ENGL 691 – Topics in Film and Literature: Blues and Jazz in Literature and Film
Dr. Tim Ryan  TTh 2:00-4:45 pm  DU 270

Description:
In this class, we will examine a variety of literary and cinematic works that engage with (or relate in some way to) jazz and/or blues music. Although blues and jazz have had an immense impact upon American and global culture, the significant works and artists of these musical traditions remain relatively marginal in the popular imagination today, certainly in comparison to the ubiquitous productions of the rock era. For this reason, the course assumes no pre-existing knowledge of blues and jazz, and provides an introduction to the histories of these musical forms, as well as to selected recordings by major artists. We will also learn more about the subject through excerpts from critical and historical studies.

This class thus provides a survey of canonical twentieth-century literature and film, an exploration of modernist/African American culture, and an introduction to the emerging field of music and literature/film studies. This class also contributes to academic professionalization through writing, workshopping, and presentation of scholarly papers.

Texts:
Our primary texts will be:
James Weldon Johnson. The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man (1912)
Blues in the Night (dir. Anatole Litvak, 1941)
Toni Morrison. Jazz (1992)
Whiplash (dir. Damien Chazelle, 2014)

The course will also include short stories, poetry, songs, music, short films, and excerpts from secondary scholarship—all available via electronic reserve on Blackboard—by such writers, musicians, filmmakers, and scholars as Louis Armstrong, James Baldwin, Thomas Brothers, James Lincoln Collier, Angela Davis, Duke Ellington, Ralph Ellison, William Faulkner, Adam Gussow, Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, Robert Johnson, Gjon Mili, Charlie Parker, Bessie Smith, and Eudora Welty.
**Requirements:** The central project for the course is a conference-length paper that will go through an in-class workshop and which class members will present at the end of the semester. The final grade will also be based upon productive contributions to class discussion.

**N. B.** This course is cross-listed as ENGL 363 for undergraduate students.

For additional details and a complete reading list, please e-mail Professor Ryan at tryan@niu.edu.

**ENGL 696 – Practicum in the Teaching of College English**  
**Dr. David Gorman**  
[Permission Number Required] Contact Dawn Sibley at dsibley@niu.edu

3 hours. May be repeated to a maximum of 15 semester hours; however, only 3 hours may be applied toward a graduate degree in English. S/U grading.

**ENGL 697 – English Institute**  
**Dr. David Gorman**  
[Permission Number Required] Contact Dawn Sibley at dsibley@niu.edu

1-6 hours. May be repeated to a maximum of 12 semester hours as the topic changes. S/U grading.

**ENGL 698 – Independent Reading**  
**Staff**  
[Permission Number Required] Contact Dawn Sibley at dsibley@niu.edu

Normally open only to students who have completed 30 semester hours in an M.A. program. May be repeated to a maximum of 6 semester hours when topic varies.

**ENGL 699 – Master’s Thesis**  
**Dr. David Gorman**  
[Permission Number Required] Contact Dawn Sibley at dsibley@niu.edu

This course may be taken upon selection of a thesis director, appointment of a committee of two additional readers, and approval of a prospectus. Selection of a thesis director is made by the thesis writer, based upon the faculty member’s expert knowledge in the thesis field. The other two readers, typically a subject specialist and a general reader, are selected by the Director of Graduate Studies in consultation with the thesis writer and thesis director.

**Approval of the thesis prospectus by all committee members should be obtained at least one semester in advance of enrollment in 699.** A student writing a thesis must register in 699 in the semester in which he or she plans to defend the thesis, and must register in any subsequent term until the thesis is submitted to and formally approved by the Graduate School. A permit for registration will be given to approved students by the Director of Graduate Studies.

**ENGL 799 – Doctoral Disseration**  
**Dr. David Gorman**  
[Permission Number Required] Contact Dawn Sibley at dsibley@niu.edu

Dissertators will be enrolled in ENGL 799 when they have entered into candidacy: after their director has been selected, their committee approved, and dissertation proposal defended. Once enrolled in 799, **continuous enrollment is required, including summers, until the dissertation is submitted to and formally approved by the Graduate School.**