

Universidad de Puerto Rico  
Recinto de Río Piedras  
Facultad de Humanidades  
Departamento de Inglés

**INSTRUCTOR:** Dr. María del Carmen Quintero Aguiló

**COURSE TITLE:** Contemporary Issues in Caribbean Development

**COURSE NUMBER:** INGL 3156

**COURSE CREDITS:** 3 credits/ 45 hours

**CONTACT INFORMATION:** [maria.quintero@upr.edu](mailto:maria.quintero@upr.edu)

Office hours: Pedreira Basement OF 12  
Fridays 7:30-9:00 am, or by appointment  
via email or videoconferencing

**PRE-REQUISITE:** First Year English or Advanced Placement

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Online course.

“We helped ourselves/ to these green islands like olives from a saucer,/ munched  
on the pith, then spat their sucked stones on a plate,/ like a melon’s black seeds.”  
-Derek Walcott, *Omeros*

An interdisciplinary course that examines essays, short stories, novels, plays, poems, and films that address—from a variety of perspectives—contemporary issues in Caribbean development and culture.

**OBJECTIVES:**

By the end of the course students will be able to:

1. Explain fundamental aspects of a variety of literary genres that address Caribbean economic development and its cultural impact.
2. Describe the history and current trends in Caribbean development as depicted through the literature.
3. Recognize and employ argumentative strategies from a number of genres that illustrate history and cultural manifestations of socio-economic development.
4. Identify basic literary devices and terms as well as development theories in classroom discussions and presentations, as well as in written responses and formal essays.
5. Formulate—in the form of critical questions and written responses—arguments on the materials and themes covered to support extended discussions.

6. Demonstrate understanding and an ability to utilize research sources in the fields covered, which would include bibliographic research sources, electronic databases and web-based research sources.

**COURSE OUTLINE (CONTENT AND TIMEFRAME): \*Subject to change**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Text(s)</b>	<b>Details/Task/Assignment</b>	<b>Asynchronous</b>	<b>Synchronous</b>
Jan. 22	Nadine Gordimer's "Once Upon a Time"	Meet and greet, discussion of syllabus, presentation dates assignment and instructions, critical activity on short story by Nadine Gordimer		X
Jan. 29	<i>From Peter Roberts' "West Indians and Créoles in the Smaller Islands" in The Roots of Caribbean Identity: Language, Race and Ecology</i>	<b>Response Paper #1</b> Supplementary reading: "How Puerto Rico Became the Newest Tax Haven for the Super Rich" by Jesse Barron		X
Feb. 5	<i>From Walter Rodney's: How Europe Underdeveloped Africa</i>	<b>Response Paper #2</b> Supplementary reading: <i>Locked in, Locked Out: Gated Communities in a Puerto Rican City</i> by Zaire Zenit Dinzey-Flores		X
Feb. 12	<i>From Elizabeth M. DeLoughrey, et.al: Caribbean Literature and the Environment: Between Nature and Culture; From</i>	<b>Response Paper #3</b> Supplementary reading: Excerpts from Daniel Defoe's <i>Robinson Crusoe</i> ; Selections from Naomi Klein's books, articles and essays		X

	DeLoughrey's <i>Routes and Roots: Navigating Caribbean and Pacific Island Literatures</i>			
Feb. 19	From Supriya Nair's <i>Pathologies of Paradise: Caribbean Detours</i>	<b>Response Paper #4</b> Supplementary Reading: "Taking History Offshore: Atlantic Islands in European Minds, 1400-1800" by John R. Gillis		X
Feb. 26	Jamaica Kincaid's <i>A Small Place</i>	Group I presentation; <b>Response paper #5</b>		X
Mar. 5	Derek Walcott's "Ti-Jean and His Brothers"	Group II presentation; <b>Response paper #6;</b> Midterm Guidelines distribution via Moodle		X
Mar. 12	Writing Workshop	Students will share midterm abstract along with secondary sources for feedback and discussion		X
Mar. 19	Film screening of <i>Even the Rain</i> via Netflix and/or <i>Disempowered</i>	<b>Midterm Due</b> via Google Drive	X	
Mar. 26	Monique Roffey's <i>The White Woman on the Green Bicycle</i> Part I	Group III presentation, <b>Response Paper #7</b>		X
Apr. 9	Monique Roffey's <i>The White Woman on</i>	Group IV presentation; <b>Response paper #8</b>		X

	<i>the Green Bicycle</i> Part 2			
Apr. 16	Monique Roffey's <i>The White Woman on the Green Bicycle</i> Part 3	Group V presentation; <b>Response Paper #9</b> ; Final paper guidelines distribution via Moodle		<b>X</b>
Apr. 23	Writing WS	Students will share final paper abstract along with secondary sources for feedback and discussion		<b>X</b>
Apr. 30	Independent study	Students will independently work on writing and research in preparation for final paper	<b>X</b>	
May 7	The Writing Process	<b>Final Paper Due</b> via Google Drive	<b>X</b>	

Total credit hours: 45

**TEACHING STRATEGIES:** Lecture (20%), critical discussion (50%) of literary texts, (10%) workshop, and (20%) seminar.

**ACADEMIC HONESTY:**

The University of Puerto Rico promotes the highest standards of academic and scientific integrity. Article 6.2 of the UPR Students General Bylaws (Board of Trustees Certification 13, 2009-2020) states that academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to: fraudulent actions; obtaining grades or academic degrees by false or fraudulent simulations; copying the whole or part of the academic work of another person; plagiarizing totally or partially the work of another person; copying all or part of another person answers to the questions of an oral or written exam by taking or getting someone else to take the exam on his/her behalf; as well as enabling and facilitating another person to perform the aforementioned behavior. Any of these behaviors will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the disciplinary procedure laid down in the UPR Students General Bylaws.

**SEXUAL DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT:**

The University of Puerto Rico prohibits discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity in any of its forms including that of sexual harassment. According to the Institutional Policy Against Harassment at the University of Puerto Rico, Certification Num. 130, 2014-2015 from the Board of

Governors, any student subjected to acts constituting sexual harassment, must turn to the Office of the Student Ombudsperson, the Office of the Dean of Students, and/or the Coordinator of the Office of Compliance with Title IX for an orientation and/or a formal complaint.

### **ACOMODO RAZONABLE (LEY 51):**

Los estudiantes que reciban servicios de Rehabilitación Vocacional deben comunicarse con la profesora al inicio del semestre para planificar el acomodo razonable y equipo asistivo necesario conforme a las recomendaciones de la Oficina de Asuntos para las Personas con Impedimento (OAPI) del Decanato de Estudiantes. También aquellos estudiantes con necesidades especiales que requieren de algún tipo de asistencia o acomodo deben comunicarse con el/la profesor/a. Según la Ley de Servicios Educativos Integrales para Personas con Impedimentos, todo estudiante que requiera acomodo razonable deberá notificarlo al profesor el primer día de clase. Los estudiantes que reciban servicios de Rehabilitación Vocacional deben comunicarse con el (la) profesor(a) al inicio del semestre para planificar el acomodo razonable y equipo asistivo necesario conforme a las recomendaciones de la Oficina de Asuntos para las Personas con impedimentos (OAPI) del Decanato de Estudiantes. También aquellos estudiantes con necesidades especiales de algún tipo de asistencia o acomodo deben comunicarse con el(la) profesor(a). Certificación #99 (01-02) del Senado Académico, Ley 51 de 1996 (Ley de Servicios Educativos Integrales para personas con impedimentos) y la Certificación 130 (1999-2000) de la Junta de Síndicos.

### **REQUIRED RESOURCES:**

Internet connection; tablet or computer that can process audio and video with access to one or more of the following: Google Meet, Zoom, Big Blue Button, Google Hangout, Microsoft Teams, and Moodle. The class will be mostly held via Moodle for assignments and Google Meet in order to synchronically convene every Friday from nine to eleven fifty a.m., unless otherwise stipulated (see course schedule chart). Please notify the professor if you do not have one or more of the required resources so that we accommodate your needs.

### **METHODS OF EVALUATION:**

Response papers ( in total)  
9 @ 10 pts. each= 90 points  
Writing Workshops (2 in total)  
2 @ 10 points each= 20 points  
Midterm paper (1)= 100 points  
Presentation (1)= 100 points  
Final paper (1)= 100 points  
Total: 410 points

**GRADING SYSTEM:** Quantifiable scale; A, B, C, D, F

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

*A Small Place* by Jamaica Kincaid

*The White Woman on the Green Bicycle* by Monique Roffey

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:**

Barron, Jesse. "How Puerto Rico Became the Newest Tax Haven for the Super Rich." *EQ*, 18 Sept. 2018, <https://www.gq.com/story/how-puerto-rico-became-tax-haven-for-super-rich>. Accessed 10 Jan. 2019.

Carew, Jan. *Rape of Paradise: Columbus and the Birth of Racism in the Americas*. Seaburn, 2006.

Carrigan, Anthony. *Postcolonial Tourism: Literature and the Environment*. Routledge, 2011.

Crosby, Alfred. *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900-1900*. Cambridge UP, 2004.

—. *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492*. Praeger, 2003.

DeLoughrey, Elizabeth. *Allegories of the Anthropocene*. Duke UP, 2019.

DeLoughrey, Elizabeth and George B. Handley. *Postcolonial Ecologies: Literatures of the Environment*. Oxford UP, 2011.

Dinzey-Flores, Zaire Zenit. *Locked In, Locked Out: Gated Communities in a Puerto Rican City*. Pennsylvania UP, 2013.

*Dis.em.POWER.ed: Puerto Rico's Perfect Storm, a Documentary Film on the Causes of the Longest Blackout in US History*. Directed by Roque Nonini, Aug. 2019.

Drayton, Richard. *Nature's Government: Science, Imperial Britain, and the 'Improvement' of the World*. Yale UP, 2000.

Edmond, Rod and Vanessa Smith. *Islands in History and Representation*. Routledge, 2003.

Gillis, John R. "Not Continents in Miniature: Islands as Ecotones." *Island Studies Journal*, vol. 9, no. 1, 2014, pp. 55-166.

Hay, Pete. "A Phenomenology of Islands." *Island Studies Journal*, vol. 1, no. 1, 2006, pp. 19-42.

Huggan, Graham and Helen Tiffin. *Postcolonial Ecocriticism: Literature, Animals, Environment*. Routledge, 2010.

Klein, Naomi. *The Battle for Paradise: Puerto Rico Takes on the Disaster Capitalists*. Haymarket Books, 2018.

McCracken, Donal P. *Gardens of Empire: Botanical Institutions of the Victorian British Empire*. Leicester UP, 1997.

Miller, David P. and Peter Hans Reill. *Visions of Empire: Voyages, Botany, and Representations of Nature*. Cambridge UP, 1996.

Nair, Supriya. *Pathologies of Paradise: Caribbean Detours*. Virginia UP, 2013.

San Miguel, Pedro. *Imagined Islands: History, Identity, and Utopia in Hispaniola*. North Carolina UP, 2005.

Van Duzer, Chet. "From Odysseus to Robinson Crusoe: A Survey of Western Island Literature." *Island Studies Journal*, vol. 1, no. 1, 2006, 143-162.

\*\*The professor will provide the rest of the readings in the course schedule via Drop Box links along with supplementary material that may be relevant to the topic under study. Most can be found and accessed through the English Department's Seminar Room and/or the UPR Library system.

**Rules of the Game:**

Students are required to complete a series of weekly response papers that count for 90 points of the course grade (10 points each). These will take the form of an MLA-style, one page, double-spaced, size 12 font Times New Roman word-processed document to be uploaded to Moodle. Moodle will open and accept your RP on the day the reading is due from 8:30 am-12:30 pm. There will be no make-ups for this course requirement. Therefore, students' presence in class is a determining factor for the course grade. Since the response papers will be uploaded to Moodle on a weekly basis, completing the assigned readings prior to class is of the utmost importance. Not complying with this minimum requirement will result in course failure and/or cancellation.

There will be three main assignments during the semester. 1). Students are expected to divide in groups (depending on class size) and present on one of the texts pertaining to the course reading load (100 points of course grade); 2). Write a 5-6 page midterm paper; and 3). Write one substantial 6-7 page final paper (100 points of course grade).

All written assignments must follow MLA format and must be electronically submitted within the allotted time, or as otherwise specified. For the latest MLA version, go to: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl> or <http://mla.org/style>.

The use of cell phones and/or smart phones is not permitted in the virtual classroom, unless you are dialing in via Google Meet. Please turn off the ringer setting in your device prior to entering the virtual classroom.

Laptops, I-Pads and/or any tablet device will only be used for class purposes.

Since courses are based on contact time, class attendance is compulsory at this university. All professors throughout the course of the semester submit attendance reports. If a student is often absent, he or she is liable to not receiving their Federal Aid check. In addition, attendance will be numerically surveyed through the response papers. If absent (without the formal documentation) more than twice, the student is liable to course failure. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of every class. If you are more than twenty minutes late, please refrain from entering the classroom. Otherwise, please remind me at the end of class to remove your presumed absence.

According to the *Reglamento General de Estudiantes* (9 de septiembre de 2009) it is the institutional policy of the Río Piedras Campus to observe the highest standards of intellectual and scientific integrity and to pursue the prosecution of all violations (Circular Núm.17 de la Oficina del Rector, Año 1989-90). Violations include plagiarism (using the work, processes, ideas, and results of others without proper credit). Moreover, Article 6.2 (B) of the UPR General Regulations for Students identifies cheating as a punishable conduct.

As such, a professor *may* present a formal complaint to the Campus Disciplinary Board if she or he believes a student has committed plagiarism. If the professor pursues this line of action, Article 6.2 of the UPR General Regulations for Students stipulates that the repercussions may be the following:

- A written warning which will be included in the student's official record
- Probation for a determined period of time
- Suspension for a determined period of time
- Administrative permanent withdrawal from the UPR system
- Other sanctions provided by special regulation

PLAGIARISM – “The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one's original work. Something appropriated and presented in this manner.”

PLAGIARIZE – “To appropriate by plagiarism. To appropriate ideas, passages, etc. from (a work) by plagiarism. To commit plagiarism.”

~*Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary*

I, \_\_\_\_\_, fully understand the meaning of  
(Print name)

plagiarism, and therefore if I am found to have plagiarized, I realize I may receive a

“0” for that grade and that I *may* be reported to the Campus Disciplinary Board and/or *may* fail for the semester.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date