

Preliminary Web Course Description

*Please note: This is a preliminary web course description only. The department reserves the right to change without notice any information in this description. The final, binding course outline will be distributed in the first class of the semester.

School of English and Theatre Studies

Course Code: ENGL 4270	Course Title: United State Literatures: Black Lives Matter	Date of Offering: W'21
---------------------------	---	------------------------

Course Instructor: G. Campbell	Course Format: Seminar
-----------------------------------	---------------------------

Brief Course Synopsis:

We begin the course by assuming systematic racism across the entire history of the United States as demonstrated by The New York Times in their 1619 Project. When Trayvon Martin, aged 17, was shot to death in Florida on February 26, 2012 for the crime of being Black and wearing a hoodie and when Trayvon Martin's killer was acquitted of murder charges, the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter introduced anti-racist activism to a younger generation connected through social media. An assumption of the BLM movement is that the justice system of the modern state is effectively an injustice system: American activists are in the process of generating radical change. This course will explore a long history of anti-racist thought and action that may be unfamiliar to BLM activists, from the rise of an abolitionist movement in the era of slavery, the necessity of a Civil War, the success and then failure of Reconstruction, the rise of Jim Crow oppression, W.E.B. Dubois's call for a "talented tenth" in the early 20th century, the emergence of a Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s, the renewal of segregation and economic injustice in the 1970s and 1980s to the rise of mass incarceration in our own era and a murderous war on drugs that has done little more than oppress minorities and promote social inequality. The major figures we will explore in this course include Frederick Douglass, W.E.B. DuBois, Martin Luther King Jr., James Baldwin, Gwendolyn Brooks, Angela Davis, and Claudia Rankine. Students will be encouraged to follow their own interests in the long history of anti-racist thought in the hope that racism can be understood and then overcome. This world needs to be changed.

Methods of Evaluation and Weight:

Seminar presentation.	20%
Shorter paper (2000 words).	20%
Research project.	25%
Long Final paper (3000 words).	30%
BLM presentation/ posting	5%

Texts and/or Resources Required (e.g. Internet access, specific textbook title, lab kit, etc.)

Fredric Douglass, Narrative of the Life of Fredrick Douglass.

W.E.B. Du Bois, The Souls of Black Folk.

Gwendolyn Brooks, Blacks.

Angela Davis, If They Come in the Morning...Voice of Resistance.

Michelle Alexander, The New Jim Crow.

Claudia Rankine, Citizen: An American Lyric

Dominique Morisseau, Detroit 67

This course counts towards the following distribution requirement(s) for students who registered at the University prior to the Fall of 2018:

20th-21st Century American

Information about mode of delivery (synchronous/asynchronous/other details):

Synchronous delivery

*Students who registered at the University of Guelph after Fall 2018 must fulfill the “new” major and minor requirements. Students who registered at the University of Guelph prior to Fall 2018 must fulfill the requirements of the Calendar in effect when they first enrolled unless they have filed a Schedule of Studies Change Request to change to the 2018-2019 calendar. For more information, please consult the major and minor checklists at <https://www.uoguelph.ca/arts/sets/undergraduate/english/current-student-information>.