COURSE DESCRIPTION:
From the inception of an African American community in what would become and is the United States, its experience and character over time has been characterized by migration. Some of these migrations have been forced such as the slave trade, voluntary, like moves to cities in many eras, and both forced and voluntary as in movements North. This class looks at African American literature with an eye towards the representation and significance of movement and migration in black experience and creativity. You will be introduced to major texts in the African American literary tradition and to modes of critical analysis that question how people make meaning through writing and creative expression.

COURSE TEXTS:
Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*
Lawrence Rodgers, *Canaan Bound* (also on e-reserve & in packet)
Paul Lawrence Dunbar, *Sport of the Gods*
James Weldon Johnson, *Autobiography of an X-Colored Man*
Jesse Fauset, *Plum Bun*
Jean Toomer, *Cane*
Thurman, Wallace, ed. *FIRE!!: Devoted to Younger Negro Artists*
Octavia Butler, *Wildseed*
Course Packet

COURSE REQUIREMENTS and GRADING:
Readings: Students are expected to complete all course assignments prior to Lecture. You should always read the material mindfully. *Ask yourself: What is happening in this novel, text, passage, etc? What are its significant symbols, words, phrases, images, sounds...? Why is it being expressed in this particular way? How is it related to the rest of the text? How does this text compare to other texts we’ve read? Specific questions to keep in mind: How is the South represented? How is the North represented? How are the characters being represented?* Be prepared for pop quizzes throughout the Quarter.

Class Participation/Attendance/Quizzes/Written responses: 20%
Midterm: 25%  (ID key terms, ID & analyze passages, 1 essay)
Critical Response paper (5-7 pages): 25%
Final Exam: 30%  (ID key terms & passages, short answers, 2 short essays)

COURSE SCHEDULE/ASSIGNMENTS:
WEEK 1
9/24   Introduction. In-Class: Syllabus Review.

WEEK 2
9/29   Henry Louis Gates, “Preface to Blackness: Text and Pretext,” (course packet);


**WEEK 3**

10/8 *Canaan Bound*, Introduction; Rudolf Fisher, *City of Refuge*; Migration articles from collection *Up South* p. xv-18; (course packet) 
In Class: Art of Jacob Lawrence

**WEEK 4**
In Class—Dunbar poems, esp. “We Wear the Mask,” “Negro Love Song,” “Sympathy,” “Philosophy” (course packet)

10/15 Dunbar, Ch. X-XVIII; 
In Class—Stevie Wonder. *Livin’ for the City*

**WEEK 5 RESEARCH WEEK (SECTIONS WILL MEET)**
GROUP RESEARCH & ANALYSIS ON METAPHORS OF “MOVEMENT” IN JOHNSON:
1) COLOR, 2) MIGRATIONS, 3) FAMILY/HOME, 4) CITIES & SPACES 5) VIOLENCE, 6) ART & CREATIVITY.

USE THE NOVEL, SECONDARY MATERIALS FOR WK 5 DAY 2 (10/22), AND ONLINE RESEARCH TO ANALYZE THE THEMES ABOVE. IN WHAT WAYS DOES YOUR GROUPS’ THEME REFLECT “MOVEMENT(S)” FOR THE NARRATOR? INTERPRET AND DEFINE YOUR THEME. CHOOSE PASSAGES THAT ILLUSTRATE YOUR POINT AND BEST REFLECT YOUR POSITION.

MEET IN GROUPS. Discuss novel.

MEET IN GROUPS. Discuss research and background materials. 
Prepare a brief argument for your theme to present to the class on Tuesday. Practice in Section.

**WEEK 6 MIDTERM**
10/27 Johnson Discussion. Choose a spokesperson for your group.

10/29 In-Class Midterm. [Section 3, In-Class Essay: Analyze your theme from Johnson on movement.]

**WEEK 7**

[Lecture TBA; Dr. Batiste @ ASA National Conference]

**WEEK 8**
11/12  Toomer, *Cane*, part 1, 3-37

**Week 9**


**11/20 DUE CRITICAL ANALYSIS PAPER (5-7 PAGES) -- SUBMIT TO TA BOXES IN SANKEY ROOM SH, DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

**Week 10**
11/24  *Up South*, 60-84, esp. Hurston, “Backstage and the Railroad” (course packet)

11/26  Thanksgiving Holiday

**Week 11**
12/1  Octavia Butler, *Wildseed*.

12/3  Octavia Butler, *Wildseed*.

**Exam Week**
12/10 7:30-10:30 pm FINAL EXAM
Class Assignments:

Attendance, Participation, & Quizzes: All points of view are welcome as long as they are not deliberately discriminatory or insensitive. To that end, your contributions should adopt an “academic” tone; you may certainly disagree with the readings, one another, or the instructor, but must do so in a manner suitable for public discussion in the somewhat formal setting of the university. Over the course of the quarter, you may be asked to complete short quizzes or responses. These responses are unannounced, can occur in lecture or section, and cannot be made up unless you have written documentation of a justified absence, e.g. a doctor’s note. Attendance and participation in section constitutes 20% of the final grade.

Course papers should be double-spaced in a reasonable, legible font. 12-pt Times, Times New Roman, Palomino, or comparable. See the syllabus and close-reading handout for guidance.

Administrative Notes:

Office hours are for clarification of course readings and lectures, specific help with assignments, opportunities to share ideas. If you miss a class, read the material and obtain the lecture notes before seeing the professor or your TAs during office hours. FYI, outlines, power point presentations or lecture notes are not available from the Professor or TA. Please obtain lecture notes from a classmate.

E-mail messages In practice, the Professor and TAs dedicate specific times for answering emails as a part of their work schedules, and will respond to you during these dedicated times. If you do not receive a response before office hours, please drop in to see with your question! We’d love to see you. Please use office hours instead of email if you have specific questions or need help with the material. Email is not a useful conduit for teaching but mainly for administrative issues.

Cell Phones and Pagers Please turn off cellphones and pagers before you enter the classroom. You should not use a cell phone as your clock during class, especially during quizzes or exams. Please do not engage in phone or text conversation during class.

Scholastic Dishonesty includes, but is not necessarily limited to, cheating on assignments or examinations; plagiarizing, which means misrepresenting as your own work any part of work done by another; submitting the same paper, or substantially similar papers, to meet requirements of more than one course without the approval and consent of all instructors concerned; depriving another student of necessary course materials; or interfering with another students’ work. Acts of scholastic dishonesty may result in an F for the course and additional disciplinary action.

[Note: The professor reserves the right to change or adjust the syllabus if/when necessary.]
**Close Reading Handout**

*Definition:* A close reading is an intellectual response to a passage you found compelling, disturbing, pleasing, moving or important in some way. Many people internalize the kinds of critical inquiries associated with close readings, but sometimes it helps to explicitly articulate what we mean by the expression in this class. A critical response is a close reading and analysis of a text—it is not a summary. Therefore, try to avoid simply repeating, rephrasing, summarizing, or vaguely generalizing about the text. The more specific your response, the better. Below are some prompts and suggestions that we hope clarify the critical response exercise, and should help if you are not sure just what to say about a passage or quote or image. You certainly do not have to answer all these questions raised—in fact, develop whatever aspect of a passage or scene especially interests you—but if you’re not sure how to analyze a passage, you might begin by addressing these kinds of questions:

* Briefly identify some of the major issues or concerns reflected in the passage/image (e.g. problems with communication, sexuality, construction of the self, interracial relations, etc). Try to step back for a moment (before you focus more on the specifics of the quote) and assess the significance of the piece. Remember, what you take from a quote will not necessarily be what others initially see in it—*your quotes are not self-evident*; they will need explanation and analysis.

* Analyze the implications of the language or graphic detail in the passage. This is often the easiest and most useful way to enter into a close reading: Ask yourself why the writer chose those *particular* words or that *distinct* style in that *specific* excerpt. Explore the subtler connotations of the words, adjectives, allusions, metaphors, similes, turns of speech, and the way language use implicitly defines or orients or challenges an audience. Look at the possible importance of italics, capitalizations, page positioning, etc. How does the style and word choice tie into larger issues in the story? (If it’s an image you’re looking at, you can still consider the details of composition—its organization, choice and representation of the subject, color, format, implied viewer position, etc)

* Consider the context in which the passage/image appears and analyze its significance. First, you can consider contexts within a text: ask yourself where exactly does the passage appear in the story (in the beginning, after an important scene, when a character is first introduced, at the end, etc) and why is its placement important? Also, who is doing the speaking in the passage (or about whom is the passage) and why is that significant? As you develop close reading and research skills, you might also examine how the respective historical, social, biographical, critical, literary contexts inform your understanding of the passage.

* Draw some comparisons and conclusions about the text in terms of its relevance to the rest of the essay, poem, film, musical movement etc—how it is specifically related to other parts of the story? Does it particularly resonate with another part—and if so, how? What does it reveal about a character or an issue that we see earlier or later in the piece? Offer a brief example. Why is that particular text important? (e.g. if there are several pages about sexuality, for example, what does that particular passage reveal about sexuality that another line in the story does not?) Often choosing one or two other scenes you find most relevant help focus any contrasts or comparisons and help you too avoid vaguely discussing the passage's relevance to *every* scene.