


The background image shows a coastal fortification, likely a lighthouse or observation tower, built on a rocky shore. The structure is made of weathered stone and has a small, domed cupola on top. The ocean is a deep blue, and the sky is clear. The fortification's walls are thick and show signs of age and wear. The overall scene is one of a historic coastal defense structure.

Disaster and Reconstruction

A Field Course in Post-Hurricane Maria
Reconstruction and Gender in Puerto Rico
Faculty Led Study Away Course - June 2019

INFO SESSION: November 28, 2018
6:00 - 6:45 pm
Meneely 207

Wheaton College
Center for Global Education
gloaled@wheatoncollege.edu
5 Howard Street
508.286.4950



ANTH 298/PH 298

Disaster and Reconstruction

Estimated Travel Dates: May 29-

June 15, 2019

Faculty Director

M. Gabriela Torres (Anthropology/Public Health)

Email: torres_mgabriela@wheatoncollege.edu

Course Description

This field-based course enables students to learn how natural disasters are lived in the individual lives of persons by focusing on the incidence of gender based violence after disaster. This is an interdisciplinary field research experience course in Public Health and long term natural disaster management that leverages the ability of humanistic inquiry to connect lives lived to larger social and cultural processes.

Students in this course analyze and collect narratives that demonstrate the gendered impacts of Hurricane Maria on Puerto Rican society. Engaging in the work of public humanities, students will work to make the collection of narratives of life post-disaster useful for community reconstruction. In this effort, students will be guided by local public intellectuals, artists, and activists. Through classroom instruction and site visits, students will engage in putting humanities analysis together with social science methods. Interviews, surveys and social service inventories will be analyzed in tandem with site visits to cultural performances and installations so as to understand the work of social reconstruction and gender based violence as it is expressed by artists, activists, community members, policy makers, and researchers.

This practice of inquiry at this time in Puerto Rico requires a deep engagement with questions that have been at the core of humanistic inquiry. Literature and art—modern, classic, western, and that originating in the global south—are filled with gendered narratives of hardship, endurance, tragedy, and the trials of overcoming disaster that are now strikingly present in the lives of Puerto Ricans. Through crafting life stories in context, the course asks students to interrogate what lies at the core of the human will to survive and thrive amidst hardship. Tracing how societies, not just individuals, reframe core values in the face of hardship, scarcity and loss, the course draws attention to the ways that gender shapes understandings of the self and society. These are age old questions as human resilience in the face of disasters, both natural and manmade, have shaped societies for millennia.

Off- Course Included Recreation Highlights

Day trip to San Juan, Arecibo Observatory, Cavernas del Rio Camuy, and Sunset Snorkel in Bioluminescent Bay in La Parguera

Program Costs

Program fee: Final price will be set by March, but will not exceed \$4000. Program fee will be charged to Wheaton fee bill upon confirmation of participation.

Program fee includes: airfare, accommodations, guides, field trips, in-country transportation.

➡ Need-based financial aid is available!

Application Information

Apply online at globaled.wheatoncollege.edu

Complete applications must be submitted by the application deadline to be considered.

Applications may be reviewed and students accepted on a rolling basis.

Accepted students will be expected to confirm participation within two weeks of notification of acceptance.

Application deadline: March 1, 2019.

Important Course Notes:

The course does not require students to be fluent in Spanish, although some knowledge of Spanish is preferred.

The course will require students to complete work and attend sessions prior to departure. One pre-trip planning session in April (time and date TBD) and a three-hour working session during exam week are required (early evening Tuesday May 7th, 2019).

The first assignment in the course will be due on May 27th, 2019.

Course Location:

The course is based from the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Puerto Rico (PUCPR), in the historic city of Ponce, Puerto Rico.

Located in the southern region of the island three miles from the south central coastline, Ponce is Puerto Rico's second largest city with a population of less than 150, 000. Ponce is a 1.5 hour drive from Luiz Muñoz Marin International Airport and is a tourist destination

Basic Program Itinerary:

May 29	Depart from Boston on May 29, arrival in San Juan and transportation to Ponce, PR.
May 30	Introductory Class Work in Ponce, PR.
May 31	Class Visit to San Juan including course dinner in San Juan.
June 1,2	Visit to Arecibo Observatory and Cavernas del Rio Camuy.
June 3-6	Class Work in Ponce, PR and surrounding communities.
June 7	Class Visit to San Juan including Museum of Modern Art.
June 8,9	Sunset Snorkel in Bioluminescent Bay in La Parguera.
June 10-13	Class Work in Ponce, PR and surrounding communities.
June 14	Final Presentations and Course Wrap-up including course final dinner.
June 15	Depart for Ponce, to San Juan Airport and return.

NOTE: Dates and itinerary are subject to change by the Center for Global Education and the Faculty Director.





Course Highlights

The course carries no prerequisites and will provide students with methodological instruction in quantitative and qualitative research methods. The course is a particularly useful experience for students interested in role humanities can play in public and global health as well as narrative, policy, journalistic, and public writing.

This field-based course develops:

- (1) an integrated interdisciplinary experiences that has the potential to develop skill in the Spanish language, narrative writing, textual analysis and quantitative and qualitative social science research methodologies;
- (2) an active collaboration with local scholars and activists working in situ in a post-natural disaster area;
- (3) student interest in social responsibility;
- (4) skill sets as public and global health policy as well as academic research and advocacy skills; and
- (5) exposure to classroom work in bilingual environments.

Work Due Prior to Travel:

In the April and May Exam Week Sessions as well as in the assignment due prior to travel students will begin to cover:

- (1) Basic Puerto Rican history and culture,
- (2) Anthropology of natural disasters,
- (3) Basics of Gender-based violence research, and
- (4) Ethics in the field research basics.

Assessment of Student Work:

Students should expect to be assessed on their participation in course activities, their informed contribution in course discussions, submitted annotations of required readings prior to departure, one expository essay, reflection field journals, individual and group presentations, and group project work defined in collaboration with Puerto Rican counterparts.

Public Health Credit:

Students may be able to apply to have a PH designation for this course.

Students may be able to petition to have this course substitute for PSY 334 if they make prior arrangements with the professor to take it as a 300-level course.