

- Faculté des lettres et sciences humaines
- www.unine.ch/lettres

Seminar 4: Modern and Contemporary Literature : African-American Literature (2AN1435)

Filières concernées	Nombre d'heures	Validation	Crédits ECTS
Pilier principal B A - langue et littérature anglaises	Séminaire: 2 ph	Voir ci-dessous	5
Pilier secondaire B A - langue et littérature anglaises	Séminaire: 2 ph	Voir ci-dessous	5

ph=période hebdomadaire, pg=période globale, j=jour, dj=demi-jour, h=heure, min=minute

Période d'enseignement:

- Semestre Printemps

Equipe enseignante

Prof. Patrick Vincent

Contenu

The aims of this course are the following:

- To develop students' close reading skills, learned in the first-year Introduction to Literature course.
- To pursue in more depth a specific genre, period, or theme in modern literary history
- To improve expository and critical writing skills, notably through class participation and through reader-response papers
- To improve research-paper writing skills, notably by preparing an oral presentation based on a critical article, and by learning how to integrate secondary criticism into a longer essay

This course will offer a survey of African-American literature from the colonial period to today, looking at a variety of genres and paying special attention to questions of gender and the body in response to political, sexual and economic oppression.

We will begin the semester with Te-Nehsi Coates's 'Between the World and Me' (2015), then go back to examples of early African-American writing, including poetry by Phillis Wheatley and slave narratives by Harriet Jacobs and Frederick Douglass. We will then review the early fight for civil rights starting during the Reconstruction in essays by Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. DuBois, before turning to some of the most important texts of the Harlem Renaissance, including poetry by Langston Hughes and Claude McKay, and fiction by Nella Larsen and Zora Neale Hurston.

In the second half of the semester, we will look at literature produced in response to lynchings of the 1940s, the segregation of the 1950s, the civil rights movement of the 1960s, and the urban violence and decay of the 1970s and 80s, including a play by Lorraine Hansberry, essays and short fiction by Richard Wright and James Baldwin, speeches by Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, poetry by Rita Dove and Claudia Rankine, and a novel Toni Morrison.

Students will be asked to present an article relating to the texts, to African-American history, or to more theoretical questions relating to race and gender.

Forme de l'évaluation

Ev. Interne : one in-class oral presentation (10%), two essays (4-6 double-spaced pages each) (90%).

Documentation

Nella Larsen, *Passing*
Zora Neale Hurston, *Their Eyes were Watching God*
Toni Morrison, *The Bluest Eye*

The three novels are available at Payot. Other texts will either be made available on the Moodle course platform or can be accessed on the web.

Pré-requis

First-year courses are required; survey of American literature is recommended.

Forme de l'enseignement

Seminar discussion

Objectifs d'apprentissage

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Au terme de la formation l'étudiant-e doit être capable de :

- Rédiger un texte de 10 à 12 pages d'une manière autonome sur un aspect de la thématique du séminaire
- Spécifier les concepts de base de l'analyse littéraire importants pour la thématique du séminaire
- Développer des questions de la recherche (avec le soutien de l'enseignant)
- Appliquer les concepts de base de l'analyse littéraire à des textes

Compétences transférables

- Manage priorities
- Communicate in a second language
- Intellectual rigor and curiosity
- Generate new ideas (creativity)