

University of Puerto Rico  
Río Piedras Campus  
College of Humanities  
Department of English

**Course Title:** US Latino/a Literature

**Code:** English 4256

**Credit Hours:** 45 hours/ 3 credits

**Dr. Carmen Haydée Rivera Vega**

**Office 211, Janer Building** (also online through Google Meets and emails)

**Office Hours:** MW 8:00-8:30 am; 11:30 am -1:00 pm; 2:30 – 4:00 pm or by appointment online

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### **Course Description**

A study of the literature produced by Latino/a writers in the United States and its contribution to a multifaceted American literary tradition. The term *Latino/a* is used as an indicator of cultural identity and as a larger rubric that unites authors from Puerto Rican, Mexican, Cuban, and Dominican descent born and/or raised in the United States. **This course will be taught in online modality.**

### **Objectives**

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. situate selected texts written by Latinos/as born and/or raised in the United States (and writing predominantly but not exclusively in English) within a transnational and historical perspective;
2. scrutinize the politics of representation by exploring issues of race, class, gender, and hybridity;
3. comprehend how cultural difference is reconfigured in the texts from a Latino/a perspective;
4. examine the effects of immigration/migration, bilingualism, and biculturalism on the authors' works and how these issues relate to the process of ethnic literary representation;
5. analyze the texts' rhetorical and aesthetic qualities that include innovative literary techniques used by the writers (mixing of genres and languages in a single work, temporal/spatial fragmentation, free indirect discourse, etc.);
6. conduct research (library, internet, etc.) related to the field of Latino/a studies that will help in the development of ideas, critical/theoretical analyses, and research papers;
7. strengthen oral and writing skills by working on assignments (class presentations, essays, response pieces, final term paper, class projects, among others) that incorporate research and exhibit insightful contributions to the larger discussion of Latino/a literature and its contexts.

### **Course Outline**

#### **Weeks 1-2: Introduction – Historical and Cultural Context**

**(6 hours)**

TED Talk: *The Danger a Single Story* – Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

Introduction to Alicia Pousada's *Being Bilingual in Borinquen*

Bill Santiago's *Pardon My Spanglish*.

Introductory essays from Ilan Stavans' *The Norton Anthology of Latino Literature*, among others

Discussion of thematic concerns found in the writing: immigration/migration; race, racism/discrimination; gender roles; assimilation/acculturation; development of a cultural consciousness; hybridity/*mestizaje*

**Week 3-6: Mexican American Literature****(12 hours)**

Selected entries from *The Norton Anthology of Latino Literature* edited by Ilan Stavans (Bartolomé de las Casas, Alvar Nuñez, Garcilaso de la Vega, M.A. Ruiz de Burton, Leonor Villeags, Luis Leal, Cesar Chavez, Tomas Rivera, Rudolfo Anaya, John Rechy, Luis Valdez, Gloria Anzladúa, Richard Rodriguez, Cherrie Moraga, among others) and selections from the webpage.

Documentary Film - *Struggles in the Fields*

**Weeks 7-9: Puerto Rican Writers in the US****(9 hours)**

Selections from anthology (R.E. Betances, E.M. Hostos, Lola Rodriguez de Tio, Bernardo Vega, Arturo A. Schomburg, Julia de Burgos, Jesus Colon, Pedro Juan Soto, Judith Ortiz Cofer, Pedro Pietri, Aurora Levins Morales, Piri Tomas, Miguel Piñero, Iris Morales, Pablo Guzman, Esmeralda Santiago, Giannina Braschi, Abraham Rodriguez, José Rivera, Tato Laviera, Willie Perdomo, Mariposa, among others) and selections form the webpage.

Documentary Film - *Every Child is Born a Poet*

Documentary Film - *Pa'lante, Young Lords*

**Weeks 10-12: Cuban American Literature****(9 hours)**

Critical essays by Isabel Alvarez Borland and José Quiroga

Selections from anthology (Jose Marti, Heberto Padilla, Reinaldo Arenas, Pablo Medina, Oscar Hijuelos, Elias Miguel Muñoz, Ruth Behar, Achy Obejas, Cristina García, Dolores Prida, among others) and selections from the webpage

**Weeks 13-14: Dominican American Literature****(6 hours)**

Critical essays by Silvio Torres-Saillant

Selections from anthology (Julia Alvarez, Junot Díaz, Loida Maritza Perez, among others) and selections from the webpage

**Week 15: Class Discussion Summary and Final Exam or Research Project****(3 hours)****Teaching Techniques**

This course includes lectures by professor, assigned readings, group and individual discussions, oral presentations, assignments, forums, research, and writing both in synchronic and asynchronous online modes. Films and/or documentaries will also be included to complement class assignments. Occasionally a guest speaker will be invited, or an out-of-class activity will be required.

**Required Resources**

Students should have access to a computer and internet services, the UPR Moodle platform, the chrivera-upr.com website, electronic searches, and on-line databases, among others.

**Evaluation Techniques**

The final grade includes the following course requirements:

Exam 1	20%
Exam 2	20%
Article Analysis and Oral or Video Presentation	20%
Final Exam or Research Project	20%
<b>Class Grade*</b>	<b>20%</b>
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Final Grade	100%

**\*Important evaluation factors that make up class grade:**

1. Attendance and Punctuality – determined by your log-in to class sessions during class time (synchronic) or when instructed by the professor (asynchronic). Each absence will deduct **3 points** from your **class grade**. A sequence of late arrivals will also affect your **class grade with points deducted**. Please make sure to be ready to log on **5-10 minutes** prior to any synchronic session and to complete your work during the established date and time of any asynchronic session.

2. Participation – determined by your oral contributions to discussions in synchronic classes (Google Meets) and to your written contributions in assignments and forums in asynchronic class sessions. Participation is an important part of your class grade since it demonstrates knowledge and analysis of reading assignments prior to and during the class session as well as your commitment to interactive discussions (both synchronic and asynchronic) with classmates and the professor.

**\*Both attendance and participation make up 20% of your class grade.**

3. Responsibility. NO MAKE UP WORK will be accepted. You are responsible for completing and handing in all your work on time following the instructions provided by the professor. If you do not comply with the instructions provided, this will result in an automatic 0 in the assignment and a deduction of points from your grade.

**The Final Grade will be determined by all three of these evaluation factors (attendance, participation, responsibility) and the other four components listed in the Evaluation Techniques.**

**Reasonable Accommodations for Students with Special Needs**

Students who receive Vocational Rehabilitation services should contact the professor **at the beginning of the semester** to plan any reasonable accommodations or necessary equipment stipulated by the Office of the Dean of Student Affairs and its *Oficina de Servicios Para Estudiantes con Impedimentos* (OSEI, formerly known as OAPI). Students with special needs of any kind that require any type of assistance or accommodations should contact the professor **at the beginning of the semester** (Law 51).

**Academic Integrity**

The University of Puerto Rico promotes the highest standards of academic and scientific integrity. Article 6.2 of the UPR Students General Bylaws (Board of Trustees Certification 13, 2009-2010) states that academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to: fraudulent actions; obtaining grades or academic degrees by false or fraudulent simulations; copying whole or part of the academic work of another person; plagiarizing totally or partially the work of another person; copying all or part of another person's answers to questions of an oral or written exam by taking or getting someone else to take the exam on his/her behalf; as well as enabling or facilitating another person to perform the aforementioned behavior. All of these behaviors will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the disciplinary procedure laid down in the UPR Students General Bylaws.

**Policy Against Discrimination**

The University of Puerto Rico prohibits discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity in any of its forms, including that of sexual harassment. According to the Institutional Policy Against Sexual Harassment at the University of Puerto Rico, Certification Num. 130, 2014-2015 from the Board of Governors, any student subjected to acts constituting sexual harassment must resort to the Office of the Student Ombudsperson (*Procuraduría Estudiantil*) of the Office of Compliance with Title IX (*Hostigamiento Sexual y la Normativa Institucional*) for an orientation and/or a formal complaint.

**Grading System:** A, B, C, D, or F

Differentiated evaluation for students with special needs. *Evaluación diferenciada para estudiantes con necesidades especiales.*

## **Bibliography**

### **A. Primary Texts (used for class discussion)**

1. *The Norton Anthology of Latino Literature* - Ilan Stavans, Ed. (2011).
2. Selected essays and other materials on the following websites: **chriviera-upr.com;**  
**portal.upr**

### **B. Secondary References**

Acosta-Belen, Edna and Carlos E. Santiago. **Puerto Ricans in the United States: A Contemporary Portrait.** Boulder/London: Lynne Rienner, 2018.

Alvarez Borland, Isabel, Ed. **Cuban-American Literature and Art: Negotiating Identities**  
New York: SUNY Press, 2010.

Bixler Marquez, Dennis J and Carlos F. Ortega. **Chicana/o Studies: Survey and Analysis.** Dubuque, IA:  
Kendall Hunt, 2014.

Campisi, Elizabeth. **Escape to Miami: An Oral History of the Cuban Rafter Crisis.** New York:  
Oxford UP, 2016.

Denis, Nelson A. **War Against All Puerto Ricans: Revolution and Terror in America's Colony**  
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Duany, Jorge. **Puerto Rico: What Everyone Needs to Know.** New York: Oxford UP, 2017.  
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Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 2002.

Flores, Juan. **The Diaspora Strikes Back: Caribeo Tales of Learning and Turning.** New York: Routledge,  
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Frank, Marc. **Cuban Revelations: Behind the Scenes in Havana (Contemporary Cuba).** Gainesville:  
UP of Florida, 2013.

Garcia-Peña, Lorgia. **The Borders of Dominicanidad: Race, Nation, and Archives of Contradiction**  
Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2016.

González, Juan. **Harvest of Empire: A History of Latinos in America.** New York: Penguin Books,  
2011.

Graziano, Frank. **Undocumented Dominican Migration.** Austin: U of Texas P, 2014.

Hooker, Juliet. **Theorizing Race in the Americas: Douglass, Sarmiento, Du Bois, and Vasconcelos.**  
New York: Oxford UP, 2017.

Horn, Maja. **Masculinity after Trujillo: The Politics of Gender in Dominican Literature.** Gainesville:  
UP of Florida, 2017.

- Irizarry, Ylce. **Chicana/o and Latina/o Fiction: The New Memory of Latinidad**. Champaign: U of Illinois P, 2016.
- Martinez, Erika, Ed. **Daring to Write: Contemporary Narratives by Dominican Women**. Athens: U of Georgia P, 2016.
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- Morales, Iris, Ed. **Latinas: An Anthology of Struggles and Protests in 21<sup>st</sup> Century USA**. New York: Red Sugarcane P, 2018.
- Moran Gonzalez, John, Ed. **The Cambridge Companion to Latina/o American Literature**. New York: Cambridge UP, 2016.
- Moya, Paula L. **The Social Imperative: Race, Close Reading, and Contemporary Literary Criticism**. Redwood City, CA: Stanford UP, 2015.
- Orchard, William, and Yolanda Padilla, Eds. **Bridges, Borders, and Breaks: History, Narrative, and Nation in Twenty-First-Century Chicana/o Literary Criticism (Latino and Latin American Profiles)**. Pittsburgh: U of Pittsburgh P, 2016.
- Picó, Fernando. **History of Puerto Rico: A Panorama of Its People**. New York: Markus Wiener, 2014.
- Ricourt, Milagros. **The Dominican Racial Imaginary: Surveying the Landscape of Race and Nation in Hispaniola**. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 2016.
- Saldaña-Portillo, Maria Josefina. **Indian Given: Racial Geographies across Mexico and the United States**. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2016.
- Sánchez González, Lisa. **Boricua Literature: A Literary History of the Puerto Rican Diaspora**. New York: New York UP, 2001.
- Sanchez-Korrol, Virginia. **Pioneros II: Puerto Ricans in New York City, 1948-1998**. Arcadia Publishing, 2010.
- Suárez, Lucía. **Tears of Hiapaniola: Haitian and Dominican Diaspora Memory**. Gainesville: UP of Florida, 2006.
- Torres-Padilla, Jose and Carmen Haydee Rivera, Eds. **Writing Off the Hyphen: New Critical Perspectives on the Literature of the Puerto Rican Diaspora**. Seattle: U of Washington P, 2008.
- Wagenheim, Kal, and Olga Jimenez De Wagenheim, Eds. **The Puerto Ricans: A Documentary History**. Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener, 2013.

**Electronic Reference:**

**Pew Research Center** – <http://www.pewhispanic.org>

\*Statistical Portrait of Hispanics in the United States, 2012

- \*Hispanic Trends
- \*Hispanic Latino Demographics
- \*Facts About Illegal Immigration in the US
- \*Key Findings About Puerto Rico
- \*Surge in Cuban Immigration to the US continued through 2016
- \*Hispanics of Dominican Origin in the US, 2013
- \*Deferred Action for Children Arrival Program – «Dreamers » (DACA)

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/what-defines-latino-literature-73399798/>

<http://www.latinoliteratures.org/>

<https://www.humanitiestexas.org/exhibitions/list/by-title/voces-americanas-latino-literature-united-states>

<https://alexanderstreet.com/products/latino-literature-poetry-drama-and-fiction>

<https://remezcla.com/lists/culture/books-by-latino-writers-2018/>

<https://www.questia.com/library/literature/literature-of-specific-groups/women-s-literature-and-women-writers/latina-women-writers>

<https://larrlasa.org/>

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<https://florida.pbslearningmedia.org/collection/latino-americans/#.XsRN3U3sbIU>