

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

**Course Title:** US Latino/a Literature (In-class Modality)

**Code:** English 4256 **Credit Hours:** 45 hours/ 3 credits

**Dr. Carmen Haydée Rivera Vega**

**Office 211, Janer Building**

**Office Hours:** MW 8:00-8:30 AM; 11:30 AM-1:00 PM; 2:30-3:00 PM; by appointment (office or online)

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**Prerequisites:** Level 5 English proficiency. The course is designed to fulfill part of the graduation requirements for both English and non-English majors.

**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 social and 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.

**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. identify and analyze 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 and critical/theoretical analyses;
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 1-3: Introduction – Historical and Cultural Context**

**(6 hours)**

Introductory essays from Ilan Stavans' *The Norton Anthology of Latino Literature*, among others  
Introduction to Alicia Pousada's *Being Bilingual in Borinquen*  
Bill Santiago's *Pardon My Spanglish*.

Documentary: *The Danger of a Single Story* – Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie  
Discussion of thematic concerns found in the writing: immigration/migration; race, racism/discrimination; gender roles; assimilation/acclturation; development of a cultural consciousness; hybridity/*mestizaje*

**Week 4-7: Mexican American Literature** (12 hours)  
Selected entries from *The Norton Anthology of Latino Literature* edited by Ilan Stavans (may include 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 - *Struggles in the Fields*

**Weeks 8-10: Puerto Rican Writers in the US** (9 hours)  
Selections from anthology (may include 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 - *Every Child is Born a Poet*

Documentary - *Pa'lante, Young Lords*

**Weeks 11-13: Cuban American Literature** (9 hours)  
Critical essays by Isabel Alvarez Borland and José Quiroga  
Selections from anthology (may include 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 14: Dominican American Literature** (6 hours)  
Critical essays by Silvio Torres-Saillant and Lucia Suárez  
Selections from anthology (may include Julia Alvarez, Junot Díaz, Loida Maritza Pérez, Chiqui Vicioso, among others) and selections from the webpage

**Week 15: Class Summary and Instructions for Final Exam or Research Projects** (3 hours)

**Total Hours** 45 Hours/3 credits

### **Teaching Techniques**

This course includes lectures by professor, assigned readings, group and individual class discussions, and/or oral presentations, as well as research and writing. Films and documentaries will be included to complement class assignments. Occasionally, a guest speaker will be invited, or an out-of-class activity will be required. Up to 25% of the class sessions may be conducted online as stipulated in Certification Number 42 (2019-2020, JG) and its definition of an on-campus course.

### **Required Resources**

Students should have access to all UPR library facilities (including Moodle platform), chriviera-upr.com website, electronic search and on-line databases, English Department Richardson Seminar Room, Seminario Multidisciplinario José Emilio González, among others.

### Evaluation Techniques

The final grade includes the following course requirements:

Exam 1	20%
Exam 2	20%
Quizzes	20%
Final Exam and/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** – attendance, punctuality, participation, and responsibility. NO MAKE UP WORK without justified excuse. A pattern of repeated absences and late arrivals will affect your grade. Each absence will deduct **3 points** from your class grade. Three late arrivals will deduct **1 point** from your class grade.

**--No texting or answering cell phones while in class. Please turn your phones off or place on vibrate mode during class time. Your cell phones should not be placed on your desks. If you are using a laptop for class notes, you should focus on class content and discussion at all times.**

### 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.

### Contingency Plan in Case of Emergency

If an emergency or an interruption of courses occurs, course offerings will take place with the support of distance learning modalities, as established in the official syllabus. In compliance with official communications and institutional guidelines, the professor will make efforts to communicate with students via institutional email or other available communication outlets to coordinate the continuity of course work.

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

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

**Selected Bibliography**

**A. Primary Texts**

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

**B. Secondary References**

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

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

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

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

Denis, Nelson A. *War Against All Puerto Ricans: Revolution and Terror in America's Colony*. Nation Books, 2016.

Duany, Jorge. *Puerto Rico: What Everyone Needs to Know*. Oxford UP, 2017.

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Ferrer, Ana. *Cuba: An American History*. Scribner, 2021.

Flores, Juan. *The Diaspora Strikes Back: Caribeño Tales of Learning and Turning*. Routledge, 2008.  
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Frank, Marc. *Cuban Revelations: Behind the Scenes in Havana (Contemporary Cuba)*. UP of Florida, 2013.

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

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

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

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

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

- Florida, 2017.
- Irizarry, Ylce. *Chicana/o and Latina/o Fiction: The New Memory of Latinidad*. U of Illinois P, 2016.
- Llenín-Figueroa, Beatriz. *Affect, Archive, Archipelago: Puerto Rico's Sovereign Caribbean Lives*. Rowman and Littlefield, 2022.
- Martinez, Erika, Ed. *Daring to Write: Contemporary Narratives by Dominican Women*. U of Georgia P, 2016.
- Matos, Félix V. and Pedro Juan Hernández, eds. *Pioneros: Puerto Ricans in New York City, 1896-1948*. Arcadia, 2001.
- Molina, Alejandro. "The Plight of Puerto Rico: Coloniality, Diaspora, and Decolonial Resistance." Puerto Rican Cultural Center, 21 May 2018, [prcc-chgo.org/blog/2018/05/21/the-plight-of-puerto-rico-coloniality-diaspora-and-decolonial-resistance](http://prcc-chgo.org/blog/2018/05/21/the-plight-of-puerto-rico-coloniality-diaspora-and-decolonial-resistance).
- Morales, Iris, Ed. *Latinas: An Anthology of Struggles and Protests in 21<sup>st</sup> Century USA*. Red Sugarcane P, 2018.
- Moran Gonzalez, John, Ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Latina/o American Literature*. Cambridge UP, 2016.
- Moya, Paula L. *The Social Imperative: Race, Close Reading, and Contemporary Literary Criticism*. 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)*. U of Pittsburgh P, 2016.
- Picó, Fernando. *History of Puerto Rico: A Panorama of Its People*. Markus Wiener, 2014.
- Ricourt, Milagros. *The Dominican Racial Imaginary: Surveying the Landscape of Race and Nation in Hispaniola*. Rutgers UP, 2016.
- Rivera, Angel. "The Spanish Caribbean Confederation: Modern Subjectivities and a Rhetoric of Failure." *Small Axe: A Caribbean Journal of Criticism*, vol. 61, March 2020, pp. 53-60.
- Rivera, Carmen Haydée and Duany, Jorge, Eds. *Cuba and Puerto Rico: Transdisciplinary Approaches to History, Literature, and Culture*, U of Florida P, 2023.
- . *Border Crossings and Beyond: The Life and Works of Sandra Cisneros*, Praeger P, 2009.
- Saldaña-Portillo, Maria Josefina. *Indian Given: Racial Geographies across Mexico and the United States*. Duke UP, 2016.
- Sánchez González, Lisa. *Boricua Literature: A Literary History of the Puerto Rican Diaspora*. New York UP, 2001.
- Sanchez-Korrol, Virginia. *Pioneros II: Puerto Ricans in New York City, 1948-1998*. Arcadia

Publishing, 2010.

Scafe, Suzanne, and Leith Dunn, eds. *African-Caribbean Women Interrogating Diaspora/Post-Diaspora*. Routledge, 2022.

Stephans, Michelle, and Yolanda Martinez San-Miguel, eds. *Contemporary Archipelagic Thinking: Towards New Comparative Methodologies and Disciplinary Formations*. Rowman and Littlefield, 2020.

Suárez, Lucía. *Tears of Hiapaniola: Haitian and Dominican Diaspora Memory*. 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*. U of Washington P, 2008.

Wagenheim, Kal, and Olga Jimenez De Wagenheim, Eds. *The Puerto Ricans: A Documentary History*. Markus Wiener, 2013.

West-Durán, Alan. *Cuba: A Cultural History*. Reaktion Books, 2018.

Zimmerman, Tegan. "Unauthorized Storytelling: Reevaluating Racial Politics in Julia Alvarez's *In the Time of the Butterflies*." *MELUS: The Society for the Study of the Multi-Ethnic Literature of the United States*, vol. 45, no. 1, Spring 2020, pp. 95-116.

#### **Electronic Reference:**

##### **Electronic Reference:**

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

- \*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-latinowriters-2018/>

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

<https://larrlasa.org/>

<https://www.clatino.org/>

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

[https://encyclopediapr.org/content\\_category/literature](https://encyclopediapr.org/content_category/literature)