

**University of Puerto Rico
Rio Piedras Campus
College of Humanities
English Department**

English 3285: Puerto Rican Writers in the US

Professor: Nemesio Gil, Ph.D.

Credit Hours: 45 hours/3 credits

Time: Tue./Thur. 4:00 p.m.-5:20 p.m.

Email: nemesio.gil@upr.edu

Office Hrs.: By appointment

Course Description: Study of the literature by Puerto Rican authors writing in English in the United States with special emphasis on the development of themes, techniques and language.

*Course approved for General Education literature requirement

Course Target: The main goal of this course is to give students an introductory visualization of literature, film, music, and visual arts (re)presenting, describing, and theorizing the multiple points of view that Puerto Rican texts written in English (and in Spanish when necessary) present as part of the continuous search to ground a strong national and international identity in a postcolonial world. The Puerto Rican experience on the island as a “colony” of the United States and in the continental United States reflects a solid/shifting paradigm grounded on tradition and constant movement. Therefore, issues of race, ethnicity, gender, language, religion, migration, economics, and politics, among others, will be addressed in their textual and visual spaces. The course hence intends to dissect how Puerto Rican (and Nuyorican?) writers, musicians, and visual artists have dealt with these issues through the production of their seminal works of art.

Textbooks:

Boricuas: Influential Puerto Rican Writings—An Anthology (Ballantine Books, 1995), Roberto Santiago, ed.

Breaking Ground: Anthology of Puerto Rican Women Writers in New York 1980-2012 (Editorial Campana, 2012), Myrna Nieves, ed.

Puerto Rican Writers at Home in the USA: An Anthology (Open Hand Publ., 1991), Faythe Turner, ed.

Methods of Evaluation Table:

DAILY READINGS AND DISCUSSION	60 pts.
FINAL RESEARCH	30 pts.
ATTENDANCE	10 pts.
Total:	100 PTS.

Grading System: A, B, C, D, F.

***NOTE: For students with disabilities with official OAPI letter, there will be differentiated methods of evaluation (evaluación diferenciada para estudiantes con necesidades especiales con carta oficial OAPI).

Methods of Evaluation Summary:

DAILY READINGS AND DISCUSSION (60 pts.)

Please be ready to discuss your homework readings and participate in active discussion every day. This is not a lecture hall course. It is imperative students verbalize their research and critical analysis of texts in class and during the whole semester. It is expected of students to participate in the academic debate that will take place IN EVERY CLASS.

RESEARCH (40 pts.)

Students will take the Colección Puertorriqueña workshop at the Lazaro Library in order to prepare for a final presentation based on original and individual research to be presented the last two weeks of class. The presentation will be on Power Point with a written component. Details on content and format in class.

ATTENDANCE (10 pts.)

Attendance is required and crucial for the successful completion of the semester. See “Rules of the Game” for specific guidelines.

****Los estudiantes que reciban servicios de Rehabilitación Vocacional deben comunicarse con el/la profesor/a al inicio del semestre para planificar el acomodo razonable y equipo asistido necesario conforme a las recomendaciones de la Oficina de Asuntos para las Personas con Impedimento (OAPI) del Decanato de Estudiantes.**

RULES OF THE GAME

The syllabus is a contract between professor and students. The following rules are firm and emphatic in order to safeguard fairness to students who show daily responsible and hardworking attitude. All students are therefore to be evaluated on equal terms for the satisfactory development of the course, respect toward professors, classmates, and co-workers.

1. **Please, be on time.** The professor always gives until 4:05pm to arrive for those students who take classes in buildings that are far away from Humanities. At 4:06 pm, 5 pts. off will be deducted for the first time a student is late to class starting on the SECOND WEEK of the COURSE. After that, it will be 2 pts. off per incident. At the end of the semester, the total will be deducted from the course’s TOTAL FINAL GRADE.

2. If you come in late after the set 5 mins. time frame, please tell the professor at the end of that specific course day. Otherwise, you will be marked as ABSENT on the roll call.

3. Rules #1 and #2 applies ALSO to Chemistry students or any other major engaged in laboratory experiments, rehearsals, full or part-time jobs in or outside the university premises, etc. If you are from Natural Sciences, please be advised that leaving regularly 30 mins. or more before the day’s classwork is over in order to take “Departamentales” or to finish laboratory experiments should be taken into consideration before taking the course. All students are required to complete the course’s contact hours.

4. ABSOLUTELY NO electronic devices (cellular, laptop, tablet, etc.) will be allowed during class. They must be TURNED OFF and in your back bags AT ALL TIMES. A deduction of 5 pts. from your TOTAL FINAL GRADE will apply automatically PER EVENT if you are caught sending messages or with your device at eyesight. Send and/or receive calls and texts before, during the break, or after the class has finished, please. NO EXCEPTIONS. **Curiously, it is precisely during class when cellulators start to receive an avalanche of texts and/or emergency calls.**

5. You are here to learn and develop your critical, writing, and oral skills. Take advantage of this great opportunity to read, do research, and share it in assertive critical analysis in EVERY CLASS. This is not a lecture hall course; it is an active critical analysis and oral discussion course.

6. There might be certain subjects discussed in class regarding race, ethnicity, gender, politics, society, economics, history, age, religion, etc. Please, analyze and discuss them in an active, mature and respectful manner, as part of the academic experience. Never use it as a platform to offend others. All points of view will be respected and explored.

7. A limit of 2 ABSENCES during the semester with or without written notice from a doctor, special event, etc. Afterwards, there will be a deduction of 5 pts. (per ABSENCE) from the TOTAL FINAL GRADE of the course.

8. Respect your classmates, the professor, and the institution's property.

9. Plagiarism is not an accepted behavior. Give credit to your sources in class and during research. INTEGRITY will secure you a successful life now and in the future.

10. An alternative study modality of 11.25 hours may be employed during the semester and completed online, as it is allowed in every course. **This will include a visit to the Museum of History, Modern Museum, and Casa Escuté in Carolina, P.R. substituting TWO DAYS = 2 hrs. 40 minutes of contact hours. Details in class.**

Thematic Course Outline (Subject to change)

AUGUST

Tue. AUG. 21

Introduction and syllabus

Discussion: "P.R. Literature in English Issue" and "Nuyorican vs Puerto Rican"

Thur. AUG. 23

READING: "Cartas en Jíbaro English" by Ernesto Ruiz

Discussion: "Jíbaro Definitions" + "Politics (P.R. Status) and Migration"

Screening 1: "The Real Housewives of Miramar" (Youtube)

Tue. AUG 28
SE REUNEN LAS CLASES DE LOS LUNES

Thur. AUG. 30

READING: From *The Roots of Caribbean Identity: Language, Race, and Ecology*
by Peter A. Roberts.

SEPTEMBER

MUSEUM VISIT WEEK (OPTION 1)

Tue. SEPT. 4

READING: "Puerto Rican Nationalism" by Pedro Albizu Campos
(English version: *Boricuas*, pp. 27-29 and Spanish version:
<https://puertoricoentresiglos.wordpress.com/2010/01/27/albizu-el-nacionalismo-puertorriqueno/>)

Thur. SEPT. 6

READING: "To the Persecuted" by José de Diego (*Boricuas*, p. 7),
"A un Perseguido" por José de Diego (PDF file)
Screening: "En la Brecha, José de Diego" (Youtube):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wETg-sq-62U>

MUSEUM VISIT WEEK (OPTION 2)

Tue. SEPT. 11

READING: "Nuyorican and Diasporican..." by Jorge Duany (PDF file)
Screening 1: "Nuyorican vs Puerto Rican" (Youtube)

Thur. SEPT. 13

READING: "Introduction" from *Boricuas* by Roberto Santiago (pp. xiii-xxii),
"Boricua" by José Ángel Figueroa (*Puerto Rican Writers...* pp. 221-224)

Tue. SEPT. 18

READING: "Black and Latino" by Roberto Santiago (*Boricuas*, pp. 93-95),
"Nigger-Reecan Blues" by Willie Perdomo (*Boricuas*, pp. 91-93)
Screening: "Willie Perdomo in New York" (Youtube)
Discussion: "The Caliban Myth" and Roberto Fernández Retamar

Thur. SEPT. 20

READING: From "Introduction: Feminism" in *The Norton Anthology...* (Ed. 2010)
Discussion: "Feminism or Feminisms: White, Latina, Black...?"

Tue. SEPT. 25

READING: "Here" by Sandra Maria Esteves (*Boricuas*, p. 3),
"Excerpt from *Uptown Thief*" by Aya de León:
<https://ayadeleon.wordpress.com/about-aya/>
<https://books.google.com/books?id=HU3ZCgAAQBAJ&printsec=frontcover&dq=aya+de+leon&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKewjTut3jpY3bAhUL74MKHbZOC3wQ6AEIPDAE#v=onepage&q=aya%20de%20leon&f=false>
Screening: "Aya de León Interview" (Youtube)

Thur. SEPT. 27

“Quinceañera” and “Women Who Love Angels” by Judith Ortiz Cofer:

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/judith-ortiz-cofer>

“Ode to the Diasporican (pa’ mi gente) by Mariposa:

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/mariposa>

<https://genius.com/Mariposa-maria-teresa-fernandez-ode-to-the-diasporican-pa-mi-gente-annotated>

Screening: “Mariposa performs” (Youtube)

OCTOBER

Tue. OCT. 2

READING: “Nuyorican and Diasporican Literature and Culture” (pp 1-8) by Jorge Duany

Thur. OCT. 4

READING: “Nuyorican and Diasporican Literature and Culture” (pp. 9-16) by Jorge Duany

Tue. OCT. 9

READING: *How to Know the Puerto Ricans* – Jesus Colón (p. 20-22)

READING: *Island of Lost Causes* – Esmeralda Santiago (p. 22-24)

Thur. OCT. 11

READING: *Child of the Americas* – Aurora Levins Morales (p. 79)

READING: *Ay, Ay, Ay for the Kinky Black Woman* – Julia de Burgos (80-81)

Tue. OCT. 16

READING: “Looking Good” – Freddie Prinze (p. 184-189)

Thur. OCT. 18

Skype Interview with Prof. Omar Rivera from Harlem’s Puerto Rican Institute

Tue. OCT. 23

LAZARO P.R. COLLECTION WORKSHOP

Thur. OCT. 25

LAZARO P.R. COLLECTION WORKSHOP

Tue. OCT. 30

READING: Braschi’s biography, “Empire of Dreams/El imperio de los sueños,” and “La pastoral; o la inquisición de los recuerdos”:

<https://gianninabraschi.wordpress.com/about/>

NOVEMBER

Thur. NOV. 1

TBA

Tue. NOV. 6

TBA

Thur. NOV. 8

Screening and discussion:

The Last Colony Part 1 (Youtube)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zz830ga1dUs>

Tue. NOV. 13

Screening and discussion:

The Last Colony Part 1 (Youtube)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zz830ga1dUs>

Thur. NOV. 15

Museum Day Alternative Modality Voucher

Tue. NOV. 20

Museum Day Alternative Modality Voucher

Thur. NOV. 22

THANKSGIVING!

Tue. NOV. 27

GROUP 1: Final Oral Presentation

Thur. NOV. 29

GROUP 2: Final Oral Presentation

DECEMBER

Tue. DEC. 4

GROUP 3: Final Oral Presentation

Thur. DEC. 6

GROUP 4: Final Oral Presentation

END OF SEMESTER