

Sophister Module Description Template 2024-25

Writing from the Creole Americas

Full Name: Writing from the Creole Americas

Short Name: Writing from the Creole Americas

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ECTS Weighting: 10

Semester Taught: HT 2025

Year: SS

Module Content

Engaging with the regional character of creoleness and creolization, this module looks at the cross-cultural connections in literary and artistic production in the creole regions of the Americas. Considering in particular the Caribbean, the American South and South America, the module rethinks definitions of national literatures along regional and hemispheric lines. Ranging from the late 19th into the 21st century, texts include poetry, novels, short fiction, travel writing, as well as theoretical and visual engagements with creoleness.

Assessment Details:

- 1 piece of close reading (1,000-1,500 words) – counting 30% of the overall mark
- 1 essay (4,000-4,500 words) – counting 70% of the overall mark

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the module students will

- be familiar with theoretical and thematic debates on creoleness and creolization
- have a clear sense of how creole cultures have historically related to issues of migration, race, class and gender
- be able to critically reflect on the relationship between literary texts and the historical situation of creole cultures
- be able to produce a piece of critical writing on any aspect of creole literatures from the Americas

Learning Aims:

This module engages with creole literatures from the late 19th to the 21st century, with particular emphasis on historical and thematic connections between texts. Central themes include the following:

- theories of creolization
- regional varieties of creole cultures and how they manifest in literature
- creoleness as a distinct cultural and literary formation
- visual and multimedia engagements with creole identity

Content:

- Kate Chopin, *The Awakening*
- Lafcadio Hearn, excerpts from *Inventing New Orleans* and *Two Years in the French West Indies*
- Patrick Chamoiseau (et al), "In Praise of Creoleness," *Callaloo* 13:4 (1990): 886-909; Édouard Glissant, from *Poetics of Relation*: "Errantry, Exile" (copies provided)
- Jean Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea*
- Pauline Melville, "Erzulie," in *The Migration of Ghosts* (copies provided)
- Kei Miller, *The Cartographer Tries to Map a Way to Zion*
- Joscelyn Gardner, *White Skin, Black Skin: Speaking the Unspeakable* (exhibition catalogue, copies provided)
- Antonio Benítez-Rojo, excerpts from *The Repeating Island*; Oswald de Andrade, "The Cannibalist Manifesto" (copies provided)
- Gabriel García Márquez, *Of Love and Other Demons*
- Jorge Luis Borges, selected stories (copies provided)