Pan African Studies 113B
Approaches to University Writing
Pan African Studies Department
California State University, Northridge
Northridge, California

Emma Stone, Octavia Spencer and Viola Davis are shown here in scene from the critically-acclaimed, award winning motion picture *The Help* based upon the novel by Kathryn Stockett.

Ticket # 17908
Instructor: Johnie Scott, M.A., M.F.A.

Days/Time: MW, 11:00am – 12:15pm
Instructor Rank: Associate Professor

Meeting Place: Sierra Hall South 234
Office Location: Santa Susanna 210

Units/GE Requirements: 3 Units, GE Basic Subjects
Office Hours: MW, 3:00pm-4:30pm

Email Address: professorscottpas@gmail.com or by appointment
Course Description:

Prerequisites: EPT score of 120 or higher. Expository prose writing with a focus on both content and form. Specific emphases shall include the exercise of logical thought and clear expression, the development of effective organizational strategies, and the appropriate gathering and utilization of evidence. Includes instruction on diction, syntax, and grammar, as well as the elements of prose style. Students receive credit for only 1 course chosen from AAS, CAS, CHS, ENGL, and PAS 113. Individual tutoring is available through the Pan African Studies Lab or Learning Resource Center.

Textbook Requirements:

3. Orwell, George, Animal Farm, http://www.george-orwell.org/Animal_Farm/index.html, and

Pan African Studies Student Learning Objectives:

As a General Education course, there are six (6) defined SLOs for appropriate course title. Those generic SLOs are embedded in the following Pan African Studies Measurable Student Learning Outcomes:

SLO #1: Gain an understanding of the political, social-historical and cultural perspectives of the African American Experience in Africa and the African Diaspora.

- Analyze and compare perspective, meaning, and style in different texts, including those that reflect multicultural images and voices;

- Construct a theme or thesis and organize and develop a substantial, balanced and convincing defense of it in a voice, tone, language, and format (e.g., essay autobiography, report, editorial, case study, inquiry, and research) appropriate to the purpose of the writing;

- Use logical support, including informed opinion and fact, as well as their interpretations, to develop ideas, avoiding fallacies, biased language, and inappropriate tone;
SLO#2: Gain broad knowledge of the cultural, political and historical contexts in which the African and African American Experience took place.

- Analyze and compare perspective, meaning, and style in different texts, including those that reflect multicultural images and voices;

- Construct a theme or thesis and organize and develop a substantial, balanced and convincing defense of it in a voice, tone, language, and format (e.g., essay autobiography, report, editorial, case study, inquiry, and research) appropriate to the purpose of the writing;

- Use logical support, including informed opinion and fact, as well as their interpretations, to develop ideas, avoiding fallacies, biased language, and inappropriate tone;

SLO#3: Develop appropriate skills in research design and methodology used to examine the various interdisciplinary areas of the Pan African Studies Department curriculum.

- Demonstrate satisfactory competence in the conventions of Edited American English and the elements of presentation (including layout, format, and printing);

- Select and incorporate ideas derived from a variety of sources, such as library electronic and print resources, books, journals, the Internet, and interviews, and document them responsibly and correctly;

Apply a variety of strategies for planning, outlining, drafting, revising and editing

Course Requirements:

The final course grade is based upon that body of work – otherwise known as the Student Portfolio – developed by the student as a direct result of the class. That Portfolio has five components, each representing 20 percent of the course grade. These components are each directly linked to the aforementioned SLOs stated for Writing courses. Under each component may be found specific course requirements that constitute primary grade factors averaged together in reaching the cumulative grade point average for the student. Those five components are as follows:

1. The Writing Portfolio Assessment. The Portfolio is comprised of a reflective essay, one timed essay examination (i.e., coming from the Departmental Midterm or Common Essay Exams), two of the three assigned modes of discourse chosen by the student with all revisions. Note that the Writing Assignments of the Term Paper (i.e., the Critical Argumentative Analysis) can be included at the instructor’s discretion.

- Timed Essay Examinations: There are four timed essay examinations of 50 minutes each given in this course – these being the Pre-Semester, Midterm, Departmental Common and Self-Reflective Essays. The student is to acquire large Blue Books (i.e., 8½“x11”) in order to take these examinations. The Midterm and Departmental Common Essay are averaged together as one component of the final course grade average. The Self-
Reflective Essay is graded separately. It is included in the Writing Portfolio as that document's required Reflective essay. **No student shall receive a grade of "C" or higher in this course who misses and fails to makeup the Midterm Essay, the Departmental Common Essay, or the Self-Reflective Essay Exam. (No exceptions!)**

- **Writing Topics:** Students in this class will write and submit a total of three (3) essays within the modes of discourse - the personal narrative, evaluative and the argumentative. These papers will be written in standard manuscript format, typewritten, double-spaced with cover pages. These papers will be rewritten and revised as deemed necessary by the course instructor. The student chooses from either the Personal Narrative, the Evaluative Essay or the Argumentative with the inclusion of two into the Writing Portfolio to be submitted for assessment by Writing Program faculty.

- **Project Text (i.e., the Research Paper):** This will be based upon either the student's reading and research of the assigned novel and the issues raised therein by its author or a research topic approved by the course instructor. Project Text consists of the student development of a formal paper of critical analysis and research written according to standard manuscript format. This paper will combine the evaluative, analytical and argumentative modes of discourse. As the capstone work for this “Approaches to University Writing” class, the paper can be no less than 2,500 typewritten, double-spaced words (i.e., eight pages) with no less than fifteen (15) formal citations that include six (6) quotes drawn from no less than three (3) references other than the assigned reading. The Term Paper must have a “Works Cited” section done according to Modern Language Association guidelines. It is to be submitted via email as a Microsoft Word attachment. **Due as noted in the course schedule, no student shall receive a grade of "B" or higher in this class who fails to submit this paper – no exceptions!**

2. **Examinations.** This is the second of the five components used in grading the class. The exams consist of the Midterm Examination and Self-Reflective Examination with these averaged together. The examinations are based directly upon the materials used in the class to include any homework assignments, lectures, group presentations, assigned readings or directed notes from the instructor. This set of examinations is factored directly as 20 percent of the final course grade.

3. **Homework:** The third component in this course is that of the assigned homework. The PAS 113B homework covers a number of areas ranging from time and study area management, listening and note-taking skills to vocabulary, punctuation and sentence skills. As with the other components, this grading factor counts or 20 percent of the final course grade. **To qualify for an honor grade in this class of "B" or higher, the student must achieve a grade average of at least 2.3 on the homework – No exceptions!**

4. **Academic Information Competency.** The fastest-growing dimension of academic growth and innovation in the last two decades involves the Internet and wireless technology. From laptop computers to cell phones equipped word processing and email to “smart” classrooms to video conferencing and “threaded” web-based discussion groups, the reach of the Information Age can be seen and felt. In the second semester of the course, the 113B student makes sure usage
of the technology in emailing homework and writing assignments, doing web-based research and mastering the University’s Moodle portal for classroom discussions. This is ongoing, being in addition to the Project Medium collaboration leading off the spring semester. This fourth component of the 113B Approaches to University Writing also carries a weight of 20% of the final course grade primarily derived from the Let’s Write Discussion Forums.

**Write Time (i.e., “Moodle”) Discussion Forums:** The class has Internet Discussion Forums using Moodle in which students participate in a dialogue – *Write Time* – wherein they made a series of at least three (3) postings per discussion topic. There are a total of four (4) Let’s Write forums for the semester. The first posting is the student’s response to a question developed and directed by the course instructor to the entire class. The remaining two postings are done by the student indirect response to the comments made by two (2) classmates on the same *Write Time* Discussion Forum Prompt. Students must make the three postings in order to qualify for the maximum points, with each *Write Time* Forum valued on the 4.0 grade scale and then, finally, averaged together at the end of the term. These *Write Time* Discussion Forums shall be open on average for a stated period of 3-4 weeks during which time the student makes his/her posting. No postings shall count towards the student grade that are made after the *Write Time* Forum has been closed (i.e., whether it is 30 minutes afterwards or one week later, in either instance the student shall have failed to post during the appropriate time period.). *Write Time* constitutes the fourth basic course requirement;

5. **Group Collaborations.** The fifth and final grading component measures the student’s ability to work with others in researching, creating and then making formal group presentations on assigned topics. This component calls not only for application of research and written communication skills. It also calls for, enhances and emphasizes those interpersonal communication skills so vital to academic and professional discourse. In this 113B course, this component is centered upon Collaborative Projects that are drawn from the Project Medium and Project Space components of the first two Progressions by the student. In the presentation, the student’s responsibility for a formalized group discussion of the specific creative production and a written discourse (i.e., writing assignment) based directly upon that product. The Presentations are averaged together and, as such, represent 20 percent of the final course grade.

a. **Project Medium:** This assignment is made first week of the term and is to be finalized and completed by the fifth week. The specific assignment finds the student, as part of a group, developing competency with the Internet in developing an actual blog dealing with a scholarly Afrocentric issue or topic approved by course instructor or Internet media-based product with research that combines text, photographs, streaming video, et al. No student may expect a grade of “B” or higher who fails to participate in these web-based creative productions which are formal group presentations of 25-30 minutes, with study guides and discussion of assigned topics being made to the class.

b. **Project Space:** This assignment is made sixth week of the term and is to be finalized and completed by the tenth week. The specific assignment finds the student, as part of a group, doing formal research in the field of how “space” is utilized in society (e.g., housing, parks,
malls, supermarkets, museums) by course instructor with investigation that combines field research with secondary research (e.g., articles) with result being a formal group presentation of 25-30 minutes that highlights outcomes of the field research. No student may expect a grade of “B” or higher who fails to actively participate.

6. **Earned Bonus Points.** Bonus points are added to the basic grade point average derived from the five “basic” grade factors and then divided by that same number (i.e., 5) in reaching the “cumulative” grade point average (GPA) for the course. Those “bonus” considerations are given according to the instructor’s discretion but would include:

**Attendance.** With regards to classroom attendance, the student who achieves a record of **perfect attendance for the semester** (i.e., no absences or tardies) will automatically receive “Bonus” points. The student with no absences and no more than two (2) “Tardies” will be awarded .25 bonus points at semester’s end. It is the student’s responsibility to account for any and all absences with verifiable, documented evidence regarding the same;

**Writing Assignment Revisions.** Students will earn bonuses for utilizing the University 62 SI Co-Leaders with regards, specifically, to revisions of the Pre-Semester and Midterm Examinations. The same holds true for those formal writing assignments (i.e., the three assigned papers) in the class. To merit these bonuses, the students must bring signature verification of the same from either one of the Writing Centers with revisions due as noted by the course instructor. The revisions are especially important as they are key factors in the Portfolio Assessments done at the end of the semester by the full Writing Program faculty.

**Participation.** Students can earn bonuses for exceptional in-class performance on specific course material (i.e., homework, classroom lectures, group presentations, et al) and “challenges” from the course instructor; and lastly,

**Grading Requirements:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance and Participation</th>
<th>Per Class Meeting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moodle “Write Time”</td>
<td>4 Assignments as Topics to be Determined by Instructor 4 Postings + 8 Peer Responses 2,000 Word Equivalency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework</td>
<td>Assignments w/ readings based upon Progressions 1-3, Exercises 1-3 in each Progression (as determined by instructor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Assignments</td>
<td>3 Assignments (Problem-Solution, Evaluative and Assertion-with-Evidence linked directly to Progressions 1-3, and the Capstone Paper)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Portfolio**
Includes Departmental Common and Self Reflective Essay
Examinations and any two formal writing assignments to include revisions other than the Capstone Paper drawn from the Progressions 1-3.

**Policy on Academic Dishonesty:**

Each and every student is expected to respect, observe and practice the University Standards for Student Conduct which explicitly states that, “Students are expected to be good citizens and to engage in responsible behaviors that reflect upon their university, to be civil to one another and to others in the campus community, and to contribute positively to student and university life.” Students are especially reminded of the following as it pertains to Unacceptable Student Behaviors subject to disciplinary sanctions under Dishonesty: “Cheating, plagiarism, or other forms of academic dishonesty that are intended to gain unfair academic advantage.” (26) It is the expectation that academic integrity applies to any and all work submitted under a student’s name, e.g., Homework, Writing Assignments, examinations, etcetera.

**Class Schedule**

Week 1-5 (January 23rd – February 25th)

**PROGRESSION ONE [READING AND RESPONDING TO TEXTS]**

Students will engage in a critical conversation that will require analysis and close reading of assigned texts. The assigned course reader shall be the primary book used by the student in association with those readings derived from *The Writer’s World with Readings/Second Edition*.

**Exercise One (with assigned readings)**

- Students will summarize and/or reconstruct an assigned reading. (e.g., “Types of Rioters” by David Locher, pg. 537; “My African Childhood” by David Sedans, pg. 546; and “Brands R Us” by Stephen Garey, pg. 564, from *The Writer’s World/Second Edition*).
- The purpose of this exercise is to engage students in an exploration of meaning (sometimes multiple meanings) in a text. This is done by choosing one (1) of the Writing Topics that follow each to write about. Although they are to read all three selections, students choose only one (1) topic to write about.
- Students will be required to directly cite the text as evidence of meaning.
- The completed exploration/summary/reconstruction should be at least 100 words in length and engage in MLA citation format, as well as include a works cited page.

**Exercise Two (with assigned readings)**

- The completed letter will be 2-3 pages in length (600-900 words), typed, double-spaced.
• The final letter will bring up questions of how an author presents ideas in a piece of writing and how the meaning is supported. The student will not merely write an approval or disapproval letter to an author. Rather, the student will thoughtfully analyze the essay and respond to the ideas presented by the author.

Exercise Three (with assigned readings)

• Students will select a second assigned reading in conversation with the first assigned reading (from exercises one and two above).
• Students will compose a letter to a friend or family member that explains/describes the connection between the two selected essays. The connection between the two essays must be clearly supported with direct references to both essays.
• The completed letter will be 2-3 pages in length (600-900 words), typed, double-spaced.

Instructions for Essay One: Project Medium (The Persuasion Essay)

• Develop a Web Medium-based creative production developed from assigned readings for Progression One that calls for the development of a Blog series with an Afrocentric approach based on topic or issue approved by the course instructor. This calls for student participant to maintain logs of the Project Development to be used later in drafting of the project Medium paper.
• Consider the larger implications and meanings of the idea.
• This essay will further analyze the larger implications of the idea (topic) and require students to engage in further reading and research.
• Project Medium is to result in a formal Group Presentation as well as a paper which is modeled on the Persuasion mode of discourse.
• 5-page requirement (1,000 words).
• MLA documentation or APA documentation.
• Works Cited page, and parenthetical documentation as needed.

Essay One, Draft One = Peer Review

Essay One, Draft Two = Instructor Review

Write Time#1 (Weeks 2-4)

Descriptor: PROJECT MEDIUM (OPTION ONE)

Students will design a blog (or other “medium-centric” site – a journal, a webpage, a newspaper) site and explore multi-media composition.

Medium sites can include images, video, animation (static and/or moving) that will illustrate the content and themes of medium entries. Each medium entry will be academic in content and provide students an alternative space in which to practice writing and revision.
Project Medium can be integrated as a continuation of *Write Time*.

Project Medium should culminate in at least 2,100 words and must engage in draft (revision) processing. (Due as of the start of Week 6, via email by day and time as noted by course instructor)

**Weeks 6-10 (February 27th – March 30th)**

**PROGRESSION TWO [CRITICAL ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION]**

Students will develop an idea/theme/issue/topic through the use of film and written text.

**Exercise One (with assigned readings)**

- Progressing from reading and analyzing texts, students will create a word-picture of a visual object (painting, sculpture, photography) and observe/describe what they see that is new/original (select from “Nature Returns to the Cities” by John Roach, pg. 584; “The Untranslatable Word ‘Macho’” by Rose del Castillo Gullbault, pg 587 and “Guy” by Maya Angelou, pg. 598, from *The Writer’s World/Second Edition*).
- Students will compose a 100-word description of their object.

**Exercise Two (with assigned readings)**

- Students will compose a scene in which the object, the student, and an outside idea are connected (select reading from “Living Environments” by Avi Friedman, pg. 553 and “‘The Rich Resonance of Small Talk’” by Roxanne Robens, pg. 567 from *The Writer’s World/Second Edition*).
- The completed composition will reflect the writer’s (student’s) attitude towards the object and the idea it generates.
- The completed composition will be at least 3 double-spaced pages (900 words).

**Exercise Three (with assigned readings)**

- Utilizing the materials collected in previous readings and writings, students will articulate relevance between materials collected in previous readings and an idea.
- Using three pieces of evidence (objects, written texts, reading assignments), students will compose a new scene that conveys to the reader the relationship between the student’s ideas and the three pieces of evidence.
- The completed composition will be at least 3 double-spaced pages (900 words), MLA documentation or APA documentation, and a Works Cited page.

**Instructions for Essay Two: (i.e., The Evaluative Essay format)**

- Student to have completed reading Kathryn Stockett’s *The Help* and to have seen the motion picture based upon the same. Consider the best way to use evidence to support your idea while clearly articulating the larger implications of your idea to your reader.
- Evidence provides the basis of this composition – which is to explore the meaning behind ideas while using comparison and contrast as modes of development.
• The completed composition will be between 4-6 double-spaced pages (1,200 – 1,800 words), MLA documentation.

• Essay Two, Draft One = Peer Review

Essay Two, Draft Two = Instructor Review

• Write Time #2 (Weeks 5-8)

• Write Time #3 (Weeks 9-12)

• Midterm Examinations: Essay and Objective (Weeks 8-9)

Descriptor: PROJECT SPACE (OPTION TWO)

• This project will analyze the diagramming of space. Space can be defined as urban spaces, community spaces, personal spaces, campus spaces, geographical spaces. This analysis will take into consideration race, social economic class, geographic and political themes. One example of this would be study of homelessness in Black America wherein students would go to downtown Los Angeles, visiting and working with homeless shelters. Reading for this selection would include, for example, The Soloist by Steve Lopez.

• This project will result in an academic essay as well as providing students the opportunity to present their findings in a class presentation. This assignment can be presented as a group project (to be determined by instructor).

• Project Space provides an opportunity for students to gather research material through self-guided field trips (analyzing "space" as it is themed in the final product).

• Project Space should culminate in at least 2,100 words and must engage in draft (revision) processing. (Due as of Monday, Week 14, via email by 10:00am)

Weeks 11-17 (April 2nd – May 18th)

Note: Spring Break is from Monday, April 2nd – Sunday, April 7th. The campus will be closed with no classes being held during that time. Instruction will resumes starting Monday, April 9th, 2012.

PROGRESSION THREE [ARGUMENT WITH RESEARCH]
Progression Three will culminate in the composition of an assertive essay leading directly to Project Text. Students are to consider the outcome of this 3rd Progression, i.e., the Assertin-with-Evidence essay, as an engagement with the positions and contributions of other scholars or authorities on the topic selected.

**Exercise One (with assigned readings)**

- Read assigned argumentative readings. Summarize the author’s argument in your own words. Define the writer’s position and the claims made to support the argument. Playing devil’s advocate, analyze the quality of the supporting claims and evidence.
- Students will summarize findings (in relation to the validity and quality of the argument) in 2 to 3 double-spaced pages (600-900 words). MLA documentation will be required.

**Exercise Two (with assigned readings)**

- Outline the opposing claims to the position of the writer’s argument in exercise one. Create a fictional dialogue between 2 or more authors. Develop each claim (through dialogue).
- The dialogue text must be three double-spaced pages (900 words).

**Exercise Three (with assigned readings)**

- Compose an argumentative proposal to your instructor.
- Present the main claim(s).
- Present an opposing claim(s).
- Analyze potential problems with the claim(s).
- Present your claim.
- Present the claims of others (scholars, authorities).

**Instructions for Essay Three: (The Assertion-with-Evidence Essay based upon the assigned course reader)**

- Compose a well-informed, well researched, critically supported, fair, and logical argumentative essay based upon the assigned course reader (i.e., *Animal Farm* by George Orwell).
- Utilize exercise 3 as a guide.
- Reflect on the larger implications of your argument and substantiate the claims in relationship with the larger implications.
- The final composition will be 4 to 6 double-spaced (1,200 – 1,800 words), MLA format and a Works Cited page (Due as noted by the course instructor)

**Essay Three, Draft One = Peer Review**

**Essay Three, Draft Two = Peer Review**

- Final Write Time #4 (Weeks 13-15)
PROJECT TEXT (i.e., the Research Paper)

The Project Text Essay must be 7 double-spaced pages (2,100 words).

Students will begin following Midterms (drafting, researching, developing a working thesis, revisioning, peer workshopping) in gaining course instructor’s approval of topic; shall continue throughout the latter half of the semester.

Descriptor: ROJECT TEXT (The Capstone Paper)

This project will focus on those issues surfacing in the assigned course reader (i.e., The Help by Kathryn Stockett) It will require students to analyze and interpret the text through close readings, references, and research on focal issues. Text is defined by, music, images, poetry, and so forth. Instructors will define “text” as appropriate for the themes found in the memoir. Primary reading for this selection will be the assigned course reader supplemented by articles, essays, films that correlates to the SLOs of the Pan African Studies Department.

Project Text will allow students to explore the larger implications of the subject of analysis (larger implications as defined and practiced in the Progression exercises).

Project Text will also allow students to move comprehensively and critically into the final research paper (with an argumentative approach).

Project Text should culminate in at least 2,100 words and must engage in draft (revision) processing. This paper is due as noted by the course instructor.

SELF-REFLECTIVE ESSAY

- The reflective essay will be timed and written in a green book in class to reflect the following:
  - What does your portfolio say about what you have learned this term?
  - How might you apply what you have learned to your work in other courses?
  - What do you need to work on next in your writing?
  - Would you recommend this course to others? Why or why not?
  - This is to be administered as of Wednesday, Week 14

Week 17 (The Research Paper is Submitted via Turnitin.com and due as noted by the course instructor)

- There is no Final Examination in the Writing Program. Instead, each student has a Portfolio Conference with the course instructor during which they learn the results of the Holistic Portfolio Reading where their individual Portfolio is concerned and their grade status in the class prior to grading of the final class assignment, that being the Research Paper, as well as for the University 62 lab cohort)