. Martin Luther King" AAL 427-29); Clifton ("Good Times," "Homage to My Hips," & "Quilting" AAL 434-36)</p>	<p>Tuesday: DO: Mandatory Poetry Slam</p> <p>Thursday: DUE: Nothing REQUIRED</p> <p>DO: Recitation Presentations</p>
April 28, 30	<p>TERMS & TOPICS: canon, blank verse, connotation/denotation, spoken-word</p> <p>FEATURED WRITER: W. E. B. Du Bois, Nikki Giovanni, Quincy Troupe, Sonia Sanchez, Rita Dove, Kool Moe Dee</p> <p>Tuesday: Focus: Du Bois, The Souls of Black Folk : "Of the Faith of Our Fathers" (SBF 119-29) & "Of the Passing of the First Born" (SBF 130-34). Poets: Giovanni ("Nikki-Rosa" AAL 458-59); Troupe ("Poem for My Father" AAL 465-67); Shange "Rite-ing" AAL 479-81)</p> <p>Thursday: Focus: Du Bois, The Souls of Black Folk : "Of Alexander Crummell" (SBF 134-42). Poets: Dove ("Banneker," "Canary," & "Ö" AAL 484-87); Moe Dee ("Knowledge is King" AAL 500-02)</p>	<p>Tuesday: DO: End-Term Evaluations</p> <p>Thursday: DUE: Latest Date for Salience Analysis submission</p>

Note: The schedule details readings as well as assignments to be completed for class. Readings should be completed prior to the day of class, for scheduled readings will be discussed in class on the day that it is listed on the schedule. If you have any questions regarding any requirements, please visit me during office hours and/or email me via ANGEL. You can copy your ANGEL email to my general Penn State account, but use your ANGEL account to send your message.

**COURSE
POLICIES**

Attendance and Assignment Submission

In fairness to students who overcome obstacles and submit work on time, **I will not accept late work.** HOWEVER, in order to encourage students to attend class in lieu of skipping class to finish the assignment, I consider work late when it is not submitted **before midnight on the day that the assignment is due.** This time allowance permits students to finish all classes for the day and deal with any computer/printer/human problems after class/work/remedies. In fairness to students who take an earlier class, all classes are privy to the same rule. Early submissions are always welcome. **Any assignments that are NOT completed during class time should be submitted via the assignment's drop box on ANGEL.** I prefer the ANGEL drop box for two reasons: 1) emailed assignments often are lost and/or sent to my **junk box.** 2) the Angel drop box will record the **exact time** of submission and will insure fairness and equality for all students.

Required Assignments

Attendance Points	10%
Participation & Reflection Points	10%
*Quizzes	20%
Saliency Analysis of fiction, nonfiction, AND poem (3-5 pages) =750-1250 words	20%
MID-TERM essay exam & FINAL essay exam	20%
Reading or Recitation Presentation (2%) with written synopsis (8%)	10%
Choose Any One (1) of the following options	
1. Author Biography --presentation (2%) & written (8%)(1-2 pages) (10%)	
2. Poetry Response Journal (10 poems) (10%)	
3. Terms & Topics Analysis--presentation (2%) & written (8%)(1-2 pages) (10%)	

*The lowest quiz grades will be dropped. There will be no makeup quizzes.

**GRADE
CRITERIA**

Letter grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

94 - 100	A
90 - 93	A-
87 - 89	B+
84 - 86	B
80 - 83	B-
77 - 79	C+
70 - 76	C
60 - 69	D
below 60	F

SUMMARY OF MECHANICAL ERRORS

MAJOR ERRORS: (Five-point deduction for each occurrence)

- subject/verb disagreement
- comma splices
- fragments
- run-on (fused) sentences

MINOR ERRORS (Three-point deduction for each occurrence)

- shifts in tense, mood, voice, type of discourse
- misplaced or dangling modifiers
- incorrect word forms
- misspelling

ANNOYANCES (one-point deduction for each occurrence)

- faulty capitalization
- missing or misused apostrophe
- compound words written separately or two words written as one
- word omissions

NOTE: Each time "they're, there, their" OR "your, you're" OR "its, it's" is used incorrectly, one point will be deducted. For example, do NOT make errors like the following:

"Their happy to be here,"
"Your a very nice person."
"The dog lost it's bone"

- faulty parallelism
- mixed and illogical constructions
- pronoun/antecedent agreement errors and other types of faulty pronoun reference
- errors in case
- missing or faulty title
- wrong word-- but not in reference to style, which emphasizes choosing the "best" word.

Usually, the little apostrophe signals a contraction, and contractions usually are not recommended for formal writing. Avoid contractions, and you may avoid such errors. The apostrophe signals possession in proper nouns, but not in pronouns such as it's. It's = It is. They're = They are. You're = You are. As a strategy, **PROOFREAD** out loud.

COURSE STATEMENTS

Assuring Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest and responsible manner. Academic integrity is a basic guiding principle for all academic activity at The Pennsylvania State University, and all members of the University community are expected to act in accordance with this principle. Consistent with this expectation, the University's Code of Conduct states that all students should act with personal integrity, respect other students' dignity, rights and property, and help create and maintain an environment in which all can succeed through the fruits of their efforts.

Academic integrity includes a commitment not to engage in or tolerate acts of falsification, misrepresentation or deception. Such acts of dishonesty violate the fundamental ethical principles of the University community and compromise the worth of work completed by others.

Avoiding Plagiarism

Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another source without giving that source credit. Writers give credit through the use of accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or end notes; a simple listing of books, articles, and websites is not sufficient. Plagiarism is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in an academic setting.

Student writers are often confused as to what should be cited. Some think that only direct quotations need to be credited. While direct quotations do need citations, so do paraphrases and summaries of opinions or factual information formerly unknown to the writers or which the writers did not discover themselves. Exceptions to this include factual information which can be obtained from a variety of sources, the writers' own insights or findings from their own field research, (what has been called common knowledge). What constitutes common knowledge can sometimes be precarious; what is common knowledge for one audience may not be so for another. In such situations, it is helpful to keep the reader in mind and to think of citations as being "reader friendly." In other words, writers provide a citation for any piece of information that they think their readers might want to investigate further. Not only is this attitude considerate of readers, it will almost certainly ensure that writers will not be guilty of plagiarism.

The University's statement on Academic Integrity is available at the following site:
<http://www.psu.edu/dept/oue/aappm/G-9.html>

Finding Assistance

1. Ask questions in class
2. Ask other students before or after class
3. Visit the [Nittany Success Center](#) in MAIN 108
4. E-mail questions to me: sls63@psu.edu
5. Visit me in my office during office hours (219 ISTC)
6. Schedule an appointment with me (sls63@psu.edu, 771-4156)

Assuring Classroom Decorum

Cell phones should not be on in class. When class is in session, please turn cell phones **off** or on **vibrate**, so ringing does not interrupt class time. Ringing, beeping, or any other disturbance results in a tardy, and two tardies are the equivalence of an absence. A tardy also occurs when you disturb class time by arriving more than fifteen minutes after the beginning of class OR LEAVE EARLY without prior approval. One absence (or two tardies) will be excused. Be respectful of other students and their learning opportunities by containing all distractions.

Respecting Diverse Abilities

Penn State is committed to providing access to a quality education for all students, including those with documented disabilities. If a student has a disability and wishes an accommodation for a course, it is the student's responsibility to obtain a University letter confirming the disability and suggesting appropriate accommodation. This letter can be requested from the York campus Disability Contact Liaisons, Dr. Sharon Christ, Student Affairs (ALL); Dr. Cora Dzubak, Learning Center (LEARNING); and Todd Eicker, Admissions (PHYSICAL).

Students are encouraged to request accommodation early in the semester so that, once identified, reasonable accommodation can be implemented in a timely manner.

Rolling with the Punches

When circumstances warrant change, this syllabus is subject to revision by the instructor.

Staton-Taiwo/Fall 2008

ASSIGNMENT DETAILS

Attendance Points ~ 10%

WHEN: Your presence presentation is based on your attendance and is due each class period. If you're not there, you can't share.

WHAT: Receive credit for your presentation of yourself in class. This means that each absence up to ten could result in a 1 point loss off of your final 10 point grade for the attendance part of the grade.

HOW: Each absence will result in a reduction of the presence presentation grade. More than ten absences will result in a 0 for the attendance part of the presence presentation, with each absence reducing the attendance part of the presentation by one point. One absence will be excused, and the student with one absence will earn the full ten points of the attendance part of the grade. The student with perfect attendance, however, will earn extra credit--11 points (or 110%) for the attendance part of the presence presentation grade.

GRADING: Perfect attendance will yield an attendance score of 110%. One absence will be excused; thus, one absence will yield an attendance score of 100%. **Each absence after one will reduce the score by ten percent,** which would be one point off of the total ten points. If a student has five absences, the attendance part of the grade will be 60, with one absence being excused. If a student has ten absences, the final attendance grade will be 10 out of 100, or one out of the ten points.

Participation & Reflection Points ~ 10%

WHEN: Each class period provides opportunities for participation. Each reading assignment provides opportunities for reflection. Participate at least once a week and record at least ten weeks of your participation in your ANGEL online participation journal, either before or after the fact. You also need to record at least ten instances of reading reflections, no more than two per week, for a total of twenty journal entries of participation AS WELL AS reflection. I will check journals weekly and will record appropriate credit periodically throughout the semester.

WHAT: Keep a participation journal that records accurate participation and that reminds this instructor that you contributed throughout the semester. For shy students, a participation journal entry can also project meaningful thoughts about current readings that I could possibly contribute for the "shy" student. Like projected participation entries, reflection journal entries would reflect on the readings but should NEVER repeat the thought or writing of the optional poetry journal entry or of the projected participation entry.

HOW: Using the ANGEL drop box, record your entry in the "remarks" section. Attachments are NOT recommended for this assignment. Record your participation, because this instructor has many students and may not remember each student's individual contribution. Therefore, remind me in the journal. Also record your reflections on some readings, because this instructor wants to know what you think about what you have read. Throughout the semester, your participation and reflections will be remembered and appreciated and will contribute to your final grade at the end of the semester. If you are not able to attend a class, you are free to write in your journal about the reading BEFORE the reading is discussed in class and submit it as a reflection.

GRADING: Each participation entry is worth ten points and is scored based on the following scale:

- A (9 or 10 out of 10 points)= actively engaged in the class and able to ask questions or give answers that show insight and appreciation;
- B (8 out of 10 points)= answered questions
- C (7 out of 10 points)= present with book, prepared, and basically attentive;
- D (6 out of 10 points)= late, or present but without book, or answers show that the reading hasn't been done;
- F (0 out of 10 points)= absent.

You can NOT wait to record journal entries all at once. You are likely NOT to remember what you did or said, and the whole purpose of the participation journal would be defeated. You only need to record for ten of the fifteen weeks to complete the ten entries, BUT no one week should include more than two entries. IN OTHER WORDS, you cannot submit a deluge of entries toward the end of the semester. I will only record grades for the first two and/or your preferred two entries per week.

SAMPLE ENTRY: Participation during a student presentation

Today during class Mr. Eric recited a song entitled "Dear Mama" by Tupac which he deemed to be spoken word poetry because it fit the three main criteria of that type of poetry: rhythm, rhyme, and repetition. He then inquired if anyone in the class had agreed with him. I raised my hand asking what the three criteria were and then I stated that the song he recited encompassed all three of the criteria into how it was written. Eric made a good point in saying that some rap songs are forms of spoken word poetry. He stated that if the words over-power the beat or music of the song then it should be considered a spoken word poem. In spoken word poetry, the words are the key into understanding what is being said. The same goes for rap music. Many artists take pride in their lyrics and have things to say. They put words to a beat in order to make a song. But in order to have their words heard in the manner they want, they need to make the beat/music inferior to the words. I agree that "Dear Mama" is a spoken word poem in the form of a song like Eric said. Tupac wanted his mother to know how much she was appreciated and he put all those thoughts into lyrics that meshed with music. The music did not interfere with the words being clearly heard so I think he was able to get the point across to his mother- the intended listener. Many rap artists simply make up silly lines and their words are all over the place making the song nonsense; the beat however, is what keeps the audience hooked. That is why most rap songs are constantly replayed over the radio stations all day. Good beats sell in rap music-- not good lyrics. However, good lyrics can also sell in the rap world if they are mixed with a catchy beat. Hip hop is a realm of beats. If you can dance to the beat of a song in hip hop it will be a good seller and people will want to hear it over and over again because it gets you moving and dancing. "Dear Mama" is a great example of spoken word in rap music.

*Quizzes ~ 20%

WHEN: Pop quizzes will be given either at the very beginning or at the very end of class. An attempt will be made to provide at least one pop quiz per week. Some quizzes will be opportunities to express your opinion and not just your knowledge about the course and or any material covered.

WHAT: Pop quizzes are opportunities for you to show what you know.

HOW: If a pop quiz is given at the beginning of class, it will be given during the first ten or fifteen minutes of class and will be based on information from a previous class period and/or reading. If a pop quiz is given at the end of class, it will be given during the last ten or fifteen minutes of class and will be based either on material discussed during that class period or will be an opportunity for students to express for credit any concerns that they may have about the class and/or the material.

GRADING: At least ten quizzes will be given, and the highest ten grades will count. If a student is able to take more than ten quizzes, the lowest pop quiz grades beyond the ten will be dropped. If a student takes less than ten pop quizzes, a grade of 0 will be given for each quiz less than the ten quizzes required for a grade.

Poetry Response Journal ~ 10%

WHEN: The poetry response journal will be due throughout the second half of the semester, no more than two poems in any given week, though a student is free to start the journal early, during the first half of the semester. You can NOT wait until the final few weeks of the semester to pile up on responses. To complete all entries, a student would have to start the journal NO LATER THAN the final five weeks of the semester.

WHAT: The poetry response journal will be a way to keep poetry in the program and part of the class mindset. The poetry response journal will be an OPTIONAL assignment, but a student MUST choose one out of the three optional choices--journal, biography, or term/topic analysis.

HOW: Poetry will be discussed throughout the second-half of the semester--see the schedule for poetry presentation/recitation for specific dates. Respond to ten different poems/poets throughout the semester.

Submit a total of ten journal entries, typed and submitted via ANGEL. Submit no more than two entries in any given week--each in a half page, if single spaced, or a whole page, if double-spaced. I recommend composing the entry in a document file FIRST and then copying and pasting the entry to the ANGEL remarks box. I prefer the remarks box over attaching. If you do attach the entry, I have to spend extra time copying and pasting your entry for you, into the remarks box.

GRADING: Each journal entry is worth ten points and is scored based on the following scale:

- A (9 or 10 out of 10 points)= Entry shows **insight** that rivals publishable thoughts--has that "ah ha" moment of Eureka bliss;
- B (8 out of 10 points)= Entry shows an **understanding** of the poem at an above superficial level, beyond stating what the poem is about
- C (7 out of 10 points)= An attempt is made to **explain** the meaning of the poem;
- D (1-6 out of 10 points)= Entry is NOT a fully-developed thought and only provides a **superficial** discussion of the poem;
- F (0 out of 10 points)= Entry **missing**.

You can NOT wait to record journal entries all at once. You are likely NOT to remember what you did or said, and the whole purpose of the participation journal would be defeated. You only need to **record for ten of the fifteen weeks** to complete the ten entries, BUT no one week should include more than two entries. IN OTHER WORDS, you cannot submit a deluge of entries at or after the end of the semester. I will only record grades for the first two and/or your preferred two entries per week.

SAMPLE ENTRY: Response to Amiri Baraka's "Somebody Blew Up America"

This poem made me just as uncomfortable as Jess said it would. I felt that way for two reasons; first, I am white and I felt like he was lecturing to my race, and second, as the listener i could feel his overwhelming rage coming through his words. I do not think his rage was against terrorists however. I felt like all the questions he was asking throughout the entire poem, "Who got fat from plantations, Who genocided Indians, Who you think need war, Who killed the most niggers, Who killed the most Jews, Who killed the most Italians?", etc, were all aimed at the white man. It was as if he was asking questions he already knew the answer to and that's what made me feel uncomfortable. Wasn't it a white man that killed Kennedy, Lincoln, and Lennon? Didn't white people elect Bush as president. Facts are facts-- I cannot deny that some of things he says are true. The blame, it seems, is to be put on the white man. Baraka is making a point to say, "it's the white man's fault. The white man made our bed and now we have to lay in it."

I don't see how this poem could be anything about being angry over terrorists blowing up the twin towers. I think 9/11 happening was a good chance for Baraka to take out more of his anger on the white man. Like Jess had stated in class, he was anti- white, anti-homosexual, anti-everyone except African Americans. So let me pose one question. For someone being so anti-everyone, how could Baraka get upset that terrorists blew up the Twin Towers, where the majority of working people there were anti-Black? I don't believe that he was upset that 9/11 happened. I just think he used that opportunity to say things that he needed to say. I will give him prompts for being so vulgarly honest. This type of poetry is the kind I was looking forward to reading. On the other hand, it goes against my grain to be racist. I can applaud him for his talents but not for his views and arguements against everyone except the African American.

Salience Analysis of nonfiction, fiction, AND poetry -- 20%

WHEN: As noted on the course schedule, this analysis will be due NO LATER THAN April 30, 2009--however, early submissions are welcome.

WHAT: This salience analysis of nonfiction, fiction, AND poetry will be your opportunity to locate and explain the most salient identity in a collection of Black American literature. In addition to "blackness," this literature also often explores other identities among seven possible categories: race & ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, age, or ableness (physical and mental ability).

HOW: Throughout the semester, you will have the opportunity to read various genres of "Black American Literature." You are to choose a work of fiction, a work of non-fiction (as in Du Bois' *Souls of Black Folk* or any of the other nonfiction essays discussed in class) AND a poem that interests you. You are to identify in each work the most salient identity in addition to blackness (race and ethnicity). Ezplain how this other identity is just as crucial if not more crucial than the race issue. Inevitably, this review may involve some other analysis as well.

GRADING: Grading for your salience analysis will be based on five areas, each worth 20% (or twenty points out of the total 100). The five areas are as follows:

- 1) **Focus:** Do you have a clear, central thesis and purpose and do you address all aspects of the thesis?
- 2) **Content:** Do you provide good background information and use a comprehensive approach, excellent insight into the topic, evidence of strong, reflective analysis, and keen awareness of audience?

Do you answer the relevant question in reference to expected criteria?

- 3) **Support:** Do you provide excellent support drawn from your experience, knowledge, and/or research? Do you use examples to enhance and deepen the focus of the thesis?
- 4) **Organization and Structure:** Do you have clear, logical progression of ideas? Does your paper contain a clear, engaging introduction that previews the paper's main argument and does your paper have coherent, well-developed paragraphs and transitional phrases? Does your paper contain a strong conclusion, which draws together and summarizes your main points?
- 5) **Written Quality & Mechanics:** Do you use college-level vocabulary that varies sentences and wording? Do you use vivid examples and employ a strong, consistent voice? Do you have excellent grammar, spelling, usage, and punctuation? Does your paper flow effortlessly?

Optional Author Biography ~ 10%

WHEN: As noted on the course schedule, the author biography will be due prior to the initial discussion of any author. Potential dates are listed below.

WHAT: Authors for potential biographies could include any of the following authors of fiction or nonfiction during the first half of the semester:

AUTHOR	DATE
Jamaica Kincaid, Barack Obama	(January 13, 2009)
Toni Morrison, Frederick Douglass	(January 15, 2008)
Harriet Jacobs, Frederick Douglass	(January 20, 2009)
Charles W. Chestnutt	(January 22, 2009)
Zora Neale Hurston	(January 27, 2009)
Richard Wright	(January 29, 2009)
Langston Hughes	(February 3, 2009)
W. E. B. Du Bois	(February 5, 2009)
Ernest Gaines	(February 10, 2009)
Alice Walker	(February 12, 2009)
Gloria Naylor	(February 17, 2009)
Toni Cade Bambara	(February 19, 2009)
Bill Ellis	(February 24, 2009)
Booker T. Washington	(March 3, 2009)
W. E. B. Du Bois	(March 5, 2009)

HOW: Throughout the first half of the semester, you will have the opportunity to read prose written by various authors. This optional author biography paper will give you the opportunity to contribute in a major way in helping your classmates understand an author and his or her possible motivations. For each class day, we will discuss a different author. In most cases, I will provide a bio of the author in reference to the work written. However, I value the input of students and welcome any student who chooses to present the biography in my stead. The 1-2 page biography will be due in the ANGEL dropbox by midnight after the day the author is discussed; HOWEVER, you will also be expected to give a brief bio of the author (3-5 minutes), with your explanation of whether or not the life did or did not influence the work. You will present on the day the author is being discussed in class, prior to the submission of the actual paper. The presentation should provide feedback for you in your final editing of the paper.

GRADING: The presentation part of the paper will factor in up to 3% of your grade, for a maximum grade of 100 points (70 for the paper and 30 for the presentation). As with most forms of oral communication, you are expected to use good oral communication skills; if you use visual aids, they should be used appropriately, and you should maximize your use of posture, gestures, eye contact, and emphasis. You should plan to speak from 3-5 minutes, which would include any introductory, supporting, or concluding thoughts and/or props. The essay, like most essays, will be graded based on the following five components:

- 1) **Focus:** Do you have a clear, central thesis and purpose and do you address all aspects of the thesis?
- 2) **Content:** Do you provide good background information and use a comprehensive approach, excellent insight into the topic, evidence of strong, reflective analysis, and keen awareness of audience?
- 3) **Support:** Do you provide excellent support drawn from your experience, knowledge, and/or research? Do you use examples to enhance and deepen the focus of the thesis?
- 4) **Organization and Structure:** Do you have clear, logical progression of ideas? Does your paper contain a clear, engaging introduction that previews the paper's main argument and does your paper have coherent, well-developed paragraphs and transitional phrases? Does your paper contain a strong conclusion, which draws together and summarizes your main points?
- 5) **Written Quality & Mechanics:** Do you use college-level vocabulary that varies sentences and wording? Do you use vivid examples and employ a strong, consistent voice? Do you have excellent grammar, spelling, usage, and punctuation? Does your paper flow effortlessly?

Mid-Term & Final Essay Exams ~ 10% (EACH) for a TOTAL of 20%

WHEN: As noted on the course schedule, the mid-term essay exam will be due by **March 5, 2009** and the end-term essay exam will be due by the designated exam day in **May of 2009**.

WHAT: Material covered in the class will be reviewed in two segments: mid-term and end term. Both essay exams will include a multiple-choice matching segment that covers topic vocabulary throughout the semester. The mid-term exam will include the first half of the semester's topics, up to February 26, 2009, and the end-term will include the last half of the semester's topics, from March 3, 2009, before spring break, to April 30, 2009, the last day of class. In addition to the multiple-choice matching part of the essay exam, an essay, of course, will also be required. The essay part of the exam will be your well-composed answer/resolution to one of three to four optional prompts.

HOW: Both the multiple-choice/ matching and the essay parts of the exam will be completed separately and graded separately. Both parts will be available via ANGEL during a designated period of time. Students will have about a week to complete both parts of each exam.

GRADING: The multiple-choice/ matching part of the exam will be graded by ANGEL, and a grade will be awarded as soon as this part of the exam is completed. To ensure accuracy and fairness, I will double-check any answers and make any necessary changes to scores. The essay part of the exam will be completed separately and will be graded manually. Both parts will then be averaged together, with the essay part of the exam being worth two parts to the multiple-choice-matching one part. In other words, the essay part of the exam will be worth twice the amount of the multiple-choice/matching part of the exam. The essay part of the exam will be graded based on the following five areas:

- 1) **Focus:** Do you have a clear, central thesis and purpose and do you address all aspects of the thesis?
- 2) **Content:** Do you provide good background information and use a comprehensive approach, excellent insight into the topic, evidence of strong, reflective analysis, and keen awareness of audience? Do you answer the relevant question in reference to expected criteria?
- 3) **Support:** Do you provide excellent support drawn from your experience, knowledge, and/or research? Do you use examples to enhance and deepen the focus of the thesis?
- 4) **Organization and Structure:** Do you have clear, logical progression of ideas? Does your paper contain a clear, engaging introduction that previews the paper's main argument and does your paper have coherent, well-developed paragraphs and transitional phrases? Does your paper contain a strong conclusion, which draws together and summarizes your main points?
- 5) **Written Quality & Mechanics:** Do you use college-level vocabulary that varies sentences and wording? Do you use vivid examples and employ a strong, consistent voice? Do you have excellent grammar, spelling, usage, and punctuation? Does your paper flow effortlessly?

Terms & Topic Presentation ~ 10%

WHEN: Each class period provides opportunities for leadership. Every class day, except the week of the mid-term and the last two weeks of school, offers opportunities for a topic presentation.

WHAT: For each class day, we will feature different terms and topics, topics that will be covered on the mid-term or final exam. In most cases, I will provide a discussion of the topic in reference to the work written. However, because I value the input of students and want students to lead the discussion in my stead, group topic presentations are a better alternative.

HOW: Write a 1-2 page paper that defines the topics and terms for the day AND that explains how the term(s) does or does NOT reflect the reading for the day. The short paper would be due after the presentation, by

midnight, and would be worth 70% (7 points). The presentation would account for the other 30% (3 points).

GRADING: Grading for the paper part of the project will be graded using the same criteria as any other written paper in class. Length as well as depth factors into the content grade.

The grading criteria for oral presentations will also be based on five areas, with each area weighing 20% of the grade:

- 1) **Organization:** You should present information in a well-organized and interesting manner, you should focus on a central idea or narrowed aspect of your research, your speech should flow well, and you should build to a strong conclusion.
- 2) **Group Involvement:** Each group member should contribute equally and should provide a group evaluation after completion of the presentation.
- 3) **Content:** You should demonstrate superb knowledge and understanding of the topic, you should support your ideas with vivid examples and details and you should make relevant connections for your audience.
- 4) **Voice:** You should demonstrate great enthusiasm for the topic, speak clearly and loudly enough to be understood easily, and you should vary your tone and pitch for animated speaking style.
- 5) **Body Language:** You should make effective eye contact with the whole audience throughout the presentation, and you should use gestures and body language to emphasize certain points.

Recitation Presentation of Poetry ~~ 10%

WHEN: Students sign up for presentations on any of the following twelve (12) days AFTER the first half of the semester, since poetry is listed to be discussed during the second half of the semester. The following dates are available:

- March 17, 19, 24, 26, 31
- April 2, 7, 9, 14, 16, 21, 23

HOW: The format of your paper should follow the guidelines for a well-developed composition, such as the one described for the salience analysis paper or the author biography. The format of your presentation should follow the conventions of a well-developed paper, with an introduction to the presentation, the presentation, and then a conclusion to your presentation. Your oral presentation should be between five and ten minutes.

GRADING: Grading for the paper part of the project will be graded using the same criteria as any other written paper in class. Length as well as depth factors into the content grade.

The grading criteria for oral presentations will also be based on five areas, with each area weighing 20% of the grade:

- 1) **Organization:** You should present information in a well-organized and interesting manner, you should focus on a central idea or narrowed aspect of your research, your speech should flow well, and you should build to a strong conclusion.
- 2) **Group Involvement:** Each group member should contribute equally and should provide a group evaluation after completion of the presentation.
- 3) **Content:** You should demonstrate superb knowledge and understanding of the topic, you should support your ideas with vivid examples and details and you should make relevant connections for your audience.
- 4) **Voice:** You should demonstrate great enthusiasm for the topic, speak clearly and loudly enough to be understood easily, and you should vary your tone and pitch for animated speaking style.
- 5) **Body Language:** You should make effective eye contact with the whole audience throughout the presentation, and you should use gestures and body language to emphasize certain points.