

Department of English & Writing Studies

**English 4470F (001)**  
**Seminar in American Literature: The Harlem Renaissance**  
Fall 2024

**Instructor:** Prof. Alyssa MacLean

**Course format:** in-person, synchronous

**Prerequisites:** 1.0 from English 3000-3999 or permission of the Department.

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Course Description

This course will explore the extraordinary creativity, improvisation, and innovation of the period known as the Harlem Renaissance. Read in its most static sense, the term “Harlem Renaissance” invokes a Black cultural movement emerging in a fixed time and place when Black artistic culture was “reborn” in a single district of New York City. However, we will be using the term to refer more broadly to a period of Black cultural production, improvisation, and conversation, one which developed from the late 1910s to the 1940s

**Learning Objectives:**

By the end of the course, successful students will be able to:

Analyze key texts in Harlem Renaissance literature, explain their significance, and appreciate their characteristics and qualities

Generate original, incisive readings of assigned works in oral and written assignments

Read and understand theoretical and critical works about Harlem Renaissance literature and culture; summarize and cite literary scholarship responsibly; use discussions of secondary sources to generate new interpretations of texts

Express ideas clearly using appropriate textual evidence, literary terms, scholarly criticism, theoretical concepts, historical contexts, and insights from class discussions

Design and execute a research project: formulate a research question, identify research gaps, analyze and summarize scholarship, and offer original readings of texts

Use specialized research methods such as library databases to conduct research

Communicate effectively and respond constructively to peers in multiple contexts, including discussions, papers, and seminars. C

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