

CMLT 2600  
Multicultural Black Diaspora Literature  
Fall 2007

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Office Hours: MW 12:15-1:15 and by appt.  
Office Location: Joe Brown Hall Room 125

*The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.*

### ***Transmission, Transcendence, and Transformation: the Yoruba and the Diaspora***

E kaabo o! Welcome. You are sitting in a course offered by the Comparative Literature department titled "Multicultural Black Diaspora Literature." This course surveys some of the multicultural literature of the world-wide dispersion of Africans and people of African descent based on select representative works of African-Brazilian, African-Caribbean, and African literature. This course fulfills the multi-cultural requirement of the University, which states that: "in order to further enrich the educational experience of the University of Georgia and to ensure that our graduates acquire the understanding and respect for cultural differences necessary for an enlightened citizenry, all undergraduate students will be required to study cultural diversity within a domestic or global context before graduation." Further, it states that the requirement should be implemented in a way that enables students to develop their understanding of cultural diversity "not only with the cultures they are studying, but also as applied to their own cultures." This course accomplishes this in a very specific way. We will read the literature of the Yoruba people in Africa, through the slave trade, and in the New World. We also examine works by non-Yoruba writers that demonstrate a significant Yoruba influence. By focusing on a single culture, we are able to devote more energy on understanding the sociological, political, and religious contexts of works produced in Africa as well as in the New World. As the reading list below indicates, this is NOT an African-American literature course. Our content will be more global, and we will read works from MANY places in the New World. Since it is likely that none of us are experts in Yoruba or slave trade history, we will also read nonfiction that will increase our knowledge, expand our worldview, and provide the necessary background for understanding this literature in the appropriate cultural context. Some of the goals of this course are as follows:

- To survey important works of African and African Diaspora literature
- To increase knowledge about a part of the world and a culture NOT our own
- To use that knowledge to inform and analyze our fictional readings
- To develop analytical skills for interpreting literature
- To develop the skills necessary for an academic discussion of literature, culture, and society

#### Required Texts:

To Purchase: (available in main bookstore)  
The Yoruba Diaspora in the Atlantic World  
Tent of Miracles (Tenda dos milagres)  
Women Writing (Mulheres escrevendo)  
Kehinde  
Wild Seed

#### Additional:

**Course Pack from Bel-Jean**  
E-reserve sources as indicated by instructor  
Web CT  
Films and handouts, and internet sources

During the first few weeks of this course, I expect you all to have a certain amount of difficulty with the material. It will be entirely appropriate for you to feel "out of your comfort zone." This is OK! In fact, it is desirable. The learning curve will be quite sharp, but if you barrel through, you will learn a great deal. The reading will be substantial, and you need to take it seriously.

#### **Course Policies**

Reading is mandatory.

- Complete all reading assignments in full BEFORE the date of class discussion. The reading schedule will make this clear.

Attendance is mandatory.

- Come to class.
- Be on time.
- Stay for the entire period.
- Be attentive.
- I will tolerate FIVE absences, excused or unexcused. I do not differentiate between excused and unexcused absences, so please do not ask for “excused” status. The ONLY exceptions to this are: 1. extended documented illness or tragedy and 2. missed exams.
  - For each absence exceeding 5, three points will be subtracted from your final average. This is significant. The attendance policy is generous; do not abuse it.
  - I will allow exams to be made up ONLY when there is a DOCUMENTED excuse from an approved source, like the hospital. AND you notify me before the exam time that you will not be present. Health center notes will not be accepted unless they indicate clearly that you were physically unable, due to serious illness, injury, or some other calamity to be in my classroom during the exam. They need to be signed by the doctor you see, not stamped with the time, etc.

Class discussion is mandatory.

- You MUST come to class prepared to say something. This can take any form: a well-formed question, and critique, praise, etc. Please refrain from comments like “I didn’t understand anything” “I’m not a literature person” “I can’t remember names” etc. I cannot affect these. You will be expected to know names, places, important dates, etc. You need to have something specific and meaningful to say. That does not mean that you need to write the authoritative Norton edition of the day’s reading assignment, just have something academic to say about it. You may begin to form your thoughts by answering the following:
  - What parts of the reading were easy for me to understand? Difficult? Why?
  - What parts of the reading did I enjoy? Hate? Why?
  - What parts of the reading are useful?
  - What parts of the reading remind of things I’ve read before? (in this class or others)
  - What parts of the reading cause me discomfort? What seems familiar?
  - What page was that on??? (always have a page number ready!)
    - Sometimes I may provide more reading-specific questions for you
- It is also required that you develop discussion skills in this class. You must respect other people’ opinions, and learn to agree or disagree in an academic and well-informed way. Please do not whisper to your neighbor, laugh, roll your eyes, sigh, groan, etc. when another member of the class is speaking. That includes your instructor, and I will do the same for all of you.
- You MUST have the text on which we are working with you in class. Students who come to class without the text will be marked absent for the day.

Complete, detail-oriented, and TIMELY work is mandatory.

- There will be THREE exams in this course.
  - The first two exams will consist of an in-class portion and a take home portion.
    - The take home assignment will be given to you when you hand in your in class exam. The in class portion will be largely objective. Take home exams are essay format and are due in class, on the day indicated by me. Please do NOT turn take home exams in late, they will be penalized FIVE points for each day late, including days that we do not have class. All exams should be placed in my hands, unless we have established another agreement. NEVER email exams, put them in my mailbox, on my door, under my windshield wiper, etc. All take-home exams must be typed, doubled spaced, use 12pt TNR BLACK font, and have one inch margins.

- If, for some reason, you need a make-up exam, DO NOT wait for me to chase you. I will not do it. YOU are required to approach me, and all make ups must be COMPLETE within one week of the original exam date.
- The final exam will be given during the time scheduled by the university, and will be written in ink, in a blue book provided by YOU. The final will be written entirely in class, and will consist mainly of essay-type questions.
- There will also be several quizzes that cover reading material. The quizzes will consist of objective, reading comprehension type questions. That does NOT mean they will be easy. Quizzes are designed to assess your comprehension of the material immediately following the reading assignment. All quizzes will be announced IN CLASS one or two class periods prior to the quiz. (this is another reason attendance is important) Quizzes will happen in the first 10-15 minutes of class, and students who arrive late will not be given the quiz. Quizzes can not be “made-up” under any circumstances.

**Grading:**

Your grade will be determined as follows:

Exam 1:	25%
Exam 2:	25%
Final:	30%
Quizzes (all/avg)	20%

**Grade Assignment:**

The above assignments will be graded with percentages, weighted based on percent of overall grade, and then added to form a total percentage earned out of 100. I do not round up. I will assign letters as follows:

A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	82-86
B-	80-82
C+	78-79
C	73-77
C-	70-72
D	below 70
F	below 60

Students with fewer than 2 absences will be given a two point attendance bonus at the end of the semester.

ANY student, who, for **whatever** reason, misses five classes before the mid point withdrawal deadline will be withdrawn from the course.

ANY student who misses three consecutive days of class without contacting me will be withdrawn from the class.

ANY student who misses more than 50% of the class meetings will not be permitted to take the final exam and will receive a grade of 0 for the quiz section.

**All academic work must meet the standards contained in “A Culture of Honesty.” All students are responsible to inform themselves about those standards before performing any academic work.** Be advised that I am a member of the student academic honesty council, and am VERY familiar with UGA’s honesty policy and the procedures for dealing with cases of dishonesty, suspected and proven. Please consult <http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/honesty/ahs.htm> for more information on this topic.

Course Schedule ~ Fall 2007  
 Black Diaspora Literature CMLT 2600

F 8/17	Course Introduction and Review Syllabus	UGA Academic honesty documents (handout)
M 8/20	Academic Honesty at UGA	Encyclopedia article on Nigeria (online)
W 8/22	Introduction to Yoruba society and culture	Encyclopedia article on Nigeria (online)
F 8/24	Yoruba Creation Myth, Introduction to Yoruba Deities	
M 8/27	Beier, Yoruba Myths (in course pack)	intro to pg 12
W 8/29	Beier, Yoruba Myths (in course pack)	13-48
F 8/31	Beier, Yoruba Myths (in course pack)	48-82
M 9/3	Labor Day Holiday ~ NO CLASS MEETING	
W 9/5	Fadipe "Ethnic History" (in course pack)	
F 9/7	Fadipe, "Religion and Morals" (in course pack)	
M 9/10	YDAW Chapters 1&2	1-34
W 9/12 *Rosh	YDAW Lovejoy and O'Hear chapters	40-68
F 9/14	Ijimere: The Imprisonment of Obatala (in course pack)	
M 9/17	Ijimere: The Imprisonment of Obatala (in course pack)	
W 9/19	Exam I	
F 9/21* Yom	Take Home Exams Due, Film: Oba Ko So	
M 9/24	YDAW: Reis/Mamigonian Chapter 5	77-105
W 9/26	Seljam: The Story of Oxala (in course pack)	all
F 9/28	NO CLASS MEETING: SCLA Conference	Re-read Oxala, read YDAW Pares Chapter 185-204
M 10/1	Film: Ile Aye	Re-read YDAW Pares Chapter
W 10/3	Finish Discussion of Story of Oxala, YDAW: Pares Chapter 10	
F 10/5	YDAW: Pares Chapter 10	Tent of Miracles 1-98
M 10/8	Tent of Miracles	1-98
W 10/10	Tent of Miracles	99-162
F 10/12	Tent of Miracles (Mid Term Withdrawal Deadline)	162-205

M 10/15	Tent of Miracles	206-264
W 10/17	Tent of Miracles	264-374
F 10/19	TM conclusions, distribute TH Exams	
M 10/22	Take Home Exams DUE, Tent of Miracles conclusion	
W 10/24	Exam II	
F 10/26	F(ootb) all Break ~ NO CLASS MEETING	
M 10/29	Women Righting: Preface, Intro and In Search of a Black Butterfly	9-39
W 10/31	Women Righting: Lucky 7, Nincinha, No. 505	40-59
F 11/2	Women Righting: Foundation and Floating Power	60-71
M 11/5	Women Righting: Nightlamp and Duzu-Querenca	
W 11/7	Rise of Black Atlantic Visual Tradition/Black Saints (in coursepack)	
F 11/9	YDAW: The Y. In Cuba: Origins, Identities, and Transformations	111-129
M 11/12	Shango de ima	13-59 (to the end of scene 7)
W 11/14	Shango de ima	59-90 (begin scene 8)
F 11/16	YDAW: Santeria in Cuba: Tradition and Transformation	209-230
M 11/19	Rivera: Shango's Rest (in course pack)	all
W 11/21	Thanksgiving Holiday ~ NO CLASS MEETING	
F 11/23	Thanksgiving Holiday ~ NO CLASS MEETING	
M 11/26	Kehinde	1-49
W 11/28	Kehinde	50-141
F 11/30	Wild Seed/Octavia Butler	3-49
M 12/3	Wild Seed	49-131
T 12/4	Wild Seed	135-198
W 12/5	Wild Seed	201-279

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**Final Exams:**

**11:15 class Monday December 10**

**12-3**

**1:25 class**    **Friday December 14**  
**12-3**