University of Texas at El Paso. Fall Semester 2023
Department of Sociology and Anthropology / Chicano Studies
Cross listed with / XL5N202410 (SOCl-3341 CRN:12311), (ANTH-4370 CRN:12310), (CHIC-4350 CRN:13899)

PUERTO RICAN SOCIETY
Studies in Anthropology - 12310 - ANTH 4370 - 011

Dr. Víctor Vázquez
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Sociology and Anthropology Department
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Office Hours: By appointment
M - 12 pm – 1:00 pm
T- R-12 pm – 1:00 pm
Class Schedule: Monday - Wednesday
10:30 am – 11:50 am
Liberal Arts Building 211
08/28/2023-12/06/2023.

The Street of Old San Juan, Puerto Rico. By Dr. Vázquez, 2020. The Street of Old San Juan has been the epicenter of the mass protests against the Puerto Rico’s Governor during the summer 2019. Through the analysis of ethnographic research, we will be able to explore and understand the historical, political and social conditions of Puerto Rico.

The Puerto Rican Flag was designed in 1868 and adopted by the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico in 1952.
COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GOALS

Updated 8.16.23

This is a multidisciplinary and critical thinking course focused on the analysis of Puerto Rico’s society. The course discusses the most important historical, political, economic and cultural aspects of Puerto Rico. Through a holistic approach, the course emphasizes in the analyses of Ethnographic Research’s, Historical Literature and Documentaries conducted in the island. The students will learn about the main Historic Events, Theories, Culture, Music, Myths, Colonialism, The Living Conditions, Social Crisis, Government – Political System, and the Challenges faced by the Puerto Rico’s population in the 21st Century.

The main goals of the course are:

1- Providing the students with historical and political context of Puerto Rico.
2- Providing the students with an academic awareness regarding the main structural problems of the island.
3- Identify and discuss the social structure of the Puerto Rican society and the main challenges in the 21st Century.
4- Applying your multidisciplinary knowledge to propose recommendations and solutions to improve the living conditions in Puerto Rico.

Requirements:

This class will be delivered face to face the attendance is mandatory. Students are responsible for reading all assignments in the time frame indicated and for completing all activities (discussions, debates, papers) within the announced time span. Each lesson will expire one week after its activation date and cannot be accessed after that. Exceptions will be made only for documented medical emergencies. There will be debates, discussion and written paper that represents a significant portion of your grade.

Familiarity with Spanish is not required although it will be highly advantageous when searching for additional materials.

This is a reading, audiovisual and writing intensive course designed to challenge pre-conceived ideas and understandings.

The subjects matter for this course will include adult themes. Students are required to be respectful and mature while dealing with these sensitive topics. If, for any reason, anyone becomes uncomfortable with the topics, I recommend to communicate with the professor through email vmvazquezro@utep.edu
Grading:

150 points - In class exercises (assignments and debates)

50 points – Midterm essay

50 points - Final Written Paper “Anthropological reflection on Puerto Rico’s Crisis”

Grade Breakdown

A – 250 pts. -225 pts.

B- 224 pts. – 200 pts.

C- 199 pts. -177 pts.

D- 176 pts. -149 pts.

F- 148 pts. -0 pts.

250 points totals

*Note* There are more possible points available in the class

All assignments may be written in English or Spanish

Classroom behavior norms

No laptop or tablet are allowed in the classroom.

It’s prohibited to use your cellphone in the classroom.

It’s prohibited to use headset or headphones in the classroom.

It’s prohibited to record, take photos on presentations or film the class content.

It’s prohibited any kind of interruption. If you need to use the restroom you can go before the class begins.

It’s prohibited any kind of talking with peers during the class discussion.

It’s prohibited any kind of foul, violent or derogatory language during the class discussion.

Every lateness or tardiness in class you will miss (-3) points from your final grade report. (After 3 lateness or tardiness you will be referred to the UTEP Disciplinary committee to process your drop out)
Every absence without justification you will miss 3 points from the final grade. After 3 absences you will be referred to the UTEP Disciplinary committee to process your drop out.

Take note with your notebook.

During the documentaries and movies projection no interruptions are allowed.

Be respectful with your peers and with the professor.

Remember, this is a critical thinking class and your engagement to the class is important to keep an academic ambient.

No tolerance toward persons who come to class to interrupt the class content. If you can’t behave according to the classroom behavior norms you will be referred to the UTEP Disciplinary committee to process your drop out.

Course Work

Course activities will consist of reading, written discussions posted on discussion boards, and long written assignments. In general, it is expected that the course will require approximately nine hours each week, including reading, exercises, discussions, and all other activities.

Using the Lessons/Reading Guide. The goal of each lesson is to give you a guideline for close, detailed reading of the books; this takes the place of lecture from the professor. Take advantage of it! It will make a big difference in discussion and on your papers, as this level of detail and understanding is what I am looking for. Please note: you do not need to write out answers to the questions (unless that would help you personally) and you do not need to submit the answers to the professor. Instead, you should review the questions before you read each set of pages indicated in the book, and have the questions by your side as you read. Not every question can be answered directly in the reading; some are there to make you think or to point out implications rather than direct statements.

The Midterm - It will also cover your knowledge of concepts that we discuss in class.

Debates- Elaborate a short opinion focused on concepts and topics discussed in class. This is a critical thinking exercise.

Final reflection: The final essay will require you to critique the different social problems (social, economic, political). You will also be required to provide your own interpretation and solutions. I expect you to write a critical account of the different perspectives advanced by the authors we have read and discuss on class.

All the written paper (assignments and final paper) must be written in APA Format 1.5-2.0 Times New Roman font and include ACADEMIC references.
Academic Integrity

Plagiarism, cheating and other forms of academic dishonesty are prohibited and will be referred to the Office of the Dean of Students. Students must do their own work on all class papers and exams.

Work submitted formally (i.e., Papers) will be evaluated for content and for standard grammar and style. Contributions to discussions will be permitted somewhat greater deviation from standard practice for formal submission.

Standard practices of academic integrity are required in the course. All material submitted must be the student's own work. Ideas and expressions cited from the work of others must be credited appropriately. The course will follow the University of Texas at El Paso’s policies on academic honesty. These policies can be found at the Student Affairs webpage.

Usage of Artificial Intelligence:
Since writing, analytical, and critical thinking skills are part of the learning outcomes of this course, all work submitted in this course must be your own and completed in accordance with the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures Chapter 1 Section 1.2.3. AI generated submissions that use ChatGPT, Grammarly, Chegg or other AI composition software is prohibited, will be treated as cheating, and reported to the Dean of Students.

COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS

Please stay home if you have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms. If you are feeling unwell, please let me know as soon as possible, so that we can work on appropriate accommodations. If you have tested positive for COVID-19, you are encouraged to report your results to covidaction@utep.edu, so that the Dean of Students Office can provide you with support and help with communication with your professors. The Student Health Center is equipped to provide COVID 19 testing. For more information about the current rates, testing, and vaccinations, please visit epstrong.org

Copyright Notice

Many of the materials that are posted within this course are protected by copyright law. These materials are only for the use of students enrolled in this course and only for the purpose of this course. They may not be further retained or disseminated.

Technical Requirements

You will be taking this entire course, and possibly other courses, on your computer. You must have the minimum hardware and software to successfully complete this course. If you are in the market for a new system, please consider spending a bit more to upgrade to a more optimal system. Please refer to the Getting Started off the course for more information on technical requirements.
Technical Support

The University of Texas at El Paso provides free 24/7 Helpdesk support to academic students and faculty members teaching on-line. The Helpdesk can provide answers to questions about using technology and services, as well as, technical support. Please visit the Technical Support Page for more information.

Academic Assistance and Disability Statement

In Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, if a student needs an accommodation, then the Center for Accommodations and Support Services located at UTEP need to be contacted. If you have a condition that may affect your ability to perform successfully in this course, you are encouraged to discuss this in confidence with the instructor and/or the director of the Center for Accommodations and Support Services. You may call (915) 747-5148 for general information about the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the rights that you have as a UTEP student with a disability. You also can visit the CASS website at http://sa.utep.edu/cass/ or the CASS office in Room 106 East Union Building. Individuals with disabilities have the right to equal access and opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor and the Center for Accommodations and Support Services at The University of Texas at El Paso.

Pictures: The Fortaleza in Old San Juan is a historical building which has served as the Governor’s Main Residence. During the summer protest in 2019, it was an important meeting point for the protesters. By Dr. Vázquez 2020.
COURSE CALENDAR FALL 2023 (Calendar is subject to change)

Calendar and Topics

1. August 28 (Monday) August 30 (Wednesday)

Class lesson # 1

**INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE.**

*Lecture Topics*

**Puerto Rico Before 1898 (Spanish colony period and The Spanish-American War)**

*Lecture Topics*

*Documentary*
(525) Yo Soy Boricua Pa'Que Tu Lo Sepas! I'm Boricua Just So You Know
[Documentary - YouTube]

*Reading Assignment 1 (10 pts.)*


2. September 4 (Monday) Labor Day Holiday University closed /September 6 (Wednesday)

Class lesson 2

**PUERTO RICO DURING THE 20st CENTURY (I).**

*Lecture Topics*

*Reading*
Documentaries:

Manos a la Obra: The story of Operation Bootstrap (1983)

**Debate 1** - Develop an anthropological opinion upon the documentaries. Review the class lesson for the rubric and guidelines. **Due date Monday 11.**

### 3. September 11 (Monday) September 13 (Wednesday)

**Class lesson # 2**

**PUERTO RICO DURING THE 20th CENTURY (II).**

**Lecture Topics**

**Readings**

**Debate 2** - Develop an anthropological opinion upon the Welfare dependency culture developed in Puerto Rico. Review the class lesson for the rubric and guidelines. **Due date Monday 18.**

### 4. September 18 (Monday) September 20 (Wednesday)

**Class lesson # 3**

**THE POLITICAL WAR IN PUERTO RICO 20st Century (I)**

**Lecture Topics**
Political repression and persecutions against the nationalist and independentism movement. Jayuya Uprising, Ponce Massacre, Assassinations in the Cerro Maravilla, Workers and Students movements. Prominent and historical figures (Pedro Albizu Campos, Lolita Lebrón, Rafael Cancel Miranda, Los Macheteros, Filiberto Ojeda Ríos).

**Reading**

Documentaries: America’s Backyard: Puerto Rico [https://youtu.be/6PqanYO0Xoo](https://youtu.be/6PqanYO0Xoo)
Lolita Lebron’s Legacy, 1954 US Congress Attack
https://youtu.be/3aOWkMpmgs

https://youtu.be/Pom5iJIVLrk

Jayuya Uprising
https://youtu.be/LDgtyjz8n0

Debate 3 - Develop an anthropological opinion upon the documentaries. Review the class lesson for the rubric and guidelines. Due date Monday 25.

5. September 25 (Monday) September 27 (Wednesday)

Class lesson #4

THE POLITICAL WAR IN PUERTO RICO 20st Century (II)

Lecture Topics
Political repression and persecutions against the nationalist and independentism movement. Oscar Lopez Rivera Between Torture and Resistance.

Assignment 2
(10 points)
Develop an anthropological opinion regarding the political repression against the independence movement in Puerto Rico during the 20th Century. Write a short essay about the figure of Oscar Lopez Rivera and the impact in Puerto Rican society. Rubric available on the blackboard. Upload on blackboard. Due date Sunday 1, 11:59 pm.

Debate 4- Develop an anthropological opinion upon the documentaries. Review the class lesson for the rubric and guidelines. Due date Monday 2 – Wednesday 4.

Reading

Documentaries: Oscar Lopez’s Legacy https://youtu.be/DsCRW4poI_Y
Calle 13 Querido FBI https://youtu.be/Oz4mLqL0Ymc
https://youtu.be/IDBVZpTkHw
iLe El Odio https://youtu.be/z6ZuUplbEOY

6. October 2 (Monday) October 4 (Wednesday)

Class lesson #5

THE PUERTO RICAN DIASPORA IN THE UNITED STATES: HISTORY, DEMOGRAPHY AND THE ECONOMY SURVIVING “LOS SURES”: AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL REFLECTION ON THE
NUYORICAN LIVED EXPERIENCES IN SOUTH WILLIAMSBURG BROOKLYN.

**Lecture Topics**

Historical background Puerto Rican mass migration to US. Cultural identity, Political contributions, The concept of Nuyorican’s, Prominent figures, Arts, Literature and Music. The young lords’ legacy.

**Readings**


**Documentaries**

Analysis of the documentary Living Los Sures (1984)

**Assignment 3 (10 points)** Write a short essay about the cultural contributions and the struggle by the Nuyorican’s Community. Upload on blackboard. Due date Sunday 8, 11:59 pm

7. October 9 (Monday) October 11 (Wednesday)

**Movie**

El Cantante (2006) / Talento de Barrio Daddy Yankee Story

**Lecture Topics**


MIDTERM ESSAY (50 pts.) Upload on Blackboard Due date: Sunday 15, 11:59 pm. Midterm grade report due date: Movie Discussion Monday 16

8. October 16 (Monday) October 18 (Wednesday) October 23 (Monday) October 25 (Wednesday)

Midterm grades report are due on October 25, 2023

Class lesson #6

**PUERTO RICO, CULTURE, MUSIC AND SOCIETY.**

**Lecture Topics**

Assignment 4
(10 points)

Write a short essay about the cultural impact of Salsa Music within the counterculture context in New York. Upload on blackboard. Due date: Sunday 22, 11:59 pm.

Reading


Debate 5 – Develop an anthropological opinion upon the salsa music genre and the cultural meanings for the Boricuas established in New York. Review the class lesson for the rubric and guidelines. Due date: Monday 23

Class Lesson # 7

REGGAETON MUSIC CULTURE.

Lecture Topics


Reading

Rivera – Rideau Petra, 2015, Remixing Reggaeton. Chapter Two The perils of Perreo, 52-80.

Assignment 5 (10 points) Debate 6 – Develop an anthropological opinion on the success of reggaeton music in US. Review the class lesson for the rubric and guidelines. Due date: Wednesday 25.

9. October 30 (Monday) November 1 (Wednesday)

Class lesson #8

HOW PUERTO RICO BEGINS THE 21st CENTURY?

Lecture Topics

The begins of neoliberalism policy, main structural problems in the island, Poverty, Violence, UPR Strike, The Struggle of Vieques. The reaffirmation of Puerto Rican identity.

Readings

Debate 7 – Develop an anthropological opinion regarding the 21st Century in Puerto Rico.  
Review the class lesson for the rubric and guidelines.  
Due date Wednesday 1.

10. November 6 (Monday) November 8 (Wednesday)

Class lesson # 9

LOCAL GOVERNMENT EFFORTS TO REDUCE THE POVERTY.

Lecture Topics
Social policy, urban poor communities’ struggles, Special Community Program.

Assignment 6 (10 pts.) Develop an anthropological opinion regarding inequality and living Conditions in Puerto Rico at the begins of the 21st Century. Write a short essay about the informal economy in Puerto Rico. Due date Sunday 12, 11:59 pm Review the class lesson for the rubric and guidelines.

Readings
Dr. Victor Vazquez presentations and selected articles.

Debate 8– Develop an anthropological opinion regarding the different forms of inequality in Puerto Rico. Review the class lesson for the rubric and guidelines. Due date Wednesday 15.

11. November 13 (Monday) November 15 (Wednesday)

Class lesson #10


Lecture Topics Bankruptcy and the political crisis. The Financial Oversight and Management Board for Puerto Rico.


Debate 9- Develop an anthropological opinion upon the documentary. Review the class lesson for the rubric and guidelines. Due date Monday 20. Debate 10 – Vote in the political status referendum of Puerto Rico. Due date Sunday 19.

12. November 20 (Monday) November 22 (Wednesday)

Class lesson # 11

Lecture Topics  The bankruptcy social impact, Crisis and Corruption, The failure of the public education system.


Assignment 7 (10 pts.)  Develop an anthropological opinion regarding the bankruptcy and the political crisis in Puerto Rico. Write a short essay about the corruption in Puerto Rico Due date Sunday 26, 11:59 pm. Rubric on Blackboard.

13. November (Monday) 27 Monday 29 (Wednesday)

Class lesson # 12

HURRICANE MARIA IMPACT AND THE REBUILDING PROCESS (2017)

Lecture Topics  Anthropological analysis of Hurricane Maria and the failure during the Rebuilding process. Mass migration exodus, corruption during the rebuilding Process, President Trumps visit to Puerto Rico. The real victims after hurricane.

Reading  Dr. Victor Vazquez presentations and selected articles.

Assignment 8 (10 points)  Develop an anthropological opinion regarding the social protest during the summer 2019. Due date Monday 4, 11:59 pm. Review the class lesson for the rubric and guidelines.

14. December 4 (Monday)

Class lesson # 13

IN SEARCH OF POLITICAL STABILITY / ENVIROMENTAL MOVEMENT / GENTRIFICATION IMPACT/ FINAL RECAP,
COVID 19 IMPACT / THE FUTURE OF PUERTO RICO.

Lecture Topics
What now after the Governor Resignation? The new challenges, Continue the struggle, The new population awareness regarding the political and corruption problems/ Environmental movement and the anti-gentrification movement.

Reading
Dr. Victor Vazquez presentations and selected articles.

Assignment 9 (10 points)
Develop an anthropological opinion regarding the Puerto Rico population awareness regarding the political and corruption problems. Monday 4 Review the class lesson for the rubric and guidelines.

Assignment 10 (5 pts bonus.)
Discuss in Class an anthropological opinion regarding the future of the political relationship between Puerto Rico and USA. Due date Sunday 3. Review the class lesson for the rubric and guidelines.

TURN IN YOUR FINAL WRITTEN PAPER PRINTED (50 PTS DECEMBER 6)

BIBLIOGRAPHY
Books and Readings


Additional Course Readings (CR’s) will be made available on Blackboard as PDF files or as class handouts.
Welcome to the incredible journey of the multidisciplinary study of Puerto Rico. LA ISLA DEL ENCANTO!

Picture: The Boquerón Beach Pier in Cabo Rojo damaged by hurricane Maria in 2017. Five years after the impact of the Hurricane Maria and still some towns of Puerto Rico are struggling with the rebuilding process. By Dr. Vázquez 2020