

**2202 (Section 006): Literary Heritage: African-American Literature (Race and Authenticity in African-American Literature)**

**11:30am-12:25pm MWF**

**Dr. Terrence Tucker**

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**Course Description:**

Using texts from various time periods, we will examine how African-American authors wrestle with the question of blackness, particularly as it relates to its construction, by whites and African Americans, by individual and communities, and by the society and country at large. This class will trace the negotiation of the authors with the definition of blackness across political, literary, and historical cycles such as slavery and Reconstruction, the Harlem Renaissance and Jim Crow, the Civil Rights and Black Power Movements, and contemporary society. Some authors produce works that come to embody traditional ideas and representations of blackness. Others are almost solely responding to racist stereotypes, while some seek to redefine our conceptions that are complicated by gender, race, class, and sexuality. We will discuss all three types. These works vary from the conservative to the militant, often contradicting other efforts and causing tensions within African America. By viewing the combination of these cycles, we will view these works to see how the authors negotiate their characters to interrogate the presence and effect of blackness in America and examine the role, if any, of race in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Required Texts:**

Dickey, Eric Jerome

*Milk in My Coffee* (ISBN: 0451194063)

Gates, Henry Louis and Valerie Smith, eds.

*The Norton Anthology of African American Literature* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition) (ISBN: 978-0-393-91155-8)

Hurston, Zora Neale

*Their Eyes Were Watching God* (ISBN: 0-060-83867-6)

Jacobs, Harriet

*Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (ISBN: 978-0-140-43795-9)

Williams, Thomas Chatterton

*Losing My Cool: Love, Literature, and a Black* (ISBN: 0101403985)

Wright, Richard

*Uncle Tom's Children* (ISBN: 978-0-061-45020-4)