

INGL3285 Literature of the Puerto Rican Diaspora (section 002)

Professor: Maritza Stanchich, Ph.D.

Time/Place: Tues./Thurs. 1 pm and 2:30 pm in LPM308 (unless otherwise indicated)

Office hours: 3-5:30 p.m. Mondays via Zoom by appointment, or live before or after class

Email: pertinent messages only to <mstanchich@gmail.com> and/or <maritza.stanchich@upr.edu> (It's a good idea to copy me using both.)

Course description: As the second largest group of the booming U.S. Latinx population in the United States, and now far outnumbering Puerto Ricans on the island (about 6 million & 3 million, respectively), Puerto Ricans stateside have since the early twentieth century forged important social, political, cultural and artistic movements. Nuyorican Poets are just one that has created a large body of literature, from New York to Hawaii, from the 1900s to today.

How this literature challenges colonial and national discourses, both in the United States and in Puerto Rico, will be a central question. Among these are links between language, race and nation. For example, our study urges us to rethink commonly held assumptions, such as about language (monolingualism, bilingualism and spanglish), national and cultural identity (such as *jibarismo*) and race (confronting differing concepts of race and racism), as well as about assimilation and belonging, and national literary canons.

The so-called American Century and the rise and fall of the Estado Libre Asociado (Free Associated State) will frame the history of the Puerto Rican diaspora in an overarching way. Literature will be analyzed with attention to its social-political-historical-cultural context, from the turn of the twentieth century to the present. We will consider literary genres such as memoir, short story, novel, essay, poetry and drama, and themes such as, classism, racism, gender, sexuality, cultural hybridity, diaspora, biculturalism.

Teaching strategies: Classes will consist of analysis and discussion of readings, and conceptual understanding of related issues. Visual and audio materials will be incorporated.

- Los estudiantes que reciban servicios de Rehabilitación Vocacional deben comunicarse con la profesora al inicio del semestre para planificar el acomodo razonable y equipo asistivo necesario conforme a las recomendaciones de la Oficina de Asuntos para las Personas con Impedimiento (OAPI) del Decanato de Estudiantes. También aquellos estudiantes con necesidades especiales que requieren de algún tip de asistencia o acomodo deben comunicarse con la profesora.
- Our scheduled class dates will meet in person unless previously announced when meeting online synchronically via Zoom or a-synchronically over Moodle. We will also keep active a WhatsApp chat for the course, though joining it is optional.
- De surgir alguna interrupción de las clases durante el semestre, se continuarán ofreciendo las mismas utilizando la modalidad a distancia o en línea para cumplir con el prontuario.

Methods of Evaluation:

Class attendance and punctuality:	20 percent
Class & <u>online</u> participation (Moodle forums):	20 percent
Quizzes:	20 percent
Freewrites or short essay assignments:	40 percent

- Note that four absences can drop your grade by one. Eight absences can drop two grades. Twelve absences or more will not pass the course. It is up to you to manage your excused or unexcused absences. **I will not differentiate between excused or unexcused absences.**
- Late assignments: I can accept freewrites no more than two class dates (or one full week) after the due date. I cannot accept assignments more than one week late, or accept all assignments at the end of semester. I am open to deadline extensions...just let me know!
- Grading system for freewrites will be \surd , $\surd+$ or $\surd-$, according to your own level of English and analytical proficiency. Works that receive $\surd-$ may be resubmitted. Quizzes get grades.
- Please note again: For students with disabilities, there will be differentiated methods of evaluation. *Evaluación diferenciada a estudiantes con necesidades especiales.*

Papers and Quizzes: 3-4 short essays in the form of “freewrites” will be due throughout the semester, with possible revisions requested for resubmission. Quizzes will consist of short identification Q&A. Freewrites might require analyzing and citing literary and critical works we have studied. Select freewrites might be revised into essays that require some research.

• ¡OJO!: INTERNET PLAGIARISM CAN EARN A FAILING GRADE FOR THE COURSE AND CAN RESULT IN SUSPENSION FROM ENTIRE UPR SYSTEM.

Please remember that if you copy any writing off the internet, you need to cite it “in quotes” and state which source it came from. Even if you paraphrase (or summarize) or put another writer’s ideas into your own words, you need to write, as NAME the AUTHOR states, or I agree/disagree with NAME of AUTHOR, or in parenthesis after the sentence (NAME of AUTHOR or SOURCE) or footnote the author and website.

I grade according to your ability, so no matter what your comfort level is with writing in English, you are better off submitting your own work, even with some errors.

Plagiarism Statement from English Department website: Plagiarism is the use of another person's ideas or experience in your writing without acknowledging the source. Other forms include repeating another's particular apt phrase without appropriate acknowledgement, paraphrasing someone else's argument as your own, introducing another's line of thinking as your own development of an idea, and failing to cite the source for a borrowed thesis or approach (for citing style, see *MLA Style Manual* online at Purdue OWL). Plagiarism may be punished by failure in a course as well as suspension or dismissal from the entire University.

- **Integridad académica:** La Universidad de Puerto Rico promueve los más altos estándares de integridad académica y científica. El Artículo 6.2 del Reglamento General de Estudiantes de la UPR (Certificación Núm. 13, 2009-2010, de la Junta de Síndicos) establece que “la deshonestidad académica incluye, pero no se limita a: acciones fraudulentas, la obtención de notas o grados académicos valiéndose de falsas o fraudulentas simulaciones, copiar total o parcialmente la labor académica de otra persona, plagiar total o parcialmente el trabajo de otra persona, copiar total o parcialmente las respuestas de otra persona a las preguntas de un examen, haciendo o consiguiendo que otro tome en su nombre cualquier prueba o examen oral o escrito, así como la ayuda o facilitación para que otra persona incurra en la referida conducta”. Cualquiera de estas acciones estará sujeta a

sanciones disciplinarias en conformidad con el procedimiento disciplinario establecido en el Reglamento General de Estudiantes de la UPR vigente.

Sexual harassment policy: 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 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 turn to the Office of the Student Ombudsperson, the Office of the Dean of Students, and/or the Coordinator of the Office of Compliance with Title IX for an orientation and/or a formal complaint.

Normativa sobre discrimen por sexo y género en modalidad de violencia sexual: “La Universidad de Puerto Rico prohíbe el discrimen por razón de sexo y género en todas sus modalidades, incluyendo el hostigamiento sexual. Según la Política Institucional contra el Hostigamiento Sexual en la Universidad de Puerto Rico, Certificación Núm. 130, 2014-2015 de la Junta de Gobierno, si un estudiante está siendo o fue afectado por conductas relacionadas a hostigamiento sexual, puede acudir ante la Oficina de Procuraduría Estudiantil, el Decanato de Estudiantes o la Coordinadora de Cumplimiento con Título IX para orientación y/o presentar una queja”.

Acomodo Razonable: Según la Ley de Servicios Educativos Integrales para Personas con Impedimentos, todo estudiante que requiera acomodo razonable deberá notificarlo al profesor el primer día de clase. 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 el equipo de asistencia necesario conforme a las recomendaciones de la Oficina de Servicios a Estudiantes con impedimentos (OSEI) del Decanato de Estudiantes. También aquellos estudiantes con necesidades especiales de algún tipo de asistencia o acomodo deben comunicarse con el (la) profesor(a). Si un alumno tiene una discapacidad documentada (ya sea física, psicológica, de aprendizaje o de otro tipo, que afecte su desempeño académico) y le gustaría solicitar disposiciones académicas especiales, éste debe comunicarse con la Oficina de Servicios a Estudiantes con Impedimentos (OSEI) del Decanato de Estudiantes, a fin de fijar una cita para dar inicio a los servicios pertinentes.

Plan de Contingencia en caso de una emergencia/Contingency Plan in case of emergency: En caso de surgir una emergencia o interrupción de clases, el profesor continuará ofreciendo el curso utilizando la modalidad a distancia o en línea, según establecidas en este prontuario oficial. De acuerdo a la información oficial y las directrices institucionales, el profesor realizará esfuerzos para comunicarse con los estudiantes vía correo electrónico institucional u otros medios alternos disponibles para coordinar la continuidad del ofrecimiento.

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.

Required Texts: (buy locally or order online the following book)

Esmeralda Santiago, *When I Was Puerto Rican* (1993)

• A digital *Course Reader* will be provided, with articles, stories, poems and essays. Also included, three parts of *Memoirs of Bernardo Vega* (1955) translated by Juan Flores (1980).

• Required assignment due Thursday, February 2 (please send to <mstanchich@gmail> with INGL3285-002 First Freewrite in the subject heading): Informal 2-3 page freewrite (double space, 12 point type) expressing your personal, political and/or intellectual interest in the course. Here are some ideas, choose ONE **or** focus on your own:

- Have you ever lived or do you have family or friends who have lived or live stateside? When? Where? Interview someone who has lived stateside about their experience.
- How do you define the term “Nuyorican” and how have you heard it used? If you have never lived stateside, do you think you have preconceptions about Puerto Ricans in the continental U.S. and are your views open to revision?
- Has any news caught your attention about Puerto Ricans stateside? This could be in popular culture, including sports, politics, or other developments (for ex, the Olympics, celebrities, elections, or the current exodus from island).
- Do you think Puerto Rican literature from the U.S. should be considered Puerto Rican literature, U.S. American or U.S. ethnic literature, neither, both, or all three? How do you feel about studying this in English or with a non-Puerto Rican professor?

Course Outline

Week 1 – Thursday, Jan. 26: Introduction to the course and each other

- 1st short freewrite assignment (instructions above here) due next Thurs., Feb. 2.
- Will ask you to fill out an index card with basic information
- In class groups: introduce yourselves to each other, analyze Course Reader cover

Week 2 – Tues.-Thurs., Jan. 31-Feb. 2: In Course Reader (starting on page 74 in red upper right to page 105) to discuss, highlight difficult terms: “*Adiós Borinquen querida*”: *The Puerto Rican Diaspora, Its History, and Contributions*, eds. Edna Acosta-Belén, et al., Chapter 1, “The Puerto Rican Migratory Experience” (About 50 pages but stop on page 105)

- In class breakout discussions Tuesday: share the focus of your first freewrite.
- **OJO:** Thursday, Feb. 2, 1st short writing assignment due (see details above).
- We will define in-depth the term “diaspora” (using page 74 of Course Reader)

Week 3 – Tues.-Thurs., Feb. 7-9: Finish discussing “*Adiós Borinquen querida*” (to pg 105)

NOTE: Pay close attention to the section titled “Cultural Deficiency Models: A Critique” (from the bottom of page 83 to the top of page 86).

Thursday: Begin discussing *Memoirs of Bernardo Vega* (from page 111 translator’s note & introduction through Chapter 4 (note description of factory “El Morito”))

Week 4 – Tues.-Thurs., Feb. 14-16: The *tabaqueros* and *pioneros* continued
From *Memoirs of Bernardo Vega* (all three sections in Course Reader, to page 170)

Week 5 – Tues.-Thurs., Feb. 21-23: Continue discussing Bernardo Vega

Required Moodle Forum: Comment on Uncle Sam Cartoons and mass media stereotypes in Bernardo Vega with deadline midnight late Monday

Week 6 – Tues.-Thurs., Feb. 28-March 2: Finish *Bernardo Vega*

- For over the long weekend, will email & post 2nd Freewrite assignment for Jesús Colón due Thursday, March 9
- Will include short YouTube video on Jesús Colón story “Little Things are Big”

Thursday is a holiday—no class

Week 7 – Tues.-Thurs., March 7-9: Discuss Jesús Colón all selections in Course Reader (starting on page 171) from

A Puerto Rican in New York and Other Sketches and *The Way it Was and Other Writings*

Week 8 – Tues.-Thurs., March 14-16: Course Reader, finish Jesús Colón selections From Course Reader (page 210), Luisa Capetillo, introduction & excerpts from *Mi opinión*

Week 9 – Tues.-Thurs., March 21-23: Prepare for Nuyorican poets by returning to *Adios Borinquen Querida*, return to “Cultural Deficiency Models” (83-86) and finish from “The Civil Rights Struggles: Survival, Resistance and Empowerment” to end (pages 105-110)

- **OJO:** Take-home Quiz on Cultural Deficiency Models: A Critique (pages 83-86) due late Thursday, March 30, by midnight.
- **OJO:** Cumbre Afro at College of General Studies, surprise guests will visit class!

Week 10 – Tues.-Thurs., March 28-30: *Nuyorican poets of 1960s-70s Civil Rights era* From Course Reader (starting page 260), Nuyorican poet Pedro Pietri, all entries, “Puerto Rican Obituary” and “Mi Viejo San Juan in Spanglish”

From Course Reader (starting page 274), Miguel Piñero “The Book of Genesis According to Saint Miguelito,” “La Metadona está cabrona,” “No hay nada nuevo en Nueva York,” “This is Not the Place Where I was Born”

- Thursday Take-home Quiz due on “Cultural Deficiency Models: A Critique”

Week 11 – Tues., April 4: From Course Reader (starting page 288), all Sandra Maria Esteves poems, especially “From the Commonwealth” and “A la Mujer Borinqueña” AND “In Response” by Luz María Umpierre (starting page 297)

Theme: Queer Diaspora—poem “Immanence” also by Luz María Umpierre

- **OJO:** REQUIRED Moodle Forum comments to documentaries on The Young Lords called “Takeover,” dir. Emma Francis-Snyder (2021, 38 mins.), and “La operación,” dir. Ana Maria Garcia (1982, 50 mins.) due by Tuesday morning after Semana Santa.

Thurs., April 6: Semana Santa holiday

Week 12 – Tues.-Thurs., April 11-13: From Course Reader (starting page 303), Tato Laviera’s “against Muñoz pamphleteering” (Also in Course Reader, as a companion piece to this, read the famous poem by Luis Muñoz Marín “Panfleto”) AND Tato Laviera’s “asimilao” and “nuyorican”

- We will analyze in class Tato Laviera’s book cover *AmeRícan* (copied in Reader)

Week 13 – Tues.-Thurs., April 18-20: Next generation of Nuyorican poets

From Course Reader (starting page 310) Willie Perdomo, all poems, especially “Nuyorican School of Poetry” AND (starting page 319) Mariposa’s “Ode to the Diasporican” and “Tears of the Tigers”

- **OJO** required comment on Moodle forum on posted YouTube videos of Willie Perdomo, Mariposa and other Nuyorican poets reciting

- **In class:** Citation Freewrite (can discuss in class too)

Week 14 – Tues.-Thurs., April 25-27: Toward post-Nuyorican developments

In Course Reader (starting page 323), Rodney Morales story “Ship of Dreams” AND Judith Ortiz Cofer essay “The Story of My Body” AND Aurora Levins Morales’ essay “Forked Tongues: On Not Speaking Spanish” AND (pages 342-342) Rosario Morales and Aurora Levins Morales poem “Ending Poem”

- Get Esmeralda Santiago’s *When I Was Puerto Rican*

- **Over weekend:** Read Esmeralda Santiago’s *When I Was Puerto Rican*

- **OJO** Tuesday, Citation Freewrite due (bring to class to discuss)

Week 15 – Tues.-Thurs., May 2-4: Esmeralda Santiago’s *When I Was Puerto Rican* Have book finished to finish discussing it.

- Also from end Course Reader, Esmeralda Santiago essay “Island of Lost Causes”

- Will post video of Santiago speaking about her work

- Will post various images of *jíbaros* from Puerto Rican art

- Freewrite on distinct gender perspectives in diaspora literature due Dec. 8

Week 16 – Tues.-Thurs., May 9-11: Finish discussing Esmeralda Santiago

- Freewrite on distinct gender perspectives in diaspora literature due May 11

- Extra credit opportunity, Moodle forum comment on documentary: *Manos a la*

Obra: The Story of Operation Bootstrap (1983, dirs. Pedro Rivera & Susan Zeig, 59 mins)

Week 17 – Tues., May 16: (Se reunen las clases de jueves, which is the same for us.)

From the Course Reader, skim or peruse or read what strikes you (starting on page 1 in red at upper right corner): We will review in class.

1. “Imparable la migración.” *El Nuevo Día*. 15 de julio de 2013. Front page plus 2-4.

2. “Exodus of Puerto Ricans to mainland about to hit milestone.” *The San Juan Star*, Feb. 11, 2004. (The milestone was hit by November 2004.)

3. “Who Are We? Identities of Stateside and Island Boricuas.” *San Juan City Magazine*, June 2005.

4. “Puerto Rico Files Show FBI Zeal.” *The Orlando Sentinel*. Nov. 6, 2003. A1. (Pgs 15-17)

5. “Migradolares,” by Jorge Duany. *El Nuevo Día*. 17 julio de 2006. (See graphic after too)

6. “Asoma el voto de nacidos en la Isla y viven en EE.UU.” *El Nuevo Día*. 10 febrero 2006.

7. “Por un voto más amplio Gutiérrez.” *El Nuevo Día*. 19 de febrero de 2006. 27.

8. “Few snags for stateside status vote.” *The San Juan Star*. June 17-23, 2007. 5.

9. Cover only of “Illegals under fire.” *Newsweek*. April 10, 2006. See also overview of federal immigration policy: “Patrolling the border.”

10. “The Hispanic Population, Census 2000 Brief.” U.S. Census Bureau. May 2001. 27-34.

11. “The Hispanic Population: 2010, Census Brief.” U.S. Census Bureau. May 2011.

AND

From Course Reader (starting on page 52 in red): Introduction from *Puerto Ricans at the Dawn of the New Millennium*, eds. Edwin Meléndez and Carlos Vargas-Ramos (2014).

- New literature from the diaspora in Florida posted
- Recommend and will post podcast “En la Brega”

Further Reading

- Manuel Ramos Otero, Queer diaspora in New York from Puerto Rico, poetry in Spanish
- In the style of Piri Thomas’ *Down These Mean Streets* (1967), Abraham Rodríguez Jr. *The Boy Without a Flag* (1992) plus subsequent novels, more recently Ernesto Quiñones’ *Bodega Dreams* (2000) and *Taina* (2020)
- *We the Animals* by Justin Torres (2011), also adapted to film (dir. Jeremiah Zagar 2018)
- Giannina Braschi’s *Yo-Yo Boing!* (1998) and *United States of Banana* (2011) brashly bilinugial, avant garde, post modern, philosophical quasi novels.
- *Impossible Motherhood* by Irene Vilar (2009) and *Ladies Gallery* (1996, reissued 2009) intense trauma memoirs by Lolita Lebron’s granddaughter
- *Rita Moreno: A Memoir* (2013), painful, poignant, powerful, on Audible in her own voice
- Fred Arroyo’s *The Region of Lost Names* (2008) and *Western Avenue and Other Fictions* (2012), beautiful stories about Boricua migrant farm workers in Midwest, Michigan, etc.
- Dahlma Llanos-Figueroa’s *Daughters of the Stone* (2009), afro-Boricua matrilineal novel.
- Sonia Sotomayor’s memoir *My Beloved World* (2013).
- Sci-fi/fantasy/speculative novels by Charlie Vazquez *Contraband* (2010), Lyn Di Iorio’s *Outside the Bones* (2011), and some of Edgardo Vega Yunqué, such as *Lamentable Journey of Omaha Bigelow Into the Impenetrable Loisaida Jungle* (2004).
- Current YA (young adult) novels that deal with LGBTQ+ or disability themes, Adam Silvera’s *More Happy Than Not* (2015), NoNieqa Ramos’ *The Truth Is* (2019).
- Quiara Alegría Hudes (co-authored *In the Heights* with Lin-Manuel Miranda, Pulitzer Prize winning dramatist of *Water by the Spoonful*) *My Broken Language: A Memoir* (2021), from Philadelphia to Ivy League and back, pays homage to activist feminist mom, her Afro-Puerto Rican religiosity, lost loved ones to the 1980s AIDS crisis.
- Rosie Pérez’s memoir *How I Survived Sister Renata and My Crazy Mother, and Still Came Out Smiling (with Great Hair)* (2014), a dizzying journey from being raised in a group home to stardom and activism via New York City, hip hop, the drugs & AIDS crisis, also on Audible in her own voice in her deep proud Brooklyn accent.
- Matthew López *The Inheritance*, winner of the 2021 Tony Award for best Broadway play about queer community in New York City during the AIDS crisis of the 1980s
- Joseph Cassara’s *The House of Impossible Beauties* (2018), award-winning novel about street smart trans community in New York during 1980s AIDS crisis. Think of TV’s *Pose*.
- Xochitl Gonzalez’s *Olga Dies Dreaming* (2021, title echoes Pietri), post hurricane, debt crisis novel imagines Puerto Rico’s crisis from current generation diaspora in New York.
- Xavier Navarro Aquino’s new post hurricane Maria novel *Velorio* (HarperCollins 2021), a graduate of UPR-RP MA program in English with a concentration in Creative Writing, and now a professor of creative writing at Notre Dame University in Indiana, great novel.

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