

University of Texas at El Paso. Spring Semester 2022  
Department of Sociology and Anthropology / Chicano Studies  
Cross listed with SOCI 3341/14814 and CHIC 4350/15813

**PUERTO RICAN SOCIETY**

**Studies in Anthropology - 14495 - ANTH 4370 – 011**

Dr. Víctor Vázquez

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Office: Old Main Building 207

Phone number: 915-747-6156

Office Hours: By appointment

Tuesday – Thursday 9 am -10 am

Class Code: **Studies in Anthropology -  
SOCI 3341/14814 and CHIC 4350/15813**

Education Building: 311 TR 7:30 am - 8:50

August 23, 2022 - December 01, 2022



**Picture: The Street of Old San Juan, Puerto Rico. By Dr. Vázquez, 2017. 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.**





PUERTO RICAN SOCIETY/ Dr. Victor Vazquez, Fall Semester, 2022. UTEP.

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### COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GOALS

Updated 8.23.22

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 21<sup>st</sup> 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](mailto:vmvazquezro@utep.edu)



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### **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 totals**

**\*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*

### **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.



PUERTO RICAN SOCIETY/ Dr. Victor Vazquez, Fall Semester, 2022. UTEP.

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**Final Ethnographic 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 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.

**COVID 19 Measures -PROTEC YOURSELF-**. Review the guidelines

<https://www.utep.edu/ehs/COVID-19/>

### **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](mailto: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.

**The Center for Disease Control and Prevention** recommends that people in areas of substantial or high COVID-19 transmission wear face masks when indoors in groups of people. The best way that Miners can take care of Miners is to get the vaccine. If you still need the vaccine, it is widely available in the El Paso area, and will be available at no charge on campus during the first week of classes. For more information about the current rates, testing, and vaccinations, please visit [epstrong.org](http://epstrong.org)

### **Copyright Notice**



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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.

### **Required COVID-19 Student Training Video**

All students, regardless of where you are taking classes, are asked to watch a COVID-19 informational and training video. Students can access the 6-minute training video at [covidtraining.questionpro.com](https://covidtraining.questionpro.com).



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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 2019.

### **COURSE CALENDAR FALL 2022 (Calendar is subject to change)**

#### **Calendar and Topics**

#### **1. August 23 (Tuesday) August 25 (Thursday)**

##### **Class lesson # 1**

##### **INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE.**

##### *Lecture Topics*

Review of the Syllabus, Review of the general concepts of Cultural Anthropology, Ethnography Research and History. General Introduction of Puerto Rico.

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

##### *Lecture Topics*

A brief history of the Spanish Colony Period. Most relevant historical figures. El Grito de Lares (The cry of Lares, Rebellion 1868). Sugar, Coffee and Tobacco plantations, Slavery and Economy. Spanish – American War. The Transition to US territory.

##### *Readings*

Documentary: Yo soy Boricua (2006)  
[\(525\) Yo Soy Boricua Pa'Que Tu Lo Sepas! I'm Boricua Just So You Know Documentary - YouTube](#)



PUERTO RICAN SOCIETY/ Dr. Victor Vazquez, Fall Semester, 2022. UTEP.

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**Assignment 1 (10 pts.)** Duany Jorge, 2017, Puerto Rico What Everyone Needs to Know. Chapter I – Puerto Rico Before 1898, pp 9-40.

Write a Short Essay about the impact of the penetration of the 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 28, 11:59 pm. Review the class lesson for the rubric and guidelines.

**2. August 30 (Tuesday) September 1 (Thursday)**

**Class lesson 2**

**PUERTO RICO DURING THE 20<sup>st</sup> CENTURY (I).**

*Lecture Topics*

Political and economic development during the 20<sup>st</sup> century. 1952, Estado Libre Asociado (Commonwealth of Puerto Rico). Industrialization Process, Main structural problems (welfare dependency and Culture of Poverty) The Legacy of Sidney Mintz and Jack Delano.

*Reading*

Duany Jorge, 2017, Puerto Rico What Everyone Needs to Know. Chapter I. Puerto Rico under US Rule, 1898-1952. pp 43-71.

Documentaries:

Jack and Iren Delano: Archive Documenting Puerto Rico’s Past Sheds Light on its present <https://youtu.be/zJ2Vx-Scg6U>

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 Thursday 1.**

**3. September 6 (Tuesday) September 8 (Thursday)**

**Class lesson # 2**

**PUERTO RICO DURING THE 20<sup>st</sup> CENTURY (II).**

*Lecture Topics*

The political and economic model of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. Political parties, The political culture in Puerto Rico, The end of the economic prosperity. The rise and fall of Estado Libre Asociado. The Problem of welfare dependency and “los cuponeros”.

*Reading*

Duany Jorge 2017, Puerto Rico What Everyone Needs to Know. Chapter III. P.73-102.





PUERTO RICAN SOCIETY/ Dr. Victor Vazquez, Fall Semester, 2022. UTEP.

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An anthropological reflection on the summer of 2019 and the social movement #Rickyrenucia (Ricky Resign) in Puerto Rico. By Dr Victor Vazquez (pages 1- 6)  
<https://erevistas.uaci.mx/ojs/index.php/decumanus/article/view/3988/3138>

**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 Thursday 8.**

**4. September 13 (Tuesday) September 15 (Thursday)**

**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*

Denis Nelson A. (2015) War Against All Puerto Ricans Revolution and Terror in America's Colony. Chapter 1- 9 pp. 3-73.

Documentaries: America's Backyard: Puerto Rico

<https://youtu.be/6PqanYO0Xoo>

Lolita Lebron's Legacy, 1954 US Congress Attack

<https://youtu.be/3aiOWkMpmgs>

<https://youtu.be/Pom5iJVLrk>

Jayuya Uprising

<https://youtu.be/LDgtyjz-8n0>

**Debate 3 - Develop an anthropological opinion upon the documentaries.**  
**Review the class lesson for the rubric and guidelines. Due date Thursday 15.**

**5. September 20 (Tuesday) September 22 (Thursday)**

**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





PUERTO RICAN SOCIETY/ Dr. Victor Vazquez, Fall Semester, 2022. UTEP.

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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 25, 11:59 pm.**

**Debate 4- Develop an anthropological opinion upon the documentaries. Review the class lesson for the rubric and guidelines. Due date Thursday 29.**

*Reading*

Lopez Rivera Oscar (2013) Between Torture and Resistance Edited by Luis Nieves Falcon. pp.19-123.

Documentaries: Oscar Lopez's Legacy [https://youtu.be/DsCRW4poI\\_Y](https://youtu.be/DsCRW4poI_Y)  
Calle 13 Querido FBI <https://youtu.be/Oz4mLqLOYmc>  
[https://youtu.be/\\_IDBVZpTkHw](https://youtu.be/_IDBVZpTkHw)  
iLe El Odio <https://youtu.be/z6ZuUplbEOY>

**6. September 27 (Tuesday) September 29 (Thursday)**

**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*

Surviving "Los Sures": An anthropological reflection on the Nuyorican lived experiences in South Williamsburg Brooklyn and the current urban context of gentrification in New York City (2021) by Dr Victor Vazquez.

Duany Jorge 2017, Puerto Rico What Everyone Needs to Know. Chapter III. P.153-170.

*Documentaries*

Analysis of the documentary Nuyorican Basket (2017)  
Living Los Sures (1984)

**Assignment 3 (10 points) Write a short essay about the cultural contributions and the struggle**



PUERTO RICAN SOCIETY/ Dr. Victor Vazquez, Fall Semester, 2022. UTEP.

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by the Nuyorican's Community.  
 Upload on blackboard. **Due date Sunday 2, 11:59 pm**

7. October 4 (Tuesday) October 6 (Thursday)

**PUERTO RICO, CULTURE, MUSIC AND SOCIETY (Introduction)  
 MIDTERM ESSAY MATERIALS.  
 (Verify the rubric and the readings on blackboard)**

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

*Lecture Topics* The Story of Hector Lavoe, Puerto Rican salsa singer who emigrated to New York city and became a pioneer in Salsa. Analysis of the Movie El Cantante (2006).

**MIDTERM ESSAY (50 pts.) Upload on Blackboard Due date: Sunday 9, 11:59 pm. Midterm grade report due date: October 19, 2022 by 5:00 PM**

8. October 11 (Tuesday) October 13 (Thursday)

**Class lesson #6**

**PUERTO RICO, CULTURE, MUSIC 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.

***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 16, 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 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: Thursday October 13.**

**Class Lesson # 7**

**REGGAETON MUSIC CULTURE.**

*Lecture Topics* What is Reggaeton music? The beginnings, Reggaeton as a Cultural Practice of The Diaspora, General Concepts, what means Perreo? Documentary The beat



PUERTO RICAN SOCIETY/ Dr. Victor Vazquez, Fall Semester, 2022. UTEP.

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that changed pop music (2018). Reggaeton – Race and Social Class. Reggaeton and feminism.

*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: Tuesday 18.**

**9. October 18 (Tuesday) October 20 (Thursday)**

**Class lesson #8**

**HOW PUERTO RICO BEGINS THE 21<sup>st</sup> 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* Galanes Valdejulli Luis, 2018, *Tourism and Language in Vieques*. Lexington Books. Pp 1-75.

**Debate 7 – Develop an anthropological opinion regarding the 21<sup>st</sup> Century in Puerto Rico.**

**Review the class lesson for the rubric and guidelines.**

**Due date Thursday 24.**

**10. October 25 (Tuesday) October 27 (Thursday)**

**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 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Write a short essay about the informal economy in Puerto Rico. Due date Sunday 30, 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.**



PUERTO RICAN SOCIETY/ Dr. Victor Vazquez, Fall Semester, 2022. UTEP.

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**Due date Tuesday 25.**

**11. November 1 (Tuesday) November 3 (Thursday)**

**Class lesson #10**

**PUERTO RICO BANKRUPTCY AND POLITICAL CRISIS 2010 – 2017 (I).**

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

*Reading* Centro Journal of The Center for Puerto Rican Studies Fall 2018. Pp. 5-172.

*Documentary* The last colony (2015) [https://youtu.be/NP5Jcvke\\_es](https://youtu.be/NP5Jcvke_es)  
**Debate 9- Develop an anthropological opinion upon the documentary.**  
**Review the class lesson for the rubric and guidelines. Due date Thursday 3.**  
**Debate 10 – Vote in the political status referendum of Puerto Rico. Due date Sunday 6.**

**12. November 8 (Tuesday) November 10 (Thursday)**

**Class lesson # 11**

**PUERTO RICO BANKRUPTCY AND POLITICAL CRISIS 2010 – 2017 (II).**

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

*Readings* Dr. Victor Vazquez presentations and selected articles. An anthropological reflection on the summer of 2019 and the social movement #Rickyrenucia (Ricky Resign) in Puerto Rico. By Dr Victor Vazquez (pages 7- 20)  
<https://erevistas.uaci.mx/ojs/index.php/decumanus/article/view/3988/3138>

*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 13, 11:59 pm. Rubric on Blackboard.**

**13. November 15 (Tuesday) November 17 (Thursday)**

**Class lesson # 12**

**HURRICANE MARIA IMPACT AND THE REBUILDING PROCESS (2017)**



PUERTO RICAN SOCIETY/ Dr. Victor Vazquez, Fall Semester, 2022. UTEP.

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*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.

**PUERTO RICO'S POPULATION OUTRAGES AND GOVERNOR RESIGNATION (2019).**

*Lecture Topics* Social mobilizations, Puerto Rican artist, Governor resignation.

*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 Sunday 20, 11:59 pm. Review the class lesson for the rubric and guidelines.

**14. November 22 (Tuesday) November 24 (Thursday) (Thanksgiving Day)**

**Class lesson # 13**

**IN SEARCH OF POLITICAL ESTABILITY / ENVIROMENTAL MOVEMENT / GENTRIFICATION IMACT**

*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. Due date Tuesday 22. 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 27. Review the class lesson for the rubric and guidelines

**15. November 29 (Tuesday) December 1 (Thursday Last Day of Classes)**

**FINAL RECAP, COVID 19 IMPACT / THE FUTURE OF PUERTO RICO**

**TURN IN YOUR FINAL WRITTEN PAPER**  
**PRINTED (50 PTS DECEMBER 1<sup>st</sup>)**



PUERTO RICAN SOCIETY/ Dr. Victor Vazquez, Fall Semester, 2022. UTEP.

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Picture: The Boquerón Beach Pier in Cabo Rojo damaged by hurricane Maria in 2017. Four years after the impact of the Hurricane Maria and still some towns of Puerto Rico are struggling with the rebuilding process. By Dr. Vázquez 2019.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

### **Books and Readings**

Andres Jose, (2018) *We Fed an Island. The True Story of Rebuilding Puerto Rico, One Meal at a Time.* An Anthony Bourdain Book. Harper Collins Publisher.

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

Denis Nelson A. (2015) *War against All Puerto Ricans Revolution and Terror in America's Colony*

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

Centro Journal of The Center for Puerto Rican Studies Fall 2018

Santiago Esmeralda (1993) *When I was Puerto Rican.*

Vazquez, Victor (2021) *Surviving "Los Sures": An anthropological reflection on the Nuyoricán lived experiences in South Williamsburg Brooklyn and the current urban context of gentrification in New York City.*

Vazquez Victor (2020) *An anthropological reflection on the summer of 2019 and the social movement #Rickyrenucia (Ricky Resign) in Puerto Rico.* By Dr Victor Vazquez (pages 7- 20)

<https://erevistas.uacj.mx/ojs/index.php/decumanus/article/view/3988/3138>

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!**