

NEW YORK CITY COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY OF THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK  
Department of African American Studies

AFR 2xxx Afro-Caribbean Literature  
Course Meeting Time:

Flexible Core: \_\_\_\_\_

College Option: \_\_\_\_\_

Writing Intensive: \_\_\_\_\_

**Prerequisites:**

Instructor: Professor Javiela Evangelista

Office: Atrium 633

Office Hours:

Email: jevangalista@citytech.cuny.edu

**Course Description:** Through a comparative study of the literature of the Caribbean, including critical essays, short stories, autobiographies, novels and poems, students will develop an understanding of historical and current trends relevant to people of African descent in the Caribbean region and within the African diaspora. Emphasis will be placed on research methods, interdisciplinary concepts and technology. We will consider love as a verb and freedom as a place.

**Course Objectives:**

During the course, students will be taught to:

1. Define and utilize the concepts of diaspora and race, while demonstrating an understanding of the vast application and complexity of these concepts.
2. Exhibit an understanding of significant literary movements of the Caribbean and cultural and political movements that produced or influenced literature in the Caribbean, including Slave Narratives, Historical Fiction, Literary Archaeology, Pan Africanism, Magical Realism, Negritude, Creolite, Afro Futurism and Digital mediums.
3. Produce critical readings of texts from writers of the Caribbean that demonstrate an understanding of the essential literary processes of meaning making through character, setting, language, imagery, structure and/or form.

4. Analyze how race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, migration, labor, and political economy are related to the historical development of various African diasporic societies and hence the literature of the African diaspora.
5. Analyze the relationships between specific historical events and contemporary writings.
6. Exhibit an understanding of the relationship between literary production and social, political and economic issues, including political and revolutionary movements in the Caribbean and African diaspora.
7. Understand the geography of the Caribbean and map connections between regional and diasporic social and literary movements and processes.
8. Identify and apply the fundamental concepts and methods of African and African American Studies.

As a Writing Intensive (WI) course, students will also be taught to:

1. Understand, summarize, <sup>synthesize</sup> and critique course material <sup>using</sup> informal and <sup>formal</sup> writing. <sup>analyze</sup>
2. Employ writing as an essential tool for learning course material.
3. Formulate and support a central argument or claim in their formal writing assignments, <sup>effectively</sup> integrating and organizing evidence to support their claims. <sup>separate</sup>
4. Practice writing for different purposes, audiences, and in various media. <sup>be more specific?</sup>
5. Follow the writing conventions of the discipline and its related professions.
6. Follow the conventions of English grammar and mechanics in their writing.
7. Compose multiple drafts in order to proofread, and revise clear and logical sentences using correct spelling, conventional punctuation, correct grammar and syntax. Use varied sentence structure. Order and connect sentences and paragraphs effectively, using transitions and parallelism.
8. Apply feedback from faculty and peers during the revision process. <sup>expanded?</sup>
9. Cite sources within the text and on a reference page according to the preferred style guidelines of a particular discipline. <sup>Chicago reference style</sup>

**Required Text:** Course Reader for purchase in the college bookstore.

**New York City College of Technology Policy on Academic Integrity:** Students and all others who work with information, ideas, texts, images, music, inventions, and other intellectual property owe their audience and sources accuracy and honesty in using, crediting, and citing sources. As a community of intellectual and professional workers, the College recognizes its responsibility for providing instruction in information literacy and academic integrity, offering models of good practice, and responding vigilantly and appropriately to infractions of academic integrity. Accordingly, academic dishonesty is prohibited in The City University of New

York and at New York City College of Technology and is punishable by penalties, including failing grades, suspension, and expulsion. The complete text of the College policy on Academic Integrity may be found in the catalog.

**Classroom Management:** Cell phone use is prohibited in class. Bring your Course Reader to all class meetings.

**Attendance and lateness:**

You are expected to attend each class meeting.

Class Meets	Allowable Absence
1 time/week	2 classes
2 times/week	3 classes
3 times/week	4 classes

If you miss class it is your responsibility to get notes from a peer.

**Assignment and Grading Scale (%):**

A	92.5-100	C	73.0- 77.4
A-	90.0-92.4	C-	70.0- 72.9
B+	87.5-89.9	D+	68.5- 69.9
B	82.5-87.4	D	60.0- 68.4
B-	80.0-82.4	F	0- 59.9
C+	77.5-79.9		

**Final Course Grade Breakdown:**

Writing Intensive Assignments (WI)	25%
Annotated Bibliography (WI)	15%
Final Paper (WI)	15%
Map Quiz	5%
Midterm	15%
Group Presentation	10%
Final Exam	15%

**Course based learning outcomes with assessment methods**

To be determined by NYCCT departmental requirements, based on the above course objectives

**General Education learning outcomes and assessment methods**

To be determined by NYCCT Gen Ed requirements, based on the above course objectives

Week	Assignment	Due Date	Assignment	Due Date	Location(s)	Literature/ Movement(s)
1	Introductions, Syllabus Review  <b>Our Narratives (WI)</b>		Michel Rolph-Trouillot. "The Three Faces of San Souci," 31-69. <b>Select Paper Topic (WI)</b>		Haiti, Germany	----
2	Walter Rodney. "The European Slave Trade as a Basic Factor in African Underdevelopment," 95-113.  Kamau Brathwaite, <i>Ancestors</i> , TBD.		Ursula C. Schwerin Library Research Methods Session (AFR Librarian Liaison)  <b>Attend Research Session (WI)</b>		Guyana, Barbados, Africa	----
3	Mary Prince. <i>The History of Mary Prince: A West Indian Slave</i> , 7-38.		David Northrup. "An African's Ordeal: Olaudah Equiano's Story," 66-70.  <b>Submit Sources (WI)</b>		Bermuda, Nigeria, England, Central America, Montserrat	Slave Narratives
4	Austin Clarke. "Growing up Stupid Under the Union Jack," 159-196.		Ana Lydia Vega. "The Day It All Happened/ El día de los hechos," 212-215.  <b>Annotated Bibliography (WI)</b>		Barbados, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic	Historical Fiction  Literary Archaeology
5	CLR James. <i>The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution</i> , 296-324.		Marcus Garvey. "The Back to Africa Movement," 164-169.  Derek Walcott, "A Far Cry From		Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Africa, Europe,	Pan-Africanism

			<b>Africa"</b> <b>Submit Thesis (WI)</b>	<b>North America, Central America</b>	
6	Fanon, Frantz. <i>Black Skin, White Masks</i> , 7-14.		Cesaire, Aime. <i>Discourse on Colonialism</i> , 31-34.	Martinique, Paris, Algeria	Negritude
7	Map Quiz	<del>Due</del>	<b>Submit Revised Thesis (WI)</b> Edouard Glissant. "Distancing, Determining" 141-146.	Martinique, Europe	Creolite
8	Alejo Carpentier. "Journey Back to the Source," 197-210.		<b>Submit 2-3 Page Draft (WI)</b>  Midterm Exam	Cuba, Africa	Magical Realism
9	Bob Marley's Lyrics (Reggae)  Simmer Down, War, Real Situation, Zimbabwe		Juan Luis Guerra's Lyrics (Merengue)  El Costo de la Vida (The Cost of Living), Ojala que llueva cafe (I Hope it Rains Coffee in the Countryside)	Jamaica, Dominican Republic	Music
10	The Mighty Sparrow's Lyrics (Calypso) Selection TBD		<b>Student Selections, Caribbean Music Submit 6-7 Page Draft (WI)</b>	Trinidad and Tobago	Music

11	Michelle Cliff. "Passing," 285-289.		Derek Walcott. "Cafe Martinique: A Story," 45-60.	Jamaica, Haiti, St. Lucia, Martinique, France	----
	Edwidge Danticat. "The Book of the Dead," 3-34.		Edwidge Danticat. "The Dew Breaker," 183-242.		
12	Jamaica Kincaid. "Girl," 123-124.		TDB	Antigua & Barbuda	----
13	Erna Brodber. <i>The Rain Makers Mistake</i> , (Part I)		Erna Brodber. <i>The Rain Makers Mistake</i> , (Part II)	Jamaica, Future	Afro Futurism
14	Yarimar Bonilla and Jonathan Rosa. "#Ferguson: Digital protest, hashtag ethnography, and the racial politics of social media in the United States," 4-17.		Selected Social Media Excerpts	#	Digital Literature
15	Groups Presentations I		Group Presentations II		
	<b>Submit Research Paper (WI)</b>		Final Exam Review		
	Final Exam				

# Selected Bibliography

- Brathwaite, Kamau. *Ancestors*. New York: New Directions, 2001.
- Brodber, Erna. *The Rain Makers Mistake*. London: New Beacon Books, 2007
- Carpentier, Alejo (1981). "Journey Back to the Source". In *If I Could Write this in Fire: An Anthology of Literature from the Caribbean*, edited by Pamela Maria Smorkaloff, New York: New Press, 1994, 197-210.
- Cesaire, Aime. *Discourse on Colonialism*. New York: Monthly Review Press, 2000.
- Clarke, Austin (1980). "Growing up Stupid Under the Union Jack". In *If I Could Write this in Fire: An Anthology of Literature from the Caribbean*, edited by Pamela Maria Smorkaloff, New York: New Press, 1994, 159-196.
- Cliff, Michelle (1981). "Passing". In *If I Could Write this in Fire: An Anthology of Literature from the Caribbean*, edited by Pamela Maria Smorkaloff, New York: New Press, 1994, 285-289.
- Danticat, Edwidge. *The Dew Breaker*. New York: Knopf, 2004.
- Fanon, Frantz. *Black Skin, White Mask*. New York: Grove Press, 1952.
- Glissant, Edouard. *Poetics of Relation*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997.
- James, CLR (1963). "Excerpt: The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution". In *If I Could Write this in Fire: An Anthology of Literature from the Caribbean*, edited by Pamela Maria Smorkaloff, New York: New Press, 1994, 296-324.
- Garvey, Marcus (1922). *The Back to Africa Movement*. In *Black Protest: History, Documents, and Analyses 1619 to the Present*, edited by Joanne Grant. New York, Fawcett Publications, 1968, 164-169.
- Kincaid, Jamaica (1978). "Girl". In *Green Cane and Juicy Flotsam: Short Stories by Caribbean Women*, edited by Carmen Esteves and Elizabeth Paravisini Gebert. New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1991, 123-124.



- Northrup, David. "An African's Ordeal: Olaudah Equiano's Story" *The Atlantic Slave Trade*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2002.
- Prince, Mary. *The History of Mary Prince: A West Indian Slave*. London: F. Wesley and A.H. Havis, 1831.
- Rodney, Walter. "The European Slave Trade as a Basic Factor in African Underdevelopment". *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*. London: Bogle L'Ouverture Publications, 1973.
- Rolph-Trouillot, Michel. "The Three Faces of San Souci", *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2007.
- Vega, Ana Lydia (1981). "The Day It All Happened/ El Dia de los Hechos". In *If I Could Write this in Fire: An Anthology of Literature from the Caribbean*, edited by Pamela Maria Smorkaloff, New York: New Press, 1994, 212-215.
- Walcott, Derek (1985). "Cafe Martinique: A Story". In *What The Twilight Says* by Derek Walcott. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1999, 45-60.

\*Reading social media, applicable within the African diaspora  
Bonilla, Yarimar and Jonathan Rosa. "#Ferguson: Digital protest, hashtag ethnography, and the racial politics of social media in the United States" *American Ethnologist*. 42, 1 (2015): 4-17.

## Sample Scaffolded Research Paper Assignments Writing Intensive Course

### Select a Paper Topic (Low Stakes)

In this writing intensive (WI) course, you will draft a 10 page research paper. We are starting the research process early in the semester and building our writing step by step. The first step in this process is to select a paper topic.

Visit the Writing Intensive (WI) Resource Center in Blackboard: 1) read through the topics; 2) pick a topic that is of interest; 3) complete the course reading that is related to the paper topic in order to get an understanding of some of the main issues; and 4) submit the below assignment.

Type the answer to each of the following questions in a word document.

- 1) Which paper topic you have chosen?
- 2) Which course reading did you review in preparation?
- 3) What do you find interesting about this topic? (5 sentences)
- 4) Do you have any questions about the research or the assignment? If yes, share your questions below.

### How to submit:

In Blackboard under Assignments, attach the word document with all of your short answers.

### **Submit Your Sources (High Stakes):**

Quality research comes from analyzing a variety of sources. It is possible that some of the sources you select now may not be useful after you learn more about your topic. This is fine. In fact, "trying" different sources is generally a part of the research and writing process.

#### **1) Bring 3 sources to class.**

To select 3 sources for your paper, use the W1 Resources folder in Blackboard and the methods learned during our session at the Ursula C. Schwerin Library with AFR librarian, Keith Muchowski. Do not bring photos of the sources or a list of citations. Bring the actual sources to class. Any combination of peer reviewed articles and books is acceptable. For example, you may bring 2 articles and 1 book or 3 articles. For credit, the sources must be related to the topic you have chosen.

#### **2) Short Answer**

This assignment will help you to reflect on the sources you have acquired and the process you used to acquire them. This reflection is particularly important in African American Studies. In African American Studies there have often been and there continue to be obstacles in the documentation of African perspectives and experiences. The outcome may be scarce, stereotypical or misrepresentative information. As a result, it is important that you take the time needed to conduct sound research, analyze your sources, look for misrepresentations or omissions and ultimately compare a range of material.

Toward this end, respond to *two* of the following questions (5 sentence minimum per response):

1. After reviewing your sources, what questions remain that you would like to research further?
2. In what ways does the information you have found support or counter your previous knowledge?
3. Is there a dominant opinion or ideology? What is it? Are there ideals that are not represented in these texts? What may they be?
4. Have you encountered different or opposing perspectives or opinions? What are they?
5. Are there any steps that proved helpful in getting information during your search? Are there any steps that you will use moving forward or that you would recommend to others searching for quality and representative sources?