Teaching Genealogists AI™
Instructor: Sylvia Vargas

AI Tools for Research and Organization

Course Overview

Course Instructor: Sylvia Vargas
Organization: Puerto Rican Genealogy Group
Website: https://puertoricangenealogy.org
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Who Is This Course For?

This course is for researchers who are comfortable using FamilySearch or Ancestry and are ready to bring AI tools into their workflow. You do not need to be a technology expert. You do need to be willing to verify everything AI produces.

You should already know:

- How to search FamilySearch for Puerto Rican records
- The basics of Puerto Rican naming conventions (double surname system)
- That AI output is always a draft, never evidence

New to Puerto Rican genealogy? Start with the Getting Started course first: https://puertoricangenealogy.org/research-guides/getting-started/

What You Will Walk Away With

- A clear understanding of what AI tools can and cannot do in genealogical research
- Practical prompts for matching records involving common Puerto Rican names
- A workflow for turning raw transcriptions into organized, searchable data
- A method for using AI to identify research gaps and suggest next steps
- Habits that keep your research GPS-compliant when AI is involved

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A Note About GPS and AI

AI cannot complete the Genealogical Proof Standard for you. It cannot evaluate source quality, assess informant reliability, or reach reasoned conclusions. What it can do is help you organize information, surface patterns, and draft text faster than working alone.

Every module in this course includes a GPS checkpoint: a reminder of where human judgment is required and AI output must be verified against original sources.

The Four Modules

Module	Title	Estimated Time
Module 1	AI as a Research Assistant: What It Can and Cannot Do	20–30 minutes
Module 2	Record Matching: Solving Common-Name Problems	25–35 minutes
Module 3	Organizing Your Data with AI	25–35 minutes
Module 4		30–40 minutes

Module	Title	Estimated Time
	Research Planning: Breaking Through Brick Walls	

Total estimated time: 1 hour 40 minutes to 2 hours 20 minutes

AI Tools Covered

This course focuses on two free AI tools:

- **Google Gemini** – https://gemini.google.com
- **Anthropic Claude** – https://claude.ai

Both tools offer free tiers. Prompting principles in this course work with either tool.

Worksheets

Worksheet	Purpose
WS 01 – AI Prompt Builder	Build and save a reusable Genealogist Profile prompt
WS 02 – Record Matching Log	Document AI-assisted record comparisons
WS 03 – Data Extraction Template	Track AI-extracted data with citations and verification status
WS 04 – Research Gap Audit	Log your known facts, gaps, and planned next searches

Download all worksheets at: https://puertoricangenealogy.org/research-guides/ai-research-organization/

The One Rule

AI output is a draft. Every fact, name, date, and citation produced by an AI tool must be verified against the original source before it enters your research record.

If you apply this rule consistently, AI tools will make you a more efficient researcher. If you skip it, AI tools will introduce errors you may not find for years.