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Newspaper article, Mississippi State Introduces Negro History and Literature, April 11, 1969

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Invited to attend.

Wayne F. Cottingham)

Mississippi State Introduces

Negro History And Literature

Dr. Cottingham has been teaching

Dr. Holland has been teaching

include more on the contributors

invited to attend Wayne F. Cottingham

Mississippi State Int Negro History And I

By LAURANCE R. MITLIN
Associate Editor

Courses in Negro history and literature will be offered at Mississippi State University beginning this fall, according to an announcement by Dr. John K. Bettersworth, vice president for academic affairs.

Negro literature in the United States (EN 4343/6343) will be described in the catalog as the "study of literature by Negro writers in the United States, especially in the 20th century." Afro-American history and culture (HI 4803/6803) is described as the "study of the Negro with emphasis on his African background and his role in the political, social, economic, and cultural development of the United States.

Teaching the literature course will be Dr. Robert B. Holland, head of the English Department. No final decision has been made on the instructor of the history course but Dr. Harold S. Snellgrove, history department head, has tentatively named Dr. Charles D. Lowrey to the position.

Dr. Holland has been teaching a similar course in the YMCA's "Free University."

The possibility of courses in Negro studies were first brought to the attention of Dr. Bettersworth by representatives of Afro American Plus, a campus black student organization. "When I made inquiries in this area, I found that the English and History Departments were already considering the possibility of offerings in this area," Dr. Bettersworth said.

New courses at MSU are developed by the departments and presented to the Academic Council by the deans of the schools involved. The Academic Council approved the new courses unanimously on March 31.

Both Dr. Holland and Dr. Snellgrove expect the field of Negro studies at MSU to expand as the field itself expands. "It is high time that we recognized the contributions of the Negro artists, many of whom have been not only culturally important, but esthetically fine," Dr. Holland said.

"More important than black courses," according to Dr. Holland, "is that traditional courses

roduces literature

include more on the contribution of the Negro. Our present American literature survey does not include one black writer. This does not make sense. But revisions of current textbooks in history and literature should take up that slack."

Eddie Washington, program chairman of the Afro-American Plus, commented, "I think courses such as these are needed. I hope white students will participate in these courses because a better understanding of the background of the Negro race will help them understand what we are trying to accomplish."