This course aims at exposing themes, commonalities, and discontinuities in the history of the French imperial project and its consequences. To what extent did empire represent the culmination of other political, cultural, and intellectual projects? How did empire arise as a response to the political upheavals of national identity formation? Drawing on examples from numerous disciplines, a wide array of theoretical perspectives, and various geographical contexts, the course readings introduce central themes in recent scholarship on French colonialism.

Sept. 4: Introduction

Sept. 11: Empire and the Ancien Régime
Readings:
Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, *Africans in Colonial Louisiana*, 1-155
Megan Vaughan, *Creating the Creole Island*, xi-252
Christopher Morris, “How to Prepare Buffalo, and Other Things the French Taught Indians about Nature” [BLACKBOARD]

Sept. 18: Revolution, Slavery, and Emancipation?
Readings:
Laurent Dubois, *Avengers of the New World*
Megan Vaughan, *Creating the Creole Island*, 253-276

Sept. 25: Empire and the Legacy of Slavery?
Reading:

Oct. 2: Professionalization and Bureaucracy
Reading:
Patricia M.E. Lorcin, *Imperial Identities: Stereotyping, Prejudice and Race in Colonial Algeria*

Oct. 9: Memory and Representation
Reading:
Robert Aldrich, *Vestiges of the Colonial Empire in France.*

**Oct. 16: Art, Aesthetics, Empire**  
**Reading:**  

**Oct. 23: Identity and the Inter-War Years**  
**Reading:**  
Gary Wilder, *The French Imperial Nation-State: Negritude and Colonial Humanism Between the Two World Wars*

**Oct. 30: Vichy and the Fascism of Empire**  
**Reading:**  
Eric Jennings, *Vichy in the Tropics: Pétain’s National Revolution in Madagascar, Guadeloupe, and Indochina, 1940-1944*

Nov. 6: Warfare, Decolonization, and the Marketing of Independence?  
**Readings:**  
Todd Shepherd, *The Invention of Decolonization: The Algerian War and the Remaking of France*

Nov. 13: Theories of Identity  
**Reading:**  
Jean Bernabé, *Patrick Chamoiseau, Raphaël Confiant. Eloge de la Créolité*  
James Le Sueur, *Uncivil War: Intellectuals and Identity Politics During the Decolonization of Algeria, 32-62, 98-146, 239-285 [BLACKBOARD]*

Nov. 20: Empire at Home (I)  
**Reading:**  
Dominic Thomas, *Black France: Colonialism, Immigration, and Transnationalism*

Nov. 27: Empire at Home (II)  
**Reading:**  
Paul A. Silverstein, *Algeria in France: Transpolitics, Race, and Nation*

Dec. 4: Empire at Home (III)  
**Reading:**  
Jean-Loup Amselle, *Affirmative Exclusion: Cultural Pluralism and the Rule of Custom in France*  
Françoise Gaspard and Farhad Khosrokhavar, *Le foulard et la République* (La Découverte, 1995), 34-69, 177-203. [BLACKBOARD]

**ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING**  
1) **CLASS PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE. 25%**

   a) All students are expected to arrive at discussion section prepared to contribute to our
conversation about the readings; attendance is required.

EVERY WEEK, BY 9:00 P.M. THE EVENING BEFORE DISCUSSION, every student must post two discussion questions drawn from the readings to the Blackboard site. Questions should aim at provoking discussion, rather than soliciting answers to factual queries.

b) Every student must present one week’s readings. In a short discussion of no more than five minutes, you should outline salient themes and discontinuities in the text(s) and provide rigorous avenues for inquiry in our discussion.

2) CRITICAL READING: 25%

Each student must offer a critical reading of one or more of the additional texts listed below. In a reading response of no more than five pages, please substantively engage with the text(s) selected. What aspects of the work prove methodologically problematic or analytically inconsistent? Which elements of the argument present compelling avenues for future research or theoretical inquiry?

3) PAPER: 50%

As a final exercise, please prepare a 15-20 pages research paper on a relevant topic in the history of the French colonial empire. I expect papers to:

a) demonstrate a mastery of relevant theoretical material;

b) engage in a substantive manner with works from other intellectual traditions or disciplines;

c) offer a particular perspective on one (or more) of the fundamental questions in the emerging field(s) of Francophone Studies.

Books available for Purchase at the NYU Bookstore:

- Bernabé, Jean; Chamoiseau, Patrick; and Confiant, Raphaël. *Eloge de la Créolité*
- Dubois, Laurent. *Avengers of the New World: The Story of the Haitian Revolution.*
- Lorcin, Patricia M.E. *Imperial Identities: Stereotyping, Prejudice and Race in Colonial Algeria.*
- Silverstein, Paul A. *Algeria in France: Transpolitics, Race, and Nation.*

**Suggested Supplemental Readings for Assignment #2:**


