

# Department of Chicano/Latino Studies

Volume 10 Issue 3

Spring 2007

## INAUGURAL CEREMONY



*Professor Leo Chavez and Assistant Professor Cynthia Feliciano engage in discussion with Dr. Seymour Menton, left, and Francisco J. Ayala, right.*

UCI faculty and administrators, community leaders, and friends of Chicano/Latino Studies inaugurated the Department at a February 28 ceremony at the University Club. Giving

congratulatory remarks were UCI Vice Chancellor and Provost Michael Gottfredson, UCI School of Social Sciences Dean Barbara Doshier, and DCLS Chair Louis DeSipio. Special recognition was given to former Chicano/Latino Studies Program Director Professor Leo Chavez for his efforts and commitment in helping establish the DCLS. Among those in attendance were



*From left: Chair of Chicano/Latino Studies, Louis DeSipio, Toni Garcilazo, Alex Garcilazo, Jr., and Alex Garcilazo, Sr., mother, brother, and father of the late Jeff Garcilazo, faculty member of Chicano/Latino Studies and History 1995-2001.*

Alex and Toni Garcilazo, parents of the late Chicano/Latino Studies and History Professor, Jeff Garcilazo. The ceremony provided a glimpse of the strong relationship that exists among undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, staff, and administrators within the DCLS, School of Social Sciences, and UCI. The crowd was also treated to a performance by Ballet Folklorico de UCI.

## FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

Since 2005, Assistant Professor of Chicano/Latino Studies and Anthropology, **Michael Montoya**, has received many accolades for his ethnographic research on diabetes among Mexican Americans.



Montoya's research calls into question not only how race-specific information is being gathered and interpreted by the medical community, but how it is presented to the public through media and pharmaceutical marketing.

Genetic studies have sparked international headlines suggesting that Mexicans are predisposed to Type 2 diabetes. Montoya's research reveals just how problematic it is to link health inequalities in any way to genetic variation rather than structural inequalities. Montoya notes that, "Unfortunately, looking for genetic factors that influence diabetes in ethnic groups ignores the social factors like poverty and access to health care that have a much stronger correlation to the rates of diabetes among certain groups. And if we don't understand that those groups are not biological, we will look for biological explanations for their disease rates when we should be looking for social ones." The implication, notes Montoya, is that to ethnically label disease promotes the idea that the finding is not about universal human biology, but only about Mexican American biology, which he calls "scientific nonsense."

In the last two years Montoya has received research grants from the: General Clinical Research Center, School of Medicine, UC Irvine; Intel Corporation; National Institutes of Health; National Science Foundation; School of Social Sciences, UC Irvine; and Wenner-Gen Foundation. Montoya is on the faculty of UCI's Program in Medical Education for the Latino Community (PRIME-LC), the first medical education program in the country designed to meet the growing demand for physicians and public health leaders who are culturally sensitive and can address the distinct and specific needs of Latinos.

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Friends of Chicano/Latino Studies:

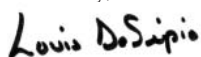
In the last newsletter, I highlighted one important sign of the continued growth and prominence of Chicano/Latino Studies at UCI: three recently-hired faculty members who are at the forefront of research on the Chicano/Latino experience in the United States. Today, I want to look at another sign of our success: the students we are training and mentoring.

Since the establishment of the undergraduate major in 2001, we've seen a steady growth in the number of students majoring in Chicano/Latino Studies. At the present time, we have 67 majors and, based on recent experience, we can expect this to grow by twenty or more in the coming year. Our majors are certainly not the only students we serve. More than 2,000 UCI undergraduates took Chicano/Latino Studies classes last academic year. Our faculty also work with more than two dozen UCI graduate students on Chicano/Latino-focused research; this number will undoubtedly grow as the Department implements our new Graduate Emphasis.

Our undergraduate majors graduate with a rich intellectual and experiential foundation to begin careers in many different fields. Since the inception of the major, 45 UCI students have graduated with Chicano/Latino Studies majors. Many of our graduated majors have gone on to begin graduate or professional degrees, attending such prominent universities as the University of California, Los Angeles, Harvard University, the University of California, Santa Barbara, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, the University of Southern California, and the University of Wisconsin. Several of our graduates have gone on to teaching careers or to work in public policy research organizations. We have at least one graduate working as staff member in a Congressional office in Washington, D.C. In sum, our graduates use their training in Chicano/Latino studies as a critical foundation for further scholarly training and professional careers in public service and research.

With your continued support, UCI Chicano/Latino Studies students will continue to have the opportunity to prepare for rich professional futures.

Sincerely,



Louis DeSipio  
Chair, Department of Chicano/Latino Studies &  
Associate Professor, Departments of Chicano/Latino Studies  
and Political Science



## COURSE SPOTLIGHT: 102W

In the CLS 102W Research Seminar course, students continue to work on original research projects they began in CLS 101. Students design their own studies, all of which deal with issues of importance to Latinos in the U.S., such as education, health, politics, identity, and immigration. The range of methods the students use are also diverse, including quantitative analyses of existing surveys, fieldwork, interviews, content analysis, and conducting surveys. Through working on independent projects that they care about, students develop skills in analytical and critical thinking and writing. They learn how to construct an argument and how to present evidence to make that argument.

While their research projects are all unique, the process is also very collaborative. Students receive extensive feedback from the instructor and their classmates, and together troubleshoot common research and writing problems as a class in a supportive environment. Students also develop important verbal communication skills through formal presentations of their research papers at the end of the quarter. In the end, the course is a challenge for the students, but is also very rewarding. Through their hard work, they not only develop polished research papers that they can be proud of, they also develop stronger analytical thinking, researching, and writing skills, which will serve them well in the future.



## COLLOQUIUM SPEAKERS



**Arlene Davila**  
Professor of Anthropology  
New York University

*"On the Neoliberal Politics of 'Looking Good': The Struggle Over the Latino Public Image."*

**Helena M. Viramontes**  
Professor of English  
Cornell University

*Author: Under the Feet of Jesus and The Moths and Other.*





## FACULTY/STAFF NEWS

**Leo Chavcz**, Professor of Anthropology was featured in a February 25th *Los Angeles Times* article titled “Citizenship requests soar before big changes.” In regard to Latinos’ future influence in the U.S., Professor Chavez stated that “Increased citizenship could influence politics nationally and locally if the new citizens register to vote and get to the polls. As more immigrants vote, it will be harder to attack immigrants. They will be the constituency.”

**Louis DeSipio**, DCLS Chair and Associate Professor of Chicano/Latino Studies and Political Science, published an article with Carole Jean Uhlaner (UCI, Political Science) entitled “Immigrant and Native: Mexican American 2004 Presidential Vote Choice Across Immigrant Generations” in *American Politics Research*. Professor DeSipio received support from the Chief Justice Earl Warren Institute at the University of California, Berkeley to analyze data on the effect of change in immigrant-parent legal status on the political attitudes and behaviors of their 1.5 and 2nd generation children.



**Lisa Garcia Bedolla**, Associate Professor of Political Science and Chicano/Latino Studies, has published an article in the journal *Politics and Gender* titled “Intersections of Inequality: Understanding Marginalization and Privilege in the Post-Civil-Rights Era,” and another entitled “A Second Look: The Latina/o Gender Gap” in the *Journal of Women, Politics & Policy*. Professor Garcia Bedolla is also

awaiting the release of her latest book chapter entitled “Race, Social Relations, and the Study of Social Capital.”

**Vicki L. Ruiz**, Professor of Chicano/Latino Studies and History, has recently published two of her works in national academic journals. The first, entitled “Nuestra América: Latino History as United States History,” was published in the December 2006 *Journal of American History*. The second, “Migrations and Destinations: Reflections on the Histories of U.S. Immigrant Women,” was featured in the Fall 2006 edition of the *Journal of American Ethnic History*.

**Deborah Vargas**, Assistant Professor of Chicano/Latino Studies, was recently awarded the John Randolph Haynes and Dora Haynes Foundation 2007 Faculty Fellowship Award for her project entitled “Radio Waves/Immigrant Waves: Spanish Language Radio, Immigration, and Cultural Citizenship.”



## STUDENT/ALUMNI NEWS



**Ana Gomez**, a junior with double majors in Chicano/Latino Studies and Psychology & Social Behavior, has been selected as next year’s House Assistant for Casa Cesar Chavez. Ana graduated from Central High School in El Centro. She has lived in Casa for the past two years.

**Angelica Gutierrez**, a graduating senior in Psychology and Social Behavior and Criminology, Law and Society has been admitted to the M.A. program in Social Work at Columbia University. Angelica, originally from Coachella, CA, is the first in her family to attend college.

**Ismael Diaz Herrera**, a graduating senior in Chicano/Latino Studies and Sociology was recently admitted to the Harvard Graduate School of Education where he will pursue an M.A. in Education Policy and Management.



Ismael proudly hails from the small San Joaquin Valley town of Mendota, CA. He is the son of former farm workers; his father having immigrated to the U.S. in 1958 as a Bracero.



**Marlen Kanagui**, a 2007 graduating senior and honor student in Psychology and Sociology has been named this year’s UCI Alumni Association’s Lauds & Laurels Outstanding Undergraduate Student. Marlen will begin a doctoral program at the University of Missouri, Columbia in the fall. She grew up in Dinuba, CA.

**Rodolfo Mondragon**, a graduating senior and Chicano/Latino Studies major from South Gate, CA was named to the Big West Conference’s All-Academic Team. Rudy was a forward on UCI’s Men’s Soccer team.



**Cindy Villanueva**, a 2006 UCI graduate in Chicano/Latino Studies and Political Science from Los Angeles, was recently admitted to UCLA School of Law for Fall 2007.

## DEADLINES FOR STUDENTS

**April 20:** The Center for Research on Latinos in a Global Society Graduate Student Research Fellowship, SST 385

**April 23:** 2007 SURP Fellowship Call for Proposals

**May 14:** Spring UROP Fellowship Call for Proposals

**June 8:** DCLS Honors Program, 5pm, SST 385

## SPRING 2007 CALENDAR

**April 21:** Celebrate UCI 2007-DCLS Annual Reception for New Admits, 11am-12:30 pm, Social Science Hall

**May 12:** UROP Symposium

**May 18:** David Montejano

**May 30:** Ron Schmidt, 3-5pm, SSPA 2112

**June 15:** Social Science Commencement Ceremony I, 1pm, Bren Events Center

**June 15:** Social Science Commencement Ceremony II, 5pm, Bren Events Center

**June 16:** Raza Graduation, 6pm, Social Science Hall and Plaza

## DEANS HONOR LIST: FALL 2006

Jessica Alvarez  
Graciela Arguelles  
Diana Campos  
Barbara Escobar  
Liliana Gonzalez  
Ismael Diaz Herrera  
Ismael Morales  
Wendy Narez  
Pedro N. Ramirez  
Rosa Erandi Zamora

Lizbeth Antonio  
Jacqueline Arreola  
Maritza Carhuasila  
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