ENGL 218
African American Literature I
3 Credits

Community College of Baltimore County
Common Course Outline

Description

ENGL 218 – African American Literature I: is a course that examines the portion of American literature created by African Americans, beginning with slavery up to the Harlem Renaissance, and including the vernacular tradition. Students read slave narratives and literature by fugitive slaves and free African Americans, as well as essays, and speeches. The literature introduces students to the complex socioeconomic and political history of African Americans as a former enslaved population as well as an oppressed group whose full civil (legal) rights were not recognized until the mid-1960s.

Pre-requisites: Successful completion of English 101 with a C or better.

Overall Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. describe works from various periods of African American literature within the context of the literary norms of the dominant society;
2. discuss different literary genres and periods as they have been traditionally defined, and the ways in which these definitions have been challenged;
3. explain ways traditional literary genres and periods have been challenged by African Americans writers;
4. analyze stylistic characteristics, and recurring themes reflected in literary works of each period;
5. engage in critical discussion about questions and problems related to the texts;
6. examine changing societal values and mores of the literary era as they relate to the moral and ethical decisions of individuals;
7. assess the ways in which the selected literature reflects and also contributes to its particular historical moment and cultural context;
8. analyze the ways in which issues of race, gender, and class shape works of literature;
9. recognize the importance of the oral tradition in African American literature;
10. explain the connections between African American literature and political and social empowerment;
11. write a well-informed, logical literary analysis using appropriate terminology and textual support;
12. find, evaluate, use, and cite appropriate academic sources in essays according to the assigned formatting and style guide;
13. utilize digital resources for exploring humanities as appropriate to the academic environment; and
14. compose stylistically correct assignments using appropriate technology.

The Common Course Outline (CCO) determines the essential nature of each course.
For more information, see your professor's syllabus.

Major Topics

   I.   Oral traditions
           a. Spirituals
           b. Gospel
           c. Sermons
           d. Speeches
  II.   Pre-Emancipation literature such as Fugitive Slave Narratives, Early Literature - poetry and fiction, Abolitionist Literature
 III.   Reconstruction to New Negro Renaissance, Accommodation vs. Political Empowerment, Exploration of literary forms
 IV.   Harlem Renaissance: The New Negro emerges, White patronage, Political leadership, Protest writing
  V.   Cultural contexts
           a. Race, class, and gender in individual texts
           b. Literary production and canon formation
 VI.   Inter- and intra-textual connections
VII.   Literary analysis

Course Requirements

Grading will be determined by the individual faculty member, but shall include the following, at minimum:

- participation in weekly discussions in-class and/or online
- literary analysis essay(s) with appropriate academic sources, of at least 2500 words, one of which assesses 5 of the 7 General Education Outcomes and accounts for 10% of the overall course grade
- one exam with an essay component
- collaboration with peers on a project that will be presented to the class.

   Written assignments and research projects: Students are required to use appropriate academic resources in their research and cite sources according to the style selected by their professor.

Other Course Information

This course is an approved 3–credit General Education course in the Arts and Humanities. One or more assignments will infuse CCBC General Education Program outcomes and will account for a minimum of 10% of the total course grade. The assignment(s) will allow students to demonstrate at least 5 of the 7 General Education program outcomes. This course is approved for General Education Diversity.

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