Many African American novels take place in New York City and have been written by authors who have lived within the metropolis. A hub of African American culture from the early twentieth century onward, New York serves more than a backdrop for these narratives. This seminar will explore ways in which cityscapes (spaces, places, and cultures) inform the novels and shape their meanings: ideologically, conceptually, and metaphorically.

Course Requirements and Grade Breakdown
Attendance is mandatory and will be taken regularly. Be punctual. Absence of more than 4 classes will jeopardize the student's status in the class.

* Active Participation: 35%
  a. You must come prepared = complete all the reading assignments and prepare a critical question that emerges from the readings.
  b. Each student will be asked to launch a class discussion; the theme/question/idea will be pre-circulated on-line by the student on the evening before class.
  c. Each student must have the reading material accessible during class – either in electronic or printed format.

* 3 Written responses (one page): 3 X 5 = 15%
  The responses will include one theoretical response (due by November 12), one close reading of a literary text (due by December 20), and one application of theory to text (due by January 14).

* Seminar paper: 50%
  Length: 4500 words = 18 pages
  Minimum 6 substantial secondary sources
  Due: May 6, 2018
Introduction & Theoretical Grounding


Claude McKay, Home to Harlem (1928)

Harlem Renaissance:
McKay, Claude, Harlem: Negro Metropolis (1940). Excerpts.


Home to Harlem:


Ann Petry, *The Street* (1946)


Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man* (1952)


James Baldwin, *Go Tell It on the Mountain* (1953)


Langston Hughes and Roy DeCarava, *The Sweet Flypaper of Life* (1955)


Toni Morrison – *Jazz* (1992)


Colson Whitehead – *Zone One* (2011)


https://www.academia.edu/31063164/Zombies_the_Uncanny_and_the_City_Colson_Whiteheads_Zone_One

**Schedule:**

October 22 – Intro – The City and its Spaces I

October 25 – Intro – The City and its Spaces II

October 29 – Intro – The City of Refuge: Harlem Renaissance

November 1 – McKay

November 5 – McKay

November 8 – McKay

November 12 – WWII, The Emerging Ghetto, Harlem Riot 1943

November 15 – Petry

November 19 – Petry

November 22 – Petry

November 26 – Hughes/DeCarava

November 29 – Ellison – Prologue, Chapter 7 (journey north), 10 (Liberty Paints), 13 (Yams & Eviction), 14 (Enter the Brotherhood)

December 3 – Ellison – chapters 15 (Jolly Nigger Bank), 16 (Rally), 17-19

December 6 – Ellison – Chapters 20 (Sambo Dolls & Clifton), 21 (funeral) -25 (Harlem Riot) & Epilogue

December 10 – Interlude: Film TBA

December 13 – Baldwin

December 17 – Hanukah Vacation

December 20 – Baldwin
December 24 – Baldwin

December 27 – Interlude: Black Arts

December 31 – Morrison

January 3 – Morrison

January 7 – Morrison

January 10 – Interlude: Hip Hop

January 14 – Whitehead

January 17 – Whitehead

January 21 – Whitehead

* The Syllabus is Subject to Change