COURSE OVERVIEW
From Blackface to Black Power looks at the formation and representation of African American identity within the context of the quest for the full rights of United States citizenship during the twentieth century. Throughout this complex period, African Americans made considerable gains in their pursuit of equal rights. Simultaneously, black identity underwent dramatic and subtle changes as the majority of African Americans transformed themselves from slaves to free men and women to New Negroes to Proud and Beautiful Black Americans. As cultural mediators, black artists simultaneously illustrated and provoked transformations of black identity and black political consciousness. Focusing upon the intersection between the cultural and political realms, this interdisciplinary seminar will explore the roots and routes of the African cultural Diaspora as the foundation of urban, northern, politically-conscious cultural production. Using a variety of texts including critical analysis, fiction, non-fiction, poetry, film, music, and visual arts we will examine touchstone moments including the New Negro or Harlem Renaissance and the Black Arts Movement, as well as the spaces in between where artists, activists and artists-activists continued to shape 20th century America.

OBJECTIVES
From Blackface to Black Power will introduce students to key moments and foundational, as well as lesser known, texts of the African American experience during the 20th century. Students will also gain a working knowledge of the broad academic discourse around African American identity formation and representation and African American literary theory. With a focus on writing, students will develop their own intellectual curiosity, creativity, and flexibility as they hone their analytical and writing skills to produce clear and effective essays.

CLASS POLICIES
BE ON TIME.

ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY.
Unexcused absences will impact your final grade. If you have a compelling reason for missing class, talk to me in advance and complete make-up work.

HARD COPIES OF ALL PAPERS.
LATE PAPERS WILL BE REDUCED BY 1/3 OF A LETTER GRADE PER DAY.

TURN OFF YOUR CELL PHONES. NO CALLS. NO TEXTING.

YOU DO NOT NEED A LAPTOP.

PLAGIARISM
The Instructor will uphold the University's code of academic and personal conduct for all instances of plagiarism. You may find this code in your NYU Gallatin Bulletin, page 100. You can download the bulletin at: http://www.nyu.edu/gallatin/pdf/GallatinBulletin.pdf

REQUIREMENTS
Students are required to complete weekly reading assignments and be prepared to discuss them during class meetings. To facilitate discussion, students must submit 3 questions by 9:00pm each Wednesday night.

Students are also required to write one 6-page analytical essay, a prospectus, and one 18-20-page final essay on a topic of your own choosing, which must be approved by the instructor. Students are also required to give one formal oral presentation accompanied by a written outline/summary.

Attendance, discussion questions and class participation 20%
Presentation and outline/summary 10%
Analytical essay 20%
Prospectus 10%
Final essay 40%

PRIMARY TEXTS:
Unless otherwise noted, all primary texts can be found at the NYU Book Store

Alexander, Elizabeth, American Sublime
Baldwin, James, “Sonny’s Blues” [blackboard]
Brooks, Gwendolyn, Selected Poems
Cleaver, Eldridge, Soul on Ice
Du Bois, W.E.B., Souls of Black Folk [blackboard]
Giovanni, Nikki, The Collected Poetry of Nikki Giovanni
Greenlee, Sam, The Spook Who Sat by the Door
Hansberry, Lorraine, A Raisin in the Sun
Hughes, Langston, select poems [blackboard]
Hurston, Zora Neale, The Complete Stories
Johnson, James Weldon, Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man [blackboard]
Morrison, Toni, Beloved
Walker, Alice, The Color Purple
Washington, Booker T., Up from Slavery [blackboard]
Wright, Richard, Uncle Tom’s Children
SECONDARY LITERATURE
All secondary literature will be posted on Blackboard by date

**THERE WILL BE A SCREENING OF ONE FILM IN THE AFTERNOON OR EVENING ON TUESDAY, OCTOBER 30TH.**

SYLLABUS
Week 1: Tuesday, September 4th: Introduction

Thursday September 6th: Screening and discussion: *I’ll Make Me a World*, part I

Week 2: Tuesday, September 11th: The Roots of 20th Century African American Culture

Thursday, September 13th: Discuss:

*Up from Slavery* [blackboard]
Critical Essay: 9/13/2012 [blackboard]

Week 3: Tuesday, September 18th: Arts, Politics, and Identity Formation

Thursday, September 20th: Discuss:

*Souls of Black Folk*
Critical Essay: 9/20/2012 [blackboard]

Week 4: Tuesday, September 25th: Arts, Politics, and Terrorism

Thursday, September 27th: Discuss:

*Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man* [blackboard]
Critical Essay: 9/27/2012 [blackboard]

Week 5: Tuesday, October 2nd: The Great Migration, WWI & The Harlem Renaissance

Thursday, October 4th: Discuss:

*The Complete Stories*
Select poetry by Langston Hughes [blackboard]
Critical Essay: 10/4/2012 [blackboard]

First Essay Due

Week 6: Tuesday, October 9th: The Great Depression & WWII
Thursday, October 11\textsuperscript{th}: Discuss:

\textit{Uncle Tom’s Children}
Critical Essay: 10/11/2012 [blackboard]

**Week 7: Tuesday, October 16\textsuperscript{th}: FALL BREAK 😊**

Thursday, October 18\textsuperscript{th}: Discuss:

\textit{Selected Poetry}
“Sonny’s Blues” [blackboard]
Critical Essay: 10/18/2012 [blackboard]

Week 8: Tuesday, October 23\textsuperscript{rd}: Post-War America & Desegregation

Thursday, October 25\textsuperscript{th}: Discuss:

\textit{A Raisin in the Sun}
Critical Essay: 10/25/2012 [blackboard]

Week 9: Tuesday, October 30\textsuperscript{th}: Civil Rights

**EVENING SCREENING OF THE SPOOK WHO SAT BY THE DOOR**

Thursday, November 1\textsuperscript{st}: Discuss:

\textit{The Spook Who Sat by the Door} (book and film)
Critical Essay: 11/1/2012 [blackboard]

Week 10: Tuesday, November 6\textsuperscript{th}: Black Power

Thursday, November 8\textsuperscript{th}: Discuss:

\textit{Soul on Ice}
Critical Essay: 11/8/2012 [blackboard]

**VISIT TO SCHOMBURG CENTER**

Week 11: Tuesday, November 13\textsuperscript{th}: Black Arts, Black Women & Black Feminism

Thursday, November 15\textsuperscript{th}: Discuss:

\textit{The Collected Poetry of Nikki Giovanni}
Critical Essay: 11/15/2012 [blackboard]

\textit{Prospectus Due}
Week 12: Tuesday, November 20th: Discuss:

*The Color Purple*
Critical Essay: 11/20/2012 [blackboard]

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS DUE BY 9:00PM ON MONDAY, NOVEMBER 19TH**

Thursday, November 22nd: THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY 😊

Week 13: Tuesday, November 27th: History & Memory

Thursday, November 29th: Discuss:

*Beloved*
Critical Essay 11/29/2012 [blackboard]

Week 14: Tuesday, December 4th: New Voices

Thursday, December 6th: Discuss:

*American Sublime*
Critical Essay: 12/6/2012 [blackboard]

Week 15: Tuesday, December 11th: Blackness and the 21st Century and Wrap Up

Thursday, December 13th: Wrap up & discuss:

*Dreams from My Father*
Critical Essay: 12/13/2012 [blackboard]

**FINAL ESSAYS ARE DUE TUESDAY, DECEMBER 18TH**