

Brooklyn College
Department of Puerto Rican and Latino Studies
PRLS 2505: LATINXS IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMPLEX
Fall 2021

Contact Info/Class Info

Professor: Rita Sandoval
Office: Boylan Hall, 1208B
Email: rita.sandoval@brooklyn.cuny.edu
Class Details: Tuesdays & Thursdays 11am-12:15pm
Office Hours: By Appointment

Official Course Description

LatinXs within the penal system; mass incarceration and reform; racial profiling; juvenile justice; drug criminalization; legal representation; immigration policy; human and civil rights struggles and organized movements; political activism and repression, including Puerto Rican nationalists; "gang" formation; globalization and labor formation after 1970's shift in global capital; school-to-prison pipeline; urban displacement. 3 hours; 3 credits.

Course Overview

This is an inter and trans-disciplinary course, which has two main objectives. The first is to serve as an introduction into the current realities and challenges of the LatinX community within the criminal justice complex in the United States. The course seeks to critically examine the misconceptions and realities of the LatinX community within the larger discussion of mass incarceration and prison reform in the United States. Close attention will also be paid to the use of criminalization as a form of social control and the proliferation of regulations, ordinances, and legislative acts that give legal form to such methods of discipline and punishment. The course will address dynamics and phenomena of racial profiling; juvenile justice; drug criminalization; and the intersection of immigration law with criminal law. In concluding, the course will shift to understanding and connecting the prison-industrial complex to what the future holds for marginalized communities within the current movement and crisis of global capital.

The course also seeks to improve your skills in critical reading, writing, and thinking. Paper assignments will provide opportunities to develop your own interpretations systematically and polish your writing skills.

While there undoubtedly exists an infinite research agenda when it comes to the study mass incarceration and the ongoing challenges of the LatinX community within the criminal justice system of the United States, it is only possible [in 15 weeks] to cover a limited surface/amount of such complicated history and realities of these topics. However, provided is a list of suggested/recommended readings for additional literature to be consulted.

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A Brief Note on the terms Latino/Latinx/Latine:

A majority of this course covers the diversity and heterogeneity that fall under the singular designation of “Latino”. Many course readings (given their time period and purpose) may use the term “Hispanic”, “Latino”, or “Latinx”. In the last few years, “Latinx” has been used to identify one’s indigenous roots, and more recently, to describe works that critically engage with questioning and challenging heteronormative functions that suppress diasporic Latin American and Hispanic-Caribbean people in the United States. During our class discussions, Latinx/Latine can be used at the discretion of students to demonstrate course material’s inclusivity of LGBTQ experiences.

Course Learning Goals

Official SLO (Student Learning Objectives):

1- Students will demonstrate knowledge of race, ethnicity, class, gender, (im)migration, diaspora, national origin, intra- and inter-group dynamics, religion, language, and/or sexuality regarding Latinxs, Caribbean-, and/or Latin Americans, inclusive of Afro-Latinx and indigenous populations.

2- Students will design a plan of action, research project, or creative work focusing on advocacy and leadership involving issues of equity and social justice vis a vis Puerto Rican/Latinx communities, the Caribbean and/or Latin America, inclusive of Afro-Latinx and indigenous populations pertaining thereto.

Students will also:

- Critically reflect on the criminal justice system’s role in racializing human “subjects”
- Understand the historical underpinnings of mass incarceration in the United States
- Better navigate the scholarly literature on mass incarceration, migrant detention, and racially disparate criminal justice policies and practices
- Further develop critical thinking skills and the ability to speak and write clearly and analytically
- Connect a series of social movements (e.g. Black Lives Matter, Prison/Police Abolition) to academic literature on race and criminal justice
- Situate select Latino/a/x scholarship within a historical framework of U.S. criminal justice and contemporary carceral studies
- Critically reflect on the systems of state governance, institutions, organizations, commercial enterprises, and non-profits built around and upon the project of mass imprisonment

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- Anchor criminal justice policy in electoral politics and the racial politics of crime control
- Understand the special role of three types of institutions: Police, Corrections, and Courts – and their impact on communities of color

General Note

We are living through unprecedented times. Students of all levels are facing unique academic and personal challenges in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Given these challenges, I believe communication between instructor and students is of paramount importance. Should you encounter any issues throughout the semester, I encourage you to speak with me so we can work together to ensure your successful completion of the course.

Grading Rubric

Requirement	Percentage of Final Grade
Attendance/Class Participation	20%
Reading Response Papers (3)	20%
Film Critiques (3)	20%
Final Research Paper-Abstract & Annotated Bibliography	10%
Final Research Paper-Full Paper	30%

Attendance

Attendance/Class Participation is worth 20% of Final Grade. Participation grades are based on **qualitative** assessment of YOUR contribution to class discussions. You are expected to attend live on-line class sessions having already read assigned course materials for that week and demonstrate familiarity with assigned readings. Please send me an email before class notifying you will not be attending, *you are not required to provide an explanation for your absence* if you do not wish to

Requirements and Grading:

Reading Responses (20% of Final Grade):

- You are to write a response paper [3-4 pages] in a manner that illustrates critical engagement with the material/literature from class discussions, assigned readings, and other course materials.
- This is not a summary of the reading, but rather a serious and scholarly analysis of the course content.

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Film Responses (20% of Final Grade):

- You are to write a response paper [2 pages] to the films in a manner that illustrates critical engagement of the material/literature from class discussions, assigned readings, and content of the films.
- This is not a summary of the films, but rather a serious and scholarly analysis of the film.

All responses should be in 12 PT font (Times or Calibri) with proper citations/in-text references.

Research Project Abstract and Annotated Bibliography

- Students will turn in a 250 word (max) abstract of their research project
- In addition, students will provide a list of 10 sources with a brief (3-5 sentences) summary of the sources thesis/findings and provide an explanation of how the sources relates to the students' research project.

Final Research Project Paper (30% of Final Grade):

- You will be responsible to write a 7-10-page analytical paper engaging the material discussed in the course.
- You must show in-depth knowledge of the literature assigned in the class.
- A full description of the paper and its requirements will be addressed during class. As such, plan accordingly.
- **ALL** students will present for a 3-5 minutes synopsis of their final paper topic during;
 - Week 9/10 of the course and
 - Their final research findings during Week 15.

All assignments due on Blackboard via Turn It In by 12PM on Friday of the week they are due.

Class/Reading Participation

Please come to on-line sessions prepared to participate in informed discussion of assigned readings and to engage actively in the in-class activities designed to help you apply what we are learning to a research project of interest to you. You will also be assigned to a group that will be responsible for re-calling and discussing a particular reading. The reading for which your group is responsible will be decided during our live sessions and the day that reading is covered will be posted on blackboard. On those days, please come prepared for me to "call on" you to discuss the reading.

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Statement on Academic Integrity

The faculty and administration of Brooklyn College support an environment free from cheating and plagiarism. Students are responsible for being aware of what constitutes cheating and plagiarism and for avoiding both. The complete text of the CUNY Academic Integrity Policy and the Brooklyn College procedure for implementing that policy can be found at this site: <http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/bc/policies>. If a faculty member suspects a violation of academic integrity and, upon investigation, confirms that violation, or if the student admits the violation, the faculty member MUST report the violation.

Students enrolled in this class are hereby placed on notice that the professor reserves the right to use turnitin.com to help identify plagiarism.

Statement from the Center for Student Disability Services

In order to receive disability-related academic accommodations students must first be registered with the Center for Student Disability Services. Students who have a documented disability or suspect they may have a disability are invited to set up an appointment with the Director of the Center for Student Disability Services, at 718-951-5538. If you have already registered with the Center for Student Disability Services please provide your professor with the course accommodation form and discuss your specific accommodation with him/her.

Division of Student Affairs Personal Counseling

Personal counseling is available to Brooklyn College undergraduate and graduate students. A staff of psychologists, counselors, and social workers are available to assist you with personal issues or problems you may experience during your academic years. Emergency consultations and referrals to outside services are also provided. Workshops are offered on stress management, time management, test anxiety, etc.

All services are free and confidential. No information is released without consent of the student. Initial appointments for services must be made in person. The PC Office is located at 0203 James Hall. You may also contact them at 718-951-5363 or BCPersonalCounseling@gmail.com

Accessibility

Students who have a documented disability or suspect they may have a disability are invited to set up an appointment with the Director of the Center for Student Disability Services at 718-951-5538. See here: [Center for Student Disability Services](#). If you have already registered with the Center for Student Disability Services, please provide your professor with the course accommodation form and discuss your specific accommodation with them.

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Nonattendance because of religious beliefs

The New York State Education Law provides that no student shall be expelled or refused admission to an institution of higher education because he or she is unable to attend classes or participate in examinations or study or work requirements on any particular day or days because of religious beliefs. Students who are unable to attend classes on a particular day or days because of religious beliefs will be excused from any examination or study or work requirements. Faculty must make good-faith efforts to provide students absent from class because of religious beliefs equivalent opportunities to make up the work missed; no additional fees may be charged for this consideration.