Course Description: Welcome to a literary focus on issues of difference, power, and discrimination. We’ll explore writers (many already familiar to you) who represent ethnic minorities within the United States. Traditionally, these voices have not been well represented in mainstream literature. Why? What are the standards for valuing literature? Who gets to decide which works to treasure? And why does it take us so long to recognize and celebrate certain minority voices? Perhaps in part discrimination is the result of silent and unexamined beliefs about other groups, powerful beliefs which are encoded in the way we have traditionally studied literature. In this course, as responsible scholars and citizens, we’ll listen for culture and traditions as we study some of our finest modern American literary voices. Our focus will be to understand, experience, and celebrate our differences.

Learning Outcomes: All literature courses at LBCC strive to achieve common goals. When you successfully complete ENG220, you should be able to:

- Recognize how literature helps in understanding the human condition. Increase your understanding of how American minority and immigrant groups experience difference, power, and discrimination.
  - Understand the history and culture of minority groups within the United States, including some of the causes and effects of discrimination.
  - Appreciate major minority authors.
  - Value a wide range of experiences & issues related to the minority experience in the US.
- Interpret literature through critical reading.
- Demonstrate how literature enhances personal awareness and creativity.
  - Examine your own experience of being different, “outside” the mainstream, and alienated, as well as your own experience of being “inside” the mainstream, privileged, and integrated.
- Write and speak confidently about your own and others’ ideas.

A Note on Writing and Reading Skills: Succeeding in this class will require that you have college-level writing and reading skills (write at the WR121 level). If you have not yet taken WR121 (or aren’t taking it this term), please see me.

Campus Resources
- Conferences with your instructor – please visit with me early and often throughout the term.
- LBCC Library (917-4638)
- Diversity Achievement Center
- Writing Center and OWL (Online Writing Lab)
ENG220 The Work We’ll do / assignments/ assessment

**Attendance/Discussion Participation (40 points):** Please commit to these goals from the beginning: 1) to attend class regularly, 2) to arrive on time, prepared, and feeling confident, enthusiastic, and generous to share your thoughts and ideas.

More than three absences will negatively affect your final grade. If you miss a class, you are responsible for finding out from a classmate what you missed. It is also your responsibility to access the handouts on our Moodle site so that you can be prepared for the next class. Keep up with the readings so that you can be an involved, active member of our class discussions. **Prepare for class** by reading the assignment carefully, using all of your critical reading and thinking strategies – annotate, look up words and references that you don’t understand, identify important passages you’d like to discuss with us in class. The *Weekly Reading and Writing* assignment handouts will help you focus your readings and prepare for class. Also, always keep in mind the *Essay One* and *Essay Two* guidelines.

**Classroom Etiquette:** Please arrive on time and plan to stay from 2:00 – 3:20 (please don’t leave in the middle of our discussions). Please remember to turn off your cell phones before class. I heartily encourage your active note-taking during our discussions; if this must be on a laptop, so be it, but if you’re using a laptop for note-taking, please sit in the back so that you don’t distract others. During class time, focus your attention on our discussion of the readings, the themes we’re exploring, and the ways in which you can contribute to our active discussion. Please don’t create or contribute to “sidebar discussions” which distract and insult the rest of us.

**Weekly Writings (60 points / 6 of your choice @ 10 points each, due on Wednesdays)**

Each week I’ll give you an ENG220 *Weekly Reading and Writing* handout. The reading is required each week, but the writing is only required six times, i.e. you’ll choose six times from the ten weekly possibilities to write. In your writings, you’ll compose responses to questions and discussions about our readings. This informal writing will give you the opportunity to discover, analyze, and explain what you think and how you feel about the issues and readings. These writings, which are designed for you to reflect on and synthesize what you are learning, will lead you toward your Formal Essays and provide you with your own writing as foundation. **(Full credit):** turned in on time, represents clear understanding and critical thinking, well developed. **(Partial credit):** not turned in on time, or does not represent a clear understanding or clear critical thinking, or is not well developed. Format: one full page [500 words], include word count in header, word-processed, single-spaced.)

**Essay One Native American Tradition (50 points)**

**Essay Two African-American and Latin-American Literary Tradition (70 points)**

**One History Group Presentation (30 points) see History Presentation Guidelines OR**

**Enrichment Events (two event write-ups at 15 points each = 30 points)** Choose your own events, on or off campus, related to American Minority Lit class concepts or artists (e.g. speakers, celebrations, exhibitions) and write a summary and response. Format for both: one full page [500 words], include word count in header, word-processed, single-spaced.

“In the polyglot we call America, literature has to include all voices. Nothing else makes sense.”

Lucille Clifton