Upper-division Writing Requirement Review Form (12/1/08)

I. General Education Review – Upper-division Writing Requirement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dept/Program Subject</th>
<th>English: Literature</th>
<th>Course # (i.e. ANTH 455) or sequence</th>
<th>ENLT 337</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course(s) Title</td>
<td>African American Literature</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Description of the requirement if it is not a single course</td>
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</table>

II. Endorsement/Approvals

Complete the form and obtain signatures before submitting to Faculty Senate Office.

| Instructor          | Jill Bergman        |
| Phone / Email       | x 5352/ jill.bergman@mso.umt.edu |
| Program Chair       | Casey Charles       |

III. Overview of the Course Purpose/Description

The particular content for this “bag” course varies significantly across sections, but generally involves the study of a range of novels by African-American writers. Examining these novels in their historical and literary contexts, the course foregrounds the ways these writers have used narrative forms and conventions to respond to their cultural contexts and to reflect upon issues of identity and literary power. The course explores the ways class, race, and gender intersect in works of fiction, and how African-American writers construct black subjectivity in a world which has often/historically regarded them primarily as objects.

IV. Learning Outcomes:

**Student learning outcomes:** Identify and pursue more sophisticated questions for academic inquiry

Through a combination of lecture and class discussion, students are instructed in the practice of academic inquiry and are introduced to a variety of critical approaches and methodologies. The students share their insights and questions, and the instructor guides them – through a Socratic method – to deepen those ideas and questions.

Find, evaluate, analyze, and synthesize information effectively from diverse sources (see [http://www.lib.umt.edu/informationliteracy/](http://www.lib.umt.edu/informationliteracy/))

This course requires a portfolio comprised of several researched assignments. Sue Samson, humanities librarian, meets with the class to teach them how to prepare for this assignment.

Manage multiple perspectives as appropriate

Building on skills learned in ENLT 301, students read and weigh various critical perspectives as part of their analysis of literary texts.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recognize the purposes and needs of discipline-specific audiences and adopt the academic voice necessary for the chosen discipline</th>
<th>By this time in their progress through the English major, students have been exposed to the “academic voice” and have had a great deal of practice writing in it. Nevertheless, students read at least one sample of student writing that uses an appropriate voice in the course of the semester, and professor comments on written work address this skill where needed.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use multiple drafts, revision, and editing in conducting inquiry and preparing written work</td>
<td>Writing as a process and a revision are emphasized at all times in this class, regardless of the literary/historical content. Students are expected to revise at least one of their major papers after receiving substantial written comments from their instructor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow the conventions of citation, documentation, and formal presentation appropriate to that discipline</td>
<td>Students are required to follow the MLA documentation style – a handbook with this information is included among the course texts. Students receive feedback on these conventions in early drafts of their work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop competence in information technology and digital literacy</td>
<td>Students must find scholarly articles using research databases for their final research paper and presentations. They must assess the quality and applicability of the sources they use for their argument, topic, and purpose.</td>
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</table>

### V. Writing Course Requirements Check list

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is enrollment capped at 25 students? If not, list maximum course enrollment. Explain how outcomes will be adequately met for this number of students. Justify the request for variance.</td>
<td>□ Yes X No</td>
<td>This course has been capped at 30, in keeping with current writing course requirements. If it remains a W course, it will be capped at 25 with the start of the new Writing Course requirements.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are outcomes listed in the course syllabus? If not, how will students be informed of course expectations?</td>
<td>X Yes □ No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are detailed requirements for all written assignments including criteria for evaluation in the course syllabus? If not how and when will students be informed of written assignments?</td>
<td>□ Yes X No</td>
<td>Students receive a handout (in class and via email) describing the written assignments and grading criteria for each assignment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Briefly explain how students are provided with tools and strategies for effective writing and editing in the major.</td>
<td>We read exemplary essays; we discuss the essays, both for content and style/form; students revise based on instructor feedback.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Will written assignments include an opportunity for revision? If not, then explain how students will</td>
<td>X Yes □ No</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
receive and use feedback to improve their writing ability.

Are expectations for Information Literacy listed in the course syllabus? If not, how will students be informed of course expectations?

☐ Yes ☐ No
This information is included in the assignment handout.

VI. Writing Assignments: Please describe course assignments. Students should be required to individually compose at least 20 pages of writing for assessment. At least 50% of the course grade should be based on students’ performance on writing assignments. Clear expression, quality, and accuracy of content are considered an integral part of the grade on any writing assignment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formal Graded Assignments</th>
<th>Informal Ungraded Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essay #1 (5-7 pp.)</td>
<td>Occasional response papers, close reading exercises, and group reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay #2 (5-7 pp.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revision Essay (10-12 pp.)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Final essay exam</td>
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</table>

20% 20% 30% 20%

VII. Syllabus: Paste syllabus below or attach and send digital copy with form. The syllabus should clearly describe how the above criteria are satisfied. For assistance on syllabus preparation see: http://teaching.berkeley.edu/bgd/syllabus.html

ENLT 337/WS 395.02: African American Literature: Women Writers

MWF 1:10 – 2:00, GBB L04

Professor Bergman
Office: LA 128

Office phone: 243-5352
Email: jill.bergman@mso.umt.edu
Office hours: Tuesdays 2:30 – 4:30 and by appointment.

Course Description:

In this course we will read a range of novels (and one play) by nineteenth- and twentieth-century African-American women. Examining these novels in their historical and literary contexts, we will study the ways these writers have used narrative forms and conventions to respond to their cultural contexts and to reflect upon issues of identity and literary power. We will explore the ways class, race, and gender intersect in works of fiction, and how African-American women writers construct black female subjectivity in a world which has often regarded them primarily as objects.

Course Objectives: To familiarize students with some of the range and diversity of writing by African-American women; to study and discuss the effects of race and gender
on writing; to review African-American history in the context of literary study; to deepen students’ interpretative and critical skills, both by discussing literary critical practice and by engaging in it; to improve students’ verbal skills of argumentation and articulation of ideas through large and small group discussion; to improve students’ skills of written argumentation through writing and revising essays.

**Texts:**

Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*
Pauline Hopkins, Magazine Novels
Nella Larsen, *Quicksand*
Ann Petry, *The Street*
Lorraine Hansberry, *A Raisin in the Sun*
Toni Morrison, *Beloved*
Murfin and Ray, *Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms*
Hacker, *A Pocket Style Manual*

**Grading:**

- Essay #1 (5-7 pp.) 20%
- Essay #2 (5-7 pp.) 20%
- Revision Essay (10-12 pp.) 30%
- Final exam 20%
- Participation 10%

**Requirements:**

*Writing assignments:* You will have several opportunities to work on your critical writing in this course. You will write two short essays, exploring and interpreting a text from a list of possible topics. In a third essay, you will revise and expand one of the earlier papers. For this essay, you will incorporate critical and/or historical sources. Sue Samson, humanities librarian, will meet with us in November to talk about researching this topic. We will read several critical essays in class and discuss them along with the novels as a means of complicating our understanding of the novels and of familiarizing you with the ways of engaging with critical scholarship.

Students must complete all written work in order to pass English 337. Assignments may be submitted to me in class or placed in my campus mailbox (in LA 133) by 5:00 p.m. on the due date. Late assignments will be penalized, unless arrangements are made with me prior to the due date.

*Participation:* Students should come to class every day prepared to discuss the day’s reading. I will help you in your preparation by providing extensive discussion questions for each novel. (These are designed to provide starting points for your thinking, but are not intended to be exhaustive. I welcome any ideas you have that do not come up in the questions.) Think about the questions prior to class and be prepared to contribute your thoughts to the discussion.
As part of your participation, I will ask each of you to be responsible for the biographical introduction of one of our writers. This will be very informal – oral only, nothing written – but it will require you to look up some information on your writer in the library. I recommend the following sources:

- Shockley, Afro-American Women Writers, 1746-1933 (stacks)
- Dictionary of Literary Biography series, volumes such as Afro-American Writers Before the Harlem Renaissance (stacks)
- Nineteenth-Century Literature Criticism series (stacks)
- Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism series (info center)

**Reserve Materials:** I have put the required articles on both traditional and electronic reserve (ERES). Our ERES password is ENLT337. You will need to get copies of these articles, read them, mark them as needed, and bring them with you to class.

**Attendance:** Obviously, to participate regularly, you’ll need to be here. This is a discussion-based course, and I’m a stickler for attendance. More than four absences will adversely affect your grade in the course. More than seven absences will result in failure. If extreme circumstances arise, do talk to me.

**Students with disabilities:** If you have a disability and will need accommodation, please see me early in the semester.

**Course Schedule:**

- M 8/30 Course Introduction
- W 9/1 McDowell, “‘The Changing Same:’ Generational Connections and Black Women Novelists” (reserve)
  Walker, “In Search of Our Mothers’ Gardens” (reserve)
- F 9/3 Jacobs, Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl (5-45, chs. I-IX)
- M 9/6 Holiday. No class.
- W 9/8 Incidents (45-91, chs. X-XX)
  Willis, from The Convalescent (in Incidents 189-193)
- F 9/10 Incidents (91-131, chs. XXI-XXXII)
  Carby, “Slave and Mistress: Ideologies of Womanhood under Slavery” (reserve)
M 9/13  *Incidents* (131-158, chs. XXXIII-Appendix)


**The Woman’s Era: Racial Uplift**

F 9/17  Cooper, “Womanhood: A Vital Element in the Regeneration and Progress of a Race” (reserve)

M 9/20  Harper, from *Iola Leroy* (This is the second portion of the Washington reading, above.)


F 9/24  Exploring *The Colored American Magazine*


W 9/29  *Of One Blood* (504-563, chs. IX-XVI, part one)

F 10/1  *Of One Blood* (563 – 621, chs. XVI part 2 - end)

**Race, Class, and Gender in the Harlem Renaissance**

M 10/4  Larsen, *Quicksand* (1-46)
Essay #1 assigned.

W 10/6  *Quicksand* (47-93)

F 10/8  *Quicksand* (94-135)

M 10/11  *Quicksand*

**The Blues**

W 10/13  Petry, *The Street* (1-84)

F 10/15  *Workshop Essay #1. Bring 3 copies of your draft with you to class.*

M 10/18  *The Street* (85-162)

W 10/20  *The Street* (163-256)
F 10/22  *The Street* (catch-up discussion)

M 10/25  TBA
Essay #1 due in my box by 5 pm.

W 10/27  *The Street* (257-350)

F 10/29  *The Street* (351-436)

M 11/1  Pryse, “‘Pattern against the sky’: Deism and Motherhood in Ann Petry’s *The Street*” (on reserve)

**The Civil Rights Era**

W 11/3  Hansberry, *Raisin in the Sun*

F 11/5  *Raisin in the Sun*, cont.

M 11/8  *Raisin in the Sun*, cont.

W 11/10  *Workshop for Essay #2*. *Bring 3 copies of your draft with you to class.*

**The Recent Renaissance**

F 11/12  Smith, “Gender and Afro-Americanist Literary Theory and Criticism” (reserve) [exchange drafts]
Combahee River Collective, “A Black Feminist Statement” (reserve)

M 11/15  Spillers, “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s maybe: An American Grammar Book” (reserve) [workshop]

Essay #2 due.
Final Essay assigned.

F 11/19  Morrison, *Beloved* (3-63)

M 11/22  *Beloved* (64-105) [#2 due]

W 11/24 and F 11/26  THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

M 11/29  *Beloved* (106-153)

W 12/1  *Beloved* (154-199)
F 12/3 Beloved (200-235)
M 12/6 Beloved (237-275)
W 12/8 Mullen, “Runaway Tongue: Resistant Orality in Uncle Tom’s Cabin, Our Nig, Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, and Beloved” (in Incidents 253-278)
F 12/10 Wrap Up
Discuss final exam
Final Essay Due

FINAL EXAM: Thursday, Dec. 16, 1:10 – 3:10 in our usual room