

UNIVERSITY CORE CURRICULUM

SECTION III. INTEGRATIVE STUDIES - INTERDISCIPLINARY

1. COURSE NUMBER: **MUS 303i** SEMESTER HOURS: **3**

COURSE TITLE: **Women, Blues, and Literature**
Start Date: Spring 2000
2. COURSE FORMAT: Interactive discussion. Liberal use of relevant audio and video materials. Student-designed creative/analytical paper/presentations. Faculty taught. Average enrollment: 25.
3. STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES: Students will be able to: (a) identify blues musical and poetic features, aesthetics, contexts, functions, and styles; (b) develop an awareness of women's contributions to the blues and an appreciation of the blues as a vehicle of empowerment; (c) identify and analyze music-literature relationships and to recognize extensions of women's blues in music and literature.
4. DETAILED COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course explores the traditional aesthetic processes of the blues, and the blues as a mode of self-expression which empowers creative artists and their audiences by giving voice to their experiences while challenging the status quo, teaching survival while stimulating individual creativity. Beginning with an analysis of the origins, functions, contexts, and musical/poetic features of the blues, and continuing with an examination of the images and voices projected by vaudeville blues women in the 1920s and 30s when African American female performers stood in the public limelight en masse for the first time, we will explore the significance of the vaudeville blues women for their contemporaries and for those who followed. We will look at the continuance of women's blues traditions, examining various manifestations and extensions--instrumental and vocal, musical and literary--from fiction and poetry to jazz, R&B, soul, and rap. The course will involve in-depth analysis of blues music and literature.
5. REQUIRED READING: Textbooks (subject to change) include: Murray, *Stomping the Blues*, 1982; Davis, *Blues Legacies and Black Feminism*, 1998; Hurston, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, 1978; Walker, *The Color Purple*, 1982. Required readings will also include a packet of supplementary readings. In addition, there will be listening CDs on reserve and weekly required listening assignments.
6. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING: Current requirements (subject to change) include:
 - Weekly reading and listening assignments
 - Student-designed creative/analytical paper/presentations
 - Two exams which include essays and listening examples
 - Commitment to attendance
7. ADVANCED UCC COURSE(S): None

1/20/06