

San José State University
English/African-American Studies

E165: *African-American Literature & Thought*

From Reconstruction to Black Lives Matter

Spring 2016

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Persis Karim
Office Location:	Faculty Office Building 216
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Office Hours:	Tu/Thurs. 1:30-2:30 & by appt.
Class Days/Time:	Tu/Thurs. 12:00-1:15 pm
Classroom:	Clark 306

Course Prerequisite: Upper Division Standing

Course Description: This special topics course in American ethnic literature takes as its focus the literature, ideas, and context of African-American writers and thinkers over a long period of US history. By looking at essays, journalism, as well as novels and films, we will investigate the discourses of African-American literary and intellectual figures from the late 19th to early 21st century. We will look at the ways that writers and thinkers respond to representations of race, racism, and inequality, while also understanding how important self-representation is for claiming and articulating an African-American identity. We will particularly look at the ways that writers and thinkers respond to institutionalized racism such as segregation, mass incarceration of black people, as well as the more immediate and subtle forms that have been identified as “micro-aggressions” and more immediate responses to events such as the killing of young black men by police and the response by the “Black Lives Matter” movement.

English Department Student Learning Objectives (as they are evoked in the English 165 Course Goals)

1. Read closely in a variety of forms, styles, structures, and modes, and articulate the value of close reading in the study of African- American literature.
2. Show familiarity with major literary works, genres, periods, and critical approaches to African-American Literature, gaining an awareness of the range of cultural experiences and productions that make up African - American literary and cultural history, focusing on the self-representations of African Americans by African Americans.
3. Write clearly, effectively, and creatively, and adjust writing style appropriately to the content, the context, and nature of the subject.

4. Develop and carry out research projects, and locate, evaluate, organize, and incorporate information effectively.

5. Articulate the relations among culture, history, and texts, strengthening their abilities to engage ethnic American literary text and to analyze both its form and content as well as its social and historical contexts.

Teaching Associate – Amanda Licato

This semester, Amanda Licato, a PhD student in American literature from Stanford University, will be involved in the class, participating in sessions from the start of the semester until March 10, occasionally lecturing, and helping with class discussion and grading. Amanda is holding office hours every Tuesday from 2-3pm (location TBD) to help with anything— experiences in grad school, challenges you face beyond the classroom, how to improve basic writing skills or more complex analysis and argumentation (expository writing), etc. If you cannot make it during this time, Amanda is also available for Facetime/Skype sessions. Please contact her by email: amanda.licato@gmail.com. Please note, she will not be available for face-to-face meetings the entire semester, so please communicate directly with her.

Assignments and Grading Policy

Coursework includes reading assignments (see schedule below), seven one-page brief analyses, a review of a reading/performance by an African-American writer, a proposal and annotated bibliography, an 8-12 page research paper, class participation, and a final exam. Class participation includes in-class discussion, reading quizzes, and brief written assignments either in class or on our class Canvas site. The final exam will be comprised of both essay and short identification questions. Late paper policy: keeping in mind the many emergencies and unforeseen events that can occur in the average SJSU student’s life, I have a very generous extension policy. As long as you give me the request in writing—print or email— (complete with a new deadline) before the paper is due, most requests for an extension will be granted. If the original deadline is passed by a student who has not received an extension or an extended deadline has been passed, 10% of the total points possible will be taken off for lateness up to one week, **NO PAPER WILL BE ACCEPTED ONCE AN ORIGINAL OR EXTENDED DEADLINE HAS PASSED BY MORE THAN A WEEK**. Extended or late papers will be graded AFTER on-time student work. **Note that doing the reading and being able and willing to respond to the comments and questions of both the professor and your fellow students on a daily basis is a requirement of the course.** Reading quizzes and other in-class assignments will be given to ensure that students are indeed completing and understanding the readings. These cannot be made up.

Due dates for all papers and the times for all exams are listed on the reading and assignment schedule at the end of the syllabus.

Proposal and annotated bibliography (SLO 2-5)	1-page proposal (300 words) of your research project plus annotated bibliography with at least 5 entries (Due April 26— follow up with Amanda Licato)	10%
Research Paper (SLO 1-5)	8-12 pages (Due May 17)	30%
1-2-pages (SLO 1, 2, 3, & 5)	7 brief, focused 1-2-page (300-500 word) analyses (Due throughout the semester, tba)	20%
Final Exam (SLO 1, 2, 3, & 5)	Identification terms, passage id & comparative essay (May 20, 9:45am to 12noon)	20%
Participation, reading quizzes & other in-class assignments (SLO 1, 2, 3, & 5)	Class discussions/quizzes/participation/group work Presentation Facebook postings	10% 15% 5%
Extra Credit: Performance/reading review (SLO 2 & 3) (will replace one quiz grade)	1-page review of reading or performance by African-American author/performer due anytime, but no later than May 5	

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The following statement has been adopted by the Department of English for inclusion in all syllabi:

In English Department Courses, instructors will comment on and grade the quality of student writing as well as the quality of ideas being conveyed. All student writing should be distinguished by correct grammar and punctuation, appropriate diction and syntax, and well-organized paragraphs.

The Department of English reaffirms its commitment to the differential grading scale as defined in the SJSU Catalog ("The Grading System"). Grades issued must represent a full range of student performance: A = excellent; B = above average; C = average; D = below average; F = failure.

In written assignments for English 165, this scale is based on the following criteria:

A [90-92=A-, 93-96=A, 97-100=A+] = Excellent: The "A" essay is articulate and well developed with fluid transitions and a clear and persuasive use of evidence, which is drawn from the literary text itself, lecture materials (when appropriate), and research materials. An "A" essay contains a fresh insight that teaches the reader something new about the subject matter.

B [80-82=B-, 83-86=B, 87-89=B+] Above average: The "B" essay demonstrates a good understanding of its subject, a clear and persuasive use of evidence, a certain level of ease of expression, and solid organization. However, it usually lacks the level of originality and creativity that characterizes the insight found in an "A" essay.

C [70-72=C-, 73-76=C, 77-79=C+] = Average: The "C" essay makes a good attempt at all the assignment's requirements. It has a reasonable understanding of its subject matter but its ideas are frequently simplistic or over-generalized. The writing style is also more bland and repetitive than the style shown by "A" and "B" essays and it often contains flaws in grammar, punctuation, spelling and/or word choice. It may also use textual evidence out of context.

D [60-62=D-, 63-66=D, 67-69=D+] = Below average: The "D" essay is poorly organized and generally unclear. It has inappropriate or inadequate examples, is noticeably superficial or simplistic, and/or contains some serious mechanical and grammatical problems. A "D" essay may also reveal some misunderstanding of the assignment requirements.

F = Failure: An "F" essay has not addressed the requirements of the assignment and is unacceptable work in terms of both form and content.

Classroom Protocol

You are required to be courteous and professional to both classmates and the professor. Most people take this as a requirement in their daily lives and this statement does not need to be reiterated here. However, people sometimes forget that the classroom is a professional setting and rules that govern a business meeting apply here. For example, devices such as cell phones need to be turned off; using laptops for email or social media instead of note taking or coming to class late is unacceptable. If an emergency arises that requires your absence from class, please contact the professor. Simply prioritizing your education behind other time commitments does not constitute such an emergency.

Participating in class discussions and listening to and taking notes on class lectures are absolutely necessary for the successful completion of this course. I expect you to participate, speak up, ask questions, comment on the work of your peers. I also expect you to be respectful, listen well, and be supportive of your peers, even if you do not agree with them. We need to create a safe and intellectually productive space in which to discuss ideas, even if they are difficult, controversial, and sometimes force us to interrogate our own assumptions, privileges, and prejudices. I expect that you will be respectful, thoughtful, and open.

Protocol for written work requires that all quotations must be enclosed in quotation marks or, when more than three lines, put in an indented block. Full citation of the original author and source must also be included. For all papers, review a writing handbook for help with quote integration, formatting & proper citation (most of you will have purchased one for your Freshman comp. classes). Also see the University policy on “Academic Integrity” below for help defining and avoiding plagiarism of all kinds.

Presentations

You will be required to sign up for a presentation date at the beginning of the semester (within the first two weeks). Presentations will be no more than 10-15 minutes in class (and you’ll be paired with someone else to discuss a different aspect of the text or, if there are two texts assigned on the same day), wherein you analyze, discuss, and closely read a portion of the text. Your presentation can focus on themes, characters, issues, and representations within the text. You are not required to do outside reading, but must be prepared to offer a more analytical and in-depth reading of the text. You must turn in an outline on the day of your presentation. The idea is to get you to offer something to the class in your own reading experience. It should be a thoughtful, well-organized presentation that you prepare ahead of time. Please don’t just ask the class a series of questions!

Research Paper

Prior to the deadline(s) for the research paper, you will be given a handout with suggestions/prompts for the paper. You will be required to turn in a proposal along with a working bibliography. You must meet with Amanda Licato, my teaching associate in person or via skype to talk about your paper proposal. Amanda and I will also be available to discuss drafts of your paper during office hours. Please note deadlines for proposal and annotated bibliography in schedule.

Facebook Page and Required Posting

We will set up a class **Facebook page** called, “**E165: From 1865-Black Lives Matter**” (Amanda will email us all the link the first week of class). You will be required to post at least one article, essay, news article (with analysis) that pertains to the class and you’ll be required to respond to at least one story with 1-2 paragraphs. It can be helpful to address how the article/news item/story/etc. pertains to our class, resonates with the reading, or holds some important opportunity for us to discuss and understand how race and racism does or does not get discussed.

University Policies

SJSU classes are designed such that in order to be successful, it is expected that students will spend a minimum of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours per unit per week), including preparing for class, participating in course activities, completing assignments, and so on. More details about student workload can be found in University Policy S12-3 at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf>.

Dropping and Adding

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drop, grade forgiveness, etc. Refer to the current semester’s Catalog Policies section at <http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html>. Add/drop deadlines can be found on the current academic year calendars document on the Academic Calendars webpage at http://www.sjsu.edu/provost/services/academic_calendars/. The Late Drop Policy is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/>. February 3rd is the last day to drop classes in Spring 2015. Information about the latest changes and news is available at the Advising Hub at <http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/>. English

Consent for Recording of Class and Public Sharing of Instructor Material University

Policy S12-7, <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-7.pdf>, requires students to obtain instructor’s to record course material. Course material developed by the instructor is the intellectual property of the instructor and

cannot be shared publicly without his/her approval. You may not publicly share or upload instructor-generated material for this course such as exam questions, lecture notes, or homework solutions without instructor consent.

Academic Integrity

Your commitment, as a student, to learning is evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University. The University Academic Integrity Policy S07-2 at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S07-2.pdf> requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The Student Conduct and Ethical Development website is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/>.

Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 at http://www.sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the Accessible Education Center (AEC) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aec> to establish a record of their disability.

Required Texts/Readings

Course Packet Available from Maple Press (**identified in schedule of readings as CP**)

James Baldwin, *The Fire Next Time*

Zora Neale Hurston, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*

Toni Morrison, *Beloved*

Jesmyn Ward, *Salvage the Bones*

Claudia Rankine, *Citizen*

Ta-Nehisi Coates, *Between the World and Me*

August Wilson, “*Joe Turner’s Come and Gone*” (**a play- available as PDF, I will email to you**)

Required Films

“Malcolm X” – view on your own (Netflix)

“Fruitvale Station” (in class)

Recommended Films

“Selma”

“Do the Right Thing”

“Rosewood”

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General Expectations, Rights and Responsibilities of the Student

As members of the academic community, students accept both the rights and responsibilities incumbent upon all members of the institution. Students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with SJSU's policies and practices pertaining to the procedures to follow if and when questions or concerns about a class arises. To learn important campus information, view [University Policy S90-5](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S90-5.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S90-5.pdf> and SJSU current semester's [Policies and Procedures](http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html), at <http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html>. In general, it is recommended that students begin by seeking clarification or discussing concerns with their instructor. If such conversation is not possible, or if it does not address the issue, it is recommended that the student contact the Department Chair as the next step.

Dropping and Adding

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drop, grade forgiveness, etc. Add/drop deadlines can be found on the current academic year calendars document on the [Academic Calendars webpage](http://www.sjsu.edu/provost/services/academic_calendars/) at http://www.sjsu.edu/provost/services/academic_calendars/. The [Late Drop Policy](http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/) is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/>. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for dropping classes.

Information about the latest changes and news is available at the [Advising Hub](http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/>.

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- “Common courtesy and professional behavior dictate that you notify someone when you are recording him/her. You must obtain the instructor's permission to make audio or video recordings in this class. Such permission allows the recordings to be used for your private, study purposes only. The recordings are the intellectual property of the instructor; you have not been given any rights to reproduce or distribute the material.”
 - It is suggested that the greensheet include the instructor's process for granting permission, whether in writing or orally and whether for the whole semester or on a class by class basis.
 - In classes where active participation of students or guests may be on the recording, permission of those students or guests should be obtained as well.
- “Course material developed by the instructor is the intellectual property of the instructor and cannot be shared publicly without his/her approval. You may not publicly share or upload instructor generated material for this course such as exam questions, lecture notes, or homework solutions without instructor consent.”

Academic integrity

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Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. [Presidential Directive 97-03](http://www.sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf) at http://www.sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the [Accessible Education Center](http://www.sjsu.edu/aec) (AEC) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aec> to establish a record of their disability.

Accommodation to Students' Religious Holidays (Optional)

San José State University shall provide accommodation on any graded class work or activities for students wishing to observe religious holidays when such observances require students to be absent from class. It is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor, in writing, about such holidays before the add deadline at the start of each semester. If such holidays occur before the add deadline, the student must notify the instructor, in writing, at least three days before the date that he/she will be absent. It is the responsibility of the instructor to make every reasonable effort to honor the student request without penalty, and of the student to make up the work missed. See [University Policy S14-7](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S14-7.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S14-7.pdf>.

Student Technology Resources

Computer labs for student use are available in the [Academic Success Center](http://www.sjsu.edu/at/asc/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/at/asc/> located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and in the Associated Students Lab on the 2nd floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library. A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include DV and HD digital camcorders; digital still cameras; video, slide and overhead projectors; DVD, CD, and audiotape players; sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

SJSU Peer Connections

Peer Connections' free tutoring and mentoring is designed to assist students in the development of their full academic potential and to inspire them to become independent learners. Peer Connections tutors are trained to provide content-based tutoring in many lower division courses (some upper division) as well as writing and study skills assistance. Small group and individual tutoring are available. Peer Connections mentors are trained to provide support and resources in navigating the college experience. This support includes assistance in learning strategies and techniques on how to be a successful student. Peer Connections has a learning commons, desktop computers, and success workshops on a wide variety of topics. For more information on services, hours, locations, or a list of current workshops, please visit [Peer Connections website](http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu) at <http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu> for more information.

SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Clark Hall, Suite 126. All Writing Specialists have gone through a rigorous hiring process, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. In addition to one-on-one tutoring services, the Writing Center also offers workshops every semester on a variety of writing topics. To make an appointment or to refer to the numerous online resources offered through the Writing Center, visit the [Writing Center website](http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter>.

English 165, African-American Literature & Thought, Spring 2016

Course Schedule

Please note that this schedule is subject to change. You will be notified via email or in person of changes. If you are absent from class, however, it is your responsibility to ask the instructor or a peer of any changes. Reading is assigned for the session on which we will be discussing it; please come to class prepared to discuss the reading for the day it appears on the schedule.

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1-Th	January 28	Course Introductions Discuss Frederick Douglass (emailed to you before our first meeting) "What the Black Man Wants"
2-Tu	February 2	CP: Charles Chesnutt, Excerpts from <i>The Conjure Woman</i> & Excerpts from Paul Lawrence Dunbar Presenters: _____
2-Th	February 4	CP: Booker T. Washington and W.E. B. DuBois Presenters: _____
3-Tu	February 9	CP: Ida B. Wells Dunbar "The Lynching of Jube Benson" Presenters: _____
3-Th	February 11	Jean Toomer Excerpts from <i>Cane</i> and Langston Hughes Poems Presenters: _____
4-Tu	February 16	Toni Morrison, <i>Beloved</i> (up to "Upstairs Beloved was dancing.") Presenters: _____
4-Th	February 18	Toni Morrison, <i>Beloved</i> (up to "In the back of Baby Suggs' mind...") Presenters: _____
5-Tu	February 23	Toni Morrison, <i>Beloved</i> (up to "Beloved she mine. See. She come back to me.") Presenters: _____
5-Th	February 25	Toni Morrison, <i>Beloved</i> (finish book) Presenters: _____
6-Tu	March 1	Finish <i>Beloved</i> and Zora Neale Hurston, <i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i> , Chapters. 1-8 Presenters: _____
6-Th	March 3	Zora Neale Hurston, <i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i> , Chapters 9-16 Presenters: _____
7-Tu	March 8	Zora Neale Hurston, <i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i> , Chapters 17-end Presenters: _____
7-Th	March 10	James Baldwin, <i>The Fire Next Time</i> , "Down at the Cross" to end Presenters: _____

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
8-Tu	March 15	August Wilson, "Joe Turner's Come and Gone" Presenters: _____
8-Th	March 17	August Wilson, "Joe Turner's Come and Gone" Presenters: _____
9-Tu	March 22	August Wilson, "Joe Turner's Come and Gone" Presenters: _____
9-Th	March 24	March 28-April 3
	SPRING BREAK	CP: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X
10-Tu	April 5	Watch "Malcom X" on your own, TBA (emailed readings)
10-Th	April 7	CP: "Black Power" & Amiri Baraka (Black Arts Movement) Excerpts from Michelle Alexander, <i>The New Jim Crow</i> (via email & this link: http://billmoyers.com/content/book-excerpt-understanding-the-new-jim-crow/) Presenters: _____
11-Tu	April 12	Film Screening of "Fruitvale Station"
11-Th	April 14	Film Screening of "Fruitvale Station"
12-Tu	April 19	Jesmyn Ward, <i>Salvage the Bones</i> , Chapters 1-4 Presenters: _____
12-Th	April 21	Jesmyn Ward, <i>Salvage the Bones</i> , Chapters 5-9 Presenters: _____
13-Tu	April 26	Jesmyn Ward, <i>Salvage the Bones</i> Chapters 10-12, CP: Hurricane Katrina Presenters: _____
13-Th	April 28	Claudia Rankine, <i>Citizen</i> , pages, TBA, CP: Barack Obama writing Presenters: _____
14-Tu	May 3	Claudia Rankine, <i>Citizen</i> , pages TBA & Steve Martinot, "On the Epidemic of Police Killings" (other links will be emailed to you) Presenters: _____
14-Th	May 5	Ta-Nehisi Coates, <i>Between the World and Me</i> , Part I Presenters: _____
15-Tu	May 10	Ta-Nehisi Coates, <i>Between the World and Me</i> , Part II-end Presenters: _____
15-Th	May 12	Reading TBA, Ferguson and Black Lives Matter Final class discussion.
	May 17	Final paper due with rough draft (no class, but due in my office by 12 noon)
	May 20	9:45am-12 noon (pls. bring green book)

