

**Department of English  
College of Humanities  
University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus  
2018-19, First Semester**

**Course title:** Pidgins and Creoles  
**Prerequisites:** Graduate student status  
**Meetings:** Tues. 5:00 PM- 7:50 PM  
**Professor:** Don E. Walicek, PhD  
**Office:** PGL, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor PED  
**Email:** [don.walicek@upr.edu](mailto:don.walicek@upr.edu)

**Course number:** INGL 8005  
**Section:** OU1  
**Credits:** 3 (45 contact hours)  
**Tel.** 787-764-0000 ext. 89715  
**Office hours:** Wed. 10-12 & 3-4  
(other hours possible)

**I. Description:** This doctoral seminar focuses on the diachronic and synchronic analysis of Creole languages spoken in former English colonies, English-lexifier Creoles. You will learn about the methods and insights associated with the analysis of various types of data (e.g., grammatical, spoken, archival, textual, ethnographic) by engaging seminal scholarship and related academic literature that describes pidginization, creolization, and decreolization, as well as phenomena and processes described in general theories of language and language change. The course offers a multi-faceted and nuanced understanding of these languages, one that is based largely on scholars' ideas about grammatical analysis, linguistic creolization, the Atlantic Slave Trade, identity formation, political economy, language ideologies, the use of Creole languages in writing, and the history of creolistics, among other topics. Readings will include articles, case studies, book chapters, and primary source archives. Some of these will contextualize the study of the English-lexifier Creoles by providing information about language and social life in the region's Dutch, French, Danish, and Spanish colonies. You will become familiar with key concepts and central debates in the field of creolistics; make connections across different analytical frameworks; learn to make cross-linguistic comparisons; develop your own data sets, arguments, explanations, and commentaries; and come to see how scholarly projects can be used to address social problems linked to linguistic discrimination and linguistic inequality.

## **II. Learning objectives**

By the end of the course, you will be able:

1. To understand, situate, and critically question the basic concepts and categories used by creolists in scholarly work.
2. To identify and describe the different processes involved in language contact and language change in general and creolization in particular.
3. To recognize and understand the wide variety of political, social, historical, ideological, and linguistic contexts that have given rise to Creole languages.
4. To conduct descriptive and analytic research on one or more English-lexifier Creoles from the greater Caribbean region.

5. To explain and question the theories of creole genesis and to begin to situate your ideas and interests in relation to those of different competing theoretical-analytical frameworks.
6. To critically analyze how linguists, sociolinguists, historians, and creolists do their work.
7. To recognize and analyze the different lexico-semantic, phonological, and morphosyntactic structures that typify the Creole languages of the colonial era.
8. To critically question the assumptions that underpinning concepts such as 'language,' 'creole,' 'island,' 'culture,' 'history,' 'civilization,' 'development,' and 'globalization' as they are generally understood and used in the Caribbean and beyond.
9. To contribute in an effective way to the integration of fellow students with special challenges and needs into the learning environment.
10. To participate in teamwork designed to make necessary adjustments for the inclusion of students with special challenges and needs.

**III. Readings:** A required packet of readings that consists will be made available by the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of class. Additional materials will be distributed online and as handouts.

#### **IV. Grading and evaluation**

##### Grading

A 100-90    B 89-80    C 79-70    D 69-60    F 59-0

##### Evaluation

Weekly thought papers (10-12)*	20%
Active & informed participation**	20%
Weekly discussions	
Presentations of readings (3)	
Oral presentations of exercises (your own work) (2)	20%
Mid-term exam	20%
Final paper (abstract, rough draft, final draft)	20%

\*Thought papers should be between one and two pages in length.

\*\*With the exception of online assignments, active and informed participation requires attendance.

##### Law 51 - Law 238

In accordance with the recommendation of the Office of the Dean of Students (Division for Persons with Disabilities), students who receive services or other types of assistance of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation concerning their coursework must contact the professor at the beginning of the semester in order to make arrangements for reasonable accommodations and for any necessary auxiliary equipment. Other students with special needs who require any kind of assistance or reasonable accommodation should also contact the professor.

## V. Calendar

A more detailed calendar of readings and topics to be covered will be distributed in week 2 of the course. Some of the course's content will be informed by discussion that takes place in our first meeting.

<b>Meeting &amp; date</b>	<b>Topic</b>
Week 1 Aug. 21	Introduction & Overview
Week 2 Sept. 4	History of PCS : Terms and Theory
Week 3 Sept. 11	Grammatical categories
Week 4 Sept. 18	➤ Min-lab 1: Working with spoken data ➤ Pecha Kucha Presentation 1: 20 twenty-second slides
Week 5 Sept. 25th	Key concepts from sociolinguistics: indexicality, identity, agency
Week 6 Oct. 2nd	Simplicity vs. complexity
Week 7 Oct. 9th	West Africa and European colonization
Week 8 Oct. 16th	Mid-term exam
Week 9 Oct. 23rd	Debates about origins of Caribbean Creoles
Week 10 Oct. 30th	What is linguistic creolization?
Week 11 Nov. 6th	➤ Mini-lab 2: The seventeenth-century Caribbean ➤ Pecha Kucha Presentation 2: 20 twenty-second slides on final project: abstract, data, hypothesis, argument
Week 12 Nov. 13th	Literacy and the 19 <sup>th</sup> century
Week 13 Nov. 20th	The use of Creole languages in writing
Week 14 Nov. 27th	Postcolonial linguistics, language rights, & language policy
Week 15 Dec. 4th	Final projects and wrapping up

## VI. Academic guidelines

### A. Written assignments

1. Type all assignments.
2. Use size 12, Times New Roman font.
3. Double-space and use standard margins for your work.
4. Staple multiple pages. (Unstapled work will not be accepted).
5. Follow academic writing guidelines (paragraph form, topic sentences, indentation, organization), avoiding contractions and incomplete sentences.

6. Use data and examples as evidence, to support claims, discussion, and argument.
7. In the case of quotes, be sure to introduce the quoted material. After it is presented, comment on its use (e.g., why it is relevant) and then link it to the overall argument.
8. Correctly use scholarly terminology covered in the discussion and readings and your other courses, showing that you understand the meaning of key concepts and terms that are relevant to your argument or discussion.
9. Follow APA citation and style guidelines given that these are frequently used in linguistics publications. For tips, see Purdue's OWL writing center.
10. Strive for academic writing that is interesting and informed as well as creative, at times taking advantage of linguistics as a strategic bridge that connects the Humanities with the Social Sciences and the Natural Sciences.
11. Pay close attention to comments received on your work and avoid the same mistakes, striving to improve your writing across the semester.
12. As the semester progresses, develop new ways of introducing, explaining, and supporting specific claims and arguments.
13. Write not for the professor, but for a broad readership. Imagine readers who have already read the same texts you have. These readers are highly intelligent and interested in your findings and the questions that you formulate, including those you might not be able to answer.
14. Make sure you are clear about the goals of your written work and communicate those to your readers, either implicitly or explicitly. Make sure that the body of the work is aligned with goals.

## **B. Academic integrity**

The UPR promotes the highest standards of academic and scientific integrity. Plagiarism, using someone else's ideas and/or words as if one's own, is a serious offense and will result in a zero. Plagiarism offenses include using material downloaded from the Internet (e.g., Wikipedia's resources, study guides); copying from printed work; borrowing an idea or sentence without citing the name of the person who originated it; and using writing, concepts, or ideas formulated by another person as one's own. Plagiarizing cheats us out of the intellectual growth and self-esteem necessary to be better learners and efficient and effective writers. Avoiding plagiarism makes us become aware, honest, and responsible learners, researchers, and writers. Citing sources is a strategic and useful way of situating our own ideas. It shows that we are familiar with relevant scholarship as well as with academic standards that assist us in contributing to knowledge formation and changes that assist our disciplines in growing in ways that are useful, insightful, and relevant to the societies in which we live.

A first offense will count as a "0" [zero] for the assignment; a second offense will result in an "F" for the course. Continued reports of plagiarism may result in action taken by the Dean of Academic Affairs and suspension or dismissal from the University of Puerto Rico. Students should consult the Graduate Student Manual to be aware of all possible ramifications of plagiarism.

Reglamento General de Estudiantes: *Penalidades (Artículo 15)*:

- *Amonestación*
- *Probatoria por tiempo definido durante el cual otra violación de cualquier norma tendrá consecuencia de suspensión o separación.*
- *Suspensión de la Universidad por un tiempo definido.*
- *Separación definitiva de la Universidad.*

### **C. Thought pieces**

1. Follow the guidelines presented above in A & B.
2. Directly respond to instructions and any prompt that is provided.
3. Avoid mere summary.
4. Include and properly cite important quotations that are relevant to your topic.
5. If discussing a scholarly work, identify and comment on the significance of one or more of the following: hypothesis, argument, new findings, information that's new to you, tensions and connections with other readings, links to your own interests and research.
6. Write something useful for you, sharing insights and connections that are not explicitly identified by the author.
7. Be prepared to share your work with the class.

### **D. General academic success**

1. Keep a running list of new terms and their definitions.
2. Take notes as you read and then find a way to effectively organize your notes.
3. Reread material strategically, including work that you find especially compelling and relevant.
4. Complete assignments in a timely manner.
5. In the process of thinking and conceptualizing projects, prioritize (i) data-driven arguments, (ii) specific findings, (iii) the significance of your findings, (iv) strategic links with existing scholarship.
6. Schedule meetings with your instructor to discuss your work, including feedback on assignments.
7. Remember that language is the object of study in this course and in linguistics more generally. Use interdisciplinary perspectives and methods to complement your work but identify tools, theories, and resources from one or more of the many fields of linguistics and become intimately familiar with them.
8. If you are completing the PhD track in linguistics, subscribe to Linguist List and carefully read at least one item daily. Familiarize yourself with the Society for Caribbean Linguistics and the Society of Pidgin and Creole Languages.
9. If you are completing the PhD track in linguistics, consider attending summer institutes in linguistics.
10. Familiarize yourself with H-Net, including its sections on conferences, summer opportunities, and fellowships.
11. Familiarize yourself with the history of the department and important scholarship by its faculty members, whether they're currently teaching, retired, or deceased.

12. Plan to present your work at conferences and other meetings, both those sponsored by the UPR and external ones.
13. After you have completed your introductory courses, write and publish at least one book review (of new work in your field) annually for publication.