Hunter College, City University of New York

Department of Africana, Puerto Rican, and Latino Studies

AFPRL 104 (section 03)
Introduction to Puerto Rican and Latino Studies
Spring 2025
F 4:00-6:50 pm
Rm. 215HW

Prof. José A. Laguarta Ramírez
Office: 1732 HW
Office Hours: F 2:45-3:45 pm
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Course Description

This as an introductory course to the field of Puerto Rican and Latino Studies. The course aims to provide a broad overview of topics in the field, including its conceptual and historical foundations, and introduce students to historical, geographical, and cultural information pertinent to Latinx presence in the United States. This includes a comprehensive history of the U.S. relationship to the region up and the ways U.S. foreign and domestic policies have shaped the Latinx experience. We will approach the history, politics, and culture of Puerto Rico and Puerto Ricans in New York as a major case study, with additional focuses on Mexican and Dominican New York, as well as a broader survey of some of the major issues that Latinx communities have faced historically, up to the present.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the semester, students will have developed their ability to:

- Gather, interpret and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view via a comparative analysis of theoretical and methodological approaches to community formation.
- Evaluate evidence and arguments critically or analytically.
- Produce well-reasoned arguments to support a thesis in written and oral forms.
- Identify and apply the fundamental concepts and methods of a discipline or interdisciplinary field exploring the relationship between the individual and society, including, but not limited to anthropology, communications, cultural studies, history, journalism, philosophy, political science, psychology, public affairs, religion and sociology.
- Analyze and discuss common institutions or cultural patterns of life in U.S. society, and how they influence, or are influenced by race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, belief, or other forms of social differentiation from both a historical and contemporary perspectives.
- Identify and engage with local, national or global trends and ideologies, and analyze their impact on individual or collective decision-making.

Required Texts

The following book has been ordered for purchase at the Hunter College online bookstore (https://hunter.textbookx.com/institutional/index.php?action=browse#/books/4570071/).

González, Juan. 2022 [2000]. *Harvest of Empire: A History of Latinos in America*, Second Revised and Updated Edition. Penguin Books. [listed on the Schedule as *Harvest*; please make sure you have the right edition, as page numbers vary]

In addition, selected readings from the following books have been assigned. Digital copies are available at no cost through the Hunter College Libraries website (using the links provided below and your CUNY Login credentials). Pages and chapter numbers are included in the Schedule. It is your responsibility to find the correct pages assigned to be read for each class day.

Flores, Juan and Renato Rosaldo, eds. 2007. *A Companion to Latina/o Studies*. Malden: Blackwell Publishing. [https://cuny-hc.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01CUNY_HC/m880uq/alma9994451234306133; listed on the Schedule as *ACLS*]

Laó-Montes, Agustín and Arlene Dávlia. 2001. *Mambo Montage: The Latinization of New York*. New York: Columbia University Press. [https://cuny-hc.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01CUNY_HC/m880uq/alma9994372889706133; listed on the Schedule as *Mambo*]

Ramos-Zayas, Ana Y. and Mérida M. Rúa. 2021. *Critical Dialogues in Latinx Studies: A Reader*. New York: New York University Press. [https://cuny-hc.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01CUNY_HC/m880uq/alma9994538816806133; listed on the Schedule as *CDXS*]

All other readings will be posted in the Brightspace folder for the corresponding class day. These are identified in the Schedule by an asterisk (*) following the title of each. For the purpose of proper citation, a Bibliography with the full citation of all texts used in this class will be posted to Brightspace as well.

Grading Criteria

Your final grade will be calculated on the following basis:

	%
Participation	10
Class discussion leadership	20
Reading reflections (all 3)	30
Midterm Essay	10
Final Reflection	30
Final Grade	100

Instructions for each of these assignments will be posted to Brightspace from the beginning of the semester (except the Midterm). I'm mostly interested in seeing that you are thinking critically (although it is always important to **carefully check your facts**). My grading criteria (in addition deductions for not following instructions) are the following:

	A (95% - excellent)	B (85% - satisfactory)	C (75% - barely passing)
Content	Everything in column 'B' plus genuine effort to **engage and think critically and originally**	Shows class materials were read/viewed and mostly understood, used concepts	Paid some attention, but no real effort to understand/use concepts
Evidence	Evidence from materials thoughtfully selected to illustrate claims, cited, additional facts checked	Some evidence cited, facts checked, but not tied to main idea, a few references to the class materials	Ideas from materials used randomly/misused, few to no citations, little to no fact-checking
Writing	Presentation is logical and coherent, easy to read, spelling/grammar checked	Presentation is less coherent, some spelling/grammar mistakes	Incoherent, poorly organized, repeated mistakes make difficult to read

For each of the criteria listed above (content, evidence, and writing), efforts that are truly above and beyond will be graded 100%. I then average out the three criteria for the assignment grade. Each assignment has a one-week grace period after its due date, and I deduct a half letter increment (from A to A-, etc.) each seven days after that. I also deduct a half letter increment for each step or rule not followed (so read both the specific assignment instructions and the Formatting and Submission Rules in this Syllabus carefully!). I do **not** give Ds or Fs for complete work that has been submitted (unless lateness or failing to complete steps and rules takes it there), but **absent** work (not turned in, plagiarized, or which shows a total disregard for the course) will receive an automatic F (applies to all assignments, including the Final Reflection). There are no make-ups in this class. For extra-credit possibilities, see the Assignments section on Brightspace.

It is my policy to **only** provide feedback on work submitted (or in general, on how you are "doing" in the course) in individual face-to-face meetings during office hours, **at least one week after submitting the midterm**. If you can't make it to my office hours, I am happy to schedule a Zoom meeting a time that works for you. In either case it is **your responsibility** to ask for it. I will **only** reach out to you individually if and when there is a major problem or if there is a particular direction I would like you to explore.

Finally, please remember it is your responsibility to make sure all assignments are submitted by their due date. I will only consider offering an INC grade to those students who attended class regularly (and on time) and satisfactorily completed at least 80% worth of the assignments (by point value).

Class Policies

Academic Integrity

Please read the college's Academic Integrity Policy (summarized below). On a personal note: I don't tolerate cheating or plagiarism, period. This includes the use of ChatGPT and other AI

platforms: **all assignments will be inspected with AI detection software. ANY percentage of AI use will result in a zero (0%) grade. Repeated infractions will be reported and possibly lead to your withdrawal from the course.** While I understand the pressures that might lead a student to consider plagiarism, it's extremely disrespectful your instructor and classmates, but mostly to yourself. In any case, *it won't help you much anyway in a class like this*, where there aren't many "right answers" as such (although you do, of course, need to get your facts straight). What I actually want is to see you make a genuine effort to engage critically with challenging ideas. To avoid unpleasant situations*: when in doubt, always cite!*

Accessibility

Please read the college's ADA Policy, below. I am always more than happy to make any and all accommodations that are notified in a timely manner and through the appropriate channels.

Attendance

Class attendance, punctuality, and active participation are **mandatory**. The frequency and quality of participation will directly impact the participation portion of your grade. That said, if you do need to miss or be late to **one** particular class for any reason, you do not need to inform me (in fact, I prefer that you don't!). You are responsible for figuring out and making choices about how to organize and best make use of your time, which includes checking with classmates for notes and any work you may have missed as the result of a lateness or absence. However, if there are longer-term circumstances that may negatively affect any aspect of your participation in class, it is your responsibility to inform me **immediately** so that together we can work out alternatives. Under no circumstances will I offer alternatives of any kind at the end of the semester to anyone who was regularly late and/or absent and did not inform me of the reason in a timely manner.

Rules of Interaction and Commitment to Academic Freedom

All points of view pertinent to the course material may be freely voiced, discussed, questioned, criticized, defended, and debated, so long as these are: 1) expressed in a tone and language that are respectful and collegial; 2) focused on the specific ideas and actions of specific individuals, groups, or governments, and not any aspect of people's core humanity such as their race, gender, sexuality, spirituality, ability, ethnicity, or migratory status; 3) presented, and open to being challenged, on the basis of evidence; and 4) rooted in recognition of the equal basic dignity and worth of all human beings and cultures.

The success of this course hinges on its ability to be a space of free discussion of topics and issues that are highly relevant to today's conflictive world. As such, there will be some perspectives and factual situations raised that may be uncomfortable for some to consider. It would be futile (and educationally counterproductive) to pretend that I do not have my own positions on these issues. The respect due to any hard-working educator includes the acknowledgement that we are professionals with nothing to gain from punishing or creating unsafe environments for students who may disagree with us. By enrolling and remaining in this course, you consent to having your preexisting views of the world challenged, and affirm that you understand that any such challenges that may arise do not in any way constitute a threat to your security or human dignity.

Classroom Behavior

The use of laptop computers in the classroom will be accepted **only** for purposes related to the course (taking notes, accessing readings, quick definitions, etc.). All other electronic devices (cell phones, tablets, watches, etc.) are **strictly prohibited** during class time. I reserve the right to take away any devices being used improperly, for the remainder of the class period. This includes laptops that are used for non-class related purposes. Sounds or body language that reflect engagement in anything other than the class conversation are disrespectful, disruptive, and simply unacceptable.

If you need to leave the room for whatever reason, you do not have to ask permission, but bear in mind that repeated entrances and exits are disruptive. Please take care of any pressing matters **fully** before returning to the classroom.

I reserve the right to ask you to leave the room at any time, for the remainder of the class period, if any of the above guidelines are not followed. Repeat offenses may result in a request to drop the class permanently.

Formatting and Submission Rules

All assignments are to be typed in Times New Roman, 12 pt. font, double-spaced, with no more than one (1) inch margins. A word count demonstrating compliance with the minimum length requirement **must** be included at the **end** of every assignment. Do **not** include a title page, and make sure your name, course, and assignment information take up as little space as possible (three **single-spaced** lines in the upper left corner is more than enough). When citing, please follow the author-date system of the Chicago Manual of Style as closely as possible. A reference list must be included at the end of each assignment.

All **regular** assignments must be submitted as .docx or .pdf documents or equivalent formats (please keep in mind I may not be able to view documents in all alternative formats, so to save us time and stress, please do your best to submit as .docx or .pdf) via Brightspace by 11:59 pm on the due date specified on the assignment instructions and in the Schedule (any extra-credit work should be emailed to me, instead). When uploading to Brightspace, **always** wait for confirmation of a successful upload, and periodically check your Grade Center to make sure your assignments have gone through. If you are unable to successfully upload your assignment due to technical reasons, **email** it to me **as soon as you are able to**. **Always** keep accessible backup copies and **never** delete your work before the end of the semester. **You are entirely responsible for any work that does not reach me, whatever the reason.**

All assignments will have a one week (seven day) grace period, within which they can be turned in without penalty for lateness. Assignments turned in past their due date will be downgraded half a letter increment for each week of lateness (an A becomes A-, etc.). This policy does *not* apply to extra credit assignments, discussion leadership, or any quizzes or in-class exercises that may arise. These will immediately begin losing points if not submitted by the deadline, no exceptions—however, this is still not a reason not to complete them as soon as possible (a lower grade is still better than a zero).. There will be **no** opportunities to redo any assignments in this course.

Writing Center

This is not a writing course. However, your grade **will** be affected if I can't make sense of what you're saying. To be on the safe side, **always** use your word processing program to check for

spelling and grammatical errors, and re-read everything you write at least once before submitting (out loud if necessary). It's also a good idea to have at least one other person read it and comment on it. If you are especially uncertain about your writing, you **must** contact Hunter's Rockowitz Writing Center for help.

Schedule of Readings and Assignments

* Reading posted to Brightspace
** You do **not** need to submit reading reflections every week: **pick three** (3) (more for extra credit)

Week 1

Friday 1/31

Please read the Syllabus thoroughly and carefully.

P. Cabán, "Moving from the Margins to Where?"*

Optional:
C. T. Whalen, "Radical Contexts"*

Week 2

Friday 2/7

G. Anzaldúa, "La Conciencia de la Mestiza"*

J. E. Muñoz, "Chico, what does it feel like to be a problem?," *ACLS*, 441-451 (Ch. 39)

L. Pulido, "Geographies of Race and Ethnicity III," *CDXS*, 51-64 (Ch. 4)

M. Jiménez Román, "Looking for a Middle Ground," *ACLS* 325-336, (Ch. 29)

WEEK 2 READING REFLECTION DUE**

Week 3

Friday 2/14

J. González, *Harvest*, 3-29 (Ch. 1)

J. González, *Harvest*, pgs. 30-38 (Ch. 2 until "Freedom, Filibusters, and Manifest Destiny")

WEEK 3 READING REFLECTION DUE**

Week 4

Friday 2/21

J. González, *Harvest*, 39-65 (Ch. 2 from "Freedom, Filibusters, and Manifest Destiny")

J. González, *Harvest*, 66-88 (Ch. 3)

WEEK 4 READING REFLECTION DUE**

Week 5

Friday 2/28

In-class film: *Harvest of Empire*

J. González, *Harvest*, 121-130 (Ch. 6) and 144-164 (Ch. 8)

J. González, *Harvest*, 297-338 (Ch. 13)

Optional:
T. Harmer, "The Cold War in Latin America," 4-12 ("Chronology")*

WEEK 5 READING REFLECTION DUE**

Week 6

Friday, 3/7

J. Meléndez-Badillo, "Foundations of U.S. Colonialism in Puerto Rico," "A Turbulent Decade," "The Populist Moment," "The Great Migration"*

J. González, *Harvest*, 339-376 (Ch. 14)

Optional:
P. Cabán, "Puerto Rico," *CDXS*, 13-26 (Ch. 1)

WEEK 6 READING REFLECTION DUE**

Week 7

Friday 3/14

J. Flores, "The Puerto Rico that José Luis González Built" and "Cortijo's Revenge"*

J. Laguarta Ramírez, "A Plant without Seeds"*

Optional:
J. L. González, "The Four-Storeyed Country"*

In-class film: *From Mambo to Hip-Hop* (second half of the class)

WEEK 7 READING REFLECTION DUE**

MIDTERM INSTRUCTIONS POSTED TO BRIGHTSPACE

Week 8

Friday 3/21

J. González, *Harvest*, pgs. 81-95 (Ch. 4)

L. Briggs, "I Like To Be In America"*

Optional
L. C. Delgado, "Jesús Colón and the Making of a New York City Community"*
J. Laguarta Ramírez, "Antonia Pantoja"*

WEEK 8 READING REFLECTION DUE**

Week 9

Friday 3/28

In-class film: *¡Pa'lante, Siempre Pa'lante!*

N. Martínez, "Past is Present"*

L. Ševčenko, "Making Loisaida," *Mambo*, 293-318 (Ch. 10)

J. Duany, "Nuyorican and Diasporican Literature and Culture"*

Optional:
W. Guerron, "CHARAS and the Reimagination of Loisaida"*

WEEK 9 READING REFLECTION DUE**

MIDTERM DUE

Week 10

Friday 4/4

J. González, *Harvest*, 96-107 (Ch. 5)

J. Solís, "Immigration Status and Identity," *Mambo*, 337-362 (Ch. 11)

Optional:
R. C. Smith, "Mexicans in NY at a Crossroads"*

WEEK 10 READING REFLECTION DUE**

Week 11

Friday 4/10

J. González, *Harvest*, 131-143 (Ch. 7)

J. Itzoghson and C. Dore-Cabral, "The Manifold Character of Panethnicity," in *Mambo*, 319-336 (Ch. 12)

Optional:
R. Hernández and S. Torres-Saillant, "Perspectives on Dominicans in New York City"*

WEEK 11 READING REFLECTION DUE**

SPRING RECESS: Saturday 4/12 – Sunday 4/20

Week 12

Friday 4/25

J. González, *Harvest*, 199-224 (Ch. 11)

J. González, *Harvest*, 225-248 (Ch. 12)

Optional:
N. De Genova, "The Legal Production of Illegality"*
A. I. Castañeda, "Language and Other Lethal Weapons," *ACLS*, 126-137 (Ch. 11)

WEEK 12 READING REFLECTION DUE**

Week 13

Friday 5/2

E. Machado Sáez, "In Pursuit of Property and Forgiveness," *CDXS*, 332-343 (Ch. 25)

E. Morales, “Media, Marketing, and the Invisible Soul of Latinidad” and “A Cautionary Tale”*

WEEK 13 READING REFLECTION DUE**

Week 14

Friday 5/9

J. González, *Harvest*, 167-198 (Ch. 10)

M. C. García, “Refugees or Economic Immigrants?” *ACLS*, 480-491 (Ch. 43)

Optional:
E. Zilberg, “Inter-American Ethnography,” *ACLS*, 492-501 (Ch. 44)

WEEK 14 READING REFLECTION DUE**

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Thursday 12/22

FINAL REFLECTION DUE

Statement on Majors and Minors

Looking For a Major? Make AFPRL Your Choice. Major, Double Major or Minor in AFPRL.

The Department of Africana & Puerto Rican/Latino Studies prepares students for a broad range of careers in the public and private sector; for entrance to professional schools such as law, social work, urban planning and medicine, and for graduate study and research in the social sciences and humanities. The Department has a long history of nurturing students' intellectual discipline, creativity, and social and political awareness. The Department's interdisciplinary structure offers students an opportunity to satisfy the increasing expectations of admissions committees and prospective employers for a broad liberal arts perspective that complements the specialized knowledge of a field.

Required credits: Major (30 credits), Double Major (30 credits), Minor (12 credits)

For more information contact Prof. Edey-Rhodes, jrhodes@hunter.cuny.edu, 212-772-5140.

Policy on Academic Integrity

Hunter College regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values of intellectual honesty. The College is committed to enforcing the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity and will pursue cases of academic dishonesty according to the Hunter College Academic Integrity Procedures.

ADA Policy

ln compliance with the American Disability Act of 1990 (ADA) and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Hunter College is committed to ensuring educational parity and accommodations for all students with documented disabilities and/or medical conditions. It is recommended that all students with documented disabilities (Emotional, Medical, Physical, and/or Leaming) consult the Office of AccessABILITY, located in Room E72I4B, to secure necessary academic accommodations. For further information and assistance, please call: (212) 772- 4857 or (212) 650-3230.

Policv on Sexual Misconduct

In compliance with the CUNY Policy on Sexual Misconduct, Hunter College reaffirms the prohibition of any sexual misconduct, which includes sexual violence, sexual harassment, and gender-based harassment retaliation against students, employees, or visitors, as well as certain intimate relationships. Students who have experienced any form of sexual violence on or off campus (including CUNY-sponsored trips and events) are entitled to the rights outlined in the Bill of Rights for Hunter College.

a. Sexual Violence: Students are strongly encouraged to immediately report the incident by calling 911, contacting NYPD Special Victims Division Hotline (646-610-7272) or their local police precinct, or contacting the College's Public Safety Office (212-772-4444).

b. All Other Forms of Sexual Misconduct: Students are also encouraged to contact the College's Title D(Campus Coordinator, Dean John Rose (trose@hunter.cuny.edu or 212-650-3262) or Colleen Barry (colleen.barry@hunter.cuny.edu or 212-772-4534) and seek complimentary services through the Counseling and Wellness Services Office, Hunter East 1123.

CUNY Policy on Sexual Misconduct Link:
http://www.cuny.edr.r/about/administration/offrces/lalPolicy-on-SexualMisconduct-12-1-14-withlinks.pdf