AFRICAN-AMERICAN LITERATURE
ENG 221
4 credits

Rationale for conversion: By adding readings and increasing the length and complexity of analytical writing assignments, the conversion will allow students to study and write about a broader historical range of literature by African-American writers – thus countering the prevailing emphasis on the 1920s alone as the archetypal period of African-American literary expression. Instruction includes introduction to print and non-print resources, such as digital collections, MLA (Modern Language Association) online data bases, web resources, and citations appropriate to topic. A 5-7 page critical essay will be added, requiring students to consult at least one outside source as research for the essay. This course meets all outcomes for Literature and the Arts. This change does not alter bacc core requirements.

The 4 credit version will:
• add research instruction in digital and print resources appropriate to introductory study of African-American literature;
• add 5-7 page critical essay.

The core syllabus is the three credit generic version the last time the course was taught, but outcomes and assignments are updated.

Course Description:
Reading and critical analysis of African-American literature in historical, political, and/or thematic perspective. Content changes from term to term.

Student learning outcomes:
• Identify key authors and themes within the African-American literary tradition from its origins through the twentieth-century
• Name shared themes among African-American writers while unearthing elements unique to each text;
• Account simultaneously for literary, political, and social imperatives as they variously influence African-American literature;
• Critically analyze the effect of the paradox that African-American literary history was significantly shaped by powerful interests of a predominantly white publishing establishment;
• Demonstrate general skills in reading comprehension, critical thinking, literary analysis, research (digital and print sources) and academic writing in the humanities.

Learning Outcomes for Literature and the Arts:
1. Define, quote, or label significant works of literature.
2. Summarize, interpret or describe, from a historical perspective, the role of literature in society.
3. Demonstrate interrelationships or connections with other subject areas.
4. Recognize methods by which pattern and meaning are found.
5. Integrate and engage, through literature and the arts, one’s own and other cultures.
6. Develop expertise and sophistication in the conventions and techniques of literature, and also in critiquing those methods.
7. Demonstrate critical thinking skills.

**Evaluation of student performance:** Midterm exam (25%), one research project on African-American literary expression in a chosen decade (12.5%), one 4-5 page essay on an assigned topic (12.5%), **one 5-7 page critical essay incorporating research (digital and print) from at least one secondary source** (25%), and a final examination (25%).

**Statement Regarding Disability Access Services:**
Accommodations are collaborative efforts between students, faculty, and Disability Access Services (DAS). Students with accommodations approved through DAS are responsible for contacting the faculty member in charge of the course prior to or during the first week of the term to discuss accommodations. Students who believe they are eligible for accommodations but who have not yet obtained approval through DAS should contact DAS immediately at 737-4098.

**Link to Statement of Expectations for Student Conduct:**
http://oregonstate.edu/admin/stucon/achon.htm

**Theme: African American Literature, Origins to 1955**

**Required Texts:**
- David Walker, *Appeal*
- Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*
- Emma Dunham Kelley, *Megda*
- Charles Chesnutt, *The House Beneath the Cedars*
- Nella Larsen, *Passing*
- Locke and Rampersad, *The New Negro: Voices from the Harlem Renaissance*
- Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man*

**SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNED READINGS**

- **Week One:** Walker, *Appeal*
- **Week Two:** Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*
- **Week Three:** Kelley, *Megda*
- **Week Four:** Chesnutt, *The House Beneath the Cedars*
- **Week Five:** Chesnutt, *The House Beneath the Cedars* (cont.); Toomer, from *Cane* (in *The New Negro*); Hurston, “Spunk” (in *The New Negro*)
- **Week Six:** Folk Traditions: Entire Collection (pp. 231-271) in *The New Negro*; Chesnutt, “The Goophered Grapevine” (online)
- **Week Seven:** McKay, Cullen, Hughes, Toomer: Poems in *The New Negro*
- **Week Eight:** Larsen, *Passing*
- **Week Nine:** Ellison, *Invisible Man*
- **Week Ten:** Ellison, *Invisible Man*