

African & African American Literature (AAAL)

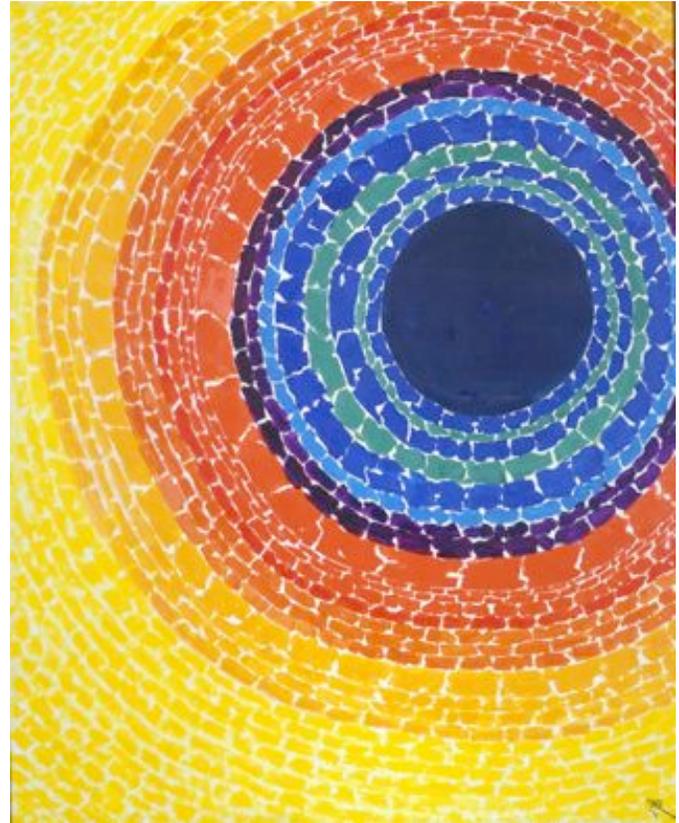
Spring 2016 Course Offerings

ENG400, African American Rhetorics **Dr. Burns, MWF 10am**

This course will explore the language practices of Black Americans. We will address the history and development of African American Vernacular English (AAVE), its roles within black cultures, and its relationships to black experiences in mainstream U.S. society. The course will draw rhetorical frameworks from Western European and African Diasporic traditions, sociolinguistic theory, and sociocultural theory. We will analyze texts as expressions of Black Americans' experiences and forms of resistance to racial oppression in the U.S. The main goals of the course are to have students engage in rhetorical analysis and develop a more critical understanding of the role language has played in the Black American Experience.

LIT 203: African American Literature II **Dr. Pollard, MWF 11 am**

In *The Souls of Black Folk*, W.E.B. Dubois argues that, "the problem of the Twentieth Century is the problem of the color line." In this course, we will explore the complexity of twentieth-century Black literature; its many traditions and tensions reveal the often tenuous relationship between politics and aesthetics that Black writers and critics confronted during this tumultuous historical period. We will examine the ways in which Black writers used poems, plays, short fiction, and novels to comment upon various American historical, social, and cultural movements from the turn of the century through to its end. Throughout the semester, we will explore the following questions: what responsibilities (if any) does a Black writer have to his or her community? How have Black writers confronted issues of social and cultural inequality such as racism, sexism, and classism? How do we define a "Black aesthetic"? How has Black literature changed from the beginning to the end of the twentieth century?



The Eclipse, Alma Thomas

LIT204: Black Women Writers in America **Dr. Banner, MWF 2pm**

In this course, we will study the rich literary output of Black women writers in the Americas from the nineteenth century to the present. We will read texts in many genres, including poetry, autobiography, novels, short stories, and a play to study the ways in which these works draw on common themes and, just as importantly, the ways they diverge from one another. Core topics for the course include Black women writers' literary-formal experimentation, Black feminism(s), womanism, and the racial and gender politics of literary canon formation. This course is also cross-listed with WCU's Women's and Gender Studies program, so our discussions will frequently engage with Black women's critical scholarship and activist writings. These critical texts will help us consider questions about race, gender, sexuality, disability, and social justice in the literature we read.

AAAL Spring 2016 Courses, cont...



Starry Night and the Astronauts, Alma Thomas

LIT 309: Martin Luther King Dr. Burns, MW 3pm

In this course, we will engage in close study of King with regard to his identity, politics, means of expression, influences, impact, public and private images, death, and legacy. We will immerse ourselves not only in the essays, books, speeches, and sermons that King produced as a preacher and leader of the Black American Civil Rights movement of the 1950s and 60s, but also in a voluminous body of material produced *about* him by cultural critics, creative writers, biographers, historians, political scientists, sociologists, theologians, movement participants, journalists, and documentary filmmakers. Viewing King's life and work in the historical and political contexts of the Civil Rights, Black Power, and Vietnam eras, we will read, discuss, and write about iconic and lesser-known texts to form a nuanced picture of a man whose view of racial protest and social justice grew, in his final years, to be more radical and expansive than is typically remembered today.

CLS 365: African American Film Dr. Pollard, MWF 10am

This course will focus on the development of African American film from the early twentieth century to the present. We will examine the various ways that African American filmmakers have responded to racist stereotypes in their work, as well as how black directors responded to social, cultural, and historical forces that shaped our society. We will study films made during and about historical periods like the Harlem Renaissance, the Black American Civil Rights Movement, and the Black Power Movement. As the semester progresses, students will come to develop and hone an understanding of film analysis through discussions of African American film.

For more information about the AAAL Minor at WCU:

Please visit our official page on the WCU English Department website:

https://www.wcupa.edu/academics/sch_cas.eng/africanLit.aspx

Or contact our Program Coordinator:

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