

Reporting to the class on current events

Once or more during the semester, each student will be assigned to give an oral report on current events at the beginning of a class period.

Requirements include:

1. Report on at least six news stories. These should be the most newsworthy events of the day at all levels — local, state, national and international. Don't limit the report to what interests you or your friends. Mostly, you will be looking for events that touch people's lives and have long-term importance. But also include at least one event that is just interesting or funny (perhaps something from entertainment or sports).
2. Identify at least two stories as having come from the #jlabnews Twitter feed or another social media project of this class, including at least one story that you contributed to social media as a class member within the past week.
3. Identify at least one story as having come from the most recent Tropolitan, TropNews.com or TrojanVision.
4. Use a variety of media sources, such as the ones listed at the top of the Course Schedule page.
5. Select one of your stories, and analyze it. In other words, describe briefly to the class what facts it contains, what sources the reporter obtained her information from, how she wrote the story, and how the story was presented in digital, print or broadcast format. Use the word "analysis" in introducing this section of your report.
6. Your report should last four to five minutes — no longer. Be concise. Summarize; don't read the stories at length. Think of it as a radio newscast, where the announcer gets straight to the point of each story and does not waste words.
7. You may use notes, but you don't have to give them to the teacher.

IMPORTANT: *When it's your turn to give the report, come to class on time and be prepared to start immediately. If you don't show up for class without giving a good reason and notifying the professor ahead of time, you may receive a zero on this report.*

Your grade on this assignment will be based on how well you follow these directions — in particular, whether you exercise good news judgment, follow all directions and provide a thorough report. Inquire after class, and the professor will be glad to discuss your grade with you.

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SOURCES

Trump threatens to abandon Puerto Rico recovery effort

By Philip Rucker and Ed O'Keefe October 12 at 12:00 PM

President Trump served notice Thursday that he may pull back federal relief workers from Puerto Rico, effectively threatening to abandon the U.S. territory amid a staggering humanitarian crisis in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria.

Declaring the U.S. territory's electrical grid and infrastructure to have been a "disaster before hurricanes," Trump wrote Thursday that it will be up to Congress how much federal money to appropriate to the island for its recovery efforts and that relief workers will not stay "forever."

Three weeks after Maria made landfall, much of Puerto Rico, an island of 3.4 million people, remains without power. Residents struggle to find clean water, hospitals are running short on medicine, and commerce is slow, with many businesses closed.

① Trump's tweet

[Trump's tweets anger, but do not surprise, Puerto Ricans]

Trump on Thursday sought to shame the territory for its own plight. He tweeted, "Electric and all infrastructure was disaster before hurricanes." And he quoted Sharyl Attkisson, a television journalist, as saying, "Puerto Rico survived the Hurricanes, now a financial crisis looms largely of their own making."

He also wrote: "We cannot keep FEMA, the Military & the First Responders, who have been amazing (under the most difficult circumstances) in P.R. forever!"

② Governor's tweet

Puerto Rico Gov. Ricardo Rosselló responded with his own tweet, saying Puerto Ricans were seeking the support "any of our fellow citizens would receive across our Nation."

③ Mayor's tweet

Carmen Yulín Cruz, the mayor of the capital city, San Juan, who has been feuding publicly with Trump, strongly condemned the president Thursday in a tweet calling him a "Hater in Chief" and in a lengthy statement sent to reporters and members of Congress. She said the president's actions "are unbecoming of a leader of the free world," and she argued that he "is simply incapable of understanding the contributions, the sacrifices and the commitment to democratic values that Puerto Ricans have shown over decades."

Cruz pleaded with "every American that has love, and not hate in their hearts, to stand with Puerto Rico and let this President know we WILL NOT BE LEFT TO DIE."

④ White House statement

The White House issued a statement Thursday committing for now "the full force of the U.S. government" to the Puerto Rico recovery, though noting that "successful recoveries do not last forever."

⑤ Sanders

"Our job in any disaster affected location is to help the community respond and recover from that disaster," White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said. "We continue to do so with the full force of the U.S. government and its resources in Texas, Florida, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands and other affected areas. Successful recoveries do not last forever; they should be as swift as possible to help people resume their normal lives. We are committed to helping Puerto Rico. Our administration is working with Governor Rosselló and Congress to identify the best fiscally responsible path forward."

Trump has been roundly criticized for his leadership in coming to Puerto Rico's aid. In response, the president has tried to portray the territory as in full recovery mode and has voiced frustration with what he considers mismanagement by local officials.

⑥ Background info, probably from previous news stories

During a visit last week, the president tossed rolls of paper towels at local residents as if shooting baskets, drawing scorn from local leaders. He also complained that the recovery efforts had "thrown our budget a little out of whack," and noted that the death toll was lower than the "real catastrophe" of Hurricane Katrina, which devastated New Orleans and surrounding areas in 2005.

Trump's threats to limit the emergency worker footprint in Puerto Rico come as the House is set to vote Thursday on a \$36.5 billion disaster aid package that includes provisions to avert a potential cash crisis in Puerto Rico prompted by Hurricane Maria.

⑦ Rossello's warning

Rosselló warned congressional leaders over the weekend that the U.S. territory is "on the brink of a massive liquidity crisis that will intensify in the immediate future." The legislation set for a vote allows up to \$4.9 billion in direct loans to local governments in a bid to ease Puerto Rico's financial crunch.

Without congressional action, the territory may not be able to make its payroll or pay vendors by the end of the month.

⑧ House speaker

House Speaker Paul D. Ryan (R-Wis.) said that Puerto Rico must eventually "stand on its own two feet," but that the federal government needs to continue to respond to the humanitarian crisis.

"We're in the midst of a humanitarian crisis," Ryan said. He added, "Yes, we need to make sure that Puerto Rico can begin to stand on its own two feet. ... But at the moment there is a humanitarian crisis has to be attended to and this is an area where the federal government has a responsibility, and we're acting on it."

⑨ Nancy Pelosi

Top Democrats assailed Trump for his Thursday tweets on Puerto Rico. House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) called Trump's tweets "heartbreaking," adding that "we are all Americans, and we owe them what they need."

⑩ Schumer's tweet

Senate Minority Leader Charles E. Schumer (D-N.Y.) tweeted: "There is still devastation, Americans are still dying. FEMA needs to stay until the job is done."

⑪ Velázquez's statement

Another New York Democrat, Rep. Nydia M. Velázquez, who was born in Puerto Rico, said in a statement that the president's "most solemn duty is to protect the safety and the security of the American people. By suggesting he might abdicate this responsibility for our fellow citizens in Puerto Rico, Mr. Trump has called into question his ability to lead. We will not allow the federal government to abandon Puerto Rico in its time of need."

⑫ Hing (speaking for Frelinghuysen)

Jennifer Hing, a spokeswoman for House Appropriations Committee Chairman Rodney Frelinghuysen (R-N.J.), said that those who live on the island "are American citizens and they deserve the federal assistance they need to recover and rebuild. The Chairman and the Committee fully stand by them in these efforts, and will continue to be at the ready to provide the victims of these devastating hurricanes with the necessary federal resources both now and in the future."

Frelinghuysen is scheduled to be part of a delegation led by House Speaker Paul D. Ryan (R-Wis.) that will visit Puerto Rico on Friday to see the hurricane's devastation firsthand.

⑬ VP Pence

The president's tweets on Thursday seemed to contradict Vice President Pence, who during a visit to the island last week vowed that the administration would be with Puerto Rico "every step of the way."


"I say to all of you gathered here today to the people of Puerto Rico: We are with you, we stand with you, and we will be with you every single day until Puerto Rico is restored bigger and better than ever before," he said.


⑭ Trump speech

Trump himself made a similar promise, saying in a Sept. 29 speech, "We will not rest, however, until the people of Puerto Rico are safe." He added: "These are great people. We want them to be safe and sound and secure. And we will be there every day until that happens."

Arelis R. Hernández in Puerto Rico and Mike DeBonis in Washington contributed to this report.

6029 Comments

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