

Haiti Beyond the News

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The lifestyles, customs and culture of Haitians are the focal points of a new Latin American studies course, "Haitian Culture and Society," being taught this semester by Wedsly Guerrier, visiting assistant professor and native of Haiti.



Wedsly Guerrier, a native of Haiti, is a visiting assistant professor teaching courses on Haitian culture and Haitian Creole language. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

The course gives students an opportunity to look beyond what they see on television and participate in discussions on topics ranging from politics to religion, media and literature.

Haiti is often viewed by the outside world through a lens that misrepresents the reality of the country, says Guerrier, who is an associate of the Tulane [Stone Center for Latin American Studies](#).

"I expect the students to learn about the lives and the struggles of the Haitian people," says Guerrier, who also teaches a Haitian Creole language course at Tulane. "They are studying in depth some of the problems of Haiti and what has been done so far to help this nation."

Using *A Haiti Anthology: LibÃ¨te* as a text, students in the class are exploring Haiti's music, cuisine and contributions to the arts.

Guerrier moved to the United States to attend college. That is when he first noticed the narrow international news coverage of his country. When reported at all, the news about Haiti focused on the poorest areas of the country, leaving the impression that there is nothing more, he says.

“We are going to look at nice neighborhoods and wonderful places that they don't really show on television when they talk about Haiti,” says Guerrier. “There are beautiful homes and wealthy Haitians that people never hear about.”

In the final assignment of the semester, students will be asked to think critically about the problems of Haiti and propose detailed solutions.