

## **367H SAMPLE SYLLABUS (REVISED VERSION)**

### **English 367H.02: Literatures in the U.S. Experience**

#### **Remembered Pasts: Representing and Making Arguments about Memory and History**

##### **Course Description and Goals:**

English 367H.02: The U.S. Experience as Reflected in Literature, satisfies the university's GEC requirement for a second level writing course. The primary goals of this course are to sharpen your expository writing and critical thinking skills through analysis of African American art, specifically African American literature.

The course has four main parts: out-of-class writing assignments, out-of-class reading assignments, in-class writing workshops, and in-class discussions. Each of these parts plays a crucial role in 1. Improving your writing ability and 2. Introducing you to the African American literary tradition.

Our primary focus will be how writers go about representing and making arguments about the past in non-fiction, poetry, fiction, film, visual art, drama, and music. Our analysis will focus most intensely on the first three genres. Questions we will consider include: How does a writer manifest collective/communal memory in her/his work? Is collective/communal memory solely a construct of literature? Why might a writer include a sense of collective/communal memory in her/his work? To answer these questions, we will consider a range of texts from all of the major periods of the African American literary tradition.

In general, English 367:

- Focuses on expository writing. Students write papers that employ/develop their skills in analysis, argumentation, and the use of evidence.
- Provides extensive experience in writing but also experience in reading, listening, and speaking.
- Stresses revision. For most if not all papers, student have the opportunity to revise after receiving instructor and/or peer comments.
- Deals with aspects of the diverse U.S. experience. English 367 fulfills the university's diversity requirement, meaning that the course furnishes students with a view of the multi-faceted cultures that comprise the "American experience" (or "American experiences"), including issues of race, culture, ethnicity, disability, economic class, social class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and politics. Students learn to analyze their own perspectives (as well as the perspectives of others) and articulate them in well-reasoned, expository prose.

##### **General Education Curriculum General Description and Objectives**

English 367.02H fulfills the second half of the GEC requirement "Category 1: Writing and Related Skills."

**Goals/Rationale:** The purpose of courses in this category is to develop students' skills in writing, reading, critical thinking, and oral expression.

**Learning Objectives:**

- Students apply basic skills in expository writing.
- Students demonstrate critical thinking through written and oral expression.
- Students retrieve and use written information analytically and effectively.

English 367.02H fulfills “Category 6.A: Diversity Experiences: Social Diversity in the United States.”

**Goals/Rationale:** The purpose of courses in this category is to foster an understanding of the pluralistic nature of institutions, society, and culture in the United States.

**Learning Objectives:**

- Students describe the roles of such categories as race, gender, class, ethnicity, and religion in the institutions and cultures of the United States.
- Students recognize the role of social diversity in shaping their own attitudes and values.

**Course Texts and Materials:**

1. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and Nellie Y McKay, eds. *The Norton Anthology of African American Literature (Second Edition)*. New York and London: W.W. Norton and Company, 2004.
2. Octavia Butler. *Kindred*. 1979. Boston: Beacon Press, 2003.
3. Handouts distributed in class and via email.

**Required Assignments:**

**Assignment 1:** Personal narrative on a site of memory in your own life or rhetorical analysis of Kincaid’s “In History.” Prompts will be given. **2-3 pages. 15% of final grade.**

**Assignment 2:** Comparing representations of memory in autobiography and poetry. Prompts will be given. At least one secondary source must be used. **4-5 pages. 25% of final grade.**

**Assignment 3:** Research proposal and working bibliography for final paper. **1-2 pages. 5% of final grade.**

**Assignment 4:** Project on memory and history in African American literature. *You may choose to work with two to four primary texts. At least one of them must be a work of fiction that we have not read in class. You must work with at least five secondary sources that we have not read in class. Specific prompts will not be given. You must submit a proposal for research and an annotated bibliography with at least three secondary sources two weeks before the final draft is due. 10-12 pages. 35% of final grade.*

**Assignment 5:** Leading class discussion. Come prepared with a sheet of discussion questions (at least 5) to pass out to the class and any additional materials you find are relevant. Note: your job is not necessarily to *teach* the class for the day, but rather to *lead* class discussion with your ideas, questions, and concerns. Each student will have her/his own day to lead the class. **10% of final grade.**

**Participation:** You must come to class each day prepared to ask questions and talk about the day’s readings and writing assignments. **10% of final grade.**

**Writing Workshops:** Each student will also have her/his work workshopped by the class at least once. You're responsible for emailing your draft to the class 24 hours before your assigned day. These workshops are designed to stimulate the revision process. Our work during the workshops will not be graded but will be an important step in our work on assignments 1, 2, and 4.

**Course Policies:**

**Attendance** is important to the success of this class and to your development as a writer. Therefore, each unexcused absence after two will result in the lowering of your final grade by a third of a grade. Excused absences, such as those for documented illness, family tragedy, religious observance, or travel for inter-collegiate athletics, will not affect your grade. **It is program policy that five unexcused absences will automatically result in failure for the course.**

**Tardiness** is disruptive to the classroom environment and prevents you from fully participating and assimilating the information and materials discussed in class. Excessive tardiness will lower your participation grade.

**Plagiarism** is the unauthorized use of the words or ideas of another person. It is a serious academic offense that can result in referral to the Committee on Academic Misconduct and failure for the course. Please remember that at no point during the writing process should the work of others be presented as your own.

**Student Work** must be completed and submitted on time. All assignments should be turned in during the class period when they are due.

1. **Draft assignments:** Turning your draft assignment late will mean that you cannot receive a timely or full response from the instructor, so turn in your drafts on time. Failure to turn in an assignment draft at all will result in the deduction of **one-third of a letter grade** on the final version of the paper (for example, B+ to B). Further, if the assignment draft was part of a peer group exercise, failure to turn in the draft will lower your participation grade.
2. **Final graded assignments:** Late submission of a final graded assignment will result in the deduction of **one full letter grade** for each day past the due date (for example, B+ to C+).

The grade will not be affected when a draft or final graded assignment is late for reasons that would result in an excused absence. Students who know they will miss the class when the assignment is due must contact the instructor as soon as possible in advance of class to arrange for submission of the assignment.

Please pick up all late-quarter work as soon as possible. Materials will be held until the end of the second quarter subsequent to the quarter in which you take English 367.

**Paper Format:** double spaced, 12 point font, standard 1 inch margins, your name, instructor's name, the class (English 367.02), and the date should appear in the upper left corner of the first page; pages should be stapled and numbered; paper should have a title.

**Mandatory Conferences:** Students must attend one mandatory conference (outside of class) with their instructor on the research project. We will schedule them during class.

**Class Cancellation Policy:** In the unlikely event due to emergency, I will contact you via email and request that a note on department letterhead be placed on the door. In addition, I will contact you as soon as possible following the cancellation to let you know what will be expected of you for our next class meeting.

**Resources:**

The **Ombudsman of the Writing Programs**, Matthew Cariello, mediates conflicts between students and teachers in English 367 and 110. He can be reached at [cariello.1@osu.edu](mailto:cariello.1@osu.edu) and 292-5778. All conversations with the Ombudsman are confidential.

The **OSU Writing Center** is available to provide free, professional writing tutoring and consultation. You may set up an appointment by calling 688-4291 or by dropping by the center at 475 Mendenhall Laboratories. If you are interested in on-line writing advice, visit the OWL (On-Line Writing Lab) at [www.cstw.osu.edu](http://www.cstw.osu.edu).

**The Office for Disability Services**, located in 150 Pomerene Hall offers services for students with documented disabilities. Contact the ODS at 2-3307.

### **Course Schedule:**

**Day 1 | T, 3/25:** Introductions. Discussion of history and memory.

**Day 2 | R, 3/27:** Robert O’Meally and Genevieve Fabre, “Introduction” from *History and Memory in African-American Culture* (handout). Jamaica Kincaid, “In History” (handout).

### **Non-Fiction: Slave Narratives, Autobiography, and Memoir**

**Day 3 | T, 4/1:** Toni Morrison, “The Site of Memory” (2290-2299). Harriet Jacobs, from *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (279-315).

Discussion leader: \_\_\_\_\_

**Day 4 | R, 4/3:** Booker T. Washington, from *Up from Slavery* (572-602). W.E.B. DuBois, from *The Souls of Black Folk* (692-699). **A1 draft due.**

Discussion leader: \_\_\_\_\_

**Day 5 | T, 4/8:** Zora Neale Hurston, from *Mules and Men* (1053-1062). “How to Write a Letter” (135-136). James Baldwin, “Stranger in the Village” (1705-1713). **Writing workshop 1.**

Discussion leader: \_\_\_\_\_

Workshopped writers:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

**Day 6 | R, 4/10:** Audre Lorde, from *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name* (1926-1936). Alice Walker, “In Search of Our Mothers’ Gardens” (2430-2437). **Writing workshop 2.**

Discussion leader: \_\_\_\_\_

Workshopped writers:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

### **Poetry**

**Day 7 | T, 4/15:** Lucy Terry, “Bars Fight” (186). Phillis Wheatley, “On Being Brought from Africa to America” (219). **A1 final due.**

Discussion leader: \_\_\_\_\_

**Day 8 | R, 4/17:** Langston Hughes, “The Negro Speaks of Rivers” (1291); “The Weary Blues” (1294). Countee Cullen, “Heritage” (1347). **Writing workshop 3.**

Discussion leader: \_\_\_\_\_

Workshopped writers:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

**Day 9 | T, 4/22:** Robert Hayden, “Middle Passage” (1520). Amiri Baraka, “A Poem for Black Hearts” (1940); “SOS” (1942). Essex Hemphill, “XXIV” (2647). **Writing workshop 4.**

Discussion leader: \_\_\_\_\_

Workshopped writers:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

### **Fiction: Short Stories and Novels**

**Day 10 | R, 4/24:** Charles Chesnutt, “The Goophered Grapevine” (604-613). Langston Hughes, “The Blues I’m Playing” (1315-1325). **A2 draft due.**

Discussion leader: \_\_\_\_\_

**Day 11 | T, 4/29:** Ralph Ellison, from *Invisible Man* (1548-1570). **Writing workshop 5.**

Discussion leader: \_\_\_\_\_

Workshopped writers:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

**Day 12 | R, 5/1:** John Edgar Wideman, “Doc’s Story” (handout). Alice Walker, “Everyday Use” (2437-2443). **Writing workshop 6.**

Discussion leader: \_\_\_\_\_

Workshopped writers:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

**Day 13 | T, 5/6:** Toni Morrison, from *Song of Solomon* (2210-2285). **A2 final due.**

Discussion leader: \_\_\_\_\_

**Day 14 | R, 5/8:** Octavia Butler, *Kindred* (9-51). **Writing workshop 7.**

Discussion leader: \_\_\_\_\_

Workshopped writers:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

**Day 15 | T, 5/13:** Octavia Butler, *Kindred* (51-188).

Discussion leader: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Film**

**Day 16 | R, 5/15:** Octavia Butler, *Kindred* (189-264). **A3 due.**

Discussion leader: \_\_\_\_\_

**Day 17 | T, 5/20:** Spike Lee, *When the Levees Broke* (Act 1) (in class). **Writing workshop 8.**

Discussion leader: \_\_\_\_\_

Workshopped writer:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

**Day 18 | R, 5/22:** Spike Lee, *When the Levees Broke* (Act 2) (in class). **Writing workshop 9.**

Discussion leader: \_\_\_\_\_

Workshopped writer:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

### **Visual Art**

**Day 19 | T, 5/27:** African American self-portraiture (in class). Paul Laurence Dunbar, “We Wear the Mask” (918). **A4 draft due.**

### **Music and Music Videos**

**Day 20 | R, 5/29:** Michael Jackson, “Billie Jean,” “Smooth Criminal,” and “Remember the Time” (in class). Concluding thoughts. **Writing workshop 10.**

Discussion leader: \_\_\_\_\_

Workshopped writers:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

**A4 final due during finals week.**