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ANG-7122: African American Literature (Music and Literature)

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### Course Description

A survey of African American music, its main iterations (work songs, spirituals, blues, ragtime, bebop, free jazz, r&b, soul, funk, hip-hop), and the ways in which writers and artists have used the music in their work and infused its meaning to speak to the history of the black experience in the U.S. We will look at the blues novel, the Coltrane poem, blues womanhood from Bessie Smith to Beyonce, jazz poetry, hip-hop literacies, and various others forms that the music took in literature. We will also study the sociology of the music, as well as chart the various innovations in the music as corollaries to the political developments in the nation.

### Pedagogical Approach

Short lectures followed by class discussions, with emphasis on the latter. Students are required to have read the assigned material carefully before each class. Essays and articles will be made available for further reading at the Reserve of the library. Students are strongly encouraged to read these in order to enhance their knowledge of the works' ramifications. Familiarity with the material will enable students to complete work and enjoy the class as a whole more fully.

### Evaluation

First Essay (10-12 pages) -30%  
Long Essay (15-17 pages) -45%  
Presentation: 25%

Quality of English will be one of the factors in evaluating work. Classes, oral presentations, and discussions, including group discussions, are held in English (except for students in the LIT sigle). Essays must be handed in on time and adhere to MLA guidelines. Penalties of 5% per day apply to late essays. Essays must be based on personal, original analysis and are evaluated on the basis of three main categories: (1) mastery of subject matter and clarity of ideas, (2) argumentation, and (3) mastery of language, quality of style, mechanics, and referencing. Failure in any of these main categories may result in a failing grade for the essay.

### Required Texts (tentative)

*Corregidora*, Gayl Jones 0807063150  
*Not Without Laughter*, Langston Hughes, 0486454487  
*Blues People*, Amiri Baraka 068818474X  
*Leadbelly*, Tyehimba Jess, 0974635332

Poems and essays will also be added