

AFR 374E/LAS 337M/GOV 365N/WGS 340
July 12-Aug. 17, 2015
Bluefields, Nicaragua
TA: Pablo Lopez Oro

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Afro-Caribbean Politics and Culture in Central America

This course will examine the politics of race, culture, nation, and political mobilization among Afro-Caribbean communities on Central America's Caribbean Coast. It will discuss the historical process by which these communities were formed in the region during the colonial era, different periods of labor migration, the emergence of anti-Black mestizo nationalism, and contemporary struggles for racial justice. Students will learn how Afro-Caribbean populations have drawn from their Caribbean roots to navigate and resist persistent patterns of racial, gender, and economic inequality and have challenged the racially defined limits of citizenship and national belonging within mestizo nation-states. The course will provide students with a foundation for understanding larger racial formation patterns in Central America and ground this analysis in historical and ethnographic studies of Afro-Caribbean populations in Nicaragua, Honduras, Costa Rica, Panama, and Belize. The course fulfills the Independent Inquiry and Global Cultures flags for UT-Austin students.

Course Structure: This course will be held in and around Bluefields, Nicaragua. There are 5 weeks of class instruction, which are broken down into 7 modules. Class will be held 5 days a week from 10am-12pm, but the schedule may vary on days when there are field trips or other required course activities. Attendance is mandatory at all classes and course-related events, and we expect you to do the readings ahead of class and participate actively in class discussion.

Assignments: 1) Students will work in teams to make one in-class presentation based on a day's readings. 2) Students will also conduct an individual or collaborative research project over the course of the program, preferably tied to already-existing projects being carried out by a local organization. This research will culminate in a public presentation of the results in a 1-day workshop that will be open to the public.

Grading Policy: final grades will be assessed based on class participation (40%), and the final research project (60%).

Course Schedule and Reading Assignments

Module 1: Introduction to Caribbean Coast History

July 12: Arrive in Managua

July 13: Arrival & Orientation in Bluefields

2:00 pm: Introduction to URACCAN & Welcome

3:00pm: showing of Film *Black Creoles*

4:15pm: Tour of Bluefields

July 14: Edmund T. Gordon and Mark Anderson, "The African Diaspora: Toward an Ethnography of Diasporic Identification," *The Journal of American Folklore* 112, no. 445 (Summer 1999): 282-296.

July 15: Ariel Dulitzky, "A Region in Denial: Racial Discrimination and Racism in Latin America," in *Neither Enemies nor Friends* (Palgrave, 2005), p. 39-59.

July 16: Edmund T. Gordon, "Anglo Colonialism and the Emergence of Creole Society," in *Disparate Diasporas* (University of Texas Press, 1998), p. 30-50.

July 17: Field Trip to The Bluff.

Module 2: Creole and Garifuna Culture, History, and Identity

July 20: Field Trip to Rama Cay & Hog Cay [OPTIONAL]

July 21: Edmund Gordon, ch. 3: "Negotiating Modernity: Disparate Racial Politics in the 20th century," in *Disparate Diasporas*, p. 51-90.

July 22: Jennifer Goett, ch. 6: "Diasporic Pasts, Autochthonous Futures: A Creole Women's Oral History From the Margins," in *Diasporic Identities, Autochthonous Rights: Race, Gender, and the Cultural Politics of Creole Land Rights in Nicaragua* (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Texas-Austin, 2007): p. 236-298.

July 23: Mark Anderson, ch. 1: "Race Modernity and Tradition in a Garifuna Community," & ch. 5: "This is the Black Power we Wear: Black America and the Fashioning of Young Garifuna Men," in *Black and Indigenous: Garifuna Activism and Consumer Culture in Honduras* (Univ. of MN Press, 2009), p. 35-69, 172-200.

July 24: Presentation of student research paper topics.

- Presentation by ONECA (Organizacion Negra Centroamericana)

Module 3: Black/Indigenous Spaces and Land Rights Struggles

July 27: Field Trip to Wawashang, Kahka Creek Natural Reserve, Orinoco & Pearl Lagoon organized by FADCANIC (Foundation for the Autonomy and Development of the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua).

July 28: Visit to Kahka Creek Natural Reserve

July 29: Visit to Orinoco/Pearl Lagoon

July 30: Eva Thorne, "Land Rights and Garifuna Identity," *NACLA Report on the Americas* 38, no. 2 (2004): 21-25, 37.

- Showing of film: *Los Hijos del Destierro: Memorias del pueblo Garifuna de America Central*. Return to Bluefields.

Module 4: Race, Gender, and Sexuality

July 31: Combahee River Collective, "A Black Feminist Statement," in *Home Girls: A Black Feminist Anthology* (Kitchen Table/Women of Color, 1983), p. 272-282.

Aug. 3: 1. bell hooks, *Feminism is for Everybody* (South End Press, 2000), p. 1-6, 25-30, 55-71.
2. Omise'eke Tinsley, "Black Atlantic, Queer Atlantic: Queer Imaginings of the Middle Passage," *GLQ: A Journal of Gay and Lesbian Studies* 14, no. 2-3 (2008): p. 191-215.

Aug. 4: Socorro Woods, "*I've never shared this with anybody*": *Creole Women's Experience of Racial and Sexual Discrimination and their Need for Self-Recovery* (CEIMM-URACCAN, 2002), p. 11-87.

- Presentation by OMAN (Organización de Mujeres Afro-descendientes de Nicaragua)

Aug. 5: Courtney Morris, ch. 5: 'See how the blood de run': Intimate Space, Sexual Violence and the Politics of Silence, in *To Defend this Sunrise: Creole Women's Political Subjectivity and Community Activism in Post-Neoliberal Nicaragua* (Ph.D. diss., Univ. Texas at Austin, 2007): p. 282-337.

Module 5: Mestizaje, Nationalism, and Autonomy

Aug. 6: Juliet Hooker, "Race and the Space of Citizenship: the Mosquito Coast and the Place of Blackness and Indigeneity in Nicaragua," in *Blacks and Blackness in Central America*, p. 246-277.

- Presentation by Creole Communal Government

Aug. 7: Charles Hale, ch. 7: "Community Politics in Transition to Autonomy, 1985-1987," in *Resistance and Contradiction: Miskitu Indians and the Nicaraguan State, 1894-1987* (Stanford Univ. Press, 1994), p. 166-197.

Aug. 10: Miguel González Pérez, ch. 4: "The Autonomy Statute A promising (though Contentious) Achievement," in *Governing Multi-Ethnic Societies in Latin America: Regional Autonomy, Democracy, and the State in Nicaragua, 1987-2007* (Ph.D. diss., York University, 2008), p. 186-219.

Module 6: Afro-descendant Political Mobilization in Latin America

Aug. 11: Juliet Hooker, "Afro-Descendant Struggles for Collective Rights in Latin America," *Souls: A Critical Journal of Black Politics, Culture and Society* 10, no. 3 (July-September 2008): p. 279-91.

Aug. 12: George Priestley and Alberto Barrow, "The Black Movement in Panama: A Historical and Political Interpretation, 1994-2004," in *New Social Movements in the African Diaspora*, p. 49-78.

Module 7: Final Research Results

Aug. 13: Final Presentation of Research Results (URACCAN, Bluefields)

Aug. 14-16: Trip to Corn Island (UT students)

Aug. 16: Return to Managua (UT students)

Aug. 17: Return to the U.S. (UT students)