**20th Century American Literature Lilith Claire Acadia**

Looking to literature to understand our current moment and envision better futures, this course focuses on the work of Black writers who have shaped the field of American Literature since 1900, then ends with a unit on contemporary Taiwanese-American writing to consider how ideals we have discussed transcend time and place while relating to our lives.

As a 20th century US Literature survey, the course introduces key developments and concepts in the field, covers a range of literary forms (including poems, short stories, essays, a play, and novel excerpts) and genres (such as mystery, science fiction, creative nonfiction, memoir, and theory), and develops analytical reading techniques. The focus on Black literature is a means of engaging students with important current political and scholarly debates, while limiting the scope of a large field so that students can gain familiarity and confidence with the canon and discourse.

Structured chronologically to historically situate the literature from the legacy of slavery to ongoing #BlackLivesMatter protests, the readings feature canonical as well as underappreciated 20th century Black American and 21st century Taiwanese-American writers. We will read Booker T. Washington, Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, Ralph Waldo Ellison, James Baldwin, Lorraine Hansberry, Audre Lorde, Alice Walker, Toni Morrison, Henry Louis Gates Jr., Barbara Christian, Jamaica Kincaid, Octavia Butler, Shawna Yang Ryan, Maggie Shen King, Charles Yu, Jericho Brown, and others.

Students should be prepared to confront disturbing topics, read difficult theoretical works, write analytically about the literature, and participate in class discussion.