



Box of Bones cover by John Jennings

Course Description

Pre-requisite: ENGL1102

Preferred Pre-requisites: ENGL2145, ENGL2300, AADS1102

Per the course catalog, this course is “a study of literature using region as the primary category of analysis.” This semester, we will be using literature, film, and music to examine how horror can be used to discuss race, gender, and trauma in the American South.

Course Materials

Required Texts*:

1. Toni Morrison: *Beloved*
2. Jesmyn Ward: *Sing, Unburied, Sing*
3. Tananarive Due: *Ghost Summer*
4. Colson Whitehead, *The Nickel Boys*
5. Select texts on D2L

***NOTE:** You will read an average of 50-75 pages per week. Please keep up with your reading, as this will help you successful complete course assignments and actively participate in class discussions.

Technology requirements: Due to the nature of this course, internet access is required for successful completion of assignments and other components of the class.

Learning Outcomes

- 1. Identify major authors, works, and themes in the southern African American Literary Canon**
- 2. To develop and apply a multidisciplinary critical framework for discussing cultural expression and trauma in southern Black American communities.**
- 3. To develop a sense of social-cultural sensitivity by engaging texts, cultural expressions, and experiences that may differ from one's personal experiences.**
- 4. To develop research and writing skills to create and/or improve students' voices as scholars and essayists through the following assignments:**
 - Final Research or Creative Project (3000-3500 words)
 - Discussion Board reflections (500-750 words)

****Explicit Content Statement and Trigger Warning****

(courtesy of Dr. Treva B. Lindsey)

Over the course of the semester you will be introduced to texts that may be explicit or triggering in nature (i.e. cursing, sexual content, violence, assault). Students should be fully aware that these types of texts, even if considered offensive, should still be discussed with respect to the opinions of peers, the instructor, and creator of the text in question.

Final Project

Using a critical lens and medium of their choice, students will theorize the significance of how popular culture impacts negotiations of race, identity, and trauma in the post-Civil Rights American South. For students who want to submit a traditional research essay, the essay must adhere to the following qualifications:

- Your research essay should be a **MINIMUM** of 3000 words and a

MAXIMUM of 3500 words not including heading and identifying information. **Essays over 3500 words will not be graded.**

- Your essay should be supported by peer-reviewed scholarship. It should include a **MINIMUM** of three (3) secondary sources.

For students interested in submitting a creative project as their final, the following options are available and must be approved by Dr. B in advance of the final project deadline:

- Poetry (3-5 poems; 2500-3000 words)
- Short stories (1-2 stories, 3500-4500 words)
- Novella (3000-5000 words)
- Film short or one act play script (3500-4500 words)
- Visual art (2-3 images)

In addition to the creative project, students should also submit a 1 page critical memo that includes the following:

- **MINIMUM** of 500 words and a **MAXIMUM** of 750 words.
- “Critical Introduction” of project:
 - Which creative medium did you pick? Why?
 - How is your creative project useful for understanding the themes presented in the course this semester?
 - Creative project synopsis: what is your project about?

Disclaimers:

I. I grade hard but I grade fair. I will comment and ask you questions about your ideas. Do not –I repeat DO NOT – turn in writings and critical analyses that you think are “safe.” The purpose for scholarship is to challenge, stimulate conversation, and be as innovative as possible. Write fluidly and openly. Push it to the limit! Do not restrict your observations in fear of retaliation. That will not happen here.

II. The tone and language used in this course will not be sugarcoated. I will intentionally challenge you in order to stimulate conversation outside of your comfort zones. This is by no means a way to attack your personal beliefs or character; rather, my intentions are to force you to think about issues and concerns from various viewpoints outside your own.

Week by Week Schedule*

*Subject to change with advanced notice

UNIT I: OLD SOUTHERN HAIN'TS

Week 1:

Course Introduction and Syllabus Review via D2L; Opening discussion: “Region, Race, and Horror”

Week 2:

Readings and Media: “John Jennings Discusses the Ethno-Gothic” (D2L); “The Boo Hag” (D2L); “Letty” (D2L)

Week 3:

Readings: Toni Morrison, *Beloved* (1-14)

Week 4:

Readings: Morrison, *Beloved* (15-28)

Week 5:

Readings and Media: Kinitra Brooks, “The Importance of Neglected Intersections” (D2L)

Sugar Hill

The Walking Dead

Tananarive Due, “Danger Word” and “Danger Word” short film

UNIT II: DEM ROOTS/RUTS

Week 6:

Readings and Media: Lindsey Stewart, “Work the Root” (D2L);
“Beauty” short film
Harrow County #11

Week 7:

Readings and Media: *Eve’s Bayou* film; *The Skeleton Key* film

Jesmyn Ward, *Sing Unburied Sing* (1-4)

Week 8:

Readings: Ward, *Sing Unburied Sing* (5-15)

Week 9:

Reading: Due, “Ghost Summer” novella

Week 10:

Readings: Tee Franklin, *Jook Joint* #1

UNIT III: SCARY POP SOUTH

Week 11:

Media: Geto Boys, “Chuckie” and “My Mind’s Playing Tricks on Me;” Scarface, “Seen a Man Die” and Scarface featuring Tupac Shakur, “Smile;” T.I., “What Happened?;” Pastor Troy, “Vica Versa;” Goodie Mob, “Cell Therapy;” OutKast, “Synthesizer;” Travis Scott featuring André 3000, “The Ends;” Three Six Mafia, “Long Nite”

Week 12:

Media: *Horror Noire*

Week 13:

Readings and Media: Due, “The Lake;” Jordan Peele, “Replay”

Week 14:

Media: *Atlanta*, “The Woods” and “Teddy Perkins”

Week 15:

NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK

Week 16:

Readings: Colson Whitehead, *The Nickel Boys* (1-9)

Week 17:

Readings: Whitehead, *The Nickel Boys* (10-14)