

Culture of The Caribbean
From Fidel Castro to Bad Bunny

University of Texas at El Paso. Spring Semester 2024
Department of Sociology and Anthropology
Studies in Anthropology
(ANTH-4370 CRN:22330), (SOCI-3341 CRN:22329),(CHIC-4350 CRN:25195)
ANTH 4370 002 Studies in Anthropology 22330

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Office Hours: By appointment

T- R-9:00 am – 10:00 am

Class Schedule: Tuesday - Thursday

10:30 am – 11:50 am

Liberal Arts Building 203

01/16/2024-05/02/2024



Picture: Boulevard in Aguadilla, Puerto Rico. By Dr. Vázquez, 2020. Aguadilla is a town on the northwestern coast of Puerto Rico. Through the analysis of ethnographic research, we will be able to explore and understand the living conditions, the culture, and the government systems in the Spanish Caribbean.

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GOALS

Updated 01-16-2024.

This course focuses on the analysis of the Ethnographic works conducted in The Caribbean (Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, Cuba). Through an anthropological approach, the course discusses the political, economic, and cultural aspects that conform the Spanish-speaking Caribbean Societies. This is a critical thinking course based on historical readings, documentaries analysis, and cultural research. The students will learn about the main Historical Events, Theories, Culture, Music, Myths, Living Conditions, Government Systems, and the Challenges faced by the Caribbean people in the 21st Century.

The main goals of the course are:

- 1- Providing the students with a new perspective for looking at the Spanish Caribbean.
- 2- Recognize the cultural diversity of the Caribbean.
- 3- Identify and discuss some of the economic, historic, and political problems faced by Caribbean people in the 21st century.

- 4- Applying your anthropological knowledge to propose recommendations and solutions to improve the living conditions in the Caribbean.

Requirements:

This class will be delivered face to face the attendance is mandatory. Students are responsible for reading all assignments in the period indicated and for completing all activities (discussions, debates, papers) within the announced period. 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, discussions, and written papers that represent 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 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 communicating 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 the Caribbean”

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 total.

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

Every absence without justification you will miss 3 points from the final grade.

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 cell phone in the classroom.

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

It's prohibited to record, take photos of 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.

With 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 dropout.

Take notes 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 with the class is important to keep an academic ambiance.

No tolerance for students 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 dropout.

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 discussed in class.

All the written paper (assignments and final paper) must be written in APA Format 1.5 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 permit somewhat greater deviation from standard practice for formal submission.

Standard practices of academic integrity are required on 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 accommodation. 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

Copyright law protects many of the materials that are posted within this course. 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 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.



Picture: The Street of Havana, Cuba, and the Old Cars “Almendrones”.

By Dr. Vázquez 2016. Through an ethnographic approach, we will explore the living conditions in Cuba in the 21st Century.

COURSE CALENDAR SPRING SEMESTER 2024 (Calendar is subject to change)

Calendar and Topics

- 1. January 16 (Tuesday) January 18 (Thursday)**

**Class lesson # 1
INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE.**

Lecture Topics Review of the Syllabus, Review of the General Concepts of Cultural Anthropology Ethnography. Introduction to the Spanish Caribbean.

WHAT IS THE SPANISH CARIBBEAN?

Lecture Topics A brief history of the Spanish Caribbean, The Taino Indians, The Spanish Conquistador Period. The main languages in the Caribbean. Geography, Political Systems and Environmental issues. The Caribbean cultural and political diversity and CARICOM The Caribbean Community intergovernmental organization.
Readings Introduction to Puerto Rico.

B.J. Higman, 2011, Chapter 1, “A History of Islands,” in *A Concise History of the Caribbean*, pp. 1-8.
 Duany Jorge, 2017, Introduction Puerto Rico – *A Stateless Nation in Puerto Rico What Everyone Needs to Know*, pp 1-7.

Assignment 1 (10 pts.) **Write a Short Essay about the impact of the penetration of US politics in Puerto Rico and explain the concept of “Vaiven” moving back and forth.** Duany Jorge, 2017, Introduction Puerto Rico – *A Stateless Nation in Puerto Rico What Everyone Needs to Know*, pp 1-7. **Upload on Blackboard. Due date Sunday 21st, 11:59 pm. Review the class lesson for the rubric and guidelines.**

Documentary: Yo Soy Boricua Pa Que Tu Lo Sepas! (I’m Boricua Just so you Know) Directed by Rosie Perez (2006).

Debate 1 -Develop an anthropological opinion on the documentary. Review the class lesson for the rubric and guidelines. Due date Thursday 25.

2. January 23 (Tuesday) January 25 (Thursday)



Class lesson # 2

PUERTO RICO DURING THE 20th CENTURY.

Lecture Topics Political and economic development during the 20th century. 1952, Estado Libre Asociado. Industrialization Process, Main Problems. The Culture of Poverty in La Perla. The Legacy of Sidney Mintz and Jack Delano.

Reading Duany Jorge, 2017, Introduction Puerto Rico – *A Stateless Nation in Puerto Rico What Everyone Needs to Know*, pp 1-7. Delano Jack, 1990, *Puerto Rico Mio* pp1-37.

Debate 2 -Develop an anthropological opinion on the documentary. Review the class lesson for the rubric and guidelines. Due date Thursday Feb 1st

3. January 30 (Tuesday) February 1 (Thursday)

Class lesson # 3

PUERTO RICO DURING THE 21st CENTURY.

<i>Lecture Topics</i>	1990 -2000, The Beginning of the Globalization and the Neoliberal Policies. The US Navy in Vieques. Documentary: Battle of Vieques - Puerto Rico (2001).
<i>Assignment 2 (10 pts.)</i>	Discuss in class an anthropological opinion regarding the struggle and the future of Vieques. Write a short essay about Ethnographic Research Tourism and Language and explain the discourse of laziness 61- 69. Upload on blackboard. <u>Due date Sunday 4, 11:59pm. Review the class lesson for the rubric and guidelines.</u>
<i>Reading</i>	Galanes Valdejulli Luis, 2018, Introduction 9 -20. Chapter 3 Work33-74, Chapter 6 Decontamination, Reparations, Health and Crime Issues, Chapter 7 The Future of Vieques, Conclusions, 117-136 - <i>Tourism and Language in Vieques</i> . <u>Debate 3 - Develop an anthropological opinion upon the documentary. Review the class lesson for the rubric and guidelines. Due date Tuesday 6.</u>

4. February 6 (Tuesday) February 8 (Thursday)

Class lesson #4

PUERTO RICO'S ECONOMICAL AND POLITICAL STATUS CRISIS POLITICAL FUTURE OF PUERTO RICO, INDEPENDENCE, COMMONWEALTH OR STATEHOOD.

Lecture Topics Crisis, Government Bankruptcy, Poverty, University of Puerto Rico's Strike, May 1 manifestation 2017-2018, Field work experiences of poor communities in Puerto Rico. The recovery process after Hurricane Maria 2017.

Readings Duany Jorge, 2017, Chapter 3 Puerto Rico As a US Commonwealth since 1952 Politics and Economy – *A Stateless Nation in Puerto Rico* *What Everyone Needs to Know*, pp 73-103. Documentary: Fault Lines - Puerto Rico: The Fiscal Experiment (2011).
Debate 4- Develop an anthropological opinion upon the documentary. Review the class lesson for the rubric and guidelines. Due date Tuesday 13.

Debate 5 – Vote in the political status referendum of Puerto Rico. Due date Sunday 1.

5. February 13 (Tuesday) February 15 (Thursday)

Class lesson #5

PUERTO RICO, CULTURE AND SOCIETY.

Lecture Topics Boricuas mass migration movement to United States 1950-2021
Boricua Identity – Salsa Music.
Documentary: PBS Latin Music USA: The Salsa Revolution. [PBS Latin Music USA 2 The Salsa Revolution on Vimeo](#)

Assignment 3 (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 Due date Sunday 18, 11:59 pm.

Reading Duany Jorge, 2017, Chapter 4 Puerto Rico As a US Commonwealth since 1952 Population and Culture. Chapter 5 The Puerto Rican Diaspora to The United State in- *Puerto Rico What Everyone Needs to Know*, pp 106-131. 134-170.

Debate 6 – Develop an anthropological opinion on the salsa music genre and the cultural meanings of the Boricuas established in New York. Review the class lesson for the rubric and guidelines. Due date Tuesday 20.

6. February 20 (Tuesday) February 22 (Thursday)

**Class lesson #6
REGGAETON MUSIC CULTURE.**

Lecture Topics What is Reggaetón music? The beginnings, Reggaeton as a Cultural Practice of The Diaspora, General Concepts, what does Perreo mean? Documentary The Beat That Changed Pop Music(2018). Reggaeton – Race and Social Class. Reggaeton and feminism.
[\(522\) Latin Music USA Watch the Show 04 07 PBS - YouTube](#)

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

Assignment 4 (10 points) Debate 7 – Develop an anthropological opinion on the success of reggaetón music in the US. Review the class lesson for the rubric and guidelines. Due date Thursday 27.

**7. February 27 (Tuesday) February 29 (Thursday) March 5 (Tuesday) March 7 (Thursday)
The midterm grades report is due on March 20, 2023**

**MIDTERM ESSAY MATERIALS.
(Verify the rubric and the readings on the blackboard)**

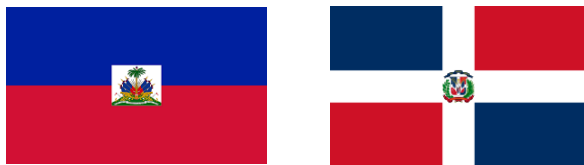
Lecture Topics Analysis of the Movie “Talento de Barrio Daddy Yankee” (2008).

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

MIDTERM ESSAY (50 pts.) Upload on Blackboard Due date: Sunday, March 3, 11:59 pm. Movie Discussion Tuesday 5

Spring Break 2024 March 11 – 15

8. March 19 (Tuesday) March 21 (Thursday)



Class lesson #7

Lecture Topics **HISPANIOLA (HAITI AND DOMINICAN REPUBLIC DOMINICAN REPUBLIC DURING THE 21ST CENTURY.**
 Political and economic development during the 21st Century.
 Documentaries: Divided Island: How Haiti and the DR became two worlds (2017). Selling Sex: Underage victims of sex tourist in DR (2018).

Assignment 5(10 pts.)
Write a short essay about The legacy of Rafael Trujillo Due date Sunday 24. The second paper is on “Improvising a Livelihood: the informal economy in DR” pp. 30 -36. Due date Sunday 31, 11:59 pm

Readings **Debate 8 – Develop an anthropological opinion regarding the economic inequality and *living* Conditions in DR. Review the class lesson for the rubric and guidelines. Due date Thursday 28.**

B.J. Higman, 2011, Chapter 7, “The Caribbean since 1945,” in *A Concise History of the Caribbean*, pp. 259-268.

Gregory Steven 2014, Chapter 1, The Politics of Livelihood in a The Devil Behind the Mirror. pp. 11-49. Chapter 4 Sex Tourism and Political Economy of Masculinity, 130-165.

9. March 26 (Tuesday) March 28 (Thursday)

Class lesson # 8

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC CULTURE AND SOCIETY.

Lecture Topics Politics of exclusion, Neoliberalism impact, Corruption and Drug trafficking, Music, and Migration to New York. Documentaries: Dominican Republic plans to push out undocumented Haitians (2015). The political future of DR. and main Challenges.

Reading Gregory Steven 2014, Chapter 2, The Spatial Economy of Difference. Behind the Mirror. pp. 50-81. Chapter 5 Race, Identity and the Body Politic 186 – 208.
Debate 9 – Develop an anthropological opinion regarding racism in DR. Review the class lesson for the rubric and guidelines. Due date Tuesday 26.

Recap Haiti and DR

10. April 2 (Tuesday) April 4 (Thursday)

Class lesson #9



CUBA DURING THE 20th CENTURY.

L. Kaifa Roland 2010, Cuban Color in Tourism and La Lucha: An Ethnography of Racial Meanings (Issues of Globalization: Case Studies in Contemporary Anthropology) Chapter 1 -2. Vazquez, Victor / Gutierrez Mariana (2023) ¿Qué está pasando en La Habana, Cuba? Reflexión antropológica sobre el actual contexto socio-político y los grandes retos que afronta la población en Cuba.

Lecture Topics Cuba during the 20th Century, The Revolution in 1958, The Government system, Education and Economy, Special Period. Documentaries: The Cuba Libre Story Chapter 1-2 (2015)

Readings B.J. Higman, 2011, Chapter 7, “The Caribbean since 1945,” in *A Concise History of the Caribbean*, pp. 259-326. Vazquez (2023) What’s going on in Cuba.

Assignment 6 (10 pts.)

Write a short essay about the rise and fall of the economy of The Revolutionary Government: 256 – 259. Explain the Special Period impact on Cuban Society. Upload Sunday 7, 11:59

Debate 10 –Develop an anthropological opinion on the Cuban Revolution Review the class lesson for the rubric and guidelines. Due date Tuesday 9, 11:59 pm.

11. April 9 (Tuesday) April 11 (Thursday)

**Class lesson # 10
CUBA CULTURE, LIVING CONDITION, MUSIC, EDUCATION,
HEALTH SYSTEM AND SOCIETY.**

Cubans’ migrants Experiences in Ciudad Juárez

Lecture Topics Cuban Culture and the Living Conditions. Documentary: Period Especial 1993. Nothing to do in Cuba. How Buena Vista Social Club Impacted the World? The perpetuation of Informal Economy, Surviving in Cuba. Dr. Vazquez’s fieldwork experiences.

Readings

L. Kaifa Roland 2010, Cuban Color in Tourism and La Lucha: An Ethnography of Racial Meanings (Issues of Globalization: Case Studies in Contemporary Anthropology) Chapter 3-5. Surviving la “lucha” in Ciudad Juárez. An Anthropological reflection on the Cuban community in Ciudad Juárez, México (2021). By Dr Victor Vazquez.

Education, Health System, Migrants Experiences

Lecture Topics Education and Health System, Why the Cuban youth don’t want to study? Cuban Covid 19 vaccine “Soberana” *Pandemic impact.*

Assignment 7 (10 points) Write a short paper on *Cuba: Economy, Living conditions, Everyday life, Sport, Gastronomy Public Health, Revolution, etc.* (Verify the rubric and the readings on the blackboard). Due date Sunday 14.

Debate 11 - Develop an anthropological opinion regarding the living conditions in Cuba. Review the class lesson for the rubric and guidelines. Due date Tuesday 16.

12. April 16 (Tuesday) April 18 (Thursday)

Class lesson # 11

Migration, La crisis de los Balseiros (Cuban Rafter Phenomenon), Sex tourism. Cubans Migrants Experiences in Ciudad Juarez and Tijuana Border.

Lecture Topics The crisis of Balseiros and the Sex Tourism. Documentary: Balseiros Cubanos en Guantanamo 1995. Jineteras y Jineteros en Cuba. Surviving in Cuba. Field work experiences 2015. Migrants Caravans and Cubans in Ciudad Juarez.

Reading Surviving la “lucha” in Ciudad Juárez. An Anthropological reflection on the Cuban community in Ciudad Juárez, México (2021). By Dr. Victor Vazquez [Vista de Surviving la “lucha” in Ciudad Juárez. An Anthropological reflection on the Cuban community in Ciudad Juárez, México. \(uacj.mx\)](#) Vazquez (2023) What’s going on in Cuba. Vazquez, Victor / Gutierrez Mariana (2023) ¿Qué está pasando en La Habana, Cuba? Reflexión antropológica sobre el actual contexto socio-político y los grandes retos que afronta la población en Cuba.

Assignment 8 (5 pts.) **Debate 12 - Develop an anthropological opinion regarding Migration, and the Cubans Community in Ciudad Juarez. Date Sunday 21.**

13. April 23 (Tuesday) April 25 (Thursday)

Class lesson # 12

CUBA AND THE BIG CHALLENGE IN THE 21ST CENTURY, PROTEST MOVMENT PATRIA Y VIDA.

Lecture Topics Cuba and the big challenge in the 21st century. The new relation with USA, President Obama Visit Cuba in 2016. The Rolling Stones in Cuba.

Reading Vazquez, Victor / Gutiérrez Mariana (2023) ¿Qué está pasando en La Habana, Cuba? Reflexión antropológica sobre el actual contexto socio-político y los grandes retos que afronta la población en Cuba.

Assignment 9 (5 points) **debate 13 - develop an anthropological opinion regarding the big challenge in the 21st Century. Due date Tuesday 30.**

14. April 30 (Tuesday) – May 2 (Thursday)**THE CUBAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY.***Lecture Topics*

Voices of the Exiled in Miami. The Impact of Castro's Death. The political impact of the Cuban exile in USA. Protest in Cuba during the pandemic.

Assignment 10 (5 pts bonus)

Debate 13 – Develop an anthropological opinion about the Cuban Exile in US. What will be the political and economic future in Cuba? Due date **Tuesday 30.**

FINAL RECAP, PANDEMIC IMPACT IN THE CARIBBEAN AND THE FUTURE OF THE SPANISH CARIBBEAN.**15. May 2 (Thursday Last Day of Classes)**

TURN IN YOUR FINAL WRITTEN PAPER PRINTED (50 PTS MAY 2)

BIBLIOGRAPHY**Books and Readings**

B.J. Higman, 2011, *A Concise History of the Caribbean*, Cambridge.

Duany Jorge, 2017, *A Stateless Nation in Puerto Rico What Everyone Needs to Know*, Oxford University Press.

Galanes Valdejulli Luis, 2018, *Tourism and Language in Vieques*. Lexington Books.

Gutiérrez Pedro Juan 2002 *Dirty Havana Trilogy*. Harper Perennial.

Gregory Steven 2014, *The Devil Behind the Mirror*. University of California Press.

Rivera -Rideau Petra, 2015, *Remixing Reggaeton*. Duke University Press.

Vazquez, Victor (2021) Surviving la “lucha” in Ciudad Juárez. An Anthropological reflection on the Cuban community in Ciudad Juárez, México

[Vista de Surviving la “lucha” in Ciudad Juárez. An Anthropological reflection on the Cuban community in Ciudad Juárez, México. \(uacj.mx\)](#)

Vazquez, Victor / Gutierrez Mariana (2023) ¿Qué está pasando en La Habana, Cuba? Reflexión antropológica sobre el actual contexto socio-político y los grandes retos que afronta la población en Cuba.

<https://www.uagm.edu/es/encuentros>

Additional Course Readings (CR's) will be made available on Blackboard as PDF files or as class handouts.

Welcome to the incredible anthropological journey of the Caribbean.