The Caribbean and Its Diasporas
HIST 347
4 Credits

Instructor: Profe Meléndez-Badillo
Email: melendezbadil@wisc.edu
Instructional Modality: In person
Classroom: 1217 Mosse Building
Day/Time: MWF, 11:00am – 11:50am
Office: 4113 Mosse Building
Office Hours: Wednesdays, 10:00am-11:00am or by appointment

Course Description:

This course surveys the history of the Caribbean from the 15th century to the present. It emphasizes the importance of colonialism, commodity-based capitalism, globalization, slavery, and forced labor for the modeling of the region's social, economic, cultural, and political structures. It also pays particular attention to the resilient, creative, and resourceful ways in which Caribbean people have responded to these adverse conditions. The course examines the circumstances that have shaped migrations from the region to the United States and Canada during the 20th and 21st centuries. Lastly, the course studies how these diasporic communities have created social spaces in these two countries that have remained closely linked to the Caribbean through economic, political, and filial networks.

Introduction, Goals, and Objectives:
What constitutes the Caribbean? And how can we approach the region’s diverse cultures, societies, and histories? These are some of the questions this course seeks to engage with throughout the semester. The course also emphasizes that the Caribbean has played a crucial, albeit unrecognized role in global developments.

The expansion of Western thought throughout the globe after the 1500s required the colonization of what is now considered “the Global South.” After the Latin American and Caribbean wars for independence, metropolitan powers still maintained economic and political control over some of their former colonies. European powers re-defined themselves after, and through, the conquest of the Americas.

One of the goals of the course is to help students build their own historical toolbox. Using ideas discussed in lectures, students will produce historical knowledge through their analysis of readings about the Caribbean. We will discuss these sources to question the texts themselves, our preconceived ideas, and overarching narratives. Throughout the course, students will also create an interactive map and write a term paper.

Ultimately, the course aspires to help students comprehend contemporary events through the study of the regions’ past. To do so, throughout the semester we will look at global politics and events from within the Caribbean and its diasporas. Thus, the course seeks to position the Caribbean at the center of our historical imagination and our perceptions of the world. Doing so will entail exploring the regions’ relationship to its Northern neighbor, the United States, as well as Europe, Asia, and Africa.

By the end of this course students will:

1. Write a primary source analysis and a term paper.
2. Develop an interactive map of Latin American and the Caribbean.
3. Recognize different nation-building moments as well as their importance in broader regional development.
4. Appreciate some of the similarities and differences between Caribbean countries at moments of nation-building, revolution, and capitalist consolidation.
5. Situate the histories of the Caribbean in a global context.
6. Integrate a historical analysis to their interpretations of the regions’ contemporary events.

Other Learning Objectives:
• Students will be able to identify and analyze within their social, cultural, and economic contexts key historical developments in the history of the Caribbean from the fifteenth century to the present.

• Students will be able to identify the historical roots of the racial, political, cultural, and social structures of contemporary Caribbean societies and their diasporas.

• Students will be able to recognize the multiple ethnic and cultural origins of Caribbean communities and the impact these communities had in the modeling of Atlantic and global historical developments.

• Students will be able to analyze the role that social and cultural factors—such as gender, religion, ethnicity, and class, among others—had in shaping Caribbean historical developments.

• Students will be able to identify and analyze within their social, cultural, and economic contexts the history of the idea of race as it relates to the history of the Caribbean.

• Students will be able to discern the impact of local and global political and economic developments, in the shaping of ideas about racial, ethnic, social, and cultural hierarchies and public policies in Caribbean nations.

• Students will be able to analyze and synthesize information, provide evidence-based interpretations about the past, and develop arguments regarding the history of Caribbean societies and their global diasporas.

**Course Designations and Attributes:**

Ethnic Studies – Counts toward Ethnic Studies requirement  
Breathe – Humanities  
Level – Intermediate  
L&S Credit – Counts as Liberal Arts and Science credit in L&S  
Grad 50% - Count toward 50% graduate coursework requirement

**Requisites:**

Sophomore Standing

**Required Books:**


Credit Hours and Student Workload:

This four-credit class carries the expectation that students will work on course learning activities (reading, writing, problem sets, studying, among others) for about 4 hours out of the classroom for every class period (8 hours total). In addition, there are opportunities for students to take the course for honors credit. If you want to explore the option, please schedule a meeting with me, as there are additional expectations and assignments. Below you will find more information about expectations for undergraduate and graduate student work.

Grading:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary Source Exercise</td>
<td>10 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm</td>
<td>20 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term Paper</td>
<td>20 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Mapping Exercise</td>
<td>15 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>10 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>25 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>100 pts</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grades on assignments and exams are recorded as numerical scores out of a total of 100 points (these scores are later weighted to arrive at a final composite course grade). The table for converting your final composite (weighted) numerical grade into final letter grades is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>&lt;60</th>
<th>60-68.9</th>
<th>69-74.9</th>
<th>75-80.9</th>
<th>81-86.9</th>
<th>87-92.9</th>
<th>93 and above</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>BC</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>AB</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Students must submit all assignments and complete all essays in order to pass this course.
- Students may **not** elect to opt out of an assignment and receive an F on it.
- Any non-emergency extensions must be requested prior to the due date.

Details About Assignments

**Primary Source Analysis** – 10 pts
Due: *September 25, 2022*

In the third week of the course, each student will write one short primary source analysis. Profe Meléndez-Badillo will hand out the instructions in the first week of classes. **Length limit: no less than 500 words but not more 900 words.**
Midterm – 20 pts
Date: October 28, 2022

The test will consist of essay questions that will allow you to engage with the class readings and lectures critically.

Term Paper – 20 pts
Due: November 13, 2022

During the term, each student must write a term paper. The paper will be based on questions listed on Canvas and the student should incorporate both primary and secondary sources. **Length limit: no less than 1,000 words but no more than 1,500 words.**

Digital Mapping Exercise – 15 pts
Due: December 7, 2022

An important aspect of being a historian entails thinking about ways to socialize the knowledge we produce. As a historian-in-training for the term, you will engage with different sources and you will also be writing a term paper. This assignment, however, seeks to produce and present knowledge in a different way. We will be collectively creating a digital map using *Knight Lab’s StoryMap.*

Each student will be producing 4 (four) entries in a particular topic from the list below. The topics represent the major themes we have covered or still plan to do so in the rest of the term.

Each entry should highlight a particular event, person, or idea from the theme you have selected. The text should make it clear how, in your own words, the chosen event, person, or idea is important for us to conceptualize or think about the Caribbean.

Important Dates for Mapping Exercise:

- **September 23, 2022:** Identify your topics. Draft a two-paragraph rationale about your choices. Email your topics and the rationale to Profe Meléndez-Badillo via Canvas.
- **November 4, 2022:** Submit draft of two of your entries to Profe Meléndez-Badillo via Canvas.
- **November 11, 2022:** Submit draft of your two last entries to Profe Meléndez-Badillo via Canvas.

Each entry should have the following:

- An image or video (media)
- Media source (credit)
- Media caption
- Headline (title of your entry)
- Your entry: This should be a short narrative where you 1) explain the event, individual, or idea chosen; 2) give historical context; and 3) explain why you think it is important to understand Latin American history. Each entry should have no less than three paragraphs but no more than five.

Class participation – 10 pts

Your class participation grade depends upon your active participation and collaboration with peers through classroom discussions and collaborative projects. Students are expected to participate in class using the course materials (readings, lectures, and their peer’s comments).

Final Exam – 25 pts

Date: December 19, 2022,
2:45pm-4:45pm

The test will allow you to engage with the class readings and lectures critically.

Course Website and Digital Instructional Tools

This course will use Canvas. You can find all the readings that are not part of the required books in the Canvas page.

General Information About the Course

1. Use office hours if you have any questions, comments, or doubts about the readings, lectures, assignments, or discussions. If you cannot attend office hours, you can contact me to schedule an appointment.

2. If you have any other question that can be answered with a few sentences and that is not answered in this syllabus, feel free to email me. If I have not replied within two (2) weekdays, please follow up with me.

3. Students are expected to read all the assigned material. Regular attendance to class and active, engaging participation is also expected from every student.

4. If, for some reason, you cannot meet a major assignment deadline, please contact me before the assignment is due. If you have not contacted me and you must miss a deadline, you have one opportunity to hand it in the NEXT DAY (not the next class). There will be a 10% tardiness reduction to your grade for each day that goes by (except for a medical excuse). The second time you cannot submit your assignment late except with a valid medical excuse.

5. Check your email and Canvas periodically to check for any announcement, posting, changes in the readings, or any other information pertaining the class.
Course Policies:

Teaching and Learning Data Transparency Statement

The privacy and security of faculty, staff and students’ personal information is a top priority for UW-Madison. The university carefully reviews and vets all campus-supported digital tools used to support teaching and learning, to help support success through learning analytics, and to enable proctoring capabilities. View the university’s full teaching and learning data transparency statement.

Privacy of Student Records and the Use of Audio Recorded Lectures Statement

Lecture materials and recordings for this course are protected intellectual property at UW-Madison. Students in courses may use the materials and recordings for their personal use related to participation in class. Students may also take notes solely for their personal use. If a lecture is not already recorded, students are not authorized to record lectures without permission unless they are considered by the university to be a qualified student with a disability who has an approved accommodation that includes recording. [Regent Policy Document 4-1] Students may not copy or have lecture materials and recordings outside of class, including posting on internet sites or selling to commercial entities, with the exception of sharing copies of personal notes as a notetaker through the McBurney disability resource center. Students are otherwise prohibited from providing or selling their personal notes to anyone else or being paid for taking notes by any person or commercial firm without the instructor’s express written permission. Unauthorized use of these copyrighted lecture materials and recordings constitutes copyright infringement and may be addressed under the university’s policies, UWs chapters 14 and 17, governing student academic and non-academic misconduct. View more information about ferpa.

Campus Resources for Academic Success

- [University Health Services](#)
- [Undergraduate Academic Advising And Career Services](#)
- [Office Of The Registrar](#)
- [Office Of Student Financial Aid](#)
- [Dean Of Students Office](#)
- [Graduate Student Services](#)

Course Evaluations

Students will be provided with an opportunity to evaluate their enrolled courses and their learning experience. Student participation is an integral component of course development, and confidential feedback is important to the institution. UW-Madison strongly encourages student participation in course evaluations.
Digital Course Evaluation

UW-Madison uses a digital course evaluation survey tool. In most instances, students receive an official email two weeks prior to the end of the semester, notifying them that course evaluations are available. Students receive an email with a link to log into the course evaluation with their netid. Evaluations are anonymous. Student participation is an integral component of course development, and feedback is important. UW-Madison strongly encourages student participation in course evaluations.

Students’ rules, rights & responsibilities

Rights & Responsibilities

Diversity & inclusion statement

Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals. The University of Wisconsin-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background – people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world.

Academic integrity statement

By virtue of enrollment, each student agrees to uphold the high academic standards of the University of Wisconsin-Madison; academic misconduct is behavior that negatively impacts the integrity of the institution. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these previously listed acts are examples of misconduct which may result in disciplinary action. Examples of disciplinary sanctions include, but are not limited to, failure on the assignment/course, written reprimand, disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion.

Accommodations for students with disabilities

The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin state statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy (uw-855) require the university to provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities to access and participate in its academic programs and educational services. Faculty and students share responsibility in the accommodation process. Students are expected to inform faculty of their need for instructional accommodations during the beginning of the semester, or as soon as possible after being approved for accommodations. Faculty will work either directly with the student or in coordination with the mcburney center to provide
reasonable instructional and course-related accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA. (see: mcburney disability resource center)

Academic calendar and religious observances

Academic Calendar & Religious Observances

“Caribe fractal” – José Arturo Ballester Panelli
Fall 2022
Course Calendar
*The readings and dates are subject to change*

Week 1 – Introductions

1. Wednesday, September 7, 2022
   Syllabus discussion and introductions

2. Friday, September 9, 2022
   What is history? How can we think critically about the Caribbean?
   Reading:

Week 2 – Epistemically Situating Ourselves in the Caribbean

3. Monday, September 12, 2022
   Defining the Caribbean Region
   Reading:

4. Wednesday, September 14, 2022
   Pre-Columbian Societies
   Reading:

5. Friday, September 16, 2022
   Class discussion – How can we think from within the Caribbean in the classroom?
   Reading:

Week 3 – Resistance and the Conquest’s Genocidal Impulse

6. Monday, September 19, 2022
   The Ideology of the Conquest
Readings:
- Lynne A. Guitar, “Negotiations of Conquest,” Chapter 7 in *The Caribbean* (**Note that we will read Chapter 6 for next class**)

7. Wednesday, September 21, 2022
*Resisting the Conquest’s Genocidal Impulse*
Readings:
- Jalil Sued Badillo, “From Tainos to Africans in the Caribbean: Labor, Migration, and Resistance,” Chapter 6 in *The Caribbean*
- Stephan Palmié, “Toward Sugar and Slavery,” Chapter 8 in *The Caribbean*

8. Friday, September 23, 2022
*No class meeting – Work on the digital map exercise*

---

**Week 4 – The Symbiotic Caribbean: Wars, Colonialisms, and Imperialisms**

9. Monday, September 26, 2022
*The Masterless Caribbean*
Readings:
- Isaac Curtis, “Masterless People: Maroons, Pirates, and Commoners,” Chapter 9 in *The Caribbean*

10. Wednesday, September 28, 2022
*Everyday Life in the Seventeenth-Century Caribbean*
Readings:
- Francisco A. Scarano, “Imperial Decline, Colonial Adaptation: The Spanish Islands during the Long 17th Century,” Chapter 11 in *The Caribbean*
- Alison Games, “The Atlantic Framework of 17th Century,” Chapter 12 in *The Caribbean*

11. Friday, September 30, 2022
Class discussion: *How can we historicize those that were erased from the archive?*
Reading:
Week 5 – The Caribbean as a Repeating Island?

12. Monday, October 3, 2022
Sugar and the Plantation Economy
Readings:
– Antonio Benítez Rojo, “Introduction,” in The Repeating Island

13. Wednesday, October 5, 2022
The Caribbean as an European Sea
Readings:

14. Friday, October 7, 2022
Class Discussion: The Darker Side of Modernity
Readings:
– Douglas Hamilton, “Rivalry, War, and Imperial Reform in the 18th-Century Caribbean,” Chapter 17 in The Caribbean

Week 6 – The Haitian Revolution

15. Monday, October 10, 2022
The Haitian Revolution as an Event
a. Readings:

16. Wednesday, October 12, 2022
The Haitian Revolution as a Process
Readings:
– Reading: Laurent Dubois, “Why Haiti Should be at the Center of the Age of Revolution,” Aeon, November 7, 2016.

17. Friday, October 14, 2022
Class Discussion: The Legacy of the Haitian Revolution
Readings:

**Week 7 – Capitalism, Slavery, and Abolition**

18. Monday, October 17, 2022

*The Non-Hispanic Caribbean in the Aftermath of Slavery*

Readings:

19. Wednesday, October 19, 2022

*The Second Slavery*

Readings:
– Christopher Schmidt-Nowara, “A Second Slavery? The 19th-Century Sugar Revolutions in Cuba and Puerto Rico,” Chapter 22 in *The Caribbean*
– Gad Heuman, “Peasants, Immigrants, and Workers: The British and French Caribbean after Emancipation,” Chapter 23 in *The Caribbean*

20. Friday, October 21, 2022

*Class Discussion: The Allure of the Nation*

**Week 8 – Review and Midterm**

21. Monday, October 24, 2022

*Imagining the Nation in Puerto Rico*

Readings:

22. Wednesday, October 26, 2022

*Review Session*

23. Friday, October 28, 2022

*Midterm*
Week 9 – The Long Nineteenth Century

24. Monday, October 30, 2022
   Readings:

25. Wednesday, November 2, 2022
   Readings:

26. Friday, November 4, 2022
   *No class meeting - Work on the digital map exercise*

Week 10 – The Turn of the Twentieth Century

27. Monday, November 7, 2022
   *Garveyism and the UNIA in the Caribbean*
   Readings:

28. Wednesday, November 9, 2022
   Readings:
   – Elizabeth Cooper, “The Conundrum of Race: Retooling Inequality,” Chapter 26 in *The Caribbean*
   – Aisha Khan, “Africa, Europe, and Asia in the Making of the 20th-Century Caribbean,” Chapter 27 in *The Caribbean*

29. Friday, November 11, 2022
   *No class meeting - Work on the digital map exercise*
Week 11 – The (North) American Century

30. Monday, November 14, 2022
Reconfiguring the Geopolitical Order
Readings:

31. Wednesday, November 16, 2022
Between Wars and Economic Turmoil
Readings:
  – Anne S. Macpherson, “Toward Decolonization: Impulses, Processes, and Consequences since the 1930s,” Chapter 32 in *The Caribbean*

32. Friday, November 18, 2022
Class Discussion – The Cultural Cold War

Week 12 – The Cold War and National Liberation Struggles

33. Monday, November 21, 2022
The Cold War in the Caribbean
Readings:
  – David Sheinin, “The Caribbean and the Cold War: Between Reform and Revolution,” Chapter 33 in *The Caribbean*
  – Michael Zeuske, “The Long Cuban Revolution,” Chapter 34 in *The Caribbean*

34. Wednesday, November 23, 2022
Between Independence and Colonialism
Readings:
  - Anthony P. Maingot, “Independence and Its Aftermath: Suriname, Trinidad, and Jamaica,” Chapter 35 in *The Caribbean*

35. Friday, November 25, 2022
No class meeting – Thanksgiving break
Week 13 – The Diasporic Caribbean

36. Monday, November 28, 2022
   Elizabeth Acevedo, Clap When You Land, pp. 1-149

37. Wednesday, November 30, 2022
   Elizabeth Acevedo, Clap When You Land, pp. 150-287

38. Friday, December 1, 2022

Week 14 – The Caribbean Today

39. Monday, December 5, 2022
   Movie: Juan of the Dead (Cuba, 2011)

40. Wednesday, December 7, 2022
   Movie: Juan of the Dead (Cuba, 2011)

*Digital Maps Due*

41. Friday, December 9, 2022
   Class Discussion: The Caribbean Today
   Reading:
   - Pedro L. San Miguel, “An Island in the Mirror: The Dominican Republic and Haiti,” Chapter 37 in The Caribbean

Week 15 – The Future of the Caribbean

42. Monday, December 12, 2022
   Documentary: Bad Bunny: How a Bag Boy Became the World’s Biggest Star

43. Wednesday, December 14, 2022
   Class Discussion: The Global Caribbean