

PACIFIC LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY GATEWAY STUDY AWAY

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

CARIBBEAN CULTURE AND SOCIETY SYLLABUS

JANUARY-MAY

4 CREDITS

Course Coordinator: Candice Hughes, M.A Cultural Studies, UWI (PLU Coordinator) and Dr. Brinsley Samaroo, (History Department (retired, UWI)
Assisted by Norvan Fullerton, Coordinator of Community Cultural Programs (Trinidad's Ministry of Community Development)

Course Components:

- Lectures and readings series (14-18) by faculty from University of West Indies and in a variety of disciplines and local cultural experts.* See attached list of lectures and preparatory readings
- Field trips (environment, history, culture, business, government) led by local experts
- Class sessions (prepared readings and assignments to facilitate discussion)
- Historical background and attendance at festivals and outings (study and participate)

Course Description:

This course places emphasis upon the history and background of the meeting of cultures and peoples in the Caribbean, and seeks through traditional academic methods and experiential learning to project the region as the location of a cross-cultural civilization. The inter-culturation taking place in the region will be seen not in terms of mosaic or melting pot, but as a process that respects and takes advantage of difference in order to produce relative harmony out of fundamental commonalities.

Beginning with the indigenous peoples of the islands disrupted by the journeys of Christopher Columbus, the motif of the journey will frame the patterns and purposes of settlement in the past and to analyze contemporary movements out of and into the region (readings from Columbus's diaries).

Columbus' encounter with the indigenous Indians is seen as the first of a series of colonial relationships, and the succeeding faces of colonialism will be contemplated through the following: Slavery and plantation system; Indian indentureship; Colonial rule from Emancipation to Independence in the 1960s; and the continuation of the colonial relationship in the form of structural adjustment programs and other conditionalities imposed by international lending agencies during so-called independence. Environmental and social issues arising from a colonial economy's land and sea use (military bases, for example), and from current economic pressures which drive industrialization (oil companies, multinational corporations) and tourism will also be examined.

A major component of the course focuses on different forms of resistance to exploitation from the time of the Amerindians to present, and these resistances will be studied as essential elements shaping the Caribbean societies. Music, religion, and festivals of the region, most notably traditional Carnival, will be explored as crucial resistance elements which forge the area's irrepressible identity.

The relevance of these studies to the debates about the nature of American society, the system of American education, and about the position of America and Americans in relation to the so-called developing world will be a continuing consideration.

Course goals:

1. Students will identify the geography of the Caribbean countries and articulate the varied colonial possessions, languages, their brief histories and eventual independence.
2. Students will explain the particular migration history and interculturalism of Trinidad and Tobago during the colonial and post-colonial period with specific focus on the plantation system, slavery and indentureship.
3. Students will experience the varied musical, ethnic, religious and festive heritages of Trinidad and Tobago's population and be able to discuss both the role of oppression and resistance in the tenacity of their survival, and the syncretism of cultural differences.
4. Students will consider the development over time of social relations among Trinbagonians, such as gender, racial, class, and ethnic relations, paying attention to the place of the tourist or visitor in the society.
5. Students will expand their cultural literacy of the Caribbean through readings and lectures in History primarily, as well as the Arts and literature.
6. Students will explain the tensions between Trinidad and Tobago's industrial and economic expansion and its fragile environment of coastal reefs and inland forests and fresh water sources.
7. Students will through participation, performance, and primary research present topics of historical, cultural and social relevance.
8. Students will examine the role of Trinidad and Tobago in global relations, paying particular attention to its historical and current relationship with the United States.
9. Students will reflect on their role as visitor to and student of the country of Trinidad and Tobago.

Texts :

Required:

- A Concise History of the Caribbean by B. W. Higman (Cambridge University Press, 2011). (Read before departure for an overview of the Caribbean and as basis for more specific learning to come).
- A Small Place, by Jamaica Kincaid (Read for discussion at Orientation 3 at PLU in early December)
- The Caribbean: Survival, Struggle, & Sovereignty, by C.A. Sunshine (1988)
Read the following sections before your midterm exam:
 - Map with notes. pp. 4-5

- Caribbean Peoples' Unity. pp. 9-15
- The Collaborative Role of the Colonial Church, pp. 16-18
- Unifying themes in Caribbean Cultures, pp. 19-22
- Black Power Protests and Emergence of the Left, pp. 58-63
- Migration in Caribbean history, pp.70-78
- Independence of Trinidad and Tobago, pp. 172-175
- Caribbean Women, pp.227-223
- Caribbean Unity, the Distant Dream, pp. 244

Note: You are strongly urged to read the rest of this book for a more comprehensive understanding of Caribbean history and events.

- The Insight Guide to Trinidad and Tobago, by Eliz Salt (Helpful information before and while in Trinidad)

- Reading Packet provided on Sakai *

These readings are designed to prepare you for the lecture/presentation series. Read designated articles BEFORE relevant lecture/presentation

Eg: The History of Carnival, by Errol Hill (read early in January so that you understand more about the traditional carnival preparations you will be experiencing)

Bibliography

Aiyejina Funso and Gibbons Rawle, Orisha Tradition in Trinidad, Caribbean Quarterly Vol. 45, No. 4, University of the West Indies, 1999, pp. 35-50

Bahadur Lata Om, "The Gods of the Hindus, USB Publishers Ltd, New Dehli, 2006

Brereton Bridget, "Society and Culture in the Caribbean: The British and French West Indies, 1870-1980," The Modern Caribbean, eds. Franklin W. Knight and Colin A. Palmer, Chapel Hill & London: UNC Press, 1989.

Brereton Bridget, "The Experience of Indentureship, 1845-1917" Calcutta to Caroni, ed. J.La Guerre, London 1974, pp 21-30

Green L. Garth and Scher Philip " Introduction: Trinidad Carnival in a Global Context" Trinidad Carnival: The Cultural Politics of a Transnational Festival ed. Garth L. Green and Philip Scher, Indiana University Press 2007 pp 1-24

Hill Errol, The Trinidad Carnival: Mandate for a National Theatre, University of Texas Press, 1972 pp. 23-31

Jha J.C, "The Indian Heritage in Trinidad", Research Papers: Indentured Indians in Trinidad and Tobago, 1845-1917, St. Augustine, Trinidad, 1985

Kerrigan Dylan, "Artists of the Streets" BWIA Caribbean Beat, 2004 pp. 40-46, 48-52, 54-58, 60-64

Meighoo Kirk, "Conclusion: Impact, Implications and Recommendations" Politics in a 'Half Made Society': Trinidad and Tobago, 1925-2001, Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2003
Mohammed Patricia, "Like Sugar in Coffee: Third Wave Feminism" Social and Economic Studies Vol. 52, No. 3, Focus on Gender, University of the West Indies, 2003, pp. 5-30

Nurse, Keith, "Globalization and Trinidad Carnival: Diaspora, Hybridity, and Identity in Global Culture." In Identity, Ethnicity and Culture in the Caribbean. Ed. Ralph R. Premdas. University of West Indies, School of Continuing Studies, 1999

Orafi Sadre, "Hypernationalist Discourse in the Rapso Movement of Trinidad and Tobago." Globalisation, Diaspora and Caribbean Popular Culture, ed. Ho and Nurse, Kingston: Ian Randle, 2005, pp. 223-235

Reddock Rhoda, "Women's Organizations and Movements in the Commonwealth Caribbean: The Response to Global Economic Crisis in the 1980s" Feminist Review: Rethinking Caribbean Difference, no.59, 1998

Regis Louis, The Political Calypso: True Opposition in Trinidad and Tobago, 1962-1987, University Press of Florida, 1998, pp47-62.

Rohlehr Gordon, Calypso and Society in Pre-Independence Trinidad, POS, Trinidad, 1990, pp.1-41

Rohlehr Gordon, "We getting the Kaiso We Deserve: Calypso and the World Music Market" Drama Review 42, no.3, 1998: pp 82-95

Samaroo Brinsley, "Reconstructing the Identity: Hindu Organization in Trinidad During their First Century" The Construction of an Indo-Caribbean Diaspora, eds. Brinsley Samaroo and Ann Marie Bissessar, St. Augustine, 2004

Suggested Additional readings:

Scandal of Colonial Rule: Power and Subversion in the British Atlantic during the Age of Revolution by James Epstein (Cambridge University Press, 2012)

Caribbean Contours (ed.) Minz and Price (1985)

The Modern Caribbean (ed.) Knight & Palmer (1989)

Salt, by Earl Lovelace (1996)

A House for Mr. Biswas, by V.S. Naipaul

The Dragon Can't Dance, by Earl Lovelace

Wine of Astonishment, by Earl Lovelace

Course Requirements:

This class is the center around which your stay in Trinidad and Tobago is organized. Students are expected to attend:

1. Readings relevant to the lectures and outings. (assigned readings will prepare you for upcoming lectures and field trips).
2. Theme lectures (one or occasionally two per week for 14-18 weeks by local academic and community experts).
3. Field trips and participatory experiences (many outings listed on your schedule which provide the experiential component to the relevant academic study).
4. Short Sunday evening meetings to discuss progress and issues with Candice Hughes.

DETAILS OF ALL COMPONENTS AND DOCUMENTS REQUIRED

1. **A JOURNAL** to record what you learn and experience on field trips and while living in Trinidad and Tobago, and from which you may be able to draw your inspiration and interest for a project topic. You are required to submit **TWO** of the following topics **(10%)**

ENTRY 1: CHOOSE ONE FROM ENTRY A or B

JOURNAL ENTRY A-SETTLING IN

Going Abroad is said to be educational and stimulates self discovery as most go abroad out of a spirit of adventure. This adventure however could come with some uncertainty and unpredictability.

On the basis of your experience over the last few weeks, write a journal entry as to how you have been able to settle in to the

- (a) Physical Environment: Weather, Location etc
- (b) Culture: People, Dialect/Language
- (c) Group: Group members, Local students at Lodge

JOURNAL ENTRY B-CARNIVAL

Thus far the CCS lecture series and excursions have focused primarily on Carnival; its genesis, development, economics and threats to traditional mas. After having experienced Carnival yourself describe why you think Carnival is important to the society of Trinidad and Tobago primarily

- (a) The People
- (b) The Government
- (c) The diaspora

Submission 1: Your entry should be based on observations from lectures and excursions experienced. List specific instances that have led you to your conclusions. Your writing style should be formal, yet be a personal essay.

JOURNAL ENTRY 2-ETHNOGRAPHY (GROUP ASSIGNMENT)

At the Spiritual Baptist Liberation event you are to spend time with the group conducting **participant observation**.

Take **notes** (see guidelines below).

On the basis of your field notes, write up a **descriptive report** (a polished, fleshed out, structured version of your notes, 2-3 pages).

GUIDELINES FOR PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION:

When observing, you should pay attention to

- 1) **The space.** What is the space like? Describe the dimensions, structure of the space, furniture, light, scents and so on. Drawing a map is very helpful.
- 2) **The people.** How many people are present? Women, men, children? What ages, ethnicities are represented? What is their general appearance – clothes, hair, demeanor?
- 3) **Time and structure.** What happens? Write down when different phases in the event begin and end. Highlight important events.
- 4) **Social roles and relations.** How do the people interact? Who speaks to whom? Who have central roles, who are marginal? Anything noteworthy about body language, nonverbal communication?
- 5) **Yourself as a participant observer.** How do you fit in? How do you interact with people? How are you feeling about it all?

You can use a recorder and/or a camera, but you still need to write down your notes.

Submission 2: Your entry should be based on places and cultural events you have experienced. Your writing style should be formal, yet be a personal essay.

2. MIDTERM EXAM

Lectures, readings, and outings will prepare you for your exam which will probe your knowledge of the history and geography of the Caribbean including your understanding of the islands' varied colonial legacies. Past exams have focused on topics such as the readings by Columbus Diary extracts, Errol Hill on the history of traditional Carnival; C.L.R. James on the history of enslavement; the first 50 pages of the Sunshine history book as well as the sections on the history of Trinidad and Tobago; Jamaica Kincaid's work; the articles on the history of indentureship, etc. Candice Hughes and PROFESSOR will clarify the content to be tested. The exam consists of one sit-down exam comprising of short-answer questions **(25%)**.

3. **ASSIGNED READINGS AND ATTENDANCE AT LECTURES**

Readings for each lecture will be assigned. Students are required to submit THREE questions pertaining to each lecture by 10am on the day of the lecture. Students must also summarize and respond to lectures, commenting on and connecting its content with what you have already learned and experienced of Trinbagonian communities. **(25%)**

READINGS FOR LECTURES ARE AS FOLLOWS

TOPIC	LECTURER	READINGS
HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE CARIBBEAN	Fiona Rajkumar	1. Bridget Brereton, " <u>Society and Culture in the Caribbean: The British and French West Indies, 1870-1980.</u> " The Modern Caribbean, eds. Franklin W. Knight and Colin A. Palmer, Chapel Hill & London: UNC Press, 1989.
HISTORY AND EVOLUTION OF CALYPSO	Dr. Hollis Liverpool	1. Louis Regis, The Political Calypso: True Opposition in Trinidad and Tobago, 1962-1987, University Press of Florida, 1998, pp47-62. 2. Jump Up: Calypso and Carnival 3. Gordon Rohlehr, Calypso and Society in Pre-Independence Trinidad, POS, Trinidad, 1990, pp.1-41
HISTORY OF CANBOULAY	Candice Hughes-Bengochea	1. Errol Hill, " <u>Canboulay: A Ritual Beginning</u> " The Trinidad Carnival: Mandate for a National Theatre, University of Texas Press, 1972 pp. 23-31

HISTORY OF TRADITIONAL CARNIVAL CHARACTERS	Felix Edingborough	<p>1. Errol Hill, "<u>Introduction</u>", "<u>The Historical Background</u>", "<u>Sources and Attitudes</u>", "<u>The Carnival Tent: Backyard Theatre</u>", "<u>Rise of the Steel Band: Carnival Music</u>" <i>The Trinidad Carnival: Mandate for a National Theatre</i>, University of Texas Press, 1972 pp. 3-22;32-99</p> <p>2. Garth L. Green and Philip Scher "<u>Introduction: Trinidad Carnival in a Global Context</u>" <i>Trinidad Carnival: The Cultural Politics of a Transnational Festival</i> ed. Garth L. Green and Philip Scher, Indiana University Press 2007 pp 1-24</p> <p>3. The Characters of the Traditional Carnival-Micheal Anthony</p>
HISTORY OF THE INDIAN EXPERIENCE	Brinsley Samaroo	<p>1. Brinsley Samaroo, "<u>Reconstructing the Identity: Hindu Organization in Trinidad During their First Century</u>" <i>The Construction of an Indo-Caribbean Diaspora</i>, eds. Brinsley Samaroo and Ann Marie Bissessar, St. Augustine, 2004</p> <p>2. Bridget Brereton, "<u>The Experience of Indentureship, 1845-1917</u>" <i>Calcutta to Caroni</i>, ed. J. La Guerre, London 1974, pp 21-30</p>
HINDUISM IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO	Geeta Ramsingh	<p>1. J.C Jha, "<u>The Indian Heritage in Trinidad</u>", <i>Research Papers: Indentured Indians in Trinidad and Tobago, 1845-1917</i>, St. Augustine, Trinidad, 1985</p> <p>2. Om Lata Bahadur, "<u>The Gods of the Hindus</u>", USB Publishers Ltd, New Dehli, 2006</p>
HISTORY OF POLITICS IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO	Indira Rampersad	<p>1. Kirk Meighoo, "<u>Conclusion: Impact, Implications and Recommendations</u>" <i>Politics in a 'Half Made Society': Trinidad and Tobago, 1925-2001</i>, Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2003</p>

<p>HISTORY OF GENDER ISSUES IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO</p>	<p>Gabrielle Hosein</p>	<p>1. Rhoda Reddock, "<u>Women's Organizations and Movements in the Commonwealth Caribbean: The Response to Global Economic Crisis in the 1980s</u>" <i>Feminist Review: Rethinking Caribbean Difference</i>, no.59, 1998</p> <p>2. Patricia Mohammed, "<u>Like Sugar in Coffee: Third Wave Feminism</u>" <i>Social and Economic Studies</i> Vol. 52, No. 3, Focus on Gender, University of the West Indies, 2003, pp. 5-30</p>
<p>HISTORY OF THE ORISHA TRADITION IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO</p>	<p>Funso Aiyejina</p>	<p>1. Funso Aiyejina and Rawle Gibbons, "<u>Orisha Tradition in Trinidad</u>", <i>Caribbean Quarterly</i> Vol. 45, No. 4, University of the West Indies, 1999, pp. 35-50</p>

LECTURE RESPONSE FORM

Name:.....

Questions based on Assigned Readings:

1.
2.
3.

Lecturer.....

Details:

Topic/Subject:.....

Summary of Main Points:

Discussion of/Comment on the Points of Particular interest

Usefulness of Lecture

1. Content

2. Things to do

3. Lecturer's presentation

a. Method

b. Content

c. Communication

d. Suggestions for Change/ improvement

Personal Response:

4. **FINAL PROJECT:**

The second half of the course will focus on this major project. Students will choose some well-focused contemporary element of Trinidad and Tobago culture or society with a rich (traditional) history.

(a) PAPER (20%)

A written research component relying chiefly on primary research that incorporates interview material, research notes, photos, data, primary documents, and other supporting materials (observation, documents, experience). This paper should demonstrate the transition from your topics earliest manifestations to its current form, and discuss the consequent changes in relevance and/or meaning within the culture today.

Length: 10-12 pages

Guidance provided by: Dr. Brinsley Samaroo and Candice Hughes

Appointments will be made to provide adequate assistance.

(b) PRESENTATION (20%)

A presentation (pay strict heed to presentational style) to be performed and video-taped before your peers and invited local faculty and friends that conveys -- through performance -- the relevance of your topic (and any perceived shift in meaning).

Guidance provided by: Mr. Norvan Fuller and Candice Hughes

Appointments will be set approx. 2-3 weeks apart

Topics completed by past students

Traditional Characters eg. Blue Devils, Midnight Robber, Fancy Indian, Moko Jumbie

Music eg. Soca, Calypso, Pan, Drumming, Organic Music

Religion eg. Spiritual Baptist, Orisha, Divali, Phagwa, River Festival

Food eg. African, East Indian

Environment eg. Pollution

Art eg. Mas Camp

Language eg. Hindi

Time Allotted: 10-15 mins

Grading System: Students enrolled in the Caribbean Culture and Society course are asked to note that your academic work for this course will be assessed as follows:

Journals	10%	Regular journaling is expected for the duration of the program. The journal grade will be based on two entries. Topics and subsequent questions are provided.
Midterm Exam	25%	One sit down exam: short-answer questions.
Lectures, Classes	25%	Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assigned readings with questions, Attendance at and written responses to lectures. Quizzes based on Excursions. Participation in class discussions.
Final Cultural Project	40%	Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your written paper/script (20%) Your performance/presentation (20%)

Final paper- Hard copy (bound)

The UWI mark scheme:

GRADE	GRADE POINT	% RANGE
A+	4.3	90-100
A	4.0	80-89
A-	3.7	75-79
B+	3.3	70-74
B	3.0	65-69
B-	2.7	60-64
C+	2.3	55-59
C	2.0	50-54
FAIL E	1.3	35-49
FAIL	0.0	0-34