

San José State University: Department of English and Comparative Literature
English 165/African American Studies 165: Topics in Ethnic American Literature

African American Print Culture, Beginnings to 1900

Section 1, Spring Semester, 2022

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Allison Johnson
Office Location:	FOB 105 (no in-person office hours)
Email:	allison.johnson@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	T, Th 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM, and by appointment
Class Days/Time:	T, Th 12:00 PM – 1:15 PM
Classroom:	Online

Course Description

Examination of early African-American literary and print culture, including Black-owned and operated printing presses, newspapers, and periodicals. Particular focus on poetry, slave narratives, abolitionist periodicals, Civil War-era newspapers, and turn-of-the-century magazine fiction.

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (3 hours per unit per week) for instruction or preparation/studying or course related activities. Because this is a 4-unit course, students can expect to spend a minimum of twelve hours per week preparing for and attending classes and completing course assignments.

Course Format

Remote lecture, discussion.

Canvas and MYSJSU Messaging

All course materials are on the course homepage on Canvas. You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through [MySJSU](#) on [Spartan App Portal](#) (<http://one.sjsu.edu>) to learn of any updates.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

CLO 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 print culture and literature.

CLO 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.

CLO 3: Write clearly, effectively, and creatively, and adjust writing style appropriately to the content, the context, and nature of the subject and in a range of forms.

CLO 4: Develop and carry out an extended research project, locate, evaluate, organize, and incorporate information effectively.

CLO 5: Articulate the relation between particular texts and their cultural, historical, and geographical contexts.

CLOs 1, 2, and 5 will be acquired via the reading assignments and class participation, while CLOs 2-5 will be acquired and demonstrated through each and every one of the written course assignments.

Required Texts/Readings

Book (available via SJSU Bookstore)

William Wells Brown, *Clotel, or The President's Daughter* (1853) ISBN 9780142437728

All other readings are available on Canvas

Library Liaison

Cabrera, Peggy, Email: peggy.cabrera@sjsu.edu

Course Requirements and Assignments

Midterm, 3/10: 20% (GELOs 1, 2, 3, 4)

Newspaper Profile, 4/17: 15% (GELOs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

Research Paper (5-7 pages), 5/8: 25% (GELOs 1, 2, 3, 5)

Final Exam, 5/24: 20% (GELOs 1, 2, 3, 5)

Participation: 10% (GELO 3)

Discussion Posts: 10% (GELO 3)

See Appendix A: Grading Policy for further information

Required Posting

Before class, post to the discussion board (you can ask a question about the text(s), make an observation, or respond to another student).

Classroom Protocol

Every student will come to class prepared for a critical discussion. Every student will read all of the assigned readings, come to every class meeting, engage with the texts and participate in the discussion, offer interpretations, ask and answer questions, and be respectful to other students. Please email me if you are unable to attend.

Remote education requires flexibility; in order to facilitate an active and productive learning environment, please follow these guidelines: 1. If you have a webcam, please have it turned on. 2. Use the chat to ask and answer questions. 3. Use your microphone to ask and answer questions.

Paper Regulations

Write your papers in double-spaced 12pt. Times New Roman font, and format them according to MLA guidelines. The OWL site produced by Purdue (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/>) provides good examples of MLA citations. **Late papers will be marked down 1/3 letter grade per day (including weekends). If you need an extension, email me before the due date.**

Office Hours and Email Policies

I encourage you to meet with me during my virtual office hours to receive assistance on assignments and papers, and ask me questions. You can email me if you are unable to meet me during my designated hours.

Plagiarism Policy

If you plagiarize, you will receive an automatic 0 grade. Please make sure you cite your sources using proper MLA format! See Appendix B: Academic Honesty.

University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo>), which is hosted by the Office of Undergraduate Education. Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

ENG 165, Spring 2022

Course Schedule

(publication dates listed in brackets; page numbers listed in parentheses)

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	1/27	Introduction
2	2/1	“African American Spirituals,” from <i>Slave Songs of the United States</i> (1867)
2	2/3	Briton Hammon, “A Narrative of the Uncommon Sufferings” (1760) Jupiter Hammon, “An Address to the Negroes in New York” (1787)
3	2/8	Phillis Wheatley, <i>Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral</i> (1773)
3	2/10	George Moses Horton, <i>The Hope of Liberty</i> (1829)
4	2/15	David Walker, <i>Walker’s Appeal</i> (1829), articles 1-2
4	2/17	Walker, <i>Walker’s Appeal</i> (1829), articles 3-4 Maria W. Stewart, “Lecture Delivered at the Franklin Hall, Boston, September 21, 1832” (1832)

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
5	2/22	William Wells Brown, <i>Clotel</i> (1853), chapters 1-8
5	2/24	Brown, <i>Clotel</i> (1853), chapters 9-18
6	3/1	Brown, <i>Clotel</i> (1853), finish book
6	3/3	Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, <i>Poems on Miscellaneous Subjects</i> (1854)
7	3/8	Review
7	3/10	No class; midterm due via Canvas by 11:59 PM
8	3/15	Frederick Douglass, <i>My Bondage and My Freedom</i> (1855), chapters I-VI
8	3/17	Douglass, <i>My Bondage and My Freedom</i> (1855), chapters VII-XV
9	3/22	Douglass, <i>My Bondage and My Freedom</i> (1855), chapters XVI-XX
9	3/24	Douglass, <i>My Bondage and My Freedom</i> (1855), finish
10	3/29	SPRING BREAK
10	3/31	SPRING BREAK
11	4/5	Douglass, selections from <i>Douglass's Paper</i> , <i>North Star</i> , and <i>Douglass's Monthly</i> United States Colored Troops in print Poems about 54 th Massachusetts
11	4/7	Selections from Black newspapers
12	4/12	Harriet Jacobs, <i>Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl</i> (1861), pages 1-89
12	4/14	Jacobs, <i>Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl</i> (1861), 90-167
12	4/17	Newspaper Profile due via Canvas by 11:59 p.m.
13	4/19	Jacobs, <i>Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl</i> (1861), 168-206
13	4/21	Jacobs, <i>Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl</i> (1861), finish
14	4/26	Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, <i>Iola Leroy, or Shadows Uplifted</i> (1892), chapters I-X
14	4/28	Harper, <i>Iola Leroy, or Shadows Uplifted</i> (1892), chapters XI-XX
15	5/3	Harper, <i>Iola Leroy, or Shadows Uplifted</i> (1892), finish
15	5/5	Ida B. Wells, from <i>The Red Record</i> (1895)
15	5/8	Research Paper due via Canvas by 11:59 PM
16	5/10	Charles Chesnutt, from <i>The Wife of His Youth and Other Stories of the Color Line</i> (1899): "The Wife of His Youth," "The Sheriff's Children," "The Passing of Grandison"
16	5/12	Charles Chesnutt, from <i>The Conjure Woman</i> (1899): "The Goophered Grapevine," "Po' Sandy," "Sis' Becky's Pickaninny"

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
	5/24	Final Exam due via Canvas by 11:59 PM

A: Grading Policy

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 60, 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.

Appendix B: Academic Honesty

“San José State University defines cheating as the act of obtaining credit, attempting to obtain credit, or assisting others to obtain credit for academic work through the use of any dishonest, deceptive, or fraudulent means.”

“San José State University defines plagiarism as the act of representing the work of another as one’s own without giving appropriate credit, regardless of how that work was obtained, and submitting it to fulfill academic requirements.”

For full definition, see <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F15-7.pdf>