

## HSI Speaker (Spring 2019)



### **Xavier Perez**

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### **RESEARCH INTERESTS**

My research interests address two broad areas of study: Criminology and Latino(a) crime. Specifically, what distinguishes Latinos(as) from other ethnic/racial groups in America? In general, Latinos(as) are characterized as violent immigrants, gang members, and drug lords. However, there is little criminological research to confirm or challenge such conclusions. In addition, the dominant discourse amalgamates the complexity of Latinidad. Indeed, Latino(a) crime demonstrates considerable variation across the different number of Latino(a) groups in the United States. The status of Latinos(as) as immigrants, political refugees, or naturalized citizens significantly influences crime in Latino(a) communities. Second, my research interests explore variation in legal traditions around the world and the implications of such variation on crime policies. Specifically, I examine the impact of this training on police behavior and community relations in Puerto Rico. The goal of comparative criminology is to explore how and why countries punish criminal offenders differently and how those differences are often the result of cross-national variation in culture, politics, economics, religion, and social organization.

### **TEACHING INTERESTS**

In accordance with the interdisciplinary nature of Criminology, my teaching interests intersect the disciplines of Sociology, Criminal Justice, and Latino/Latina Studies. I have taught courses such as Social Problems; Introduction to Criminal Justice; Race, Class, Gender, and the Criminal Justice System; Foundations of Criminal Justice; Ethics in Criminal Justice; and developed a course on Latinos(as) and the Criminal Justice System. Additionally, I also taught online criminal justice courses with Kaplan University's Department of Criminal Justice. Pedagogically, my teaching approach utilizes technology-based activities, in-depth discussions, and critical thinking assignments. I have received exceptional evaluations from both students and peers alike. As such, I take teaching very seriously and enter the classroom with the goal of *changing the world, one lecture at a time*.