

THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

ENGL-3709.3-002

Topics in Canadian Literature and Culture:
Black Canadian Writing

Term: Winter 2013

Time: Tues. & Thurs. 2:30-3:45pm

Room: 4BC57

Email: c.rifkind@uwinnipeg.ca

Office Hours: Tues. & Thurs. 1:00-2:00pm or by appointment

Professor: Dr. Candida Rifkind

Office: 2A38

Phone: 204-786-9198

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to the vibrant and diverse field of Black Canadian writing through fiction (novels and short stories), drama, poetry, and popular culture. Most of the course texts appeared after 1990 and so we will focus on contemporary practices and innovations in such literary forms as the historical novel, urban fiction, long poem, poetry cycle, and drama as well as the performance cultures of spoken word, jazz, dub, rap, and djing/turntablism. In addition to the creative texts, this course will introduce students to key concepts in critical race theory and Black studies through criticism and theory that contextualizes these Canadian writers in the flows and tides of the larger Black Atlantic.

REQUIRED TEXTS (in order of reading)

The following books have been ordered for the course through Mondragon (91 Albert Street in the Exchange District). Where possible, they have also been placed on 4hr reserve in the UW Library. They are listed in order of reading. Other required readings are available through the Nexus site for the course (see attached Reading Schedule).

Hill, Lawrence. *The Book of Negroes*. Toronto: HarperCollins, 2007. Print.

Clarke, George Elliott. *Whylah Falls*. 1990. Kentville, NS: Gaspereau, 2010. Print.

Sears, Djanet. *Harlem Duet*. Winnipeg, MB: Scirocco Drama, 1998. Print.

Brand, Dionne. *Thirsty*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2002. Print.

Mayr, Suzette. *Monoceros*. Toronto: Coach House, 2011. Print.

RECOMMENDED TEXT(S)

MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. 7th Ed. New York: Modern Language Association of America, 2009. Print.

There are many websites dedicated to writing and research skills but not all of them are appropriate for academic writing. The following provide excellent information and help:

1. The University of Toronto Advice on Academic Writing website (especially good for getting started, understanding essay requirements, planning and writing the first draft):
<http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice>

2. Purdue University has one of the largest websites dedicated to writing skills (good for specific information about grammar and style – use this to understand the comments you get back on your papers and to correct writing errors). <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/sitemap.html>

3. On using the MLA style to cite and document sources in a research paper:
<http://library.concordia.ca/help/howto/mla.php>

ASSIGNMENTS

(more information will be provided in class prior to each due date)

Textual Analysis of *The Book of Negroes* (1000 words) **20%**
Due January 31st

Research Essay

- 1. Proposal (250-300 words) and Annotated Bibliography (min. 5 sources)** **10%**
Due March 7th
- 2. Essay (2500-3000 words)** **30%**
Due April 4th

Group Presentations on Black Canadian hip hop

- 1. Presentation** **5%**
Group mark based on 20 min. presentation the week of March 12th
- 2. Written Report** **5%**
Individual mark based on 300 word summary of contribution

Final Exam (3 hours on April 11th @1:30pm) **25%**

Reading Quizzes (5x1% throughout the term) **5%**

Five times during the term, at the beginning of class, you will be required to complete a 10 minute Reading Quiz comprised of short answer questions. The dates of the Reading Quizzes are a surprise, so the best strategy is to do all the assigned reading. Quizzes will be marked Pass/Fail, where a Pass = 1% and a Fail = 0%.

GRADING SCALE

A+	90 - 100%	GPA 4.50	C+	65 - 69%	GPA 2.5
A	85 - 89%	GPA 4.25	C	60 - 64%	GPA 2.0
A-	80 – 84%	GPA 4.0	D	50 - 59%	GPA 1.0
B+	75 - 79%	GPA 3.5	F	Below 50%	GPA 0
B	70 - 74%	GPA 3.0			

NOTES

1. This course outline should be considered a guideline only. Time constraints and other unforeseen factors may require that some of the above topics be omitted or covered in less detail than indicated.
2. Work submitted for evaluation must be either typed or text processed.
3. Cellular phones and other electronic devices **MUST** be turned off during classes.

4. It is the student's responsibility to retain a photocopy or digitized copy of **ALL** assignments submitted for grading; in the event of loss or theft, a duplicate copy is required.
5. Students are advised to read the pertinent pages of the current course calendar for the rules regarding Registration, Voluntary Withdrawals, Academic Misconduct including plagiarism, and Appeals. **Concerning plagiarism, please note** that as a general rule, an F in the course will be the penalty recommended by the English Departmental Review Committee to the Senate Committee on Academic Misconduct for plagiarism on major assignments in English Department courses.
6. Accessibility Services:
Students with documented disabilities, temporary or chronic medical conditions, requiring academic accommodations for tests/exams (e.g., private space) or during lectures/laboratories (e.g., access to volunteer note-takers) are encouraged to contact Accessibility Services (AS) at 786-9771 or email accessibilityservices@uwinnipeg.ca to discuss appropriate options. Specific information about AS is available on-line at <http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/accessibility>. All information about a student's disability or medical condition remains confidential.
7. The University of Winnipeg promotes a scent-free environment. Please be respectful of the needs of fellow classmates and the instructor by avoiding the use of scented products while attending lectures. Exposures to perfumes and other scented products (such as lotion) can trigger serious health reactions in persons with asthma, allergies, migraines or chemical sensitivities.
8. Please note that registering in this course commits you to the date and time of the course final examination. If you are aware of possible conflicts with that date, please see me immediately during the first week of the course, in case you need to register in another course to accommodate the conflict. For appeals for deferred exams, please see the Calendar.
9. **Monday, March 4th, 2013** is the final date to withdraw without academic penalty from courses that begin in January 2013 and end in April 2013 in the 2013 Winter term.
10. Late Assignment Penalties I encourage you to speak with me (in person, not over email) in advance if you anticipate handing an assignment in late due to extenuating circumstances, such as illness or a personal/family emergency. **Note that having a lot of work to do for your other courses is not a reasonable excuse for a late assignment in this course.** Unless prior arrangements have been made or you present a medical/legal note explaining why your assignment has been handed in late, the penalty for a late assignment is: 10% off immediately when it is not submitted on the due date and 2% off each extra weekday it is late. No unexplained late assignments will be accepted after they are 7 weekdays late. Late assignments will not receive written comments.
11. The English Department wishes to ensure your right to privacy regarding handing in and getting back assignments is protected. Most assignments will be handed in and handed back in class or at the Instructor's office. If assignments are to be handled in another way and you are concerned about others having access to your work, you should attach to your assignment a self-addressed envelope that can be sealed. If this is not done, it is assumed that you have waived your concerns in this area.

12. Students will not be asked for identification when writing a test or examination.
13. Students are advised that the UW Bookstore may run out of textbooks early in the term. Also, the bookstore always ships textbooks back to the publisher if they are not purchased within the first few weeks of term. Students are responsible for communicating directly with the bookstore if they need to order texts or ask for texts to be held for them.
14. No unauthorized material or equipment may be brought with you to the final exam.
15. For more information regarding the English Department, please refer to our website at <http://english.uwinnipeg.ca>
16. **IMPORTANT NOTE ON EMAIL:** I only respond to students' emails during regular work hours (M-F 9am-5pm) and I may take up to 24 hours to respond. Due to the high volume of junk mail I receive, I can only respond to emails sent from UW student accounts (iam.uwinnipeg). Do not email me from hotmail, yahoo, gmail, or other non-UW accounts. Please observe professional email etiquette and do not add me to any mailing lists.
17. **IMPORTANT NOTE ON MOBILE DEVICES AND LAPTOPS:** Absolutely no texting in class. Bag texting is still texting. All mobile devices must be turned off once class begins and remain off until it is over. **Laptop use requires the instructor's permission.** You may not record lectures without my prior permission.
18. Please do not eat during class.

Reading Schedule

(any changes will be announced well in advance)

N = available for download at the course Nexus site

Date	Reading	Other Information
Jan. 8 & 10	Tuesday = Introductions Thursday = key concepts	
Jan. 15 & 17	Lawrence Hill, <i>The Book of Negroes</i> (finish Book One)	
Jan. 22 & 24	Lawrence Hill, <i>The Book of Negroes</i> (all)	
Jan. 29 & 31	George Elliott Clarke, <i>Whylah Falls</i>	Jan. 31 = Textual Analysis Due
Feb. 5 & 7	George Elliott Clarke, <i>Whylah Falls</i>	
Feb. 12 & 14	Djanet Sears, <i>Harlem Duet</i>	
Feb. 26 & 28	Poems by Dionne Brand (N)	
Mar. 5 & 7	Dionne Brand, <i>Thirsty</i>	Mar. 7 = Research Proposal and Annotated Bibliography Due
Mar. 12 & 14	Presentations on Black Canadian hip hop (Maestro Fresh-Wes; Dream Warriors; Kardinal Offishall; Michie Mee; k-os; K'naan; Cadence Weapon) Readings: 1. Rinaldo Walcott, "Toward a Methodology for Reading Canadian Hip Hop" (N) 2. Remi Warner, "Hip Hop with a Northern Touch!? Diasporic Wanderings/Wonderings on Canadian Blackness" (N)	Group Presentations
Mar. 19 & 21	Poems by Wayde Compton (N) Essay by Wayde Compton: "Turntable Poetry, Mixed-Race, and Schizophonia" (N)	
Mar. 26 & 28	Suzette Mayr, <i>Monoceros</i>	
Apr. 2 & 4	Suzette Mayr, <i>Monoceros</i>	Apr. 4 = Research Essay Due

The Final Exam (25%) is scheduled for 1:30pm on April 11, 2013.