This course introduces students to some of the primary canonical writers and texts of Caribbean literature from the mid-twentieth century to the present. Reading widely from the literature of the Spanish-, French-, and English-speaking Caribbean, we shall investigate the common themes, as well as the dissimilarities, that emerge in the writings from these ethnically and linguistically diverse societies. Students will become familiar with influential Caribbean arts movements and be able to define key words and terms associated with literature of the Caribbean.

**Course Objectives:**

- By connecting Caribbean literature in its broadest sense to the historical and political forces that have produced its multi-ethnic societies, this course improves students’ ability to understand how literature and other cultural artifacts both reflect and produce social relationships
- Students will be able to identify and speak knowledgeably about the Caribbean beyond regional stereotypes
• Students will be able to identify some of the major authors in all three major linguistic territories of the region
• Students will be able to identify major historical events and social issues that have shaped and animated Caribbean fiction
• They will be able to define key words and themes in Caribbean literary criticism
• They will learn basic skills in literary analysis—the construction of an argument, the use of literary devices such as irony, inference, metaphor, and so forth
• Students will understand the meaning of Caribbean popular culture in its various forms as forms of art, and not merely as entertainment.
• Improve writing and critical thinking skills
• Sharpen skills working as part of a team through a group project
• Learn to create a virtual analytical narrative using multimedia sources
• Develop skills for creating educational and creative content on social media sites such as Tumblr
• Develop a rhetoric for discussing race that manifests sensitivity and care

Note: This syllabus may be subject to change. The instructor will make students aware of changes via email.

Course Requirements

➢ Required Texts:

1. Rhys, Jean. Wide Sargasso Sea
2. Naipaul, V.S. Miguel Street
3. Lovelace, Earl. The Dragon Can’t Dance
4. Danticat, Edwidge. Breath, Eyes, Memory

These books are available at the Rutgers-Newark bookstore, online at Amazon.com, and should also be at most libraries. All other texts are posted on the course’s Canvas site.

➢ Office Hours

My office hours are for you. Stop by with any questions you have about assignments, readings, classroom discussions, other pertinent topics, or just drop by to say hello. The only thing I discourage is visiting to cover material from a missed class period; for that, consult fellow classmates. All else is warmly welcomed. This is an open and safe space for continuous dialogue, and there is no such thing as a “stupid” question. If your schedule conflicts with my office hours, we can set up an appointment at a mutually agreeable time.

Regarding emails, I will try and get back to students within 24 hours (many times, sooner) Mondays-Fridays. However, I may not respond to emails on Saturdays and Sundays.
➢ **Grade Breakdown:**

Attendance and Participation: 10%
Tumblr Journal: 20%
Exam: 30%
Final Pt. 1: Group Project: 20%
Final Pt. 2: Individual Essay: 20%

➢ **Attendance**

Students must attend each class meeting having thoroughly read all assigned readings and prepared to discuss the material in class. Students must bring copies of readings to class (printed or electronic).

Students may miss class three times without penalty. Missing more than three classes will negatively impact your final grade. You should be careful as to how you use these absences. If, for example, you use all three absences early in the semester just because you feel like taking the days off, you will be penalized for missing a fourth class even if you are ill and have proper documentation. Therefore, I recommend that you do not use your absences carelessly. The only exception for missing class more than three times is if you can provide proper documentation for all absences. However, these extreme circumstances will require us to meet and discuss your progress in the class.

➢ **Participation**

You are evaluated in part on your contributions to the discussion. This is not only about quantity of participation, but also about thoughtful participation: selective comments that really move discussion forward and suggest careful engagement with the texts and questions under consideration. Active listening is also part of participating. Being present in the classroom, sharing ideas, and doing your best to make the time we have together productive is far more important than recording and memorizing what is said in lectures.

I do expect you to respect and engage with your peers’ interests, as they can inform and expand your own in valuable ways. I will take note when you respond thoughtfully to other students, when you are open to different perspectives and points of view, when you call classmates by name, when you contribute to the classroom’s energy with alert body language and responsive gestures. Students who routinely contribute to class discussion, show initiative in engaging with the material, and demonstrate their active listening will receive high marks for participation. A critical part of discussions is the posing of thoughtful questions.

Many of the topics this course covers are sensitive and require intellectually mature and respectful participants. Being respectful and open-minded is the best way to learn and grow. Individual and intellectual growth should always be goals while taking courses in college. If you ever feel disrespected or uncomfortable during course discussions, you should not hesitate to contact the instructor.

➢ **Tumblr Journal**

Each student is required to start a Tumblr account dedicated to this class; it will function as a journal of sorts. **Every other Wednesday by 10:00 AM** (before class), you should add three posts to your Tumblr page. The **first** post must speak to your interpretation of the week’s assigned texts and how they relate to
the themes of the course. The second post must draw a connection between this week’s readings and a previously assigned reading from a weekTumblr posts are not due (such as the previous week). The third post must connect this week’s readings to an outside media source such as a song, artwork, movie, tv show, news or journal article, short story, poem, novel, current event, legal or historical document, etc. In the third post, you must be sure to explain how your chosen media source relates to the week’s readings and its themes. All three posts must be accompanied by an image or video clip that relates to the written content of your post (for post #3, your chosen media source will suffice).

You are required to create your Tumblr account and follow my course account (handle: drlombardi) by Wednesday, September 8 at 10:00 AM. I will create a list with everybody’s handles and post it to Canvas. Ideally, you will follow and interact with each other.

I have marked on the course schedule which Wednesdays Tumblr posts are due.

- **Exam**

A take-home exam will be due on Monday, November 22 at 10:00 AM via Canvas. The exam is worth 30% of the final grade and will consist of 2-3 short essay questions, which you will be given roughly one week prior to the due date. All responses must be written in paragraph form with complete sentences.

**Note:** I will form exam questions based off of the course’s readings and visual content and class lectures and conversations. It is crucial that when you are absent, you ask your classmates (and not the instructor) what you missed in class. I may show short clips or provide handouts during class, and you are responsible for this information on the final exam. In addition, an exceptional dialogue between students and the instructor may appear in question form on the final exam.

- **Final Project Pt. 1: Group Presentation**

Students will work in groups of four to prepare a 10–15-minute presentation on a topic related to the current state of Caribbean literature in the world. The presentations will be given to the class on Wednesday, December 8 and Monday, December 13. I will give detailed instructions and assign groups on Wednesday, November 3. The instructions will include a list of available topics—each topic can be covered by one group only, so they will go on a first-come, first-served basis. A visual component (such as PowerPoint) is required.

The group presentation is worth 20% of your final grade. All members of the group will receive the same grade for this assignment (I will make few exceptions). It is the group’s responsibility to divvy up the workload as fairly as possible. I expect groups to meet in person or via Zoom several times before the actual presentation.

- **Final Project Pt. 2: Individual Essay**

You are required to write an essay related to the topic covered in your group project. Whereas you will be graded as a group for the presentation, you will be graded individually for the essay. It is worth an additional 20% of your final grade. This is due via email during our scheduled Final Exam time: Monday, December 20 at 11:45 AM. This essay will give you the opportunity to expand your individual ideas on the topic while honing them into a single argument. I will give you detailed instructions for this essay assignment on Wednesday, November 3. Essays should be 3-5 pages (no less than 3 full pages and no more than 5 full pages) and must be written in 12-point Times New Roman or Cambria font, be double-spaced, and have 1 in. margins on all sides.
Notes on Late Assignments and Course Engagement

In the event that you know an assignment will be late, you should inform me at least three days prior to the assignment due date. If I consider your reasoning legitimate, I can choose not to penalize for lateness (this is completely up to my discretion). If you are ill or unable to complete an assignment due to a serious family matter, you should provide me with appropriate documentation, such as a doctor’s note.

You should have a plan to ensure that you will have access to the internet on a daily basis throughout the semester. Technical problems, failed internet connections, and computer crashes are not excuses for not completing course work or submitting assignments late. You should plan for what you will do if you have any technical problems.

Policy on Academic Integrity (Cheating and Plagiarism)

Rutgers University treats cheating and plagiarism as serious offenses. The standard minimum penalties for students who cheat or plagiarize include failure of the course, disciplinary probation, and a formal warning that further cheating will be grounds for expulsion from the University. If I find that you have used other people’s ideas (e.g., Wikipedia, Amazon reviews, book jacket descriptions, etc.), I will not accept the assignment because I will not be able to consider it your own work. You will get a failing grade (0 points) for that assignment and will not be able to make it up.

You are expected to be familiar with and adhere to the Academic Integrity Policy, available at http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Any use of the ideas or words of another person without proper acknowledgment of credit will result in penalties up to and possibly including a course grade of F. Likewise for cheating on exams and quizzes. Note that the uncited use of uncopyrighted material such as Wikipedia entries still constitutes plagiarism.

The department REQUIRES that the following honor pledge is written and signed on every exam, paper, or other major course assignment that is submitted for grading: “On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this examination (assignment).”

Accommodation and Support Statement

Rutgers University Newark (RU-N) is committed to the creation of an inclusive and safe learning environment for all students and the University as a whole. RU-N has identified the following resources to further the mission of access and support:

For Individuals with Disabilities: The Office of Disability Services (ODS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter barriers due to disability. Once a student has completed the ODS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and reasonable accommodations are determined to be necessary and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be provided. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at ods.rutgers.edu. Contact ODS at (973)353-5375 or via email at ods@newark.rutgers.edu.

For Individuals who are Pregnant: The Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance is available to assist with any concerns or potential accommodations related to pregnancy. Students may contact the Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance at (973) 353-1906 or via email at TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu.
**For Absence Verification:** The Office of the Dean of Students can provide assistance for absences related to religious observance, emergency or unavoidable conflict (e.g., illness, personal or family emergency, etc.). Students should refer to [University Policy 10.2.7](#) for information about expectations and responsibilities. The Office of the Dean of Students can be contacted by calling (973) 353-5063 or emailing deanofstudents@newark.rutgers.edu.

**For Individuals with temporary conditions/injuries:** The Office of the Dean of Students can assist students who are experiencing a temporary condition or injury (e.g., broken or sprained limbs, concussions, or recovery from surgery). Students experiencing a temporary condition or injury should submit a request using the following link: [https://temporaryconditions.rutgers.edu](https://temporaryconditions.rutgers.edu).

**For English as a Second Language (ESL):** The Program in American Language Studies (PALS) can support students experiencing difficulty in courses due to English as a Second Language (ESL) and can be reached by emailing PALS@newark.rutgers.edu to discuss potential supports.

**For Gender or Sex-Based Discrimination or Harassment:** The Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance can assist students who are experiencing any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, or stalking. Students can report an incident to the Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance by calling (973) 353-1906 or emailing TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu. Incidents may also be reported by using the following link: tinyurl.com/RUNReportingForm. For more information, students should refer to the University’s Student Policy Prohibiting Sexual Harassment, Sexual Violence, Relationship Violence, Stalking and Related Misconduct located at [http://compliance.rutgers.edu/title-ix/about-title-ix/title-ix-policies/](http://compliance.rutgers.edu/title-ix/about-title-ix/title-ix-policies/).

**For support related to interpersonal violence:** The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance can provide any student with confidential support. The office is a confidential resource and does not have an obligation to report information to the University’s Title IX Coordinator. Students can contact the office by calling (973) 353-1918 or emailing run.vpva@rutgers.edu. There is also a confidential text-based line available to students; students can text (973) 339-0734 for support.

**For Crisis and Concerns:** The Campus Awareness Response and Education (CARE) Team works with students in crisis to develop a support plan to address personal situations that might impact their academic performance. Students, faculty and staff may contact the CARE Team by using the following link: [tinyurl.com/RUNCARE](https://tinyurl.com/RUNCARE) or emailing careteam@rutgers.edu.

**For Stress, Worry, or Concerns about Well-being:** The Counseling Center has confidential therapists available to support students. Students should reach out to the Counseling Center to schedule an appointment: counseling@newark.rutgers.edu or (973) 353-5805. If you are not quite ready to make an appointment with a therapist but are interested in self-help, check out TAO at Rutgers-Newark for an easy, web-based approach to self-care and support: [https://tinyurl.com/RUN-TAO](https://tinyurl.com/RUN-TAO).

**For emergencies,** call 911 or contact Rutgers University Police Department (RUPD) by calling (973) 353-5111.

The **Writing Center** has remote tutoring available: [http://www.ncas.rutgers.edu/writingcenter](http://www.ncas.rutgers.edu/writingcenter)

For more resources at Rutgers, Newark, visit: [https://myrun.newark.rutgers.edu/covid19](https://myrun.newark.rutgers.edu/covid19)
Course Schedule:

Wednesday, September 1

[Course Introductions]

Monday, September 3

[NO CLASS – Labor Day]

Wednesday, September 8

Walcott, Derek. “Ruins of the Great House” and Mahadai Das. “They Came in Ships”

[Tumblr posts due]

Monday, September 13

Walcott, Derek. “A Far Cry from Africa”

Bennett, Louise. “Back to Africa?”
Wednesday, September 15

Césaire, Aimé. *Notebook of a Return to the Native Land* (excerpt).

Monday, September 20

Rhys, Jean. *Wide Sargasso Sea*. p. 15 – 76

Wednesday, September 22

[Tumblr posts due]

Monday, September 27


Wednesday, September 29


Monday, October 4

Naipaul, V.S. *Miguel Street*. p. 9 – 78

Wednesday, October 6

Naipaul, V.S. *Miguel Street*. p. 79 – 117
[Tumblr posts due]

Monday, October 11

Naipaul, V.S. *Miguel Street*. p. 118 – 178

Wednesday, October 13

Naipaul, V.S. *Miguel Street*. p. 179 – 222

Monday, October 18

Lovelace, Earl. *The Dragon Can’t Dance*. p. 9 – 76

Wednesday, October 20

Lovelace, Earl. *The Dragon Can’t Dance*. p. 77 – 115
[Tumblr posts due]
Monday, October 25


Wednesday, October 27


Monday, November 1

Kincaid, Jamaica. “Girl”

Wednesday, November 3

Cliff, Michelle. “If I Could Write This in Fire, I Would Write This in Fire”
[Tumblr posts due]
[Instructions for Final Group Project and Individual Essay Distributed/Groups Formed]

Monday, November 8

Miller, Kei, “A Psalm for Gay Boys”

Wednesday, November 10

Laviera, Tato. “my graduation speech” and “AmeRícan”

Monday, November 15

Danticat, Edwidge. *Breath, Eyes, Memory*. p. 3 – 49

Wednesday, November 17

Danticat, Edwidge. *Breath, Eyes, Memory*. p. 50 – 76
[Tumblr posts due]

Monday, November 22

[NO CLASS – Take-Home Exam due via Canvas at 10:00 AM]

Wednesday, November 24

[NO CLASS – Thanksgiving]
Monday, November 29


Wednesday, December 1

Danticat, Edwidge. *Breath, Eyes, Memory*. p. 201 – 234

Monday, December 6

[NO CLASS – Work on Group Presentations]

Wednesday, December 8

[Group Presentations]

Monday, December 13

[Group Presentations]

Monday, December 20

[Essay due via email at 11:45 AM]