



SENATE COMMITTEE ON CURRICULAR AFFAIRS
COURSE SUBMISSION AND CONSULTATION FORM

Principal Faculty Member(s) Proposing Course

Name	User ID	College	Department
MEGAN SIMPSON	mbs12	Altoona College (AL)	Not Available
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Academic Home: Altoona College (AL)

Type of Proposal: Add Change Drop

Course Designation

(ENGL 141N) African American Read-In Engaged Learning Experience

Course Information

Cross-Listed Courses:

INART 141N(AL) AFAM 141N(AL)

Prerequisites:

Corequisites:

Concurrents:

Recommended Preparations:

Abbreviated Title: Afr Amer Read-In
Discipline: General Education
Course Listing: Inter-Domain

Special categories for Undergraduate (001-499) courses

Foundations

- Writing/Speaking (GWS)
- Quantification (GQ)

Knowledge Domains

- Health & Wellness (GHW)
- Natural Sciences (GN)
- Arts (GA)
- Humanities (GH)
- Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS)

Additional Designations

- Bachelor of Arts
- International Cultures (IL)
- United States Cultures (US)
- Honors Course
- Common course number - x94, x95, x96, x97, x99
- Writing Across the Curriculum

First-Year Engagement Program

- First-Year Seminar

Miscellaneous

Common Course

GE Learning Objectives

GenEd Learning Objective: Effective Communication

GenEd Learning Objective: Creative Thinking

GenEd Learning Objective: Crit & Analytical Think

GenEd Learning Objective: Global Learning

GenEd Learning Objective: Integrative Thinking

GenEd Learning Objective: Key Literacies

GenEd Learning Objective: Soc Resp & Ethic Reason

Bulletin Listing

Minimum Credits:	1
Maximum Credits:	3
Repeatable:	YES
Maximum Total Credits:	6
Department with Curricular Responsibility:	Altoona College (ALAL_ALCOM)
Effective Semester:	Upon Approval
Travel Component:	NO

Course Outline

A brief outline or overview of the course content:

The African American Read-In Engaged Learning Experience course offers students an engaged learning experience in which they will produce original intellectual and artistic content to be presented publicly at an African American Read-In (AARI) event on campus during Black History Month. While the specific focus of the course will change from year to year, it will be consistently organized around a particular topic in the African American literary tradition. This topic will, in turn, serve as the theme of the public event the class will then host: a local African American Read-In (AARI) as part of the national AARI established in 1990 under the auspices of the National Council of Teachers of English to promote literacy and appreciation of African American literature.

The particular theme each year will be chosen so as to allow both a broad and coherent overview of a significant cultural or historical topic and to engage issues of cultural diversity in the United States. The relevant annual theme, thus, will bring the study of African American literature into a broader interdisciplinary context that intersects with African American culture, history, identity, and the struggle for equality.

Students will have the dual task of studying texts that relate to the given annual theme and then developing this knowledge into exhibitions, presentations, or performances. Accordingly, they will begin the fall semester examining key texts and authors relating to the theme, and then move, in the second half of the semester, into developing this knowledge into projects and presentations, individually and/or in groups, working closely with the instructor(s). By the end of the fall semester, students will have completed presentations to be showcased during the African American Read-In in February.

A listing of the major topics to be covered with an approximate length of time allotted for their discussion:

The African American Read-In Engaged Learning Experience course necessarily spans two academic semesters (fall and spring), since its structure involves student participation in an African American Read-In event during the month of February. To accommodate the unusual, cross-semester timetable and also the fact that different campuses will host different events under the official AARI umbrella, the course structure must be flexible.

At Penn State Altoona, where this course was taught successfully in fall/spring 2015/16, and again in fall/spring 2016/17, and where it is will be offered for a third time in 2017-18, we determined that two credits in fall and one credit in spring work very well for our purposes (the spring course is only open to students who completed the fall portion of the class). However, other instructors might decide that a 3 + 1 credit structure, or even a 3 + 3 one, works better for their purposes. We only offer one section of the course at this time; however, at bigger campuses, multiple sections, with different credit structures and under different instructors, all leading to an AARI event, could be feasible. The instructor(s) for both courses should not vary to ensure continuity across two semesters.

The following website functions as an archive of the work of the committee and, importantly, of all the scholarly and artistic projects students developed and presented these past two academic years of 2015/16 and 2016/17:
<https://sites.psu.edu/aareadin/>

The following schedule, representing just one possibility, is based on the 2 +1 credit structure and represents how the course has been successfully offered at PSU Altoona:

Week One & Two

Introduction to African American literature and its place in US culture: overview of forms and themes, in their historical and social contexts, from the colonial period until now.

Brief introduction to the history of the African American Read-In and the Black Caucus of National Committee of Teachers of

English; brief introduction to basic intent of the national AARI and other AARI-events, nationally and inter-nationally, and the role of the arts in the ongoing struggle for racial equality in the U.S.

Introduction to upcoming local AARI next February: annual theme (organizing principle, chronology, genre); ideas for programming for AARI events in February; specific roles for and contributions by students.

Weeks Three – Five

Study of texts from the African American tradition reflecting the given annual theme, including major U.S. and diasporic African American writers and artists, such as Douglas, Hurston, Hughes, Wright, Ellison, Walker, Morrison, Baldwin, Angelou, Davis, among others.

Weeks Six – Eight

Further study of texts relevant to the annual theme, as well as consultations with the faculty member about a possible program component for the AARI; oral and written project proposals over a number of stages to lead to a formal project proposal by week nine.

Week Nine

Further study of relevant texts and submission date for finalized project proposals; presentation and discussion of project proposals in class with feedback from the class and the faculty member; final revision of proposal.

Week Ten – Fourteen

Reduction of in-class meetings; more focused, in-depth research of texts in accordance with a student's specific project; individual meetings with faculty member outside of class to shape projects; week twelve: first draft of project due.

Week Fifteen

Project presentations before the entire class: trial run; feedback; final revision of projects.

SPRING SEMESTER / African American Read-In during Black History Month

While the NCTE invites individuals and institutions to host a Read-In event during the month of February, it does not stipulate its precise form. Accordingly, the second part of the course will look different depending on the specific AARI events being organized.

Week One – Five (or until the completion of the AARI events)

Weekly AARI committee meetings to shape and organize AARI events; AARI subcommittee meetings (as needed); continued individual consultation with faculty member(s) to polish individual projects and ready them for public presentation.

February AARI Events

Active participation in AARI events and implementation of individual program component.

Note: campuses that offer this course must be committed to making resources available to the instructor(s) and students to host an AARI that is open to the area community on that campus in the following February.

See the following websites for more information:

<http://www.ncte.org/aari>

<https://sites.psu.edu/aareadin/>

Course Description:

This course will allow students to study African American literature, culture, history, and arts in connection with an annual public event, the African American Read-In (AARI). The AARI, promoting literacy and appreciation of African American literature, is a national event established in 1990 under the auspices of the National Council of Teachers of English. It has become a regular feature of Black History Month—celebrated by community, neighborhood, and church groups as well as schools and institutions of higher education throughout the United States and elsewhere on a given Sunday and Monday in February—attracting more than a million participants annually.

This course offers students an engaged learning experience in which they will produce original intellectual and artistic content to be presented publicly at an AARI event on campus. Students will study texts from a range of historical periods and/or genres, and thus gain a solid introduction to the African American literary tradition. At the same time, the primary organizing principle of the course will be a particular theme that both allows a broad and coherent overview of a significant cultural or historical topic and engages issues of cultural diversity in the United States. The specific theme, thus, will bring the study of African American literature into a broader interdisciplinary context that intersects with African American culture, history, identity, and the struggle for equality. Students will study texts that relate to this annual theme and participate in a relevant field trip (museum, theater, cultural site, library, etc.) to deepen their understanding of the significance and contexts—social, historical, cultural, artistic—of these materials and this theme. They will then develop this knowledge through creative and critical engagements into exhibitions, presentations, or performances to communicate their insights about a particular author, text, or topic in the African American literary tradition. As shapers of the AARI program on their campus, class members will also have a voice in designing and planning the AARI as well as a stake in its overall success.

As this course necessarily spans semesters, students who enroll in the Fall course will be expected to enroll in the Spring course in order to present their projects at the AARI in February. Only students who were enrolled in the Fall course will be permitted to enroll in the Spring, as it is the culmination of the same course.

The name(s) of the faculty member(s) responsible for the development of the course:

1 Name: JUTTA GSOELS-LORENSEN (jmg35)

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Course Justification

Instructional, Educational, and Course Objectives:

This section should define what the student is expected to learn and what skills the student will develop.

This course enables students to study African American literature, culture, history, and the arts in conjunction with an annual, national event. Its educational objective is to pair the rigorous study of artistic and scholarly materials relating to the AARI's given yearly theme with the design of a scholarly or artistic program component to be implemented at the actual AARI events, before a public audience.

Students will gain:

- critical knowledge about African American literature, history and culture, as contextualized within the U.S.
- knowledge about intellectually grounded efforts, their stakes and challenges, to bring minority issues in the U.S. into the public sphere
- skills related to shaping in-class academic content into an engaging scholarly and/or artistic project(s) to be presented in public, such as critical reading, inferencing, research, written and oral communication, audience awareness, public speaking skills, relevant artistic skills such as performance or creative writing, etc.
- communication skills related to organizing a large public event, including public relations, social media work, outreach, administrative matters, developing program components for specific audiences, etc.
- increased understanding as to the overall stakes and challenges of presenting scholarly or artistic content to a general audience

History of Student Involvement in the AARI at Penn State Altoona:

The African American Read-In, as a two-day public and academic event held during the month of February, has a 16-year history at Penn State Altoona. It is a fixed point of the yearly calendar, anticipated by Penn State Altoona students, faculty and staff, who all contribute, as well as the Altoona community. Since its inception, students have been playing a vital role in the AARI, contributing scholarly and artistic programming as well as helping with organization, planning, and implementation of various event components.

The creation of the African American Read-In Engaged Learning Experience course recognizes the level of student interest and involvement in the AARI we have seen over the years at Penn State Altoona by finally offering a more formal, institutionally recognized, academic structure for students wishing to participate in the AARI. Indeed, student involvement has historically often been rigorous and academic through independent studies and paid undergraduate research assistantships funded through the Africana Research Center grants for six years, from the 2001-2002 academic year through the 2008 AARI. In those years, students contributed to a Black Writers of PA Database project, and shared their research findings with AARI audiences in various ways.

We are confident that a regular course offering of ENGL 141 will both fill an existing need and meet an existing demand, while furthering the University's commitment to engaged scholarship.

The course ran successfully at Penn State Altoona these past two years. In 2015-16, students also had the opportunity to

participate in a two-day field trip to the Weeksville Heritage Center in Brooklyn, NY, which was funded by a Schreyer Teaching Project Grant. Students developed scholarly or creative projects, either individually or in groups, and presented them to a public audience.

An archive of their work and contributions, including photographs and videos, can be found here: <https://sites.psu.edu/aareadin/>

Evaluation Methods:

Include a statement that explains how the achievement of the educational objective identified above will be assessed. The procedures for determining students' grades should be specifically identified.

Depending on the instructor and the nature of the yearly AARI theme, grading categories will vary from year to year, but will always include the following: an assessment of students' in-class academic work; their participation in the AARI organizational and administrative activities; and, with the greatest weight attached to it, the design and eventual implementation of their scholarly and/or artistic projects before a public audience at the February AARI events.

Accordingly, weighted grading rubrics could look as follows (this example based on a 2 + 1 credit structure):

Fall course:

Weekly assignments, possibly including journal entries, response papers, short papers, reading recommendations and/or short oral presentations (students will be asked to analyze, respond to, or critically evaluate class texts in relation to the yearly theme): 35%

Designing a project for the AARI: 50%

(preliminary project idea, oral presentation: 10 points; written proposal: 10 points; revised proposal: 15 points; draft of project: 15 points; presentation of finished project in class: 50 points)

Class participation and attendance: 15%

Spring Course:

Contributions (organizational, administrative, P/R, etc.) to February AARI: 25%

Participation and Professionalism: 25%

Presentation of Project at AARI: 50%

Relationship/Linkage of Course to Other Courses:

This statement should relate the course to existing or proposed new courses. It should provide a rationale for the level of instruction, for any prerequisites that may be specified, or for the course's role as a prerequisite for other courses.

This course will complement course offerings in the fields of English, Integrative Arts and African American Studies. In distinction to conventional academic courses, its emphasis on engaged learning, leading to a presentation in front of a public audience in the context of a large national event, however, challenges students to develop academic subject matter studied in class into scholarly or artistic program components outside its purview. In addition, students will obtain presentation and organizational skills relevant to all their future studies. The nature of the course also encourages students to connect different academic fields. More generally speaking, it will teach students skills in critical thinking, analysis, writing and public speaking that will prove valuable to other courses in literature, culture, and history.

While it can be viewed as overlapping with courses such as ENGL 135 "Alternative Voices in American Literature" or ENGL 139 "Black American Literature," and like them prepares students for advanced courses in African American and multiethnic American literature, it is unique in allowing students to think about, and actively implement, intellectual work in formats other than exams and essays.

This course will also complement the course offerings in African American Studies, none of which link academic work with the national African American Read-In chain; that is, with a large, well-established public event celebrating African American letters and literacy in the U.S. and abroad. It allows students to connect course content from this and other AFAM courses to the public sphere and its discourses on race.

This course will also complement the course offerings in Integrative Arts, though in different ways, as the INART student is more used to transitioning back and forth between the classroom and the public performance venue. There is no Integrative Arts course, though, that is exclusively devoted to the African American experience or to the specific events of the African American Read-In and that challenges a student to think about performance within a given public event and cultural context. The course dovetails with INART 062 "West African and African American Arts: from the 1960s to the present" and possibly INART 003 "Reception of the Arts"; its emphasis on the AARI, though, makes it a unique course offering.

Relationship of Course to Major, Option, Minor, or General Education:

This statement should explain how the course will contribute to the major, option, or minor and indicate how it may function as a service course for other departments.

ENGL 141 is proposed as a General Education course (US and GH/GA) and is not required in any major or minor.

However, it can serve toward the 9 credits of supporting courses that can be at any level required for the English major, or toward the 6 additional credits for the English minor that do not have to be at the 200-level or above.

For the integrative Arts major, as appropriate for a student's particular individualized academic plan, it can serve toward the 15 credits of electives or toward the 21 of the 42 credits of supporting courses and related areas that do not have to be either GA courses or at the 400-level.

With permission of the African American Studies Undergraduate Director, ENGL 141 may be used to fulfill 3 credits of additional courses that do not have to be at the 400-level for the African American Studies minor or 3 of the 18 credits in concentration areas required for the African American Studies major in the humanities concentration area.

A description of any special facilities:

No special facilities required unless the particular theme of the course as it is run in a given year calls for them, i.e., theater space or dance studio for a drama or movement-related theme, visual arts studio for an art-related theme.

Frequency of Offering and Enrollment:

Every semester, enrollment 25

Alignment with General Education Objectives

- EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION** – the ability to exchange information and ideas in oral, written, and visual form in ways that allow for informed and persuasive discourse that builds trust and respect among those engaged in that exchange, and helps create environments where creative ideas and problem-solving flourish.
- KEY LITERACIES** – the ability to identify, interpret, create, communicate and compute using materials in a variety of media and contexts. Literacy acquired in multiple areas, such as textual, quantitative, information/technology, health, intercultural, historical, aesthetic, linguistic (world languages), and scientific, enables individuals to achieve their goals, to develop their knowledge and potential, to lead healthy and productive lives, and to participate fully in their community and wider society.
- CRITICAL AND ANALYTICAL THINKING** – the habit of mind characterized by comprehensive exploration of issues, ideas, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating a conclusion. It is the intellectually disciplined process of conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action.
- INTEGRATIVE THINKING** – the ability to synthesize knowledge across multiple domains, modes of inquiry, historical periods, and perspectives, as well as the ability to identify linkages between existing knowledge and new information. Individuals who engage in integrative thinking are able to transfer knowledge within and beyond their current contexts.
- CREATIVE THINKING** – the capacity to synthesize existing ideas, images, or expertise in original ways and the experience of performing, making, thinking, or acting in an imaginative way that may be characterized by innovation, divergent thinking, and intellectual risk taking.
- GLOBAL LEARNING** – the intellectually disciplined abilities to analyze similarities and differences among cultures; evaluate natural, physical, social, cultural, historical, and economic legacies and hierarchies; and engage as community members and leaders who will continue to deal with the intricacies of an ever-changing world. Individuals should acquire the ability to analyze power; identify and critique interdependent global, regional, and local cultures and systems; and evaluate the implications for people's lives.
- SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND ETHICAL REASONING** – the ability to assess one's own values within the social context of problems, recognize ethical issues in a variety of settings, describe how different perspectives might be applied to ethical dilemmas, and consider the ramifications of alternative actions. Individuals should acquire the self-knowledge and leadership skills needed to play a role in creating and maintaining healthy, civil, safe, and thriving communities.

What component(s) of the course will help students achieve the General Education Learning Objectives covered in the course? Provide evidence that students in the course have adequate opportunities to achieve the identified learning objectives.

a. Effective Communication

In the first phase of the Fall course, students will prepare, discuss and defend their points of view, orally and in writing, in response to the class materials. In the second phase of the Fall course, they are required to write and speak about the design of their project, the motivation behind it, and the audience it seeks to reach; conversely, they will be expected to offer constructive criticism of and advice on others' projects. In the Spring course and during the AARI events themselves, students will enhance their public presentation and/or performance skills. Since the AARI, both the class and the February event, are a collaborative effort bringing together a diverse group of students, faculty members and staff persons, students will learn to present their ideas, as well as their critique, with sensitivity and respect for other opinions and perspectives, while simultaneously fostering the community needed to ensure the overall success of the February Read-In.

d. Integrative Thinking

Integrative thinking is at the core of this course design. As an inter-domain course, it will require students to engage creatively and critically with course materials, often bringing methodologies from both the arts and the humanities together simultaneously. Additionally, as a course that considers African American literary and cultural production in particular historical, social, and political contexts, students will be asked to employ integrative thinking across disciplines and to bring knowledge from different modes of inquiry to bear on their interpretive processes.

e. Creative Thinking

Students will generate and develop creative thought in both initial and informal creative responses to course materials early in the course and, in the second part of the course, as they imagine and enact original modes of presentation or performance of their final projects. For those students whose final projects are primarily creative in nature, this second phase will be characterized by intensive creative thinking. Bringing original programming intended to engage and transform to a live audience will in the most practical sense require innovation, divergent thinking, and risk-taking.

f. Global Learning

In itself, any study of African American texts necessarily grapples with intercultural awareness, including race relations in the U.S. However, this course also interprets the term "African American" in terms of recent immigrant experiences from Africa to the U.S., thus departing from any monolithic interpretation of black identity, history or culture. Students are expected to read with cultural awareness and self-reflection; those with immigrant backgrounds may also wish to explore their life experiences and distinct perspectives in light of the annual theme and in relation to U.S. discourses on blackness.

How will students be assessed to determine their attainment of the Learning Objective(s) of General Education covered in this course? This assessment must be included as a portion of the student's overall performance in this course.

Students will be assessed and evaluated on their work as it relates to these stated learning objectives. Grading criteria on academic course components including, but not limited to, the final project will emphasize students' ability to communicate effectively, synthesize knowledge, engage creatively, and analyze cultural differences and relationships.

General Education Domain Criteria

General Education Designation: Inter-Domain

GA Criteria

- Explain the methods of inquiry in arts fields and describe how the contributions of these fields complement inquiry in other areas
- Demonstrate an expanded knowledge and comprehension of the role that the arts play in various aspects of human endeavor
- Demonstrate competence in the creation of works of art and design
- Demonstrate competence in analysis, critical thinking and interpretive reasoning through the exploration of creative works
- Identify and explain the aesthetic, historic, social, and cultural significance of important works of art and critically assess creative works, their own or others', through evaluative processes of analysis and interpretation

What components of the course will help students achieve the domain criteria selected above?

Demonstrate an expanded knowledge and comprehension of the role that the arts play in various aspects of human endeavor: The course introduces students to the historical, political, and social contexts in which African American literary works and other forms of African American cultural expression have been, and continue to be, created. All students in the course, whether they choose a creative or scholarly project for their final presentation, will be able to observe first-hand how art creates sites of intervention and reflection in the February AARI events, which students, faculty and guest artists will use as a platform for artistic expression. Also, being closely involved with hosting the invited speakers for the February events, many of whom typically present creative works, will challenge students to demonstrate their competence interacting not only with artists' work and ideas, but also the artists themselves. The course will also, thus, enable students to expand their comprehension of the significance of the arts in frameworks beyond their own immediate experiences and the role the arts play in social transformation, national and cultural identity, and struggles for social justice.

Demonstrate competence in analysis, critical thinking and interpretive reasoning through the exploration of creative works: Students will develop critical thinking skills throughout the course as they explore literary art as well as related forms of artistic expression in African American cultural traditions as relevant to the particular theme of the AARI. They will be exposed to a variety of artistic genres beyond the purely literary, such as song, spoken word, music, visual art, movement, theater, or others. Modes of analysis and interpretation will include written and oral critical assessments of the more traditional kind as well as creative-interpretive responses to the course materials, such as putting a poem to original music, translating a work of fiction into a dramatic monologue or dialogue, choreographing a spoken word piece, and so on, according to the proclivity of the individual student as well as the particular area(s) of expertise of the instructor. In the case of the latter, the student will be asked to articulate, orally or in writing, through an artist's statement, for example, the impetus behind their piece, including models and sources of inspiration; the point of creative and/or critical intervention and its stakes; intended audience; and overall intended impact.

Identify and explain the aesthetic, historic, social, and cultural significance of important works of art and critically assess creative works, their own or others', through evaluative processes of analysis and interpretation: This course requires students to analyze important works of African American literature in terms of their aesthetic, historical, social, and/or cultural significance in relation to the particular theme of the course in a given year. Being exposed to a rich variety of literary and artistic work in the African American tradition will allow students to appreciate the representational and aesthetic strategies employed in expressive forms from early folk traditions to 21st century literary forms. They will interpret and evaluate these works in informal response papers, creative-interpretive pieces and class discussions as well as in their final projects, through which they will then communicate these interpretations, and by extension the scope and significance of the particular theme around which the course is organized that year, in presentations, performances, or exhibitions, to a broader audience at the AARI.

GH Criteria

- Explain the methods of inquiry in humanities fields and describe how the contributions of these fields complement inquiry in other areas
- Demonstrate competence in critical thinking about topics and texts in the humanities through clear and well-reasoned responses
- Critically evaluate texts in the humanities— whether verbal, visual, or digital— and identify and explain moral or ethical dimensions within the disciplines of the humanities
- Demonstrate knowledge of major cultural currents, issues, and developments through time, including evidence of exposure to unfamiliar material that challenges their curiosity and stretches their intellectual range
- Become familiar with groups, individuals, ideas, or events that have influenced the experiences and values of different communities

What components of the course will help students achieve the domain criteria selected above?

Demonstrate competence in critical thinking about topics and texts in the humanities through clear and well-reasoned responses: In the first part of the course, students will learn how to approach literary and other artistic works analytically through lectures and class discussions as well as written and oral assignments requiring argumentation and analysis. In the second part of the course, devoted to developing the public presentation, students will learn, through step-by-step work on their project proposals, to articulate an idea effectively and with a specific audience in mind; think about the most conducive format to convey their idea; prepare their

material for public presentation; listen and respond to feedback (oral and written); and incorporate it into a revised version of their work.

Demonstrate knowledge of major cultural currents, issues, and developments through time, including evidence of exposure to unfamiliar material that challenges their curiosity and stretches their intellectual range:

This course identifies, through the lens of its varying annual topics, distinct perspectives on broad artistic, historic and cultural themes within the African American experience. The annual AARI theme is necessarily broad enough to engage an academic, as well as a public, audience, but at the same time pointed enough to allow for focused study. Prior AARI themes have included the following: "This Land: Place, Community and Belonging the African American Experience;" "Music in the African American Experience;" and "America 2015: We the People" (exploring issues of citizenship). In any given year, students will study a variety of African American texts—both canonical and lesser known—in their historical, cultural, and political contexts, exposing students to new ideas and ways of thinking that will broaden their understanding and appreciation of African American literary traditions as well as American literature and national identity more broadly. Throughout the course, students will consider novel iterations of the term "African American," critically interrogating the reach of this designation in view of the immigrant experience and African diaspora culture.

Become familiar with groups, individuals, ideas, or events that have influenced the experiences and values of different communities: Students will learn to understand African American literature in its cultural and historical U.S., but also global, contexts. Studying the work of major writers and artists will allow students to reflect on the multiply intersecting issues of race, gender and class as they impact individuals' lives, but also societies as such. Through the study of texts that might, or might not, mirror their personal experiences, students will gain an awareness of differing interpretations of human existence, as well as the open and covert factors influencing it in different communities. Students will also, on a practical level, have to ponder the relationship between ideas and communities, as they themselves embark on shaping an event, in the form of their final presentation, in the public sphere.

Integrative Studies

Explain how the intellectual frameworks And methodologies of the two Knowledge Domains will be explicitly addressed in the course and practiced by the students.

Students' engagements with the course materials will include the creative and the critical, often bringing methodologies from both the arts and the humanities together simultaneously. Students will be required to interpret works of African American literature in the first part of the course through both creative responses—whether it be creative writing, visual art, movement, and so on—and critical assessments in the form of oral and/or written analyses, including class discussion. And, while final projects may be primarily creative, primarily scholarly, or a combination of both in nature, any approach will necessarily be integrative in key ways. For instance, having explored creative responses and processes earlier in the course will deepen the students' scholarly perceptions and insights about the texts they study. And, likewise, creative projects will be informed by insights about course materials in relation to their historical, social, and political contexts and the particular theme of the course gained through critical analysis during the first part of the course. In the case of creative final projects, students will be asked to articulate the impetus behind their piece, including models and sources of inspiration; the point of creative and/or critical intervention and its stakes; intended audience; and overall anticipated impact. In so doing, the student will be challenged to employ both methodologies simultaneously. Scholarly final projects will benefit from the experience of having crafted creative responses as alternative forms of interpretative engagement earlier in the semester.

Demonstrate that each Of the two domains will receive approximately equal attention, providing evidence from course topics, assignments, or other course components, and that students will integrate material from both domains.

In the first part of the course, as students are being introduced to key course materials and concepts, weekly assignments will include both critical assessments (such as informal journal responses, small research topics, short formal papers, mini-presentations) and creative interpretations (such as writing a poetic "response" to a text's "call," translating the plot of a novel into a children's book, or setting a poem to music). Students will integrate material from both domains in their final projects, as described above.

Briefly explain the staffing plan. Given that each Inter-Domain course is approved for two Knowledge Domains, it will be taught by an instructor (or instructional team) with appropriate expertise in both domains.

Staffing can be addressed in a number of different ways, depending on available resources. A team of two instructors, one with primary expertise in the study of literature and one with primary expertise in the practice of a particular art form (both with expertise in African American studies relative to their fields) would be one way. A single instructor with significant expertise in both domains, such as a literature and creative writing instructor, or a theatre instructor with expertise in performance as well as playwriting and criticism, would be another option. A third approach could be more collaborative, for instance, an instructor of record with expertise in African American literature working with a committee or team of faculty, all of them members of the AARI organizing committee in a given year, who make visits to the class and work individually with students interested in developing creative projects in the area of their expertise. At Penn State Altoona, we have run the course using a combination of both of the latter two approaches very successfully. For instance, in 2016-17, a theatre instructor with expertise in Black theatre, playwriting, and performance taught the course on the theme of "performance," while an instructor in visual arts on the AARI committee worked independently with a student to create the official logo of the year's AARI. In 2017-18, a literature and creative writing instructor with expertise in African and African American literature will teach the course on the theme "African Diaspora Writers in the U.S.," while additional faculty involved in the AARI will be available to work with students interested in pursuing projects involving theatre, performance, and visual arts. The latter consider this part of their work on the AARI committee, which, in itself, models cross-disciplinary thinking with faculty expertise ranging widely across the humanities, arts and social sciences.

Describe the assessments that will be used to determine students' ability to apply integrative thinking.

Students will be assessed on both the process and product from the creative exercises and the effectiveness of the written and oral interpretations of the literary texts engaged in during the first part of the course. The final projects will be assessed in terms of their quality as well as the extent to which they demonstrate integrative thinking. For instance, creative projects will be informed by a statement of artistic intent, essayed in the project's proposal, and, in final form, accompanying the final work. This statement will include analysis and explication of specific formal or creative techniques in terms of how they contribute to meaning. Scholarly projects will be informed by concepts and insights they have acquired through creative exercises throughout the semester.

Students will also be asked to consider carefully how the creative work they are analyzing will be made available to the audience attending the presentation (reading in one or multiple voices, written excerpt, visual representation, etc.), thereby heightening students' sense of responsibility for bringing texts alive in front of their listeners and involving them in modes of performance and all the attendant issues and concerns that pertain to an artist's work in the public. Another mode of assessment will be the quality of participation in class discussion and workshops in which students offer constructive feedback to one another on developing final projects.

General Education Designation Requirements

Intercultural Requirements:

1. This course focuses on the literary cultural production of a minority group in the United States. Thus it is concerned with issues of social identity relating to ethnicity and race. Students will gain knowledge of how African American literature has been and continues to be an important site for constructing, negotiating, and contesting racial and ethnic identities in the U.S.
2. Students in this course will gain knowledge of various African American cultural practices, customs, and traditions as they developed at various points in history within the particular social contexts engaged by the literary works they study.
3. As this course will introduce students to significant African American texts and authors from a range of historical moments in the development of the African American literary tradition, students will gain an understanding of the important role African American literature has played and continues to play in shaping American letters overall as well as what it means to be "American." As a course tied to a public event whose purpose is to increase awareness of the significance of the cultural achievements of African American literature, this course will require students to both recognize and articulate this knowledge.
4. The study of African American literature necessarily offers insight into intersectionality, the extent to which social identity is shaped not by any one category but by intersecting experiences of socioeconomic status, race, gender, and sexuality. African American writers routinely investigate the discourses and ideologies of race in relation to class, for instance.

As pertains to the question of how the course encourages students to develop understanding of the historical backgrounds, etc. of the group being studied, students will be encouraged to do the following in the following ways:

a. see nations, cultures, and/or social identities not in isolation, but in relation to each other:

African American cultural identities are constructed both in relation to American identity understood as a broad inclusive category—the common history and experiences and values that define us as Americans—and in relation to the very particular experiences that distinguish African Americans as a minority group from mainstream American culture and from other minority groups. African American literature offers profound insight into these relational aspects of cultural identity as texts in the African American literary tradition often deal with them quite directly.

c. increase knowledge of different cultural values, traditions, beliefs and customs:

Literature reflects culture. The plots, themes, characters, conflicts, and issues (content) as well as the styles, structures, and language (form) of works in the African American literary tradition reflect, describe, and communicate various and diverse African American cultural values, traditions, beliefs and customs.

d. appreciate the diversity that exists among persons who share a particular social identity:

The course will emphasize the diversity of African American experiences and identities, as texts and authors within the African American literary tradition are situated differently from one another in terms of region, socioeconomic status, urban or rural setting, gender, and perspective on what it means to be Black in America. The course will also interpret the term "African American" in terms of recent immigrant experiences from Africa and the Caribbean to the U.S., thus departing from any monolithic interpretation of black identity, history, or culture. No matter the particular theme around which a section of the course is organized, these differences will be addressed and explored.

e. increase knowledge about the range of cultural achievements and human conditions through time:

Students will be introduced to major figures and texts in the African American literary tradition, and will have opportunities to further explore these in discussion, small research activities, and major course projects.

f, g & h. recognize and be sensitive to the different ways social identities have been valued; re-examine beliefs and behaviors about social identities (ethnicity, race, class, religion, gender, physical/mental disability, or sexual orientation); & increase understanding of the nature of stereotypes and biases of other cultures and other nations:

Students will be encouraged to explore social constructions surrounding race, ethnicity, class, and gender and recognize how certain social identities have been subjected to stigma or misrepresentation within American society in discussion and journal responses to their reading as well as in their final projects.

Assessment of achievement of the U.S. Educational objectives:

As students will be creating major course projects whose purpose is to communicate to a broader audience significant knowledge about African American literature as it relates to the current year's AARI theme, successful projects will inherently demonstrate achievement of the US educational student objectives.

Campuses That Have Offered () Over The Past 4 Years

semester	AB	AL	BK	BR	BW	CR	DS	ER	FE	GA	GV	HB	HN	HY	LV	MA	NK	PC	SH	SL	UP	WB	WC	WS	XC	XP	XS	YK
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UPLOADED DOCUMENTS FOLLOW:

ENGL/INART/AFAM 297A
African American Read-In Engaged Learning Experience:
This Land: Place, Community, and Belonging
in the African American Experience

Dr. Megan Simpson (American literature and creative writing) Fall 2015
Office: 128F Smith T/R 4:05-5:20
Office hours: T/R 9:30-10:30 and 2:45-3:45 and by appointment classroom: 117 Misciagna
814-949-5288, mbs12@psu.edu

Assisting Faculty (AARI Committee Members)
Dr. Jutta Gsoels-Lorensen (Comparative Literature, Chair, AARI Committee)
Office: 124 Hawthorn
Office Hours: T/R 12:15-1:15, F 10-11 and by appointment
814-949-512, jmg35@psu.edu

Professor Susan Marie Brundage (Visual Arts Studies)
Professor Robin Reese (Theatre)
Dr. Patricia Jabbeh Wesley (African Literature and creative writing)
Dr. Sarah Shear (Social Studies Education)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will allow students to study African American literature, culture, history, and arts in connection with an annual public two-day event held at Penn State Altoona. The African American Read-In (AARI), which celebrates literature and literacy on a given Sunday and Monday during Black History Month, is a national event under the auspices of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE). In 1989, the Black Caucus of the NCTE decided to hold a nation-wide read-in to promote both literacy and a wider appreciation for the under-represented tradition of African American literature. The first AARI was held in 1990, and today attracts more than a million participants in the United States and internationally each year. Penn State Altoona has participated in this tradition since 2002, organized each year by a volunteer team of students, faculty and staff. Each year on our campus, over 300 people attend and/or participate in the AARI, including Altoona Area community members of all ages as well as our campus's students, faculty, and staff. For the first time this year, students at Penn State Altoona have the opportunity to partake *academically* in the AARI through this service learning experience, producing original intellectual and artistic content to be presented publicly at the 2016 AARI.

Students in the course will study materials that relate to this year's theme and then develop this knowledge into various contributions to the AARI in consultation with the professor and other faculty members involved in the AARI. As shapers of the program, class members will also have a voice in designing and planning the program as well as a stake in its overall success. The African American Read-In at Penn State Altoona will be held on Sunday and Monday, February 14th and 15th, 2016.

THEME

All peoples are shaped by their relationship to place and environment. For African Americans, this relationship is rich and complex, and certainly fraught by the historical realities of the transatlantic slave trade (removal from Africa, separation from culture) the farming economy of the American South during and post slavery, and the waves of migration from the rural South to the urban North that so many African

Americans undertook in the first half of the 20th Century. Place and relationship to natural and constructed environments is a central theme, though one not often recognized, in works by Black storytellers, singers, autobiographers, poets, novelists, and short story writers throughout the African American literary tradition. We see this topic explored in oral forms, from the earliest folktales and work songs through rap lyrics, as well as written texts, from slave narratives to 21st century poetry, fiction, and drama. Our focus on this theme in our reading of African American literature might follow any one or more of a number of related paths: representations of the natural world, wilderness, urban communities, environmental justice, migration and immigration, the struggle for land ownership, the role of the natural world in spiritual traditions, meaning of “home,” and so on.

Field Trip Component: WEEKSVILLE

As part of their exploration of the relationship between people and place and environment in the African American experience, students will examine not only literary texts produced by African Americans, but also a particular historical site, one of the first free, land-owning Black communities in the U.S. before the Civil War. Traces of this community are preserved by the recently opened Weeksville Heritage Center in Brooklyn, New York. A two-day field trip in to this site (in early October – see course schedule) will allow students to visit and study Weeksville and to incorporate what they learn into their course projects as well as forge connections with various works of African American literature read in the course.

TEXTS & MATERIALS

Black Nature: Four Centuries of African American Nature Poetry, ed. by Camille Dungy

The Norton Anthology of African American Literature, 2nd ed., ed. by Henry Louis Gates Jr., *et al*

Additional texts will be distributed in class and available on CANVAS and/or on library reserve

Online resources include

The African American Read-In at Penn State Altoona website

<https://sites.psu.edu/aareadin/>

The Weeksville Heritage Center website

<http://www.weeksvillesociety.org/>

COURSE WORK AND GRADING, FALL SEMESTER (2 credits)

Journals and Homework 35%

Various informal writings and small assignments—both creative and analytical in nature—designed to encourage engagement with course content and prepare students for discussion as well as project development will make up this portion of the grade. You may be asked to find and recommend a text that fits our course theme to add to the reading list for the AARI, to complete a small research task, to offer an informal journal response, or to bring a text “to life” for the class through creative/artistic interpretation of your choice (putting a poem to music, writing dialogue for a character from a novel, choreographing movement to accompany a passage of prose, etc.) These are not formal assignments, but will be graded for completeness, clarity, and quality.

Project: 50%

There are many forms this project can take, including, but not limited to, a short lecture, a work of creative writing, a photographic exhibit or short film, a series of drawings, on one-act historical play, a children’s book, a dance or musical performance, an annotated bibliography. This project will incorporate knowledge produced through the student’s reading of African American literature, visit to and study of Weeksville

materials, and classroom discussions. Group projects are subject to faculty approval prior to proposal due date. See assignment sheet for detailed guidelines and requirements.

Participation and Attendance: 15%

Everyone is expected to

- come to class on time and stay in the classroom throughout the class period;
- participate actively in class discussions and small group work;
- have carefully and completely read the assigned works before class time;
- have her own copy of the course text/readings in class each day;
- Meet and communicate regularly with relevant faculty mentor(s) in developing and completing course project.

COURSE WORK AND GRADING, SPRING SEMESTER (1 credit)

Contribution to 2016 AARI Events: 25%

These contributions can be administrative, organizational, in the field of P/R, event staffing, outreach, developing program components for specific audiences, and so on. Specific roles and team assignments will be made at the start of the Spring semester.

Participation and Professionalism: 25%

Expect to be available for one 60-minute meeting once per week throughout the first 5 weeks of the Spring semester in order to prepare for your presentation and/or contribute to the upcoming events on Feb. 14 and 15.

Presentation of Project at AARI event: 50%

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance Policy:

You can't participate if you aren't in class, so attendance does matter. It is expected that all students will be in class except in cases of illness, emergency, or other University-sanctioned cause.

<http://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/42-00-acquisition-of-credit/#42-27>

Class Cancellation Policy

In case of inclement weather, we will be following Penn State Altoona's Weather-Related Closing and Delay Policy (available via the Penn State Altoona web site). If there is no campus-wide closure or delay, this class *will meet* at the regularly scheduled time.

Office Visits

Please come see Dr. Simpson during office hours as often as you'd like this semester. You are welcome to share your concerns and ideas about the course, ask questions, discuss readings, explore ideas for your project, etc. You are also welcome to visit any of the faculty committee members to seek guidance and mentorship in their area of expertise as you explore and develop your project idea.

Email Communication

Dr. Simpson and other faculty involved in the Read-In will frequently communicate important information to you about the course and the read-in events via your Penn State email account through CANVAS. It is expected you will check this account regularly and respond promptly.

Academic Integrity:

The following are excerpts from the Penn State Campus Statement on Academic Integrity (to view the entire statement, go to

<<http://www.altoona.psu.edu/academics/integrity.php>>

<<http://www.altoona.psu.edu/academic/integrity.php>>

“Academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest and responsible manner. Academic integrity is a basic guiding principle for all academic activity at The Pennsylvania State University, and all members of the University community are expected to act in accordance with this principle. Consistent with this expectation, the University’s Code of Conduct states that all students should act with personal integrity, respect other students’ dignity, rights and property, and help create and maintain an environment in which all can succeed through the fruits of their efforts.

“Academic Integrity includes a commitment not to engage in or tolerate acts of falsification, misrepresentation or deception. Such acts of dishonesty violate the fundamental ethical principles of the University community and compromise the worth of work completed by others.”

Plagiarism is the form of academic misrepresentation one must be careful to avoid in English classes. Presenting any idea or language that is not your own—even a short phrase or expression—as if it were, constitutes plagiarism. The most common forms of plagiarism are unintentional, resulting from a student’s unfamiliarity with the conventions of quoting and citing sources. Intentional plagiarism, though rare, is most often the result of anxiety about an assignment or about one’s writing skills, writer’s block, or panic. Whether intentional or not, plagiarism **will not be tolerated**. First offense earns a zero (0) on the assignment (or, in the case of an absence makeup assignment, the absence will still count); second offense earns an “F” in the class, and all offenses will be formally documented and reported. Moral of the story: use your own words, write your own sentences, and properly quote and cite all ideas and language that come from another source, be it print or internet. Talk to me if you’re having trouble with an assignment or need help with your writing. And check with me **before you turn in your work** if you are uncertain about whether or not something constitutes plagiarism. I will be more than happy to help.

GRADING SCALE

(note that final grades of A+, C-, D+, and D- cannot be given at Penn State):

A	94-100%
A-	90-93.9
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	76-79
C	70-75
D	60-69
F	less than 60

The Writing Commons

The Writing Commons (127 Eiche) has peer tutors, known as peer consultants, available to help you with your writing for this or any class. While the consultants' job is not to “fix up” your essay or guarantee a particular grade on a particular assignment, the one-on-one sessions that take place at the Writing Commons will help you become a stronger college writer. Be sure to bring a copy of the assignment and two copies of your draft when you visit the Writing Commons. For hours and to make an appointment: <http://altoona.psu.edu/wc>

Students with Disabilities

Penn State welcomes students with disabilities into its educational programs. If you have a disability-related need for modifications or reasonable accommodations in this course, please contact the Health & Wellness Center, Disability Services, located in the Sheetz Family Health Center. For more information, call (814) 949-5540 or visit the Disability Services web site at www.altoona.psu.edu/healthwellness. Your instructors should be notified as early in the semester as possible regarding the need for modifications or reasonable accommodations.

Counseling and Psychological Services

If you find yourself facing problems affecting your coursework, you are encouraged to talk with an instructor and to seek confidential assistance at the Health and Wellness Center. Contact the Health and Wellness Center at 814-949-5540 to schedule an appointment or schedule through the [Online Student Access](http://www.altoona.psu.edu/healthwellness/appts.php) secure portal: <http://www.altoona.psu.edu/healthwellness/appts.php>

Diversity at Penn State Altoona

Penn State Altoona values and celebrates diversity in all its forms. The educational environment of our college is enriched by the diversity of individuals, groups, and cultures that come together in a spirit of learning. Penn State Altoona is committed to providing equal access to programs, facilities, admission, and employment without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications. Penn State Altoona will not tolerate discrimination against any person because of age, ancestry, color, disability or handicap, national origin, race, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status.

COURSE SCHEDULE: FALL SEMESTER

Note: This schedule and the specific activities and texts described represent just one possible approach to the course, an approach that was successfully implemented at Penn State Altoona in 2015-16 around the theme “This Land: Place, Community, and Belonging.”

Weeks One and Two

Introduction to African American Literature and its place in U.S. culture;
 Overview of forms and themes in their historical, social, political, and aesthetic contexts;
 Introduction to the history of the African American Read-In on a national/international level (NCIE/Black Caucus); Introduction to upcoming local AARI this coming February: purpose, goals, ideas for programming.

Readings: (relationship to place in the literature of slavery and reconstruction)

Excerpts from Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Henry Bibb, excerpts

Charles Chesnutt, “The Gophered Grapevine”

Excerpts from David Bradley, *The Chaneyville Incident*
 Excerpts from Morrison, *Beloved*
 Alice Walker, "The Flowers"
 Additional poems by Sterling Brown
 Excerpts from various texts, W.E.B. DuBois

Assignments:

Journal exploring your relationship to a significant place

Weeks Three and Four

Exploring relationship to place in African American literature (natural and constructed landscapes, community, belonging);
 Classroom visits from faculty AARI committee members in other disciplines;
 Library instruction;
 Introduction to Weeksville site (re: upcoming field trip)
 Explore and discuss possible candidates to invite to campus for the 2016 AARI as Featured Author and Keynote Presenter; issue invitations.

Readings:

Langston Hughes, "The Negro Speaks of Rivers"
 Excerpts from Eddie Harris, *Mississippi Solo*
 Etheridge Knight, "The Idea of Ancestry"
 Yusef Komunyakaa, "Sunday Afternoons"
 Rita Dove, "Three Days of Forest . . ."
 Evelyn White, "Black Women & Wilderness"
 Bell hooks, "Touching the Earth"
 Natasha Trethaway, "Liturgy"
 Alice Walker, "Sorrow Home"
 Judith Wellman, *Brooklyn's Promised Land: The Free Black Community of Weeksville, New York*

Assignments:

Small Research Presentation on history of the Weeksville Community;
 Reading Recommendation: recommend a selection from one of the reserve texts or from the library holdings in general that fits (or expands or contributes to) the course theme;
 Creative response to / interpretation of reading of choice

Weeks Five and Six

Further study of texts relevant to theme, exploring relationship to place in African American literature (urban environments);
 Weeksville field trip (no class on Thursday; depart Friday morning, return Sunday evening).

Readings:

Mari Evans, "Vive Noir"
 G. E. Patterson, "The Natural World"
 Amiri Baraka, "Return of the Native"
 Wanda Coleman, selected poems
 Langston Hughes, "Theme for English B"
 Julie Patton, poetry selections

Ann Petry, *The Street* (excerpts)
 Nikki Giovanni, "For Sandra"
 Excerpts from Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man*
 NWA, lyrics

Assignments:

Journal: exploring project ideas;
 Reading Recommendation: recommend a selection from one of the reserve texts or library holdings in general that fits (or expands or contributes to) the course theme
 Creative response to / interpretation of reading of choice

Weeks Seven and Eight:

Weeksville field trip debriefing;
 Further study of texts related to theme;
 Project development

Readings:

Toni Cade Bambara, "Blues Ain't no Mockin Bird"
 August Wilson, *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*
 Marvin Gaye "The Ecology"
 Selected poetry by Ross Gay, Patricia Spears Jones, Clarence Major, Marilyn Nelson, Margaret Walker

Assignments:

Journal: reflections on Weeksville visit;
 Creative response to / interpretation of reading of choice;
 Brief written critical analysis: exploring connections among course texts;
 Preliminary project idea (in writing and presented to class)

Weeks Nine and Ten (no regular class meetings in week 9; no Thursday class in week 10)

Project proposal due; Individual conferences; Revised Proposal due

Readings:

Works of poet Evie Shockley, the Featured Author of the 2016 African American Read-In at Penn State Altoona.

Week Eleven and Twelve (No regular class meetings on Thursdays)

Independent and group work on developing projects

Readings:

Individual and small group reading of texts relevant to project, by arrangement with instructor

Assignments:

Draft of project due week Twelve

Weeks Thirteen and Fourteen (No regular class meetings on Thursdays)

Workshop and feedback on project drafts

Week Fifteen

Project Presentations / Dress Rehearsals / constructive feedback from classmates and instructor(s)

Finals Week (No final exam)

Final touches on project if/as needed, working individually with instructor

COURSE SCHEDULE: SPRING SEMESTER

Regular AARI Committee meetings will be held on Thursdays from 12:10-1:10. Attendance is mandatory.

Week One

Establish team and individual committee assignments to fill positions in public relations (creating and distributing flyers, classroom visits, social media outreach, photographer/videographer, etc.), children's program development, master or mistress of ceremonies, reading list and book reserves, scheduling, and so on.

Weeks Two-Four

Preparation and planning for AARI in assigned teams; teams report progress, address problems and implement solutions at weekly meetings; students work with appropriate faculty outside of committee meetings according to their specific roles.

Week Five

Finalize and confirm program details, dress rehearsal.

February 14 & 15 (Sunday and Monday following week 5): African American Read-In Events

All students will present their final projects at the Sunday and/or Monday AARI

Sunday Community Dinner Program (with children's activity component, student performances and presentations, readings by community members);

Monday Marathon (open mic and scheduled special features including student performances & presentations);

Keynote Presentation: Elizabeth Kennedy, Landscape Architect (Monday at noon)

Featured Author: Evie Shockley, Poet (Monday evening following the Monday Marathon)