

# Examine Black American Literature in ENG 254

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In the 402 years following European colonization and the enslavement of Africans, the dominant literary voice in America has been extremely homogeneous. With the inception of Black literature, American literary spaces have benefited from a more diverse and intersectional perspective of life in the United States of America. At PVCC, Survey of African American Literature II (ENG 254) shines light on the multiplicity of Black literature.

Taught by Associate Professor of English Dr. Justin Wert, the course surveys Black-American literary works ranging from the colonial period to the present. Students can expect to read and interact with a broad spectrum of African American writers including Richard Wright, Ralph Ellison, and Maya Angelou.

With a diverse set of literary pieces such as biographies, memoirs, poetry, slave narratives, and works of fiction, students will engage thoroughly with Black-American literature while also satisfying the PVCC writing-intensive degree requirement.

When asked why PVCC students should take this course, Dr. Wert said, “Black literature is worth studying for a litany of reasons. The variety of literature helps one properly assess the historical story-arc of America. African-American literature acknowledges the rather arduous journey people of color have taken to tell their stories while also working to achieve similar constitutional freedoms compared to their European-American counterparts.”

The course is being offered on Zoom during the upcoming summer semester of 2021 for students who have completed ENG 112 as a prerequisite. The course lasts for a duration of seven weeks from June 14 to Aug. 4, 2021, and meets on Mondays and Wednesdays 2:45- 5:45 p.m. for a total of six in-class hours a week. The course is 3 credits and it satisfies PVCC’s writing intensive graduation requirements for degree-seeking students.

According to Dr. Justin Wert, students should expect to encounter assigned reading, critical responses, discussion posts, quizzes, as well as two papers, during their time enrolled in English 254.



Justin Wert poses with BSA. Photography by Kellyn Torres