**Title**

Lo Que Nace del Corazón, Siempre Crece: The Origins of Serving at a Hispanic Serving Research Institution the University of California, Riverside

**Permalink**

https://escholarship.org/uc/item/95m3216x

**Author**

Cano Matute, Arlene

**Publication Date**

2023

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
RIVERSIDE


Lo Que Nace del Corazón, Siempre Crece: The Origins of Serving at a Hispanic Serving
Research Institution the University of California, Riverside


A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of


Doctor of Philosophy

In

Education

by

Arlene M. Cano Matute


December 2023


Dissertation Committee:
       Dr. Tara J. Yosso, Chairperson
       Dr. Carlos E. Cortés
       Dr. Begoña Echeverria

The Dissertation of Arlene M. Cano Matute is approved:

_____

_____

_____
Committee Chairperson

University of California, Riverside

## Acknowledgments

To the four directions that grounded this study, the elements of earth, water, air, and fire, your life source has been salient to this project. When I initially embarked on this journey, I thought of this section first, honoring my village and my gratitude to each of you for supporting my learning and unlearning throughout my lifetime.

Earth, to my family, students, and community, *gracias*. You inspired this project; I became a scholar-practitioner by learning alongside you and serving you with integrity. Each time I placed my hands in the soil you provided, I was able to find my roots and be nurtured by countless members of my village. Jaime, my partner, I am so thankful our paths crossed, that we held onto each other and grew together. What was a tiny stem has bloomed into a tree, and our branches extend infinitely thanks to your love. This dream would not have been realized without your support. My *semillas*, Maya and Mateo, you are my whole world. Thank you for the joy you bring to me every day. I am a fierce mother scholar because of you. You both have seen me in school throughout your time on this earth and I promise you, I will spend the rest of our time together proving that it was worth it.

As an undergraduate student and throughout my academic journey, UCR has been my home. It has been the people at UCR that I have come to love, and it is for the people that this project set out to recover our histories and recognize how integral our presence has been in higher education at UCR and beyond. Thank you to the elders and all who have contributed to this legacy; I hope our collective story inspires the next change agents.

intentional feedback throughout this process. They were invested in my work, and its potential contribution to the scholarship, and I thank them for their mentorship. Dr. Cortés has inspired generations of scholars, and I am grateful to have learned so much from him. His testimonio motivated this project, and his confidence in me was pivotal.

Air, the wind shifted this journey in many ways. As our communities navigated a global pandemic, we all managed as best we could. In these moments of uncertainty, my village reminded me of why I am here. Chicano Student Programs staff and former staff, Estella Acuña, Sr. Alfredo Figueroa, Elena Perez, Alice Chavez, John Valdez, Sonia Garcia Avelar, and Bibiana Canales, *gracias* for your unwavering support. Since my undergraduate journey, you have supported me *con todo corazón*. Estella, thank you for your unfaltering support and leadership as a mentor and friend. To my esteemed colleagues at UCR, specifically the Ethnic and Gender centers, who do the critical work that uplifts our communities daily and do it because it is the right thing to do, thank you.

To my beloved *amigas*, Marcela Ramirez-Stapleton and Rhiannon Little-Surowski, we all set out to become Doctoras. Thank you both for setting the example of what it means to be a *Chingona* scholar! Likewise, Toi Thibodeaux, Megan M. Rush, Dr. Marlen Rios Hernandez, Romanie Arterberry, Daniel Lopez Salas, and Rachell Enriquez carried me in many ways throughout this journey, and I am grateful. Finally, to my HSI scholar *familia,* we are advancing the work *juntas*, Dr. Gina A. Garcia, Dr. Marcella Cuellar, Dr. Lina Mendez, Dr. Elizabeth Gonzalez, Dr. Cynthia Villareal, Charis Heron, and Dr. Audrey Paredes, gracias for all that you do. Lastly, I am thankful to the UCR Tomás Rivera Library Special Collections and University Archives team, especially

Sandy Enriquez and Noah Geraci, who worked tirelessly with our research team throughout this study to ensure we realized our rightful and now permanent place in the archives.

I was born in the fire, straddling the open wound that is the border to some of the strongest *mujeres*. My mother, Maria, my sisters, Brenda and Kayla, and my brother, Jose Luis, you were my first home. I am forever grateful to you for providing me with abundant love. My mother is the original mother scholar; she taught me that my voice is powerful as she navigated returning to college as a single parent with three young children. She received her degree and is now a public-school elementary teacher, instilling this lesson to her students. I speak of her magnitude often; Mom, I am honored to be your daughter. My Nana Ernestina De Anda (QPD), my in-laws Bessy and Reyes, my Tias Silvia, Yolanda, and Esmeralda, as well as my Tios Eddie, Jose, Jorge, and Freddy, they never let me forget that I am *poderosa* and that my heart is my greatest strength. To all my familia and friends in the US, México, and El Salvador, gracias for your support and encouragement; it surpassed all borders. My cherished Imperial Valley, CA, your budding fields of possibilities, the *campos*, and the beautiful people, I carry you with me in all that I do always remembering where I come from.

To my chair, Dr. Tara J. Yosso, I am honored to work alongside you. I created the Ollin in our first class, and every class and discussion with you after has been a step toward this dissertation. However, more significantly, your mentorship and *consejos* have led me to become the scholar, practitioner, and advocate I want to be. You remind us of our work's significance and continuity to ensure our voices are central. Thank you for

nourishing my fire, being a passionate mentor, and keeping that fire alive throughout this

journey, which I could not have done without you. *Mil gracias por todo*!

## Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my co-researchers, who carried the spirit of our project ESPARiTU throughout this study and, to my utter joy, continue to carry this in their graduate school and career endeavors. To the elders who shared their testimonio with us, you have built a foundation at UCR that has allowed us and multiple generations to thrive. To my partner Jaime and our *semillas* Maya and Mateo, this project is for you and all the future *semillas*. To the activists and allies of the past, present, and future, may we never be erased from history; our *lucha* will lead us to liberation.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION


Lo Que Nace del Corazón, Siempre Crece: The Origins of Serving at a Hispanic Serving
Research Institution the University of California, Riverside


by


Arlene M. Cano Matute

Doctor of Philosophy, Graduate Program in Education
University of California, Riverside, December 2023
Dr. Tara J. Yosso, Chairperson

Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI) have become an essential point of access for
Chicana/o/x and Latina/o/x undergraduate students. UC Riverside is uniquely positioned
to understand access and opportunity for Chicano/Latino students as the first HSI in the
University of California system designated in 2008 and one of the first Hispanic Serving
Research Institutions (HSRIs). While there has been a growing body of literature on
HSIs, serving is often defined in a contemporary context, and few studies involve
Chicano/Latino students in determining what serving means to them at an HSI. In this
study, I define serving as the ability to promote a culture of student success that enrolls,
cultivates, validates, and graduates Chicano/Latino students.

Guided by Critical Race Theory and Chicana Feminist Theory, this Participatory
Action Research study centers the voices and experiences of Chicano/Latino students

both historically and presently to identify the origins of Chicano/Latino student success at

UCR and trace the university's trajectory to becoming an award-winning HSI (Matute,

2022). I created a course to explore the labor of Chicano/Latino student activists and

faculty from the 1960s-1970s. Twelve Chicana/o/x and Latina/o/x undergraduate co-

researchers and I formed Encuentros, Student Participation Action Research, and

Testimonios (ESPARiTU). Over the span of three academic quarters, we analyzed

archival documents, including photographs, outreach flyers, student newspapers, and

college information brochures. We also conducted three testimonios (oral histories). We

interviewed Dr. Carlos E. Cortés, who was one of two UCR Chicano faculty in the

1960s-1970s foundational to the formation of Chicano Student Programs and the concept

of serving Chicano/Latino students at UCR. We also interviewed two students, Ofelia

Valdez-Yeager and Alfredo Figueroa, who played a central role in Chicano student

activism and helped establish support structures for Chicano students during the 1960s

and 1970s. In addition to facilitating the course and engaging in the ESPARiTU research,

I conducted collective observations, field notes, pre and post interviews, and analyzed co-

researcher weekly journal submissions. I placed our collective analysis of the archival

materials and oral accounts in conversation with my analysis of the ESPARiTU

undergraduate experiences to map continuities and contestations across time.

This collaborative research affirms the vital role of Chicano student activists and

leaders in the 1960s-1970s in establishing structures of serving at UCR. Engaging in this

historical recovery, Chicano/Latino undergraduate students gained a renewed sense of

self-determination evident in three phases: 1) *conocimiento* (knowledge production),

2) *comunidad* (establishing a collaborative knowledge community), and

3) *cambio* (change). To preserve and pass on the revelatory counter history we

excavated, ESPARiTU created a new digital collection that is available for the

community and scholars to learn about the Chicano/Latino presence and evolution at

UCR. This study advances our knowledge of HSRIs by recovering the practices and tools

used to promote a culture of Chicano/Latino student success and liberation at UC

Riverside.

# Table of Contents

# List of Figures

# List of Tables

**Chapter 1**
**Introduction**

UCR didn't become a Hispanic Serving Institution until 2008, it didn't happen just because they said let's have Hispanic Serving Institution. It was a long history that led to it (C. Cortés, personal communication, April 30, 2020).

In 1968, Dr. Carlos E. Cortés joined the UC Riverside faculty as an acting Assistant Professor in the History Department. His arrival doubled the Chicano faculty on campus. He became one of two, joining Dr. Eugenio "Eugene" Cota-Robles, a microbiologist hired in 1958. Founded in 1954, the same year *Brown v. Board of Education*[1] established racial segregation in schools was unconstitutional, UCR enrolled 127 undergraduate students (History of UCR, 2020). It was built on the ancestral lands of the Cahuilla, Luiseño, Serrano, and Tongva people as a public land-grant[2] institution

---

[1] It is significant to mention this landmark case to establish the political context nationally and specifically in education at this time. Understanding the implications of *Brown v. Board of Education (1954)* at UCR is one example of the significance of this project. In my research, I have found that in October 1965, after many years of lobbying, Riverside Unified School District (RUSD) announced its plan to desegregate its elementary schools. Riverside became the first city of its size in the nation to voluntarily and completely desegregate. The desegregation campaign of Riverside schools was developed by Black and Chicano community members living on the city's eastside (Howell-Ardila, 2018, p. 190). Although further research is needed to confirm any impact on UCR students, faculty at UCR were part of a joint study with RUSD to assess integration in the first three elementary schools. Funded by a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation, Regents of the University of California, and the California State Department of Education: Division of Compensatory Education, they published a report on the impact of integration for elementary school students from 1966 to 1971 in those first three schools. See, 1969, January 13. Riverside School Desegregation Study Pamphlet. Collection on Race, Ethnicity, and Student Activism (Box 1, Folder 21). Additionally, students and faculty at UCR collaborated with Black and Chicano parents to establish Freedom Schools, a tutoring program in 1965 to supplement the inadequate education the children received at segregated schools in Riverside (City of Riverside Latino Historic Context Statement, 2018). The program continued into the 1970s and was renamed the Tutorial Program.

[2] The University of California, Riverside is a land-grant institution with land acquired from the University of California system after the passage of the Morrill Land Grant College Act of 1862. The UC intended the land to educate the state's citizenry and advance research. In 1954, UCR was a citrus experiment station to support the growing agricultural economy in Riverside known as the citrus belt, one of the state's most lucrative agricultural communities of the 1900s (Riverside Latino Context Statement, 2018; Carpio, 2013). It is important to note that the lucrative economy was made possible by the labor of Mexican, Mexican American, Japanese, Chinese and Italian workers from 1900s-1930s followed by Mexican nationals from

(Regents of the University of California, 2019). At the time of Dr. Cortés' arrival in

1968, there were almost 4,500 undergraduates, but the Chicano/Latino[3] student

population numbered less than 100 (Baltazar-Martinez, 2020, para.1; History of UCR,

2020).

Dr. Cota-Robles saw Dr. Cortés' name, the only Spanish surname on the list of

new faculty at UCR, and invited him to coffee. Dr. Cortés agreed and joined him. During

their discussion, Dr. Cota-Robles shared that he had just established the Educational

Opportunity Program at UCR. He asked if Dr. Cortés would be willing to get involved.

Dr. Cortés, a new faculty member pending his dissertation completion at the time, notes,

"A smart answer would have been no, but I said yes and got involved with him on that. A

new phase of my life began" (personal communication, June 8, 2022). Dr. Cortés joined

Dr. Cota-Robles' efforts to build structures of support for Chicano/Latino students at

---

the Bracero Program in 1945. Although Mexican and Mexican American workers were part of the city's progression at this time, they were not welcome into society and faced blatant discrimination (Riverside Latino Historic Context Statement, 2018). Additionally, the Morrill Act and similar legislation that followed, fail to recognize the Indigenous populations who were displaced because of this land distribution and perpetuate a problematic narrative that the land acquired belonged to the federal government (Nash, 2019). The University of California, Riverside resides on the ancestral lands of the Cahuilla, Luiseño, Serrano, and Tongva people. We are honored to live and work on these homelands.

[3] I use the term "Chicano," initially defined as people who were born in the United States with Mexican as well as Indigenous ancestry or labeled as Mexican American. As early as the 1930s, the U.S. Census categorized all peoples of Mexican, Central American, and South American ancestry as Mexican. Throughout history, the U.S. government has continued to create monolithic racial/ethnic categories, and in the 1980s, "Hispanic" was introduced to categorize people of Mexican, Central American, and South American ancestry into one group on the basis of language. U.S. Census categorization has power; it is a means of erasure and the denial of indigeneity embedded in Eurocentricity. The term Chicano was an act of self-concept through an evolved critical consciousness that named a movement, un *movimiento*, focused on social justice for the people. Chicano is a political ideology; it is fluid, and in my operationalization within this project and in my own praxis, it defines a people beyond a Mexican ancestry. The inclusion of Chicano in my project is political, historically grounded, ideological, and intentional. I include the term "Latina/o/x" to recognize the way Hispanic Serving Institution scholarship define students of Mexican, Central, and South American ancestry and recognize non-binary gender identity and gender fluidity. I have chosen to utilize "Chicano/Latino" for this project; however, I will acknowledge the participant and co-researcher's preferences when citing their work directly.

UCR. At this time, the Chicano movement fueled the sociopolitical climate with the goal of Chicano liberation, utilizing higher education as a tool for protest and transformational change (Rodriguez, 1996; Gómez-Quiñones & Vásquez, 2014). Building on a global movement against oppression with origins in the Civil Rights movement of the 1950s-60s, the Chicano movement was a response to a history of educational disparities, oppressive labor conditions, and racial inequalities. The Chicano *movimiento* (movement) was a proclamation of cultural pride and self-determination (e.g., Acuña, 1972; Gomez-Quiñones & Vásquez, 2016; Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001, Navarro, 2005).

In the ten years before Dr. Cortés' arrival, Dr. Cota-Robles and Chicano/Latino student activists had established a promising foundational culture of Chicano/Latino student success at UCR. Although Dr. Cota-Robles was a microbiologist and not trained in retention work, his response was timely, and he recognized the need. In addition to his research and course load, he worked in those early years to recruit and retain students through mentorship, tutoring, and opportunities for graduate school through the Educational Opportunities Program (EOP). One of the earliest institutionalized programs at UCR, EOP provided funding and tutoring for low-income minoritized students through scholarships. Dr. Cota-Robles was the founding director of EOP at UCR. He was an advocate, and as resources became available, he maximized them to create opportunities for students. In 1964 University for California (UC) President Clark Kerr[4] and the Regents UC appropriated funds for a special program, EOP, which financed "culturally

---

[4] President Kerr was influential in developing the California Master Plan, which created California's current three- tiered public higher education system in 1960. He served as UC President from 1958-1967. His liberal philosophies and interest in UC expansion would result in funding programs like EOP (St. John et al., 2018).

deprived students at UC," covering their tuition, housing, and tutoring needs (Kitano & Miller, 1970, p.48). According to the American Psychological Association (2023), cultural deprivation is the dearth of opportunity to partake in societal or cultural offerings, such as higher education, due to several factors, including poverty, substandard housing, and discrimination. Programs like EOP were necessary for the successful transition to higher education for Chicanos, who were not provided with adequate resources and educational opportunities due to a history of neglect and blatant racism enacted throughout the educational pipeline (D. Garcia, 2018; Yosso, 2006).

UC Berkeley and UCLA piloted EOP in the first year. In the second year, 1965, it was implemented in all the UCs, including UCR. The program was a matching fund allocation, which meant that the campus would match the funds appropriated in the budget, often with contributions from faculty, students, and staff (University of California, 1965, p. 78). These federally funded programs emerged from the Civil Rights movement and supported the participation of Chicanos in higher education, specifically the Higher Education Act of 1965, which created financial assistance (Moreno, 1999). Dr. Cota-Robles utilized EOP to recruit local Chicano/Latino students and provide them with critical support at UCR. The program was regarded as a "salvaging operation" by the director succeeding Dr. Cota-Robles. The students in EOP at UCR were 85% minority students, predominantly Chicano and Black (*Adelante*, October 14, 1969, p. 4). They were from low socio-economic backgrounds and high schools and junior colleges that were under-resourced; consequently, they were underprepared and lacked the resources to succeed at UCR.

Notably, the author states that this history of neglect and substandard schooling "forced out"[5] Chicano students and engrained a sense of inferiority in them (*Adelante*, October 14, 1969, p. 4). When Chicanos arrived at UCR, the EOP staff and Dr. Cota-Robles understood the urgency. EOP at UCR was, in many ways, a salvaging operation, and Dr. Cota-Robles was at the helm, providing direct support and mentorship to meet the unique needs of Chicanos at UCR. In 1971, EOP at UCR established an 8-week summer program for students who needed additional preparatory support for university rigor. Participants of this summer program were often students who were not eligible to attend UCR and were accepted as 'special admits' because they demonstrated potential to succeed in the university. The summer program supported a successful transition to the university, providing students with funding and one-on-one guidance counseling throughout their 8-weeks (La Raza de UCR Brochure, Fall 1971, p. 6).

Dr. Cota-Robles was pulled into administration following his various leadership roles, including serving as the inaugural chair of Mexican American studies at UCR in 1969, which he helped establish along with Dr. Cortés. A California Coordinating Council for Higher Education report lists Dr. Cota-Robles as the Assistant Chancellor[6] at

---

[5] The author, Arthur D. Martinez, was the Director of EOP at UCR in 1969 and published this piece in the newly established Chicano student newspaper *Adelante*. He used 'drop-out' and 'forced-out' in the same sentence, referring to the ways Chicanos were not tracked for college and instead tracked for vocations. Additionally, the author shares harmful classifications such as 'mental retardation' (p. 4), and placements in remedial education were used as tools to force Chicanos out of an opportunity for higher education. I found his choice of words to be very significant for the time, especially considering the localized context of Riverside, CA, which was a very deficit-oriented and formerly segregated school system. Leaders at UCR, like Mr. Martinez, shifted the responsibility to the schools, holding them accountable for creating the conditions that forced Chicanos to leave. See *Adelante*, October 14, 1969, p. 4.

[6] Dr. Cota-Robles would continue in administration serving as the Academic Vice Chancellor at UC Santa Cruz following an appointment in 1986 as the Assistant Vice President for Academic Programs in the University of California Office of the President.

UCR in 1970 (Kitano & Miller, 1970). Dr. Cota-Robles was a leader who embodied a student- and community-centered approach. In addition to being the only Chicano faculty at UCR for a decade, Dr. Cota-Robles was a leader on campus and in the community. Dr. Cortés fondly recounts, "Eugene was the person everyone turned to" (personal communication, April 30, 2020). In 1967, Dr. Cota-Robles[7] was named "Chicano of the Month" by *El Chicano*, a community newsletter that served San Bernardino and Riverside Counties. The feature listed his extensive involvement in Chicano/Latino affairs on and off campus, including a committee he helped establish, Citizens Committee for Justice, following the police shooting of a young local Mexican American. However, among his many accomplishments, he regarded EOP as "The project closest to [his] heart" (*El Chicano,* 1967, para. 5). When asked why this program was significant, he shared that it was something that he had to do. After reviewing the local graduating seniors, he noticed many did not have Spanish surnames, "I decided we had to do something about that" (*El Chicano*, 1967, para. 5). EOP was an institutionalized and professionally staffed program at UCR. The program included preparatory programs, counseling, and tutoring services to "[...] increase the student's chances of success" (para.6). Through these efforts, UCR's Chicano undergraduate enrollment tripled in these initial years (*El Chicano*, 1967).

---

[7] The Eugene H. Cota-Robles Fellowship was established in honor of Dr. Cota-Robles following his retirement from the University of California (UC) system where he served in numerous administrative posts in the UC, statewide and nationally. The Cota-Robles fellowship advances diversity in graduate education and is awarded to doctoral students in the UC system.

Dr. Cota-Robles also mentored and worked collaboratively with one of the first Chicano/Latino student organizations on campus, the UCR Chapter of the United Mexican American Students (UMAS de UCR). Together, they created early outreach, advocacy, and retention efforts. The membership of UMAS de UCR was composed of Chicano student activists, who organized on and off campus to support students and the community. UMAS de UCR established one of the first high school outreach conferences in 1968, attended by over 500 Mexican American youth from southern California (UMAS de UCR newsletter, May 11, 1969). Riverside and Coachella Valley high school students, university students, and local leaders, attended the conference. Attendees passed several resolutions to improve the education of Mexican Americans, which included the desegregation of elementary schools, teaching Mexican American[8] courses from Kindergarten through college,[9] strengthening parent participation in education, and a call to organize Mexican American students in local school districts (UMAS de UCR newsletter, May 11, 1969). In the same week, on May 13, 1969, UMAS de UCR President, Henry Perez, wrote a letter to the Dean of Students requesting institutional funding to support UMAS' efforts. He expressed UMAS de UCR's critical role in "recruiting, motivating, and retaining high school Mexican American students" at UC

---

[8] The newsletter specifically states Mexican American; however, this would transition to Chicano following the evolution of Chicanismo at UCR and in the larger Chicano student movement in the 1970s. See, *Nuestra Cosa*, October 14, 1969

[9] I recognize the long history of activism for a curriculum that is reflective of our diverse communities in K-12 and higher education. This conference captures these initial collective efforts by parents, teachers, community leaders, and college students organizing for Mexican American Studies in Riverside County. On October 9, 2021, AB 101 (Medina et al., 2021,) passed making the state of California the first state to mandate an Ethnic Studies course as a high school graduation requirement. The bill was introduced by Assemblymember Jose Medina, a UCR alumnus, and representative of the 61st Assembly district, which consists of Riverside, Moreno Valley, Perris, and Mead Valley.

Riverside (Perez, correspondence, May 13, 1969). Perez detailed the organization's labor

and highlighted their triumphs. Perez also shared the success of the UMAS de UCR high

school conference and demonstrated UMAS' commitment to the community, citing the

organization's contributions to the surrounding neighborhoods. Although Perez requested

institutional funds, it was clear that UMAS de UCR intended to continue serving the

students at UCR and the local community regardless of whether they received

institutional support. However, this request was UMAS de UCR's call for institutional

investment in Chicanos by financially contributing to UMAS' programs.

In his first year at UCR, Dr. Cortés joined Dr. Cota-Robles' efforts. He supported

EOP and worked with Chicano student activists on campus, responding to structural and

systematic racism within higher education and the community at large. Collectively, their

work reflected the ongoing activism of the Chicano Movement, which sought a necessary

change in higher education to meet the needs of Chicanos. *Lo que nace del corazón,*

*siempre crece* (What is built/born from the heart always grows), the title of this

dissertation centers the contributions of the originating Chicano/Latino leaders like Dr.

Cortés and Dr. Cota-Robles, along with Chicano student activists and organizations like

UMAS de UCR.[10] Together, they led from the heart, creating programs and initiatives

that served as interventions to the ongoing low admissions and retention of Chicanos at

UCR. A special report by John Egerton in 1969, in partnership with the National

---

[10] UMAS de UCR would become Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan (MEChA) in 1969 as a result
of *El Plan de Santa Barbara* (CCCHE, 1969), which called for the unification of the Chicano student
organizations on university campuses. This manifesto established a radical plan of action that utilized
higher education institutions as a tool for social change that would positively impact the barrios, colonias,
and comunidades (CCCHE, 1969).

Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC) and the

Southern Education Foundation, found that Mexican Americans were 11% of the

population in California in 1967. However, the student population at the University of

California was only 7% diverse, with African Americans, Mexican American, and Native

Americans comprising only 2% (Egerton, 1969, p. 60). The report confirms the UC's

"exacting academic standards have had the effect of excluding all but a relative handful

of [African American] and Mexican-Americans [...] The university has never been

segregated by law [...], but for economic and academic reasons, it has been segregated in

fact" (Egerton, 1969, p. 60).

The significant contributions made by Chicano/Latino leaders at this time

happened before any institutional design or strategy, "Before [campus] decided to focus

on recruiting Hispanic/Latino students, it was the students themselves doing the work"

(Martinez Baltazar, 2020, para. 4). A Chicano/Latino community, and in many ways a

family, was established at UCR. The Chicano/Latino *familia* at UCR was purposeful and

reflected the local, statewide, and national movement for Chicano liberation. This initial

core community of radical leaders existed across the rigid disciplinary boundaries of the

ivory tower. It mirrored the Chicano sociopolitical movement to operationalize the

university as a tool for change and Chicano liberation outlined in *El Plan de Santa

Barbara: A Chicano plan for higher education* (CCCHE, 1969). Although they

deliberately enacted the steps outlined in *El Plan de Santa Barbara,* which I will refer to

as *El Plan* throughout this document, their work was unique and organic at UCR. The

foundational programs established at UCR in the 1960s-1970s were created by leaders

who built from the heart, "It takes a special kind of faculty member to be active both on campus and in the community. Most are not trained that way" (C. Cortés, personal communication, April 30, 2020).

I was driven to excavate and retrace these initial structures, which created the conditions for UCR to emerge as a top-performing Hispanic Serving Research Institution (HSRI) (Matute, 2022). Since the 1968 undergraduate enrollment of less than 100, the Chicano/Latino student population has grown to 10,000 (UCR Institutional Research, 2021). However, the narrative of this enrollment increase is not well documented. Therefore, this study is especially timely to get an accurate account of what contributed to the Chicano/Latino undergraduate growth during these initial years. In addition, this study concentrates on the 1960s -1970s because this period encapsulates the origins of serving at UC Riverside, creating foundational programs, initiatives, departments, and leaders that built a Chicano/Latino culture of success.

Furthermore, this dissertation comes from my efforts to put research into action, which started in my trajectory at UCR as a Chicano Studies major and a MEChista in 2004. As a first-generation graduate student, alumni, mother, and staff member at UCR, my work and position focus on the recruitment, retention, and persistence of Chicano/Latino scholars while also serving the Riverside County community to forge a pathway to higher education. My work and advocacy have also established a formal committee to develop our HSI serving framework and create critical interventions for Chicano/Latino students at UCR. Finally, as a beneficiary of these initial structures of support during my undergraduate tenure, I have returned home to my alma mater to serve

the next generation of Chicano/Latino students at a center founded in 1972, Chicano Student Programs. The 50th anniversary of this vital center was recognized in 2022; however, the story of its founding is mainly unknown, nor are the activists who established many of the Chicano/Latino programs we see today at UCR.

As a scholar and practitioner, the erasure of Chicano/Latino narratives is of great concern. The work done, if any, to preserve our campuses' histories often excludes the contributions of Chicanos and their stories (Ramirez, 2018; Cortés, 1970). Aurora Levins Morales (1998) states, a historian who is socially committed makes use of history not to document the past necessarily but to "restore to the dehistoricized a sense of identity and possibility" (p. 135). This study detailed the Chicano student activists, staff, and faculty's early contributions to UCR, recovering the origins of serving. It was also restorative for me and the Chicana/o/x/Latina/o/x co-researchers in this study who urge us and future HSI scholars to preserve and uplift our stories. As one of these co-researchers, Amaru shares,

> HSI inherently must expand to teach an inclusive history that combines our shared humanity, normalizing our stories and nuances. HSIs, like this education system, like the environment [at UCR], are created by movements. Our students created those movements; we would not be here without them (personal communication, July 14, 2022).

## Purpose of the Study

After ten months of engaging in this study, another co-researcher, Belen, shares how pivotal our project of recovery was for her, "Thinking about our history and how

much work has been dedicated to serving students has aided in my journey at UCR. This study has helped me discover other realms of research [...] It helped me see myself as a scholar" (personal communication, June 3, 2022). This study aims to contribute to the body of literature attempting to conceptualize what it means to serve Chicano/Latino students at a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). The federal designation is granted when an institution of higher education has sustained enrollment of Hispanic students at 25% of the total full-time undergraduate student population. HSI scholars argue that the most important metric should not be enrollment, instead it should be the institution's ability to promote a culture of Latinx student success that enrolls, cultivates, and validates Latinx students, which they refer to as the institution's "servingness" (Malcom-Piqueux & Bensimon, 2015; Garcia et al., 2019; Garcia, 2020). However, few scholars have attempted to recover the origins of enrolling or serving Chicano/Latino students, and studies rarely situate their analysis of HSI in a sociohistorical context (Cuellar & Johnson-Ahorlu, 2020; Doran, 2015; Doran & Medina, 2017; Garcia, 2019). Too often, the historical contributions and labor of Chicano/Latino activists, who often established programs and departments contributing to the recruitment and retention of Chicano/Latinos, are disregarded, erased, co-opted, and challenged (Aguirre, 2005; Garcia & Okhidoi, 2015; Ramirez, 2018). Furthermore, few studies have involved students in defining what it means to serve them at an HSI (Garcia & Zaragoza, 2020; Gonzalez, Ortega, Molina & Lizalde, 2020). Garcia and Zaragoza (2020) found, for example, that students are "rarely aware of the HSI designation" at the college they attend and do not associate that HSI designation with any meaning (p.11).

This study addresses these gaps in the literature by centering the student voices and experiences in HSIs and emerging Hispanic Serving Research Institution (HSRIs) scholarship, discussing the role of students in defining "servingness." HSRIs are defined as Hispanic Serving Research Institutions classified as R1 or doctoral-granting institutions with high research activity (Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, 2019; Marin & Pereschica, 2017; Marin, 2019). To this end, I conducted a Participatory Action Research (PAR) study at the University of California, Riverside, with a team of Chicano/Latino undergraduate researchers. PAR reflects a "learner-centered approach" challenging the hierarchical power structures of knowledge production and meaning-making by positioning the knowledge of those directly affected at the center (Brown & Rodriguez, 2009; Ayala, Cammarota, Rivera, Rodriguez, Berta-Avila & Torres, 2018; Fals Borda, 1991; Herr & Anderson, 2015). UC Riverside is considered a top-performing HSRI and the first HSRI in the UC system (Education Trust, 2017; Urban Institute, 2020). However, the designation at UCR and the accolades that followed were not coincidental; it was by design, and "a long history led to it" (C. Cortés, personal communication, April 30, 2020).

The University of California, Riverside was the first institution in the University of California system to be designated an HSI in 2008, becoming part of a new classification of HSIs, Hispanic Serving Research Institutions (HSRIs) (Marin & Pereschica, 2017; Marin, 2019). In June 2020, UCR was named the top national institution, enrolling the largest percentage of Chicano/Latino undergraduate students amongst selective universities (Urban Institute, 2020). In 2021, UCR was awarded the

Seal of Excelencia by *Excelencia* in Education, demonstrating the campus' commitment to Latinx students in three core areas: data, practice, and leadership (UCR News, October 29, 2021). As a system, the University of California is quickly becoming the largest HSRI organization. It is currently positioned as an emerging Hispanic Serving Research Institution (HSRI) system. This has significant implications for the future of scholarship and practice (Paredes, Estrada, Venturanza, & Teranishi, 2021; Requerin, Poblete, Cooper, Sanchez Ordaz & Moreno, 2019; UC Diversity and Engagement, 2018). While progress has been made, Chicano/Latino students are behind in earning a bachelor's degree compared to other groups (Geiger, 2018; U.S. Department of Education, 2016). Several scholars warn that the HSI designation is focused solely on enrollment and not necessarily on serving Chicano/Latino students.

This study advances our knowledge of HSRIs by exploring the history at UCR, a grassroots HSRI (Matute, 2022).

## Research Question(s)

1. How did the labor of Chicano student activists, faculty, and staff create the conditions for higher education as a tool for Chicano/Latino liberation at UC Riverside?

2. What does it mean to engage Chicano/Latino undergraduate students in a critical recovery of the origins of serving from the 1960s – 1970s at UC Riverside, an HSRI?

## Importance of the Study

Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) enroll 62% of Chicano/Latino undergraduate students in the United States (Excelencia in Education, 2023). As a result, HSIs serve as essential sites in creating diverse learning environments while contributing desirable outcomes for Chicano/Latino students and other minoritized student populations. Scholars have ongoingly problematized HSI designation, critiquing whether the federal program is enough to serve Chicano/Latino students and meet their educational goals. HSIs have obtained designation "simply based on numbers" and as a result, the mission of these institutions often remains unchanged (Marin, 2019, p. 167). Furthermore, HSIs who pursue federal grants intended to serve Chicano/Latino students do not always seek the grants with these intentions instead, some "capitalize on their Latinx students, rendering serving into $erving" (Aguilar-Smith, 2021, p.1). Instead, HSIs must commit to serving Chicano/Latino students beyond enrolling them.

While there has been much research on HSIs, serving is defined in a contemporary context. Consequently, the origins of serving and the Chicano/Latino activists who created these structures are largely unknown. Additionally, the foundational text *El Plan de Santa Barbara: A Chicano plan for higher education* (CCCHE, 1969), authored by Chicano student activists from the UC system and other higher education institutions, provides one the earliest definitions of serving from the Chicano student perspective yet this text, ahead of its time, is absent from the HSI or "servingness" scholarship. Lastly, most of the seminal HSI scholarship focuses on organizational theory. Although some studies use a CRT lens, they often employ positivists and

interpretivists methodologies such as survey research and case studies. However, this study is a unique contribution using a PAR methodology intending to foster change.

A recovery of the origins of serving at UCR is critical to understand what it means to serve Chicano/Latino students at UCR. The origins and structures that created a foundation for Chicano/Latino students' success are what Dr. Cortés, Dr. Cota-Robles, and UMAS de UCR struggled to create. This study challenges the dominant ahistorical narrative about UCR's HSI status and the institutional amnesia that often disregards and devalues the historical contributions and labor of Chicano/Latino activists and leaders. The co-researchers and I elevate their contributions and the foundational practices and initiatives they created, recognizing their efforts as a form of resistance and transformational change (Morales, 1998; Solórzano & Delgado, 2001; Ramirez, 2018; Yosso, 2001).

Engaging in this critical historical recovery of the origins of serving at UCR was also studied to understand how the co-researchers make meaning of their own experience within an HSRI (Hice Fromille, Ruiz, Villalobos, Martinez Ibañez & Mena, 2020). Therefore, this PAR study centers on the Chicano/Latino student voice, often missing in the HSI scholarship. Understanding the origins of serving reflective of Chicano/Latino student experiences can strengthen the effectiveness of HSIs, potentially contributing to Chicano/Latino educational advancement.

## Summary

This chapter provided a brief historical overview of the origins of serving at UC Riverside and the research questions that guide this study. Chapter two offers a literature

review on the intersegmental context of this study, emphasizing the Chicano/Latino

historical and sociopolitical experiences informing this study and contemporary

definitions of student success. Chapter three summarizes this study's Participatory Action

Research design and the theoretical and conceptual frameworks. Chapter four includes

the recovery process alongside co-researchers and our findings from the archival

materials and oral histories. This project was collaborative, participatory, and action-

oriented, with 12 Chicana/o/x/Latina/o/x undergraduate students who completed this 10-

month-long project; chapter five identifies the major themes from their experience.

Lastly, chapter six summarizes the findings and includes a reflection and

recommendations.

# CHAPTER 2
## Literature Review

> The Chicano was here before and has been present these hundred-odd years but it was only in the last two years that the institutions have been moved to satisfy their obligation to our community. This resulted because of the self-sacrifice, militancy, dedication and political maturity of student organizations (Chicano Coordinating Council on Higher Education, 1969, p. 22)

The literature review consists of three major areas that provide context and inform our understanding of the origins of serving at UC Riverside. The first section provides historical context on Riverside, CA, with a synopsis of the region's documented educational disparities for Chicanos. The second section summarizes the historical and sociopolitical context of Chicano/Latinos in higher education specific to the time period of this study, with an emphasis on political mobilization and critical consciousness. Three salient events are identified within this context: the 1968 Student Walkouts, the 1969 Chicano Youth Liberation Conference, and the 1969 Chicano Intercampus meeting at UC Santa Barbara, organized by the Chicano Coordinating Council on Higher Education (*Adelante*, October 14, 1969), resulting in 100 college students collaborating to author *El Plan de Santa Barbara: A Chicano plan for higher education* (CCCHE, 1969). *El Plan* outlines the Chicano/Latino student activists' strategies to achieve Chicano/Latino student success foundational to this study. The third major area outlines the contemporary research defining Chicano/Latino undergraduate student success. This section discusses the trajectory of the 1994 federal HSI designation and explores the potential for HSIs to serve as instructive sites and diverse learning environments. Finally, this chapter

concludes with an assessment of the operationalization of serving as it relates to Chicano/Latino student success.

### Riverside: A History of Activism

Many scholars conclude that disparate college enrollment and completion rates among Chicano/Latino students are a result of ongoing systems of racism and inequity documented as early as the 1900s (D. Garcia, 2018; Garcia, 2019; Gómez-Quiñones & Vasquez, 2014; Valencia, 2002; Valencia, 1993; Zamora, 2018). For example, David G. Garcia uncovered the segregation and under-education of Mexican children in Oxnard, California, spanning 75 years, which occurred as part of the "systemic subordination of Mexicans enacted as a commonplace, ordinary way of conducting business within and beyond schools" (p. 5). He explains that this "mundane racism" did not happen accidentally but as a result of strategic, intentional discrimination that became normalized as conventional everyday practices and contributed directly to the dismal numbers of Mexican Americans having an opportunity to graduate high school, let alone enroll in college (D. Garcia, 2018, p.5).

One of the earliest Chicano communities in California is in Riverside. Established in the 1870s, Casa Blanca was a settlement of Mexican, Japanese, and Chinese laborers attracted to Riverside for employment. A growing agricultural economy increased the number of Mexican Americans in Riverside from the 1890s to the 1940s. By the 1900s, the Casa Blanca settlement was predominantly Mexican (City of Riverside Latino Historic Context Statement, 2018). The Mexican population would continue to grow in Riverside due to the Bracero Program of 1942, which permitted Mexican nationals to

work temporarily in the United States. However, despite their growth, Mexicans were intentionally excluded from society. Historian Carey McWilliams describes this exclusion as the insulation of Mexican laborers in the Riverside region, where the "system of employment" was organized by ranchers to keep Mexican laborers away "from the cradle to the grave" (Williams, 1939, as cited in City of Riverside Latino Historic Context Statement 2018). This insulation permeated the schools and other areas of everyday life, such as housing and churches. Mexicans were regarded as a workforce and nothing more. Low-paying jobs, deplorable living conditions, and substandard schools were examples of how this system was upheld in Riverside. One long-time resident shared that agricultural work was the only job for Chicanos in Riverside during this period.[11] The legislation also played a role, criminalizing Mexican laborers for seeking employment outside of agricultural work, such as the Immigration Act of 1917[12] (City of Riverside Latino Historic Context Statement, 2018). The control of Mexican laborers was sustained by later immigration policies and enforcement throughout the country, most notably the Repatriation Act of 1929 and later the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) campaign "Operation Wetback" in 1954, resulting in the forcible deportation of Mexicans and Mexican nationals (Gómez-Quiñones, 1990).

---

[11] Historian Jose Alamillo wrote extensively about Mexican citrus workers of Riverside County, specifically the city of Corona, CA, located northwest of Riverside, CA. See, Alamillo, J. M. (2023). *Making Lemonade out of Lemons: Mexican American Labor and Leisure in a California Town 1880-1960*. University of Illinois Press.

[12] The Immigration Act of 1917 restricted Mexican nationals to agricultural work. The Department of Labor lobbied for this act to retain these regions' steady low-wage agricultural workforce. See, The City of Riverside Latino Historic Context Statement, 2018, p. 25.

In public education, de facto segregation resulted in a separate school district for Mexican and Spanish-speaking children, upheld by a 1906 Riverside City School Board decision (City of Riverside Latino Historic Context Statement, 2018). For years, repressive practices were enacted in the schooling system that became normalized assimilationist tactics which justified the treatment and segregation of Mexicans. One most notable was the implementation of a school attendance fee which barred many Mexican laborers from enrolling their children in schools. According to *The City Riverside Latino Historic Context Statement* (2018), Riverside ranch owners pushed for these practices for fear of losing a stable generational Mexican workforce. They believed that if Mexican children became educated, they would have a "less subservient attitude" and would not be content working a lifetime in the fields (p. 180). Riverside ranchers, school board members, and the superintendent worked together to create policies that ensured the continued subordination of Mexicans and their children. Poverty, a result of low wages, also impacted the education of Mexican children during this time. Mexican laborers often pulled their children from schools to support the family economically. The predominantly Mexican school, Casa Blanca Elementary School, would often start the school year with only one-third of its students registered because the remaining students were away working the fields (City of Riverside Latino Historic Context Statement, 2018, p. 74).

Despite being intentionally and systemically excluded, the Mexican community of Riverside pushed back and created counterspaces, defined as spaces that challenge "deficit notions of People of Color" (Solórzano, Ceja & Yosso, 2000, p. 70). The

community established the Cinco de Mayo festival,[13] private schools, and campaigns to

create change. Mexican parents petitioned the school board to construct public schools in

their local communities, resulting in the creation of the Casa Blanca Elementary School

in 1923. The school was one of the first segregated "Mexican Schools" in the region,

established extralegally because no state legislation or educational codes allowed for the

segregation of Black or Mexican children (D. Garcia, 2018). In 1946, these "Mexican

schools" were challenged in *Mendez v. Westminster School District of Orange County*.

The case provided the rationale for the state of California to vacate the educational codes

that had allowed for the segregation of Native American and Asian American students.

This case brought together an interracial coalition of civil rights organizations, and some

of the phrasing of the ruling, signed by Governor Earl Warren, was employed as well in

the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954, under the guidance of Supreme

Court Chief Justice Warren.

While the news media endlessly covered the multiple school districts across the

country protesting the *Brown v. Board* ruling and refusing to accept any integration

mandate, many committees and campaigns were formed in Riverside to desegregate

schools. Chicano and Black parents, small business owners, and advocates led these

organizations in Riverside. Together these organizations, led by parents, petitioned the

---

[13] The Cinco de Mayo Festival in Casa Blanca was established in 1907 and is one of the oldest festivals of its kind in California. It was an important celebration for the Mexican community as a way to honor their heritage. Historian Jose Alamillo (2003) asserts this was also the Mexican community's way of affirming their ethnic identity, which played a role in the politics of the time. See, The City of Riverside Latino Historic Context Statement, 2018, p. 135 and Alamillo, J. M. (2003). *More than a fiesta: Ethnic identity, cultural politics, and Cinco de Mayo festivals in Corona, California, 1930–1950*. Aztlán: A Journal of Chicano Studies, 28(2), 57-85.

Riverside School Board in 1965 demanding integration (City of Riverside Latino Historic

Context Statement, 2018). By October 1965, the Riverside Unified School District

(RUSD) announced its desegregation plan. Riverside became the first city of its size in

the nation to wholly and voluntarily desegregate its elementary schools beginning with

three elementary schools: Casa Blanca, Irving, and Lowell.[14] UC Riverside faculty and

students supported these efforts by working with the community to establish Freedom

Schools in 1965 to provide instruction to Lowell and Irving Elementary students, making

up for the lack of adequate instruction. The Freedom Schools became known at UCR as

the tutorial program where students and faculty volunteered their time to tutor the

children in the area (O. Valdez-Yeager, personal communication, May 11, 2022).

Although Freedom Schools did not continue, the tutorial program remained an initiative

of UCR. One of the participants in this study, Ofelia, was one of the early student

volunteers during her tenure at UCR from 1965-1969.

By 1970, Chicano/Latinos comprised 12.7% of the population in Riverside (City

of Riverside Latino Historic Context Statement, 2018). However, at UCR, Chicanos were

just 2.2% of the undergraduate population in 1968. Limited to no access to a quality

education enacted and maintained through mundane racism documented in Riverside,

CA, as early as the 1870s, resulted in few Chicanos pursuing higher education. Riverside

was one of the first school districts of its size to integrate voluntarily, and one of the

---

[14] On September 7, 1965, the Lowell Elementary School was burned down. According to newspaper clippings archived by the Riverside Unified School District (RUSD), community leaders concluded the burning of the school was due to the problem of segregation, the arson further fueled community leaders and parents to push for desegregation in RUSD. See, RUSD, The Desegregation Movement: Newspaper Clip 9-14-1965 – "Board Sets Double Sessions at Lowell School Temporarily" https://www.riversideunified.org/board_of_education/the_desegregation_movement

oldest Mexican settlements in California, yet much of its history is not widely known. Therefore, this places UC Riverside as a significant site to understand the Chicano community's pursuit of educational equity across time and space. This brief historical context sets the tone for this predominantly agricultural region and the ongoing organizing by Chicanos and others for access to education.

**The Institutionalization of the Chicano Movement in Higher Education 1968-1969**

The Chicano *Movimiento* emerged from the unrelenting quest for liberation, self-determination, and equity, with universities serving as a pivotal center for protests (Rodriguez, 1996). Chicano, formerly a derogatory term, transformed into a symbol of pride and validation by the community (Jackson, 2009; Mariscal, 2005). The Chicano movement countered the hostile sociopolitical climate produced by a history of racial discrimination and oppression. Chicano high school and university student activist groups with amplified social consciousness, such as the Mexican American Student Association (MASA), Mexican American Youth Association (MAYA), and United Mexican American Students (UMAS), created collective social change through conscious action. Mario T. Garcia (2013) defined Chicano student organizations as a key that "would help launch the 1968 blowouts" (p. 178).

The 1968 blowouts and subsequent Chicano Youth Liberation Conference in Denver, Colorado, in 1969 was followed by the Chicano Intercampus meeting at UC Santa Barbara (UCSB) organized by the Chicano Council on Higher Education in April of 1969. This political mobilization was multifaceted, led by Chicana and Chicano high school and college students, staff, faculty, and community (Delgado Bernal, 1998a;

24

Gomez-Quiñones & Vazquez, 2014). The Chicano Intercampus meeting at UCSB was a culmination of student resistance, a crescendo following protests and activism, challenging the deficit-oriented dominant narrative of Chicanos/Latinos in higher education (Muñoz, 1989; *Adelante*, October 14, 1969). A culmination of the conference was the collaboration of those in attendance to author *El Plan de Santa Barbara: A Chicano plan for higher education* (1969), which I refer to as *El Plan* throughout this document. I position *El Plan* as a foundational text for Chicano/Latinos in higher education within the University of California system and nationwide. *El Plan*, a master plan for Chicano/Latinos in higher education, created a strategy to ensure access, equity, and success for Chicanos/Latinos in higher education, and I detail it further in the following sections (CCCHE, 1969; Muñoz, 1989; Rangel, 2007).

**1968 Chicano High Student Walkouts**

In 1968, Chicano high school students participated in one of the largest actions of the Chicano/Latino community at the time. Chicano high school students challenged the poor educational conditions in East Los Angeles high schools in the 1960s. These conditions included high dropout/pushout rates, over 50% for their predominantly Mexican American student population (Delgado Bernal, 1998a). In addition, they faced classroom overcrowding, discriminatory school policies, and racist teachers (Muñoz, 1989). They walked out in protest of racism sanctioned by teachers and school policies. Chicano high school students challenged the deficit narrative of their community and demanded a culturally relevant curriculum that valued their culture and history (Muñoz, 1989; Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001). Daniel Solórzano and Dolores Delgado

25

Bernal (2001) use a counter storytelling research method and draw analysis from participants of the 1968 East Los Angeles high school walkouts. In their study of the 1968 walkouts, also known as the "blowouts," Solórzano and Delgado Bernal (2001) recognize that Chicano high school students were engaged in action centered on social justice and social change. They identify the walkouts as a form of Chicano student transformational resistance. Chicano high school student leaders were aware of the injustices they faced in education. They were motivated by social justice, critiquing their oppressive school and social conditions (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001).

Scholars have recognized the importance of the 1968 walkouts as a model for Chicano/Latino student resistance (e.g., Acuña, 1972; Berta-Avila, Tijerina-Revilla & Figueroa, 2011; Navarro, 2005). Over one thousand Chicano high school students walked out of Abraham Lincoln High School in East Los Angeles on March 3, 1968. According to Carlos Muñoz (1989), by the end of the day, thousands of students joined the strike, which would become the first momentous mass protest in the history of Mexican American action. In his analysis, Muñoz (1989) stressed the importance of the walkouts. He identified them as deliberate, conscious, and collective efforts intended to disrupt one of the largest school districts in the nation. The walkouts of East Los Angeles reverberated nationally. Similar actions would follow statewide and nationally, gaining momentum in the Chicano student movement (Navarro, 1995; Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001).

**1969 Chicano Youth Liberation Conference**

The 1968 Chicano student walkouts fueled the Chicano student movement and organizing power. In March of 1969, the Crusade for Justice, led by Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales, hosted a national conference in Denver, Colorado, to provide a direction for Chicano youth throughout the United States (Gomez-Quiñones & Vazquez, 2014; Muñoz, 1989). One year after the walkouts, the conference was the first mass national convening of Chicano/Latino youth at the time. The conference intended to create community amongst Chicano/Latino youth. Muñoz (1989) examines the significance of the Chicano/Latino youth participants, citing the conference organizers invited "students, nonstudents, militant youth…*vatos locos*[15] and ex-convicts" to participate in the planning of this direction (p. 75). Community and Chicano/Latino youth were broadly defined to recognize student and nonstudent youth as contributors to knowledge and advocacy. This is significant because this collective definition would be contextualized in *El Plan* in the 1969 Chicano intercampus meeting at UC Santa Barbara.

Over two thousand Chicano youth from across the United States attended this conference, most of whom were Chicano student activists. Juan Gómez-Quiñones and Irene Vásquez (2014) conclude that the Chicano Youth Liberation Conference resulted in two significant contributions to the Chicano youth movement. First, it created "the most memorable ideological statement" of the Chicano movement, *El Plan Espiritual de Aztlán* (p. 191). *El Plan Espiritual de Aztlán* was a call for liberation through solidarity,

---

[15] Italicized for emphasis, vatos locos is a colloquial Spanish term which translates to crazy guy or dude. However, in this context, the authors are referring to Chicano youth who are gang-affiliated or justice-impacted.

emphasizing the Chicano people's history and connection to the land. Secondly, the Chicano Youth Liberation Conference was a change from an "accommodationist posture" (Gómez-Quiñones & Vásquez, 2014, p. 191). Instead, Chicano youth called for the autonomy of the people of Aztlán, which they defined as the spiritual and geographical homelands of the Chicano people. Furthermore, this idealized notion of place and belonging was a significant positive psychological shift for Chicano youth.

**1969 Chicano Intercampus Meeting at UC Santa Barbara**

In April 1969, one hundred college students and allies met at the University of California, Santa Barbara, for a conference organized by the Chicano Coordinating Council on Higher Education (CCCHE) (Garcia, 2014). The conference assessed the state of Chicanos in higher education, acknowledging education as a critical component for Chicano liberation. In *The Chicano Movement: Perspectives from the Twenty-First Century*, Mario T. Garcia (2014) asserts that the conference created a bridge between the university and the community, led by Chicano students and allies. The three-day conference resulted in one hundred college students collaborating to author *El Plan de Santa Barbara: A Chicano plan for higher education.* This foundational document served as an act of social justice and a critique of oppression. Furthermore, *El Plan* was a pledge to the Chicano community; it recognized the historical and sociopolitical context, centering higher education as a tool for progress and the growth of the Chicano community (CCCHE, 1969).

Chicano/Latinos in higher education acknowledged a "civil rights struggle" over the low admissions and heightened sense of alienation for the few Chicanos enrolled in

colleges and universities (Gómez-Quiñones & Vásquez, 2014, p. 125). Several Chicano

student organizations emerged on college campuses at this time with clear objectives

focused on the enrollment and retention of Chicano students, implementing *El Plan*

(Delgado Bernal, 1998a; Mariscal, 2005). *El Plan* demanded institutional resources to

support Chicano students in admissions, retention efforts, and community support.

Additionally, the authors sought the creation of culturally relevant curriculum and the

creation of Chicano Studies. Lastly, *El Plan* necessitated the "vindication of [Chicano]

cultural heritage" on institutional campuses as a response to the often-hostile campus

racial climates faced by Chicano students in higher education (*El Plan*, 1969, p. 22).

## *El Plan de Santa Barbara*: Esperanza y Dirección

*El Plan* identified higher education as a source of power. *El Plan* distinguished

knowledge as a necessary factor in "producing powerful social change" (CCCHE, 1969,

p. 78). This text is foundational; it defined how institutions should 'serve' Chicano/Latino

students in higher education from the perspective of Chicano/Latino college students. I

utilize this to inform how I frame and historicize "servingness" at HSIs. According to

Cherrie Moraga (2000), the Chicano student actions of the 1960s established education as

a "fundamental concern" because it was understood as the future of the people (p. 187).

*El Plan* outlined five steps for the institutionalization of the movement, providing a 150-

page plan for higher education rooted in a critique of oppression and a desire for social

justice (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001). The authors' tone was pride and assertion;

they demanded that the institution meet the Chicano community's needs by supporting

"Admissions, recruitment, curriculum, support programs and the formation of community cultural and social action centers" (p. 22).

The first step in *El Plan* was the organization and institution of a Chicano Studies program through the formation of organizing committees and proposals. The second step was recruiting and admitting Chicano students, faculty, and staff. *El Plan* asserted that recruitment and admissions of the Chicano community were the institution's responsibility. This step challenged the institutional practice of placing the burden on the Chicano community. With an increase in college enrollment for Chicanos, the third step of *El Plan* was creating and implementing support programs in colleges and universities. Lastly, the final step was the formation of one Chicano/Latino student organization, *Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan* (MEChA), to unify all the existing Chicano/Latino student organizations.

**The Organization of Chicano Studies**

According to the authors of *El Plan*, the first step in achieving Chicano liberation was to organize and establish Chicano Studies Programs in colleges and universities. The implementation strategy outlined the establishment of an organizing committee composed of students, staff, faculty, and allies that would investigate the campus climate and secure an institutional commitment for this program. Furthermore, an organizing body such as a committee would provide institutional advocacy to challenge agents of power within the institution to make Chicano Studies a priority, thus making the Chicano community a priority. Chicano Studies served a curricular and co-curricular role, it included recruitment and retention efforts as well as the development of critical

consciousness. Furthermore, Chicano Studies "embodied resistance at the university level to the historical condition of exploitation, racism, marginality, and cultural genocide" (Gómez-Quiñones & Vásquez, p. 171). Nine principal guidelines were outlined to provide a plan of action for the actualization of Chicano Studies: "Control, Autonomy, Structure, Flexibility, Finances, Staff, and Responsibility" (CCCHE, 1969, p. 16-18). Two proposals were identified to implement these principal guidelines: departmental proposals and proposals for institutions or centers (CCCHE, 1969). Departmental proposals comprised a framework for Chicano Studies in academia with specific details on the curriculum and faculty hires. *El Plan* identified Chicano Studies as a significant tool for the creation and implementation of a Chicano curriculum. Strategically, this also served as a structure to secure staffing and faculty (CCCHE, 1969, p. 20). CCCHE (1969) rationalized that the institution would meet the needs of the Chicano community by establishing and supporting a Chicano Studies department.

**Recruitment and Admissions of Chicano Communities**

At this time, feelings of isolation and hostility permeated the Chicano college student experience in higher education (Delgado Bernal, 1998a). The second step of *El Plan was* the recruitment and admissions of Chicano students, faculty, and staff. CCCHE (1969) challenged the practice of recruitment being the sole burden of Chicano students and the Chicano community. Instead, they detailed that the Chicano community's recruitment and admissions are the institution's responsibility. CCCHE (1969) boldly stated that institutions must "never assume that Chicanos must first seek them out," instead, it is the institution who must put in this effort (p. 25). *El Plan* authors elaborate

on this second step, outlining four policies in Chicanos' recruitment and admissions

processes in higher education. The first policy challenged the funding of recruitment and

admission of Chicano students, which was determined by the enrollment numbers of

Chicanos. CCCHE sought equitable funding for recruitment and support programs for

Chicano students regardless of enrollment numbers with the understanding that if the

numbers are low, it is the institutions' responsibility to address these numbers by

investing in the recruitment and support of Chicanos.

The second policy focused on the recruitment of Chicano faculty and staff. The

authors advocated that the institution hire Chicanos at every level in the university. The

third policy stated that the immediate goal for the institution within recruitment and

admissions should be the establishment of proportional representation of Chicano

students, faculty, and staff (CCCHE, 1969).[16] The final policy recognized the potential

danger of excluding Chicanos in implementing these policies. As a result, declared

recruitment committees, if they are to be effective, must include Chicano students,

faculty, staff, and community (CCCHE, 1969, p. 24). Thus, creating and implementing

these policies should include Chicano faculty, staff, and employees. Furthermore, the

plan purports such practices to be a valuable medium for institutions to strengthen the

---

[16] In the Multidimensional Conceptual Framework for Understanding "Servingness" in Hispanic Serving Institutions (2019) used as a conceptual framework in this study, Garcia and colleagues recognize the significance of compositional diversity of the faculty and staff that reflects the student body. Furthermore, they include culturally relevant curricula and programs as well as services for minoritized students as structures for serving within HSIs. Although I will draw these connections between El Plan and current HSI scholarship throughout this project, we begin to see how 'serving' or 'servingness' historically. See, Garcia, G. A., Núñez, A. M., & Sansone, V. A. (2019). Toward a multidimensional conceptual framework for understanding "servingness" in Hispanic-Serving Institutions: A synthesis of the research. Review of Educational Research, 89(5), 745-784.

relationship between recruitment and hiring/admissions of Chicanos. These practices would allow for more effective and equitable progress in accessing higher education.

**Creation and Implementation of Support Programs for Chicanos**

Chicano student activists attending the conference at UCSB expressed a need for retention programs and services in higher education (Delgado Bernal, 1999). As a result, *El Plan* calls for the creation of support programs beyond college life adjustment or transition, but instead on creating a "stable academic, political and financial base for Chicano students" (CCHE, 1969, p. 30). To achieve this goal, *El Plan* outlined the creation and implementation of support programs in colleges and universities as the third step towards universities serving as tools for Chicano liberation and social justice. The authors of *El Plan* acknowledged the obstacles Chicano students faced, which were most often transitional. Often the institutional response to these obstacles was deficit-orientated, blaming Chicano students for the transitional challenges faced.

According to the authors of *El Plan*, the programs available to Chicano students often perpetuated an accommodationist and conformist ideal in academia instead of understanding the Chicano student's unique academic and social behavior. Therefore, *El Plan* asserted, support programs should focus on expanding educational processes that meet the unique interests of Chicanos. In 1969, the authors recognized how critical such culturally affirming support programs were to Chicano student success in colleges and universities. *El Plan* outlined examples of support programs, which included orientation programs with a focus on cultural identity in academics and achievement. Furthermore,

support programs and campus resources, such as Financial Aid and Housing, the authors

urged, must aid in lessening the barriers Chicanos often face when pursuing a college.

**Implementation of Chicano Studies**

   CCCHE regarded the institutionalization of an educational experience relevant to

Chicanos as one of the most critical steps of *El Plan*. Following the creation of Chicano

Studies programs, step four of *El Plan* outlines the implementation of Chicano Studies in

two-year and four-year institutions. The Chicano experience is the epistemology of

Chicano Studies and, thus, a relevant curriculum for Chicano students. This step provided

Chicanos with the necessary tools to navigate the educational experience and their reality

with the inclusion of the "psychological, social, and intellectual needs" of Chicanos (p.

41). The authors of *El Plan* regarded the Chicano Studies department as the most

appropriate institutional agent to administer and implement Chicano Studies within the

institution.

   CCCHE maintained that the composition of the Chicano Studies department

should include qualified faculty and staff who possess knowledge of Chicanos. They also

acknowledge allies in non-Chicano individuals. However, they pushed for the hiring and

recruitment of Chicano faculty and staff. In addition, logistically, the department would

develop lower and upper-division Chicano Studies courses, which they acknowledge

would benefit all students. Finally, *El Plan* outlines a proposal for curricular change with

specific course allocations with a list of highly qualified Chicano faculty prepared to

teach Chicano Studies.

**Creation of MEChA to Unify the Chicano Student Organizations**

Lastly, the authors of *El Plan* endorsed the unification of the various Chicano student organizations at colleges and universities in the 1960s. Politically, the unification of Chicano student organizations was also an initial step in bridging the groups throughout the United States to become a more significant force within higher education. Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan (MEChA) was created and served as a cohesive force for action and social justice. Through a cultural empowerment framework, MEChA would combat racism and oppression within higher education. The functions of MEChA were delineated in *El Plan* and were multi-layered, relating to various entities in the lives of Chicano students. The entities included the student, the campus community, education, and the Barrio (community).

This final step emphasized a strong relationship with the Barrio. The authors urged that any work Chicano students produce must always keep the community in mind. Thus, the production of knowledge and any actions that follow must be executed with respect because the students come from these communities "as such mutual respect between the Barrio and the college group should be a rule" (CCCHE, 1969, p. 61). Furthermore, MEChA's role would be to serve as a liaison between the community and the university, educating the campus about the plight of Chicanos. According to CCCHE, MEChA represented unity and served as a vital political force to implement change for access and equity in higher education and the political sphere.

## Understanding the Concept of Serving

*El Plan* is the only document detailing a plan of action for Chicanos in higher education. It also stands as the only time that there has been such a document produced by any minoritized group in higher education. Given the historic nature of its creation, it is striking that *El Plan* remains under-researched and undervalued. *El Plan* serves as a basis for understanding what it means to serve Chicano/Latino students in higher education. By establishing an internal structure for Chicanos in higher education, such as creating Chicano Studies, support programs, and services, the authors of *El Plan* recognized these steps were critical in recruiting and retaining Chicanos. Although enrollment was their initial priority, given the disparate numbers of Chicanos in higher education, *El Plan* was innovative and revolutionary because it pushed beyond enrollment. The authors demanded that the institution serve Chicanos by retaining them and providing them with culturally relevant programs, services, and curricula, detailing precisely how to do so.

In the decades since *El Plan*, Chicano/Latino students have experienced low enrollment, retention, and degree attainment compared to other racial groups (Mariscal, 2005; Rodriguez, 1996; U.S. Department of Education, 2016). Traditional measures of success, often in a deficit-oriented framework, place the blame of low enrollment and degree attainment on Chicano/Latinos (Garcia, 2019; Mares-Tamayo & Solórzano, 2018; Yosso & Solórzano, 2006). However, Chicano activists at UCR worked tirelessly to create change in the 1960s-1970s, implementing much of the steps outlined in *El Plan*. They created the conditions for UCR to emerge as a top-performing Hispanic Serving

Research Institution with the highest undergraduate enrollment in the UC system and among the highest six-year undergraduate degree attainment rates for Chicano/Latinos compared to the national average (Matute, 2022; Nichols, 2017). The following section will summarize contemporary research and praxis defining Chicano/Latino undergraduate success to understand how 'servingness' is operationalized in HSIs today.

## Chicano/Latino Student Success

This third central area of the literature grounding this study provides an overview of Chicano/Latino undergraduate student success within the student and college contexts. I review this literature to frame how reflective these terms are from the original work of Chicano/Latino student activists and allies. I also outline institutional practice, campus racial climate, and Chicano/Latino student resilience as key factors to Chicano/Latino student success to expand on the importance of this study.

### The Current Conditions for Chicano/Latinos in Higher Education

Before continuing to the third central area of the literature review, it is important to convey the current conditions Chicano/Latinos face in higher education to understand further the contemporary research defining Chicano/Latino undergraduate student success. Chicano/Latino college enrollment has increased by 37% since 1990 (Unidos US, 2022). In the fall of 2020, Chicano/Latinos composed a fifth of the postsecondary enrollment. They were 47% at four-year public institutions and 36% at two-year public[17]

---

[17] It is important to note that 2-year public institutions continue to enroll the largest number of Chicano/Latinos pursuing higher education. They also are the most accessible access point, in terms of affordability and flexibility for Chicano/Latinos to pursue higher education. See, Zarate, M. E., & Burciaga, R. (2010). Latinos and college access: Trends and future directions. Journal of College Admission, 209, 24-29.

institutions (Mora, 2022; *Excelencia* in Education, 2022). However, despite an increase in enrollment, Chicano/Latino degree-attainment gaps remain. In the fall of 2020, Chicano/Latinos earned 26% of all associate degrees and 16% of all bachelor's degrees conferred (Postsecondary National Policy Institute, 2022). Affordability, inadequate preparation, and lack of educational opportunities are the main impediments for Chicano/Latinos pursuing higher education (Yosso & Solórzano, 2006; Mora, 2022).

COVID-19 has also exacerbated these impediments. The Pew Research Center (2021) found that Chicano/Latinos were at higher risk of COVID-19 hospitalization and death in comparison to other racial groups. Additionally, they faced higher economic hardships due to the pandemic such as job loss or wage reductions (2021). During this time, Chicano/Latino enrollment in higher education dropped by 15% (Mora, 2022). A cross-sectional study was conducted of college students at a large public HSI during COVID-19 using an online survey. The study scaled responses based on the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-4) and the Patient Health Questionnaire for Depression and Anxiety-4 (PHQ-4). Four hundred fifty- six students completed the survey, ranging from 18-58 years old, with 89% of the respondents self-identifying as Chicano/Latino. The study found that Chicano/Latino college students faced higher levels of "moderate to severe" stress, anxiety, and depression as a result of the pandemic (Ibarra-Mejia, Lusk, and Jeon, 2022). College affordability and flexibility were especially salient to Chicano/Latino students' decision to pursue higher education (Mora, 2022). By October 2021, 71% of Chicano/Latino students reported having to work to support their family as the main

reason they did not pursue a bachelor's degree, followed by 69% who shared that college was not affordable (Mora, 2022).

In their 2006 Latino policy brief, Yosso and Solórzano provided a visual overview of the "leaks" in the Chicano/Latino educational pipeline. Their findings conclude that Chicano/Latinos lack access to educational opportunities starting as early as K-12; this follows them throughout the pipeline through "discriminatory school-based structures and practices" (p. 2). Chicano/Latinos were less likely to participate or have access to college-going or preparation programs, and many continue to be "tracked to remedial or vocational trajectories" (p. 2). For example, Maria Estela Zarate and Rebeca Burciaga (2010) found that Chicano/Latinos were more than likely to be enrolled in K-12 schools with fewer educational resources, inadequate facilities, and teachers who are not prepared. Additionally, Chicano/Latinos were more than likely to identify as the first in their family to attend college. In 2014, more than half of Chicano/Latinos enrolled in higher education identified as first-generation (Postsecondary National Policy Institute, 2022). Chicano/Latino students also reported the highest poverty rates nationally. In 2016, 28% of Chicano/Latino children under the age of 18 were living in poverty (U.S. Department of Education, 2019). Discriminatory practices and lack of educational opportunities for Chicano/Latinos are not new, demonstrated in the first two sections of this literature review, it is the result of decades of systemic racism in this country. Consequently, the Chicano/Latinos that do enroll in colleges and universities are not prepared, lack adequate resources to meet their unique needs, and as a result, many do not complete their degrees.

**Institutional Practice**

*El Plan* emphasized that educational policy and institutional practice must support and empower Chicano/Latino students to realize academic and social success that maintains cultural integrity (Tierney, 1999). Recognizing and incorporating Chicano/Latino students' culture as a strength is the key to that success. Tara J. Yosso (2005) asserts that students of color possess many strengths gained from their family and community, which she defines as community cultural wealth. Yosso (2005) posits community cultural wealth as an anti-deficit concept that recognizes the strengths of communities of color rooted in social justice. Institutions must understand the Chicano/Latino undergraduate story and their journey, first and foremost, to understand how to support Chicano/Latino student success. The student context, college context, and the interaction between the student and college context must be understood to promote Chicano/Latino student persistence (Arana, Castaneda-Sound, Blanchard & Aguilar, 2011).

In the last two decades, the scholarship about curricular and co-curricular experiences of Chicano/Latino students has expanded significantly. Researchers have repeatedly found that when Chicano/Latino students are recognized and valued as knowledge producers, this can yield positive educational outcomes (Delgado Bernal, 2002; Garcia & Cuellar, 2018; Rios-Aguilar & Kiyama, 2012; Yosso et al., 2009). Curricular and co-curricular programs include programs and initiatives within and outside the classroom. Some examples are academic departments such as Chicano Studies and Ethnic Studies (Garcia, 2019), student support services such as cultural or identity-based

40

centers (Lozano, 2010; Yosso & Benavidez Lopez, 2010) as well as cultural student organizations (Hernandez, 2019).

Culturally relevant curriculum and pedagogical practices in the classroom validate Chicano/Latino students and create culturally enhancing spaces (Garcia et al., 2019; Rendon, 2009). An inclusive classroom pedagogy creates a positive environment where students can interact and be valued as knowledge contributors. As a result, an inclusive classroom pedagogy can positively affect students' sense of belonging (e.g., hooks, 1994, Rendon, 1994; Quaye & Poon, 2008). Student affairs professionals can create opportunities outside the classroom to generate or encourage student involvement. Co-curricular programs include inclusive programming and intentional partnerships with racially diverse community agencies, campus departments, or faculty (e.g., Patton, 2010; Yosso & Benavidez Lopez, 2010).

Lastly, mentorship is especially salient in the Chicano/Latino community (Hurtado et al., 1998; Cuellar, 2015; Rodriguez & Gonzales, 2020; Yosso et al., 2009). Mentorship opportunities for Chicano/Latino students support a positive transition to campus and can contribute to a positive campus racial climate that affirms Chicano/Latino students' identities. Additionally, peer mentorship allows Chicano/Latino students to give back to other students and contribute to their confidence and self-determination (Rodriguez & Gonzales, 2020). In their study of a Title V grant-funded mentorship program at an HSI in South Texas, Rodriguez and Gonzales (2020) found that mentorship was a form of "servingness." The program gave first-generation and transfer Chicano/Latino students a sense of belonging. Furthermore, through the grant, a

41

culturally enhancing mentorship model was created and a centralized location on campus

for Chicano/Latino students was established (Rodriguez & Gonzales, 2020). These

findings indicate that at HSIs, mentorship programs focused on cultural belonging can be

critical in connecting students' identities to their broader goals in higher education. Often,

HSIs are some of the most under-resourced institutions with larger percentages of first-

generation and low-income students (Nuñez et al., 2015). Providing support to

Chicano/Latino students through mentorship, retention services, or co-curricular activities

ensures that students feel welcome (Cuellar, 2015; Rodriguez & Gonzales, 2020; Yosso,

2005).

**Campus Racial Climate**

  A racially diverse student body contributes to higher education in many essential

ways. Scholars have established the significance of diversity within higher education in

two overarching ways. First, increasing the number of racially diverse students on college

campuses permits more opportunities for cross-racial interactions (Chang, 1999; Dawson

& Cuevas, 2019; Hurtado & Carter, 1997). Second, because of this increase in racially

diverse students on college campuses, scholars correlate the engagement of cross-racial

interactions among college peers with a wide range of desirable outcomes. These

desirable outcomes positively affect students' cognitive and social development and

identity formation (Astin, 1993; Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, & Gurin, 2002; Hurtado & Carter,

1997). Additionally, educational attainment, perceptions of belonging, and campus

climate are positively affected (Hurtado, Griffin, Arellano, & Cuellar, 2008; Hurtado,

Milem, Clayton-Pederson, & Allen, 1998; Rendon, 1994). Although scholars recognize

the benefits of a racially diverse student body, they also note the challenges for minoritized students when attending higher education institutions with historical legacies of exclusion (Hurtado et al., 1998).

For Chicano/Latino students, the campus racial climate significantly affects their persistence and overall perceptions of belonging (Arbona & Nora, 2007; Hurtado, 1994; Locks, Hurtado, Bowman, & Oseguera, 2008; Yosso, 2006; Yosso et al., 2009). For example, in 1994 Sylvia Hurtado conducted a study on the perception of campus climate for high-achieving Chicano/Latinos, defined as students who scored among the top 3,000 in the PSATs and had high academic performance in high school. She utilized the Student Descriptive Questionnaire (SDQ), PSAT data, and the National Survey of Hispanic Students (NSHS). She outlined several findings that helped begin the discourse on campus racial climate effects on Chicano/Latino college students. There were two major findings: Chicano/Latino students felt they did not belong, and many encountered racism on college campuses. Up to 29% of Chicano/Latino students in this study believed they did not "fit in." Additionally, 43% of Chicano/Latinos reported feeling they were only admitted due to special programs and not by their merit (Hurtado, 1994). The Chicano/Latino students surveyed often encountered racism on campus, resulting in "little trust between minority student groups and administrators on campus" (p. 31). What was especially striking about this early study was that the Chicano/Latinos surveyed had a higher probability for success despite a perceived negative campus climate, due to their top academic record. However, the Chicano/Latino students surveyed were not immune to the campus climate, which affected their success.

Building on her 1994 study, in 1998, Hurtado and colleagues created a framework to understand the four overarching dimensions of campus racial climate through a multidisciplinary review of the research literature. Their literature review focused on the sources and outcomes of campus racial climates. The four dimensions of campus climate include institutional context, the historical legacy of inclusion or exclusion, structural diversity, and psychological and behavioral dimensions (Hurtado et al., 1998). The authors conclude that all four dimensions and their connections to each other create the campus climate. Each dimension, they explain, is essential in understanding its impact on students. Therefore, all four dimensions must be considered when producing a positive campus climate. For example, increasing structural diversity, defined as the number of diverse students enrolled, does not necessarily create a positive campus climate if the institution does not account for its institutional legacy of exclusion of diverse communities (Garcia, 2019; Garcia, 2023) or create opportunities for meaningful engagement across racial groups (Jayakumar & Musesu, 2012).

In a longitudinal study of Chicano/Latino students who attended ten institutions selected based on their diverse enrollment, diversity initiatives, and public service commitment, Sylvia Hurtado and Luis Ponjuan (2005) examined the factors that affect educational outcomes for Chicano/Latinos. The institutions were regionally diverse and varied in size, ranging from 5,000 – 20,00 undergraduate enrollments. The study explored student perceptions of campus climate and their sense of belonging. 370 Chicano/Latino undergraduate students participated, completing two surveys administered in their first and second years in college (Hurtado & Ponjuan, 2005). They found that student

experience plays a more vital role in Chicano/Latino students' perceptions of a hostile climate rather than their background. Additionally, their findings confirm that hostile campus climates "tend to significantly undermine Latino students' sense of belonging and morale as a member of a particular campus" (p. 248). Conversely, Chicano/Latino students reported a higher sense of belonging in courses that highlighted diversity and positively interacted with diverse peers (Hurtado & Ponjuan, 2005).

In 2015, Sylvia Hurtado and Adriana Ruiz Alvarado developed an outline for HSIs to realize their potential in serving Chicano/Latino students. They suggest that HSIs are affected by the dimensions at the organizational level, such as structural diversity and historical legacies of exclusion, as well as the individual level, including behavioral factors. Due to their predominantly White institutional (PWI) origins, HSIs must contend with their campus's historical legacy to achieve Chicano/Latino student success. Hurtado and Ruiz Alvarado adapt the Multi-contextual Model for Diverse Learning Environments (Hurtado et al., 2012) to include the Latina/o student identity. The campus climate, practices, and goals for student outcomes are reviewed. Their findings conclude that HSIs can positively influence various aspects of climate such as a sense of belonging and community, due to their structural diversity. This can result in Chicano/Latino students' stronger sense of self, leading them to be agents of social change (Hurtado & Ruiz Alvarado, 2015). However, the campus must actively create a student-centered environment that values students of color, diversity, and multiculturalism (Cuellar & Johnson-Ahorlu, 2020; Delgado Bernal, 2002; Hurtado et al., 1998; Jayakumar & Museus, 2012; Jayakumar, 2008; Yosso et al., 2009). Notably, Hurtado and Ponjuan

(2005) confirmed that Chicano/Latino students who have a positive sense of belonging feel like they are a part of the campus community. Significantly, Chicano/Latino students who report being satisfied with their campus racial climate have higher degree completion rates (Hurtado & Ponjuan, 2005; Crisp, Reyes, & Doran, 2014).

Conversely, when Chicano/Latino students are not satisfied with the campus racial climate or perceive the climate to be hostile, they are more likely to build communities that represent and reflect the cultural wealth of their home communities (Villalpando, 2003; Yosso, 2005; Yosso et al., 2009). These spaces become social and academic counterspaces for Chicano/Latino students (Yosso, 2006). Tara J. Yosso and her co-authors conducted focus groups at three highly selective, predominately White university campuses as part of a larger study of campus racial climate. They used CRT to understand incidences of racial microaggressions and their effects on Chicano /Latino students. Introduced in 1969 by Chester Pierce, a professor of education and psychiatry at Harvard, racial microaggressions are defined as racial invalidation or micro insults in and out of the classroom. Yosso and colleagues found Chicano/Latino students confronting repeated messages of rejection on campus, confirming their sense that regardless of their academic merit, they did not belong by virtue of their identity. However, Yosso and her colleagues also found a pattern: students responded to racial microaggressions by creating counterspaces and contributing to previously established counterspaces defined as a supportive community that provides the necessary tools to aid Chicano/Latino student's navigation of both school and home (Yosso et al., 2009, p.660).

**Chicano/Latino Student Resilience in Higher Education**

Historically, Chicano/Latino students demanded equity and access to higher education, demonstrating their collective student resistance during the Chicano *Movimiento* of the 1960s. Today Chicano/Latino student resistance continues to demand equity and access; however, now the challenge is from within the institution. Solórzano and Delgado Bernal (2001) recognize that Chicano/Latino student action to create positive campus environments is a form of resistance. Resilience is defined as one's ability to overcome difficult events as a result of developed or learned capabilities (Stanton-Salazar & Spina, 2000). These capabilities can be derived from external forces such as mentors and the physical space, or internal forces such as one's community cultural wealth (Yosso, 2006) and family teachings. Significantly, resilience is more than continuance but "draws from experience to enhance subsequent functioning" (Stanton-Salazar & Spina, 2000, p. 229). Through the formation of counterspaces and counternarratives, Chicano/Latino students become their own advocates (Yosso, 2006; Yosso et al., 2009). In addition, Chicano/Latino students work against stereotypes through protests, advocacy and validity (Hurtado & Ponjuan, 2005). Chicano/Latino students participate in activities that foster a welcoming environment for themselves and their peers (Yosso, 2006; Yosso et al., 2009). Significantly, the literature concludes that Chicano/Latino students who experience rejection are more likely to participate in changing it (Doran & Medina, 2017; Hurtado & Ponjuan, 2005; Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001; Yosso, 2006; Yosso & Benavidez Lopez, 2010; Yosso et al., 2009).

Chicano/Latino undergraduate students are resilient in four principal ways. First, Chicano/Latino students create positive educational conditions. They seek mentorship or become a mentor to their peers (Rodriguez & Gonzales, 2020). When Chicano/Latino students have a mentor or become a mentor, they feel more connected to the campus community and have a stronger academic self-concept. As a result, they are more likely to participate in programs and services that reflect cultural and academic success (Doran & Medina, 2017; Lozano, 2010; Orozco, 2009; Yosso & Benavidez Lopez, 2010; Yosso et al., 2009). Secondly, Chicano/Latino students cope and overcome institutional obstacles by creating or finding supportive networks through counterspaces and counternarratives (Lozano, 2010; Huber & Cueva, 2012; Solórzano & Perez-Huber, 2012; Yosso & Benavidez Lopez, 2010; Yosso, 2006; Yosso et al., 2009). Counternarratives validate the experiences and stories of people of color. They disrupt institutional histories of neglect by challenging the majoritarian story, which only legitimizes those in power (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002; Yosso, 2006). According to Yosso (2006) counterstorytelling has four major functions: building community, challenging perceived wisdom, nurturing community cultural wealth, and they have the potential to transform education (p. 15).

Chicano/Latino students are resilient when they are validated. Thus, the third principal way Chicano/Latino students are resilient is through peer, staff, and faculty validation. Chicano/Latino students feel capable and competent when their identity and culture are validated (Hurtado & Carter, 1997; Hurtado & Ponjuan, 2007; Hurtado et al., 2009; Rendon, 1994; Yosso, 2006; Yosso et al., 2009). For example, Laura Rendon's

(1994) seminal work and subsequent validation theory consider the implications when students are validated on college campuses after conducting focus groups with 132 first-year students at four regionally diverse institutions with varying institutional types, including two-year and four-year institutions. The students interviewed were from diverse racial/ethnic identities. Rendon and colleagues found that the students, especially those underserved and underrepresented, were transformed into powerful learners when validated. Guiding their analysis was a 1986 study of women as learners, which found women "yearned for acceptance and validation" (Belenkey, Clinchy, Goldberger & Tarule, 1986 as cited in Rendon, 1994, p. 36). Similarly, Rendon and colleagues found students often had self-doubt of their own potential in higher education yet were transformed when validated on campus. Transformation occurs when an individual in the curricular or co-curricular space supports or affirms their academic or social capabilities (Rendon, 1994). Rendon defines the curricular space as the formal academic space, such as the classroom, while the co-curricular space is outside the formal academic space, such as a program, center or campus event. Validation can be a transformational experience for Chicano/Latino students that facilitates student success. However, in addition to the peer-to-peer validation, Rendon contends that faculty, staff, and campus leadership must engage in these practices to fully realize diverse students' potential.

The final response is empowerment. Chicano/Latino students do not see themselves as victims, instead, much like the Chicano/Latino student activists of the 1960s, they are active on campus and create change (Doran & Medina, 2017; Solórzano & Perez-Huber, 2012; Yosso, 2006; Yosso et al., 2009; CCCHE, 1969). Marcela Cuellar

and colleagues (2017) define empowerment as a "process through which Latinx students draw their cultural assets" to develop skills and seek resources that create change for themselves and their communities (p. 86). They build on the Inputs-Environments-Outcomes (IEO) model designed by Astin and Antonio (2012), which determines student outcomes based on student inputs and the college environment. Inputs in this model are defined as pre-college characteristics, including student attributes such as identity and educational background. After a review of the literature on Chicano/Latino students at HSIs, Cuellar and colleagues incorporate CRT and community cultural wealth with IEO to develop a model for assessing Latinx empowerment at HSIs. The model outlines how to purposefully center Chicano/Latino students at HSIs and understand what leads to successful outcomes. They conclude that Chicano/Latino empowerment, includes the student's community cultural wealth and has the potential to advance equity academically, socially, and economically (Cuellar et al., 2017).

## Hispanic Serving Institution: A Brief Overview

Understanding Chicano/Latino undergraduate student success within this study's student and college context includes a specific institutional type, Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI). For the remainder of this central area of the literature, I provide a brief trajectory of the HSI designation. For the past three decades, aligned with the official designation confirmation, the scholarship on HSIs and various HSI types has increased tremendously. For example, in 2004, Berta Vigil Landen conducted a content analysis utilizing critical multicultural theory to understand the relationship between HSIs and Chicano/Latino students. Vigil Landen found that there was a total of 276 HSIs in 2004,

with the majority of HSIs concentrated in California and Texas. The largest concentration of HSIs was two-year institutions, which constituted 68.8%, consistent with higher education enrollment trends of Chicano/Latinos (Zarate & Burciaga, 2010). HSI four-year institutions were only 31.2%, and most were private four- year institutions. At the time of this study, there were only 33 public four-year institutions total.

Twenty years later, in 2023, 579 institutions met the HSI federal designation criteria, enrolling 25% Chicano/Latino full-time undergraduate students (HACU, 2023). There are 165 HSI four-year public institutions, 5 of which are UCs, including UC Riverside (HACU, 2023; Paredes et al., 2021). In addition, there are an additional 400 institutions identified as emerging HSIs defined as institutions with a 15-24% full-time Chicano/Latino undergraduate enrollment. The highest concentration of HSIs remains in California and Texas, followed by Florida, New York, Illinois, and New Mexico, as well as the territory of Puerto Rico (HACU, 2023). According to *Excelencia* in Education (2022), in 2020-2021, HSIs enrolled 66% of all Chicano/Latino undergraduate students; however, they only accounted for 18% of all higher education institutions.

Much of the HSI scholarship is in a contemporary context and reflects a different political climate than that of the 1960s-70s, which is the time period of this study. Ironically, the rationale for HSIs reflects *El Plan de Santa Barbara: A Chicano plan for higher education* (1969). However, the HSI scholarship seldom mentions this foundational text or recognizes it as the first plan for Chicano student success in higher education. Therefore, it is essential to provide context on the HSI and HSRI trajectory to understand how this study's historical recovery of the origins of an HSRI, the University

of California, Riverside, is both timely and necessary. Additionally, this recovery can contribute to the ways we justly define and historically ground HSIs/HSRIs moving forward.

**The Creation of Hispanic Serving Institutions**

In 1986, eighteen institutions founded the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU). The formation of HACU both institutionalized and formalized a pursuit in support of the nation's largest growing minority population, Chicano/Latinos. HACU's initial focus was education which they believed was the key to Chicano/Latino success in the United States (HACU, n.d.). However, as the Chicano/Latino population grew, federal support was necessary to address Chicano/Latino degree attainment prompting HACU to lead a grassroots effort to lobby Congress. In addition, HACU rationalized that the U.S. economic success was pertinent to the success of Chicano/Latinos due to their projected continual growth. As a result, HACU sought the recognition of HSI as a federal designation for institutions with high enrollments of Chicano/Latinos.

In 1992, the "Strengthening Institutions Program" was introduced by Senator Claiborne Pell to recognize HSIs federally. In a published report conducted by the 1992 Congress, six rationales led to congressional support for the Strengthening Institutions Program. The first rationale identified Chicano/Latinos had lower degree attainment rates in comparison to other groups and were at higher risk of not enrolling in higher education. Similarly, the enrollment of Chicano/Latinos in higher education was a priority for the authors of *El Plan*. They outlined an intersegmental approach in 1969 for

52

recruiting and retaining Chicano/Latinos at various institution types, namely two-year and four-year public institutions.

The second rationale recognized enrollment disparities between Chicano/Latino undergraduates and non-Chicano/Latino undergraduates. At the time of this report, in 1992, HSIs had already enrolled a substantial proportion of Chicano/Latino undergraduate students nationally. Thus, the third rationale recognized HSIs as critical access points for Chicano/Latinos. However, HACU leaders recognized the financial investment necessary to ensure HSIs meet the needs of Chicano/Latino students, as many of these institutions were grossly underfunded, receiving less state and local funding than non-HSIs. Therefore, the fourth rationale addressed financial and resource limitations. Chicano/Latino undergraduates were enrolling and graduating from HSIs in larger numbers; to sustain and advance this growth would require a federal financial commitment. The stability of HSIs was dependent on financial support, the fifth rationale defined a federal financial investment in HSIs (Cornell Law School, n.d.). The final rationale established an investment in equal higher education opportunities for Chicano/Latinos prompted a "national interest in remedying disparities" (Cornell Law School, n.d.). The HSI designation and definition became law under the Higher Education Act (HEA) in 1992. Under the HEA, Title V, HSIs were eligible for federal appropriations. However, it was not until 1995 that federal resources were granted to HSIs; within that year, $12 million was awarded (HACU, 2019). The designation legitimized HSIs and acknowledged the growing enrollments of Chicano/Latinos in higher education (Garcia, 2019a).

**Hispanic Serving Institution: Eligibility & Federal Funding**

The U.S. Department of Higher Education defines HSI as an institution that meets the eligibility requirements outlined in Title III and V, which includes a full-time Chicano/Latino undergraduate enrollment of 25% or more (Cottrell & Smith, 2019; Garcia & Taylor, 2017; U.S. Department of Education, 2019). Under Title III and V of the Higher Education Act of 1965, amended by the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008, institutions eligible for federal funding must be an Institution of Higher Education (IHE). IHEs are proprietary as a nationally recognized accredited or pre-accredited institution that provides required data to the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) for the academic year (Cottrell & Smith, 2019). The HSI designation excludes for-profit colleges.

Two core variables measured for IHE eligibility are the number of "needy students" and the core expenses for Full-Time Equivalency students (FTE). At least half of the IHE student population must receive financial assistance, and the institution's core expenses per FTE must be less than average for the institutional group (Cottrell & Smith, 2019). In a continued effort to support the educational attainment of Chicano/Latinos, both HACU and *Excelencia* in Education, two nationally recognized organizations leading HSI policy, recognize Emerging HSIs and Hispanic Serving Research Institutions (HSRIs). IHE's with a Chicano/Latino full-time undergraduate enrollment rate of 15-24% are considered Emerging HSIs (Excelencia in Education, 2019). HSRIs are defined as HSIs classified as R1 or doctoral-granting institutions with high research activity

(Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, 2019; Marin & Pereschica, 2017; Marin, 2019).

**Operationalization of HSIs: Enrollment, Not Necessarily Serving**

Although HSIs have become an essential access point for Chicano/Latino undergraduate students, several scholars caution that the designation is focused on "enrolling" and not necessarily on "serving" Chicano/Latino students (Excelencia in Education, 2019; Garcia, 2016; Garcia, 2017; Garcia & Taylor, 2017; Santiago et al., 2016; Velez, 2020). Today, there are over 500 HSIs in the country, and advocates are pushing HSIs to focus on retention efforts (Garcia, 2023; *Excelencia* in Education, 2023). The designation is based on enrollment, therefore scholars caution the emphasis of the federal designation is "simply based on numbers," and consequently, the mission of these institutions remains unchanged (Marin, 2019, p. 167). HSI effectiveness is primarily measured by traditional institutional performance metrics such as persistence and degree attainment, further legitimizing "white standards" (Garcia, 2019).

The *Status and Trends in the Education of Racial and Ethnic Groups 2018* report disaggregates undergraduate enrollment for fall 2016, concluding that 44% of Chicano/Latinos enrolled in an HSI, 2-4-year institution. However, only 37% of degrees were conferred overall for Chicano/Latinos at an HSI, most of which were associate degrees at 51% (De Brey et al., 2019). In 2023, over 572 higher education institutions met the eligibility requirements to be federally designated HSI, resulting in an increase of 203% since the initial designation in 1994 (Cottrell & Smith, 2019; *Excelencia* in Education, 2023). Many scholars also attribute the increase in Chicano/Latino

55

undergraduate enrollment to population growth as the predictive factor for future

enrollment rates. HSIs enroll the largest percentage of Chicano/Latino students and are

considered an essential access point. However, HSIs remain some of the most under-

resourced institutions (*Excelencia* in Education, 2019). Due to financial limitations, HSIs

may not be equipped to serve, or meet the unique needs of Chicano/Latino students

without additional financial support (Contreras, 2020; Garcia, 2018; Hurtado & Ruiz

Alvarado, 2015).

Malcom-Piqueux and Bensimon (2015) define HSI "servingness" as the practices

and tools used to promote a culture of Chicano/Latino student success. They measure

traditional institutional performance to assess how effective and equitable HSIs are

(Malcom-Piqueux & Bensimon, 2015). The definition has evolved to include an

emphasis on meeting the unique needs of Chicano/Latino students. As HSIs grow,

scholars urge HSIs should also be culturally enhancing spaces thus, "servingness" should

validate Chicano/Latino students (Contreras, 2019; Garcia, 2017, 2019, 2020). In 1969,

the authors of *El Plan* recognized that serving Chicano/Latino students is more than

enrollment; it was a commitment to the Chicano community and liberation. The authors

of *El Plan* recognized the central role higher education institutions play in modern

progress and the development of the Chicano community that honors Chicano/Latino

student's wholeness, "We believe that higher education must contribute to the

information of a complete person who truly values life and freedom" (CCCHE, 1969, p.

10).

In this study, I define serving as the ability to foster a culture of student success that enrolls, cultivates, validates, honors, and graduates Chicano/Latino students (Malcom-Piqueux & Bensimon, 2015; Garcia et al., 2019; Garcia, 2020; Matute, 2022). HSIs are designated based on the enrollment of Chicano/Latino undergraduate students, many IHEs become HSIs, with few intentionally seeking this designation. Thus HSIs have predominantly white institutional (PWI) foundations and despite their designation, their PWI foundations often remain embedded in mission statements and institutional practices. Consequently, this further legitimizes deficit-oriented and outcome-driven performance metrics that uphold whiteness in HSIs (Bell, 1980; Garcia, 2019; Garcia et al., 2019; Lang & Yandel, 2019; Vargas, Villa-Palomino, & Davis, 2020).

**HSIs as Instructive Sites and Diverse Learning Environments**

To remain competitive, US government leaders recognize the value of a knowledge-based economy, defined as a workforce with vastly developed knowledge and skills. Shuaily and colleagues (2017) contend that higher education institutions play a critical role in developing this highly skilled labor force where the ultimate production of knowledge is the contributions to a knowledge economy (Casner-Lotto and Barrington, 2006; Shuaily et al., 2017). However, a knowledge economy is limited to production and efficiency directly correlated to financial capital gain. This curtailed scope impacts how we measure what success is on college campuses. Furthermore, it directly impacts what and how knowledge is produced (Cordova, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 2006; Zumeta et al., 2012). Although HSIs are not immune to these concerns, scholars warn that federal priorities often dictate the distribution of federal funds. As a result, HSIs can further

perpetuate inequities or orient themselves with pluralistic ideals to support diverse learning environments that do not necessarily serve Chicano/Latino students (Garcia, 2017; Engberg, 2007; Hurtado et al., 1998).

A racially diverse student body can contribute to higher education in many essential ways. Some of these attributes include a positive impact on campus racial climate, preparation for a global workforce, and meeting the needs of a growing diverse population. A pluralistic orientation builds on John Dewey's concept of pluralism, the idea of interactions across differences to construct a more expansive environment and community (Moses & Chang, 2006). According to Dewey, a great community, fostered through schooling, leads to an educated democracy in which citizens are cognizant of their actions and impact on the larger community. Engaging in cross-racial interactions that create meaning and understanding is critical in developing a pluralistic society (Engberg, 2007; Engberg & Hurtado, 2011).

Diverse learning environments, enabled through compositional diversity, can be instructive sites to foster community building and cultural competency, positively impacting students' knowledge of diversity (Jayakumar, 2008). Additionally, institutions with racially diverse student bodies can provide students with expertise and capacities for a diverse workforce. Developmentally, college can be opportune time for students to cultivate meaning from diverse interactions and learn from others. Compositional diversity is a requirement for HSI designation. HSIs have the potential to create diverse learning environments that can positively impact student learning and perceptions of a positive campus climate through cross-racial interactions for all minoritized students.

However, a diverse student body does not necessarily produce educational benefits. Instead, the benefits of compositional diversity are conditional on the quality of group interactions (Chang, 2011; Cuellar, 2015; Hurtado & Ruiz Alvarado, 2015). Thus, the emphasis is on quality. It is meaningful cross-racial interactions that produce desired college outcomes such as retention, and cognitive and social development for students. Creating a student-centered environment that values minoritized students, diversity, and multiculturalism contributes to a positive campus racial climate (Delgado-Bernal, 2002; Hurtado et al., 1998, Jayakumar & Museus, 2012; Yosso et al., 2009). In their adapted Model for Diverse Learning Environments (MMDLE), Hurtado and Ruiz Alvarado (2015) find that the campus climate at HSIs is affected by the dimensions at the organizational level, such as structural diversity and historical legacies, as well as the behavioral dimension which includes behavioral factors. Furthermore, they conclude that HSIs can positively influence various aspects of climate, such as a sense of belonging and community, due to their structural diversity. For Chicano/Latinos in particular, this can result in a stronger sense of self and lead them to become agents of social change.

In conclusion, the HSI designation is based on enrollment, not necessarily serving. This section reviewed the federal structures and mechanisms that produce the HSI classification to understand the nuances of the federal HSI identity. Research suggests HSIs can serve as instructive sites to prepare students for a pluralistic society and create diverse learning environments that can lead to desirable college student outcomes. However, the operationalization of HSIs has become one of enrolling rather than serving Chicano/Latino students. Scholars caution on the use and reliance of deficit-

orientated markers of success that maintain HSIs' predominantly white institutional foundations. Instead, we must understand the interrelated context between the institution and the student to recognize its impact on student outcomes. Whether institutions are emerging or presently HSIs, scholars urge institutional leaders to consider a "servingness" ethos through the creation of structures of serving, as outlined in *El Plan*, institutionalizing a meaningful and validating educational experience for Chicano/Latinos.

## Summary

In conclusion, this chapter provided a review of the relevant literature to expand on the significance of this study. Three significant areas were summarized to provide context and inform our understanding of the origins of serving at UC Riverside from the 1960s-1970s and the recent Chicano/Latino undergraduate experience at UCR. First, the historical context in Riverside was outlined with a synopsis of the region's documented Chicano educational disparities. The second central area summarized the historical and sociopolitical context of Chicano/Latinos in higher education specific to the time period of this study, with an emphasis on political mobilization and critical consciousness. Finally, contemporary research and praxis on Chicano/Latino undergraduate student success were reviewed in the third section, concluding with the trajectory of HSIs and the operationalization of "servingness." Next, chapter three will describe this study's Participatory Action Research design and outline the theoretical and conceptual frameworks that inform the study.

**Chapter 3 Research Design**

> We are deeply indebted to those who have come before us in the struggle to recover hidden histories and challenge the distortions about Communities of Color in "official" narratives. Such critical revisionist excavations enable us to see more of ourselves across time and place and offer insight about how we might contribute with our work to change our collective future (Garcia & Yosso, 2020, p. 60)

In this chapter, I share my role, epistemological lens, and outline the research design. I also describe the theoretical and conceptual frameworks as well as the research methods that inform the study. This PAR study aimed to contribute to the body of literature attempting to conceptualize what it means to serve Chicano/Latino students at a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). HSI scholars have concluded that serving is the ability to promote a culture of Chicano/Latino student success that enrolls and validates Chicano/Latino students (Malcom- Piqueux & Bensimon, 2014; Garcia et al., 2019; Garcia, 2020). However, few scholars have attempted to recover the origins of serving Chicano/Latino students and studies rarely situate their analysis of HSI in a sociohistorical context (Cuellar & Johnson- Ahorlu, 2020; Doran, 2015; Doran & Medina, 2017; Garcia & Okhidoi, 2015; Garcia, 2019). Too often the historical contributions and labor of Chicano/Latino activists, who established programs and departments contributing to the recruitment and retention of Chicano/Latinos, are disregarded, erased, co-opted, and challenged (Aguirre, 2005; Garcia & Okhidoi, 2015; Ramirez, 2018).

This PAR study was a critical recovery of history (Fals-Borda, 1991; Garcia & Yosso, 2020) analyzing the oral history of Chicano/Latino staff and faculty of the 1960s -

1970s at UCR, collaboratively with a research team of Chicano/Latino undergraduate students. Critical Race Theory and Chicana Feminist Theory are the theoretical frameworks that guided this study. In addition, I employed *El Plan de Santa Barbara* (CCCHE, 1969) and the Multidimensional Conceptual Framework for Understanding "Servingness" in Hispanic Serving Institutions (Garcia, Nuñez, & Sansone., 2019) as conceptual frameworks that informed my study. Finally, I utilized and discussed the origins of Chicano/Latino student success by recovering the practices and tools used to promote a culture of Chicano/Latino student success and liberation at UC Riverside, originating in the 1960s – 1970s. Although this project has the potential to shift the scholarship of HSIs to one that is more historically grounded, this project is not a generalization of HSIs or HSRIs; it focuses on the origins of serving at a particular HSRI within the growing scholarship of HSIs and "servingness."

## A Chicana Feminist Researcher: Nepantlera y Curandera

My work is situated within a Chicana Feminist epistemology. My personal, professional, academic, and community experiences are all tied together through a narrative of resilience. I operate in the in-between, what Gloria Anzaldúa (1987) calls nepantla. The in-between reflects the multiple roles I occupy within the organization as both an insider and an outsider. This position of fluidity is part of my Participatory Action Research (PAR) research design that challenges us to disrupt the dichotomy of the researcher and the participant. PAR, like Chicana Feminist scholarship, concedes that we can and should be both (Fals-Borda & Rahman, 1991; Delgado Bernal, Huber, & Malagón, 2018). As a nepantlera or as someone who operates in the in-between, my

theoretical and epistemological lens allows me to be a "bridge-builder" who can work "within racist institutions [and] advocate for social transformation" (Delgado Bernal et al., 2018, p. 113). I exist and resist in the in-between as a scholar, practitioner, activist, and mother. These are all part of my identity where I lead with my cultural intuition reflective of my process and community (Delgado Bernal, 1998). I am a scholar-practitioner intending to recover history to fill an essential gap in UCR's HSRI narrative that excludes the Chicano activists of the 1960s-70s. This project sought to re-establish connections between people and their histories. As a curandera historian, I recognize that "storytelling is not neutral" therefore, recovering the origins from the perspective of the Chicano student activists of the 1960s-70s at UCR alongside Chicano/Latino undergraduate co-researchers is my attempt to remedy and heal the past as a means to change our logic of what is possible (Levins Morales, 1998).

Chicana writers embark on a negotiation within traditional methods of scholarship (Mendoza Denton, 2008). My identity as both a Chicana and a scholar "stresses the contradictions" of historical methods of knowledge production while addressing the ways "hidden knowledge" is managed by the subject and retold by the storyteller (Mendoza Denton, 2008, p. 44). I recognize how my identity as a first-generation Chicana influences my interest and the development of my research study. Incorporating my personal history, experience, and values informed my research and research questions. My overall interest is the success and degree attainment of Chicano/Latino students and the critical role higher education, specifically HSIs, has played and can play in supporting the Chicano/Latino community (Shuaily et al., 2017). In my own development, I also

recognized how my position as a student affairs practitioner at the study site gave me a unique understanding and experience of the HSI federal designation.

As the Assistant Director of Chicano Student Programs, one of the initial structures of serving established by UCR Chicano student activists and faculty in 1972, my role provides the programmatic campus-wide response to Chicano/Latino student needs on and off campus. I have the privilege of serving Chicano/Latino students daily, listening to their stories, and supporting them in moments of pain and triumph. There is a level of urgency in my work and scholarship, it is the impetus for this study design, which intentionally and meaningfully included Chicano/Latino students, resulting in a transformational process. This study, like *El Plan* before me, is *una esperanza y dirección* (hope and direction).

**My History and Values**

I arrived at UC Riverside, the first in my family to leave our hometown to pursue a higher education, with a powerful conviction that higher education could be a tool for social justice and economic mobility. Growing up along Imperial Valley, CA's campos (fields), I was surrounded by budding fields but presented with limited educational opportunities. Inspired by family and cultural identity, higher education was my opportunity for a different journey. However, as a first-generation, system-impacted and low socio-economic student, I quickly realized that my conviction alone did not equate to success. During my first week on campus, I joined Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan (MEChA), developing my critical consciousness, leadership identity, and organizing skills. Through MEChA, I found the office of Chicano Student Programs, a

resource center on campus focused on the academic, social, and cultural success of

Chicano/Latino students. In these counterspaces, I was validated and nurtured (Yosso,

2006; Rendon, 2009). I received my bachelor's degree in the spring of 2008. That fall,

UC Riverside was designated as an HSI, the first UC to achieve this designation. Since

this initial designation, five UCs have become HSRIs. Dorrine K. Kondo (1990) positions

her "negotiated understanding" in context with her Japanese relatives and friends formed

a "particular problematic" that animated her research (p. 10). My own negotiated

understanding, as a former UC HSRI undergraduate and now as a graduate student and

student affairs professional for over ten years at UCR, shapes my research. My

positionality then forms my own "particular problematic," I recognize the power in the

underlying construction of the HSI and HSRI identity.

A researcher's ability to reflect on their role in the development and the outcome

of a research study is considered a standard of good qualitative research (Carspecken,

2013; Marecek, 2003). This standard implies that a researcher's reflexive analysis, a

process of reflection that is a purposed account of the researcher's personal history and

values, is included in their research project. A reflexive analysis is purposeful in

understanding how a researcher's values and history may impact the progression and

results of a project (Maracek, 2003). Sofia Villenas (1996) provides lessons from the

field and the implications of upholding the dominant culture and its practices within

qualitative research. She warns that becoming a colonizer is high when promulgating

"othering" tactics and techniques in qualitative research. As a scholar, I problematized

"the researcher" identity. I collected and analyzed data that did not occupy imperialistic

research agendas or produce authoritarian recounts of a marginalized community's phenomena. Instead, I sought to produce a Participatory Action Research dissertation study, reflexive of my identities and positionalities, to co-create shared knowledge and power. PAR provides me with the tools to refrain from neutrality to address inequities and provide solutions alongside the community, the experts.

**My Role as a PAR Researcher**

The role of a PAR researcher is to engage initially in self-reflection and, ultimately, self-determination that challenges widely accepted traditional research methods. Paulo Freire (2006) defines this process of unlearning as the process of desocialization. Ira Shor (1993) states that this process challenges "learned anti-intellectualism" and contests the myths and values learned in mass culture (p. 31). This process of initial self-reflection and building self-awareness is part of the remaking of knowledge and served as a necessary step in this co-constructed PAR study. Briefly, I address a limitation in the literature that defines the development of a PAR researcher.

Various PAR scholars articulate the knowledge development of the masses, beginning with desocialization, is an initial step toward a people's science (Fals- Borda, 1991; Ayala et al., 2018). However, there are implied assumptions of the PAR researcher's ability to be a critical practitioner, an activist, which can support a PAR study as a "weapon against oppression" (Cahil et al., 2008, p. 89). I recognize that this is learned over time, an evolution of consciousness, achieved when one is provided with the tools and the safe space to do so (Alba Acevedo et al., 2001; Rendon, 2009). I acknowledge my position as a PAR researcher in this project; I recognize the privileges

and expectations I hold. This informed the ethics and respect I led with throughout our project in collaboration with the co-researchers. I also recognized that this would take time and care to develop fully. My ultimate interest was a collective transformation that harvests "ways of knowing buried in our hearts" throughout this project (Ayala et al., 2018, pg. 29).

## Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks

The chosen critical paradigm and methodology, Participatory Action Research (PAR) is a historical recovery positioned in a social science frame. This study works between these two tensions to contribute to the potential and responsibility for both reflection and impact that HRSIs have on Chicano/Latino scholars by recovering the origins of Chicano/Latino student success at a top-performing HSRI. The project recovered the practices and tools used to promote a Chicano/Latino student success and liberation culture at UC Riverside, alongside a team of UCR Chicano/Latino co-researchers. This dissertation was guided by Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Chicana Feminist Theory to examine the relationship between race and power to recover the narratives of Chicano student activists and allies of the 1960s-70s at UCR. In addition, I utilized *El Plan de Santa Barbara* (CCCHE, 1969) and the Multidimensional Conceptual Framework for Understanding "Servingness" (Garcia et al., 2019) as conceptual frameworks that informed my study and further defined what it meant to serve Chicano/Latino students in higher education. These theories and conceptual frameworks served as a basis and structure for this research.

**Critical Race Theory**

Originating in the 1970s, CRT was a movement that included legal scholars and activists in response to the need for new scholarship to challenge racism following a stalled momentum of the civil rights era of the 1960s. Rooted in legal discourse, CRT was established to study issues of race and power to understand the construction and preservation of White supremacy (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). Early CRT scholars such as Derrick Bell, Richard Delgado, Mari Matsuda, and Kimberlé Crenshaw established CRT as a critique of race evasiveness to understand the relationship between race and the law (DeCuir-Gunby, Chapman & Schutz, 2019). In addition, CRT scholars challenged the subtler forms of racism that continued despite the post-civil rights era.

As a movement and scholarship, CRT has evolved beyond the legal discipline. In education, CRT was adapted to study issues of race and racism. According to Gloria Ladson-Billings (1998), the CRT framework in education is two-fold; it recognizes that racism exists in education and seeks solutions to address educational inequities rooted in race and racism. When applied to higher education, CRT allows scholars to understand the systemic and perpetuation of dominant racial structures within higher education institutions (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002).

Particularly central to this PAR study is the intellectual foundations of CRT, also intended to "redress historical wrongs" (Delgado & Stefanicic, 2017, p. 5). A revisionist history challenges the majoritarian story to capture the lived experiences of the minority. Tara J. Yosso and colleagues (2009) emphasize that CRT is deliberate in social justice, serving as a framework to understand race as a social construct and the way it "shapes

university structures, practices, and discourses from the perspectives of those injured by and fighting against institutional racism" (p. 663). Daniel Solórzano (1998) identified five themes, or tenets, of CRT in higher education. These tenets have been widely cited in higher education research methods and theoretical frameworks, more specifically in the literature of Chicano/Latino students (e.g., Huber & Cueva, 2012; Pappamihiel & Moreno, 2011; Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001; Yosso, 2006; Yosso et al., 2009). Solórzano (1998) identifies the following five tenets:

1. The centrality and intersectionality of race and racism: CRT scholarship centers on race and considers how multiple identities, such as gender, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, etc., intersect with race (Crenshaw, 1991).

2. The challenge to dominant ideology: CRT de-centers whiteness by challenging the maintenance of White supremacy, which maintains the status quo (e.g., Yosso et al., 2009).

3. The commitment to social justice: Utilizing social justice education, the definitive goal of CRT is eradicating racism (e.g., Ladson-Billings,1998).

4. The centrality of experiential knowledge: The experiences and knowledge of people of color are legitimate and necessary to understanding race and racism in education (e.g., Yosso, 2006).

5. The interdisciplinary perspective: In education, CRT analyzes race and racism in an interdisciplinary and historical context (e.g., Solórzano, 1998).

The tenets, as outlined above, collectively guide CRT in the field of education to center the salience of race and racism in the educational experiences of students of color.

**Chicana Feminist Theory**

Grounded in the knowledge and experiences of Chicanas, Chicana Feminist Theory (CFT) disrupts the legacy of coloniality of the Chicana body and the male dominance within this legacy. Thus, CFT critiques Western/European philosophy and practice that renders the Brown body a colonial object (e.g., Anzaldúa, 2005). In education, CFT interrogates the construction of normality rooted in conquest and white supremacy (e.g., Delgado Bernal, Huber, & Malagón, 2019). Furthermore, CFT expands how scholars can do critical research, by employing a CFT epistemology in various aspects of our scholarly work. As a theoretical tool, Delgado Bernal et al. (2019) identify the following key concepts in CFT:

a) Bodymindspirit: A disruption of colonial research foundations that justify neutrality. Instead, CFT recognizes that the body, mind, and spirit are connected to the research; therefore, our work is not neutral (e.g., Rendon, 2009).

b) Conocimiento (Knowledge): Acknowledges critical consciousness is a process; new knowledge comes from our spiritual, emotional, and physical senses. (e.g. Anzaldúa, 2013).

c) Methodological Nepantla: Embraces the tensions of nepantla or the -between, as well as its contradictions and possibilities in research (e.g., Anzaldúa, 2005).

d) Sitios y Lenguas (Spaces and Discourse): This is a methodological tool where counter-discourse can exist in spaces that cultivate resistance.

These key concepts outline the possibilities of CFT and the call for critical scholars to be nepantlera/o/xs, bridge-builders, who exist and resist in the in-between. However, as some scholars have noted, "transgressing the rules" (hooks, 1994) of the academy and disrupting traditional, widely accepted knowledge production is not for everyone. A scholar must be willing to take risks, navigating the tensions and possibilities with courage (Freire, 2000; Rendon, 2009).

**Multidimensional Conceptual Framework for Understanding Servingness**

The Multidimensional Conceptual Framework for Understanding Servingness in HSIs holistically evaluates the processes and outcomes at HSIs (Garcia et al., 2019). Due to their predominantly white institutional foundations of HSIs, that often remain embedded in mission statements and institutional practices, outcome-driven performance metrics remain deficit-oriented, further legitimizing and upholding whiteness (Bell, 1980; Garcia, 2019; Garcia et al., 2019; Vargas et al., 2020). The Multidimensional Conceptual Framework encompasses thematic metrics that holistically assess if and how HSIs serve Chicano/Latino students.

In their systematic review of the literature, Gina Ann Garcia, and colleagues (2019) conceptualized HSI "servingness" in four major themes: outcomes, experiences, internal organizational dimensions, and external influences (p. 745). The authors recognize that HSIs are complex; therefore, the framework is intended to capture multiple factors used to define "servingness." The first theme is outcomes, it encompass both academic and non-academic outcomes. Experiences constitute the student experiences at HSIs, divided into two categories, validating and racialized experiences within the

71

structures for serving at HSIs. The third theme, internal organizational dimensions, includes decision-making, curriculum, and culturally relevant programming. Finally, external influences comprise local, state, and federal forces that shape the HSI.

**_El Plan_ de Santa Barbara: A Chicano Plan for Higher Education**

_El Plan de Santa Barbara_ (CCCHE, 1969) outlined five steps for institutionalizing the Chicano movement, providing a plan for higher education rooted in a critique of oppression and a desire for social justice. I have illustrated these five steps in a conceptual model represented by the Ollin, a Nahuatl symbol for movement, in Figure 1. I categorize the five steps as four directions guiding the Chicano/Latino plan for higher education. The authors of _El Plan_ demanded that higher education institutions meet the needs of the Chicano/Latino community in the following ways: admissions, recruitment, curriculum, support programs, and the formation of community cultural and social action centers (CCHE, 1969, p. 10). The steps are detailed in Chapter 2; however, I briefly outline them to reintroduce their salience.
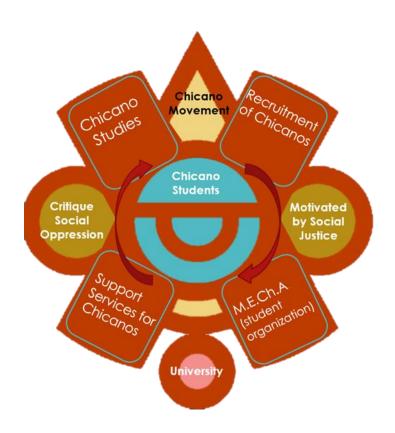
The first step was creating a Chicano Studies program. The authors suggested the formation of an organizing committee that included Chicano faculty, students, and staff. The second step was recruiting and admitting Chicano students, faculty, and staff. Although Chicano student activists were vigorously recruiting Chicano/Latino students at this time, _El Plan_ authors emphasized the Chicano community's recruitment and admissions should be the institution's responsibility. This step challenged the institutional practice of placing the burden of recruitment and admissions on the Chicano community. The third step of _El Plan_ was creating and implementing support programs in colleges

and universities. According to the authors of *El Plan*, these support programs were critical to Chicano student success at colleges and universities. The fourth step, following the completion of the first step, was the implementation of Chicano Studies in colleges and universities. The authors considered Chicano Studies vital to supporting a relevant education for Chicanos and aiding Chicano cultural regeneration (CCCHE, 1969, p. 40). This final step of *El Plan* called for the unification of the various Chicano student organizations at colleges and universities in the late 1960s, leading to the formation of Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan (MEChA) in 1969. The authors were unyielding about the Chicano student activists' role in higher education. Thus, the ultimate step was a call for action where Chicanos influenced and participated in institutional decision-making that would lead to liberation.

In their analysis of the 1968 East Los Angeles high school walkouts, Daniel Solórzano and Dolores Delgado Bernal (2001) concluded that Chicano high school students were engaged in action centered on social justice and social change, identifying the walkouts as Chicano student transformational resistance. In this model, I indicate how Chicano students in colleges and universities were also motivated by social justice and a critique of social oppression. Therefore, implementing *El Plan* was transformational resistance (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001).

**Figure 1.**

 Ollin Model – Transformational Chicano Student Resistance



At the center of *El Plan* are Chicano students. Their critique of oppression and a desire for social justice (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001) produces the four directions. *El Plan* seeks to use universities (or higher education institutions) as tools for change and Chicano liberation (CCHE, 1969). The model illustrates this process as the beacon at the bottom. Within the Ollin model, all four directions must be in association with each other for the university to serve as a tool for change and liberation.

While the HSI scholarship explores the impact and influence of HSIs, it is done so from a predominantly organizational lens and rarely situate their analysis of HSI in a sociohistorical context. This study was intentional, including Chicano/Latino

undergraduate students as co-researchers, together we engaged in a collective project

documenting the history of Chicano/Latino success at UCR. I weave together the

theoretical frameworks of CRT and CFT in education to analyze and understand the

origins of serving at UCR in the 1960s-70s. Furthermore, the Multidimensional

Conceptual Framework for Understanding Servingness and *El Plan de Santa Barbara*

serve as conceptual frameworks that further guide this study. They ground the

experiences of Chicano student activists, faculty, and staff who created a culture of

Chicano/Latino student success at UC Riverside. The theoretical frameworks validate and

establish Chicano/Latino students as creators and holders of knowledge. Moreover, these

frameworks encompass a dimension of activism that is not limited to only understanding

issues of race and power but actively seeks to create change. As methodological tools and

theoretical approaches, they allowed the co-researchers and I to use our experience and

knowledge of HSRIs and the University of California, Riverside, to recover the origins of

serving and redefine our knowledge of serving Chicano/Latino students at HSIs/HSRIs.

## Methodology

HSIs must be ambitious, they should raise the bar of what it means to be an HSI

and, most importantly, serve students. Through a Chicana Feminist epistemological

approach, this research study utilized a Participatory Action Research (PAR) design to

co-create knowledge and action with the population HSIs intend to serve, the

Chicano/Latino students. Therefore, this study addressed a gap in the literature by

centering the student voice and experience in the HSI and HSRI scholarship. Our

collaborative research project utilized *El Plan de Santa Barbara* and the

75

Multidimensional Conceptual Framework for Understanding Servingness as conceptual frameworks to recover and acknowledge the labor of Chicano student activists, faculty, and staff in creating structures for serving at UCR from the 1960s-1970s.

A strategy in the reformation of knowledge is the reclamation of knowledge (Gaventa, 1993). In higher education, the ultimate production of knowledge is the contribution to a knowledge economy (Shuaily et al., 2017). However, a knowledge economy is limited to the production and efficiency directly correlated to financial capital gain. This limited scope impacts how we measure what success is on college campuses. Furthermore, it directly impacts what and how knowledge is produced (Cordova, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 2006; Zumeta, Breneman, Callan & Finney, 2012). Utilizing PAR as a vehicle, a conscious researcher, or an activist researcher provides the tools for co-creating knowledge and consciousness. This strategy in the reformation of knowledge provides implications for change. It is our obligation, as PAR researchers, to aim for "liberating knowledge" and "political power" (Fals-Borda, 1991, p. 4). In doing so, scholars are urged to challenge what is perceived as the truth by challenging the misrepresentations of Communities of Color (Cordova, 2004; Garcia & Yosso, 2022; Morales, 1998;). To this end, it is also necessary to acknowledge the privileges attained because of the laborious sociopolitical movements of the past, which have cultivated a foundation for the development and implementation of HSIs.

<div align="center">

**PAR: Co-creation of Knowledge**

</div>

Originating in the 1970s, PAR was created to address issues of marginalized communities. The intellectual lineage is traced to Action Research, specifically in

psychology, beginning in the 1930s. This method established that research, results, and outcome should lead to action to solve community issues (Ayala et al., 2018; Van der Meulen, 2011; Fals Boarda, 1991). Critiques of action research include the failure to acknowledge the scholars of color who contributed to this methodological development and the practice of gender-evasiveness in its earlier development. Dissatisfied with traditional research methods and the minimal benefits for marginalized communities, scholars founded PAR building on the Action Research methodology and the political movements of this time, specifically in Latin America (Van der Meulen, 2011). Orlando Fals-Borda, a Colombian sociologist, and colleagues from various disciplines such as education, theology, and anthropology established PAR as a community-centered action research methodology with a participatory method and design.

The founding of PAR has an intentional political basis, created to help marginalized communities "exercise their human and social rights" to produce community solutions (Fals-Borda, 1995, p. 2). Notably, this method and design have evolved to make the pursuit of research and action on certain identities and ideologies explicit. For example, Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) centers youth and young adults, and Feminist Anti-Racist Participatory Action Research (FARPAR) disrupts gender and race evasiveness in action research.

Participatory Action Research (PAR) is both a "political statement" and a "theory of knowledge" intended to assert the contributions of people in matters which affect them directly (Klocker, 2012, p. 150). PAR addresses concerns of "equity, self-reliance, and oppression problems" with intentionally political connotations leading to the

development of an activist researcher and a collaborative action (Klocker, 2012, p. 18).

When addressing the research questions, I recognized that power creates and perpetuates

the institutional structure I intended to address. Therefore, the first step in co-creating

knowledge was challenging this power and what we have come to know as accurate or

factual.

## SPAR: A Political Statement

To challenge the hierarchy of power and establish a shared power in the collective

construction of knowledge, this PAR project combined student action research and youth

participatory action research (YPAR) to create a innovative approach, student

participatory action research, or SPAR. Herr and Anderson (2015) define the student

action research approach as an opportunity to establish equal partnerships with the intent

of both improving schools as well as "reforming processes" (p. 30). Furthermore,

Jennifer Ayala and colleagues (2018) define YPAR as engaging young people in research

to develop a critical analysis of "social and economic contexts" and ultimately to develop

critical consciousness/intellectualism that is transformative (p. 56). Together, these

approaches created SPAR, encompassing the non-traditional student voice, where the

student is a legitimate source of knowledge/value without infantilizing their

contributions.

This form of collaborative research developed an equitable relationship

throughout our study, and it was one of the four PAR techniques I operated in this

project. Four PAR techniques were utilized in this design: collective research, a critical

recovery of history, the value and application of the Chicano/Latino student voice, and

the production and diffusion of new knowledge (Fals-Borda, 1991). The co-created

knowledge emphasizes the contributions of Chicano/Latino students, centering their

voice in a federal program intended to serve them directly and recovering the historical

foundations of serving Chicano/Latino students. In addition, the co-researchers ensured

the research and outcomes were "grounded in truths" from their lives as students at UCR

and the lives of our participants who were students or faculty at UCR from the 1960s-70s

(Rivera, Medellin-Paz & Pedraza, 2018, p. 76). In the following paragraphs, I outline

these four techniques in detail.

**Collective Research – ESPARiTU**

Co-researchers engaged in a collective research process, which included weekly

group meetings for ten consecutive months. During the first three months, the students

completed a 10-week course that I created. The course served as training for the co-

researchers. The first goal of the project was to engage in a collective exploration of

shared meaning or common language that responded to the research questions 1) How

did the labor of Chicano student activists, faculty, and staff create the conditions for

higher education as a tool for Chicano/Latino liberation at UC Riverside? 2) What does it

mean to engage Chicano/Latino undergraduate students in a critical recovery of the

origins of serving from the 1960s – 1970s at UC Riverside, an HSRI? The course set to

create shared meaning and develop a collaborative research project with input from the

co-researchers, merging of *encuentros* (Ayala et al., 2018) and the process of collecting

oral histories as testimonios (Sommer & Quinlan, 2002; Delgado Bernal, Burciaga &

Flores Carmona, 2012). *Encuentros* (encounters) are defined as spaces of engagement

and dialogue, while testimonios are a research method used to center the voices of those often silenced; in this case, we did so by collecting the oral histories of our participants and the written and verbal accounts via interviews, journals, and course papers of the co-researchers. The unification of *encuentros* and testimonios with SPAR became the title of this course Encuentros, Student Participatory Action Research and Testimonios (ESPARiTU),[18] a play on the word *espiritu* (spirit) with the co-researcher team serving as the project's spirit guide.

In partnership with the Ethnic Studies Department,[19] I designed a course listed as ETST 198- G, a group internship course that met the UCR undergraduate course load. For some co-researchers enrolled, the course fulfilled their Ethnic Studies course requirement.[20] I developed a course syllabus where course readings, topics, and assignments evolved based on the continual feedback of the co-researchers following the project's PAR methodology. All course and group meetings were recorded and transcribed. Course readings and assignments highlighted issues of college access, opportunity, and student development literature, emphasizing Chicano/Latino experiences and student activism. In addition, course discussions, workshops, and

---

[18] ESPARiTU became our unifying call throughout the project. The co-researchers began referring to the acronym of ESPARiTU as Encuentros Student Participatory Action Research y Tu (and you), adding the "tu" as an invitation for others to consider these recovered stories as opportunities for self-reflection.

[19] I am grateful to the Ethnic Studies Chair, Dr. Jennifer R. Najera, and my chair, Dr. Tara J. Yosso, for their guidance and support in formalizing this course. Dr. Najera served as faculty supervisor, and Dr. Yosso served as faculty advisor throughout the duration of the course.

[20] In doing historical work, the past and present often make connections beyond the scholarship. I would be remiss if I did not draw these conclusions in our analysis. This instance is one of those moments, when my course counted as a fulfillment for the Ethnic Studies undergraduate student requirement at UCR. In this study, we had the honor of interviewing the initial author of the Ethnic Studies requirement, formerly Ethnic and Area Studies requirement, approved by the academic senate in 1974-75 at UCR almost 50 years ago, a moment in time we all acknowledged during our interview.

assignments served as training to prepare students to be co-researchers and conduct archival research and oral history interviews for this dissertation project.

This course offered students (co-researchers) opportunities to engage in all aspects of the research process, including preparation and review of the literature, data collection and analysis, presentation of findings, and critical reflection. Students enrolled in the course were introduced to the participatory action research methodology and engaged in preliminary aspects of the data collection and analysis. The course served as training for co-researchers and established weekly team meetings where the goals, instrumentation, data collection, analysis, and presentation of findings were discussed and planned collectively. Co-researchers were required to complete the 10-week course to continue participating in the remaining months of this project. Due to the tone set at the beginning of this project, we carried the course objectives and structure throughout our project meetings. We continued this format from November 2021 – March 2022 for five months. I will refer to the course and meetings in this format throughout my findings. In the subsequent months, following the completion of the course, April 2022 – July 2022, we conducted our oral histories, completed our transcriptions, and finalized two large-scale group projects, shared in detail in succeeding chapters.

We had three course objectives: 1) To develop social science research skills within an educational context and in relation to the Chicano/Latino population, 2) To examine the theoretical and conceptual frameworks, including research methodology and methods fundamental to this project, and 3) To explore the origins and evolution of UCR's Chicano/Latino student population. Incorporating the co-researchers core values,

identity, experiences, and stories to build our relationship and begin our research processes is a step in "mobilizing the masses" (Fals-Borda, 1991, p. 8). This course was offered only to co-researchers and was closed to non-participants.

**Critical Recovery of History**

To authentically engage in a collective research process, the history of the Chicano/Latino student presence and organizing of the 1960s-1970s was analyzed. This was significant because the current research widely implies the assumption of "servingness" as a new concept. In contrast, scholars such as Doran and Medina (2017) honor the contributions of sociopolitical movements, mainly those of the Chicano movement, which created the conditions for developing much of the success of Chicano/Latino students at HSIs (Matute, 2022). The past holds valuable tools and strategies in the "defense of the interest of exploited classes," which may be applied in the present day (Fals-Borda, 1991, p. 5). The historical recovery and reclamation gave co-researchers a more holistic and liberating lens to understand the origins of serving and their journey in higher education. Through ESPARiTU, the co-researchers and I engaged in recovery and reclamation throughout the course, utilizing the following data sources: a) recovery - critical recovery of history through archival research and b) reclamation – oral histories as testimonios.

In recovery, we challenged the ahistorical assumption of "servingness," or intentionally serving Chicano/Latino students, as a new concept. Co-researchers conducted archival research to map the origins of serving from the 1960s-70s at UCR to unveil any visible and invisible forms of serving and address the systemic erasure and co-

82

optation of Chicano/Latino labor. In reclamation, the testimonio is a method that is both a

creation and a progression often connected to marginalized communities' silences. Co-

researchers collected testimonios, conducting oral history interviews of 2 Chicano/Latino

students and 1 Chicano/Latino faculty from the 1960s - 1970s, documenting their own

stories throughout this process. Oral historians have recognized that oral histories

discussed in Spanish or throughout Latin America are referred to as testimonio (Randall,

1985; Foulis, 2018). In addition, testimonios are often the counterstory of the

majoritarian narrative and in this case the counterstory of Chicano/Latino student success

at UCR (Solórzano & Yosso, 2001). Testimonio, was both a tool and a process that gave

agency to the narrators who shared their oral histories, stories, and experiences with our

team (Delgado Bernal et al., 2012).

***Value and Application of Chicano/Latino Student Voice***

Including the co-researchers' whole selves meant that we collectively valued our

identities, experiences, and testimonios. This set the tone for our research process and

development (Delgado Bernal et al., 2019; Rendon, 2009). In this project, the co-

researchers were the *corazón*[21] (heart) of the project itself and essentially what we relied

on to continue our pursuit of truth, passion, and action. PAR scholars suggest the co-

researcher relationship has the potential to be a sacred space where both dreams and

realities are exchanged and valued (Herr & Anderson, 2015; Berta-Avila et al., 2018).

This process positioned co-researchers as drivers of change in a collective pursuit of

liberating knowledge. Due to this positioning and development throughout the process,

---

[21] Emphasized for effect.

co-researchers developed an "authentic commitment" that led them to become "organic intellectuals" throughout their time in the project (Fals-Borda, 1991, p. 5).

Student Participatory Action Research (SPAR) encompasses the non-traditional student voice and centers the student as a legitimate source of knowledge and value. This approach challenges the hierarchy of power and establishes a shared power in the collective construction of knowledge. Our weekly meetings consisted of course readings, discussions, and reflection. We created an environment that encouraged each of us to immerse ourselves in our course readings and reflect in our weekly journals (Bernal et al., 2019; Rendon, 2009). As the instructor, I also understood the concepts and research methodologies served as an introduction. Therefore, during our course time and subsequent team meetings, co-researchers were provided opportunities to practice these skills. In a continued effort to de-center ahistorical and colonial research methods, our course invited campus and community partners with expertise relevant to the project to join our course discussions as additional training, networking, and mentorship for co-researchers.

### *Production and Diffusion of New Knowledge*

The final technique of the PAR project was the production and diffusion of new knowledge. PAR does not simply encourage transformational change; it demands it (Brown & Rodriguez, 2009; Fals-Borda, 1991). To this end, the production of this new knowledge included a recovery of the origins of serving Chicano/Latino at the UCR from the 1960s-70s while simultaneously understanding the key experiences of Chicano/Latino undergraduate students, the co-researchers, throughout this collaborative research project.

Situating our analysis in a sociohistorical context contributes to the body of literature

attempting to conceptualize what it means to serve Chicano/Latino students at a Hispanic

Serving Institution (HSI). Moreover, our production and diffusion of new knowledge

further disrupted traditional knowledge production by allowing the co-research team to

share our findings in interdisciplinary and accessible ways. The co-researchers shared our

findings through art, music, poetry, printed material, a digital archive, panel

presentations, and visual exhibit. We co-constructed a space where we learned from one

another, producing new knowledge of the origins and evolution of UCR's Chicano/Latino

student presence and activism. We became the caretakers of these stories, archives, and

each other.

## Participants

This study included three distinct participant categories, two of which are the

areas of focus for this study. The first are the co-researchers, listed in the following

paragraphs as student participants and used interchangeably as co-researcher throughout

the study. The second participant category is the Chicano/Latino student activists and

faculty from the 1960s-1970s who were interviewed in this study. They are listed and

referred to as participants in the following paragraphs and throughout the study. Lastly,

during our course and team meetings, several course speakers were invited to contribute

to the co-construction of knowledge and as a tool to share a more community-centered

learning ethos in our course meetings. This practice was intentional, it de-centered

ahistorical and colonial research methods. Course speakers included campus and

community partners with expertise relevant to this project. They led course discussions and provided additional training, networking, and mentorship for co-researchers.

**Co-Researcher Requirements**

The research team included 12 full-time undergraduate students at UC Riverside who self-identified as Chicana/o/x, Latina/o/x, or Hispanic. Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) recommend working in a small, intimate group to further engage youth and young adult co-researchers (Kim, 2019). An intimate group allows co-researchers more opportunities to share personal experiences in group discussions and throughout the duration of the project (Kim, 2019). I initially aimed for a research group of 10 full-time undergraduate students to provide our team a more personal opportunity to connect. However, I received an overwhelmingly positive applicant pool of 77 applications. After interviewing 35 students who met all the minimum qualifications, I invited 12 students to serve as co-researchers for this study. Due to COVID-19, our course meetings shifted. The various campus instruction policies throughout the time period of this study led to a hybrid course format. Most meetings were held on campus and in person; however, there was a period when we were required to meet via Zoom (UCR Campus Return, 2022). The co-researcher and participants' safety and flexibility were prioritized. Zoom instruction and meeting engagement remained an option for co-researcher participation throughout the course. Additionally, this hybrid modality and flexibility was specified in my IRB application.

Applicants must have met specific criteria to be considered for the co-researcher position. First, co-researchers must have been 18 years of age or older and enrolled full-

time at UCR in junior or senior status as of Fall 2021. Applicants who identified as juniors or seniors could contribute to a richer dialogue because they attended an HSI for a year or longer. Transfer students were considered if they transferred from a California Community College designated as an HSI. A second requirement was that co-researchers self-identified as Chicana/o/x, Latina/o/x, or Hispanic, the student perspective this study set to capture. The training, materials, and study were primarily conducted in English; therefore, the third requirement was that co-researchers be fluent in English. Lastly, the intricate study design required a co-researcher commitment of 10 months during the 2021-2022 academic year. Co-researchers were required to enroll in my 4-unit course in Fall 2021 and complete the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI Program) as part of the co-researchers onboarding. A preferred criterion was to have passed an introductory Chicano Studies or Ethnic Studies course equivalent by Fall 2021.

The co-researcher training was designed to build on the foundational scholarship provided in these courses. In addition to the qualifying criteria, co-researchers were required to complete a pre-screening application to determine preliminary eligibility. Applicants who met the requirements, and completed the pre-screening application, were sent the co-researcher informed consent form and invited for a 15-30 interview. The pre-interviews were also analyzed to answer this study's second research question: What does it mean to engage Chicano/Latino undergraduate students in a critical recovery of the origins of serving from the 1960s – 1970s at UC Riverside, an HSRI?

*Recruitment*

A concerted effort was made to be objective in selecting co-researchers who met this study's requirements. I recruited participants utilizing a snowball sample technique, and initial participants suggested or shared the recruitment flyer with other appropriate applicants (Ramirez, 2014). I aimed to include Chicano/Latino undergraduate student researchers with a wide range of class, ability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, and expression; therefore, the only explicit identity required for participants is that they self-identified as Chicana/o/x, Latina/o/x, or Hispanic (Garcia & Cuellar, 2023).

With permission from the office of Chicano Student Programs, the recruitment email with the recruitment flyer attached was disseminated to their list serve. The Chicano Student Programs list includes a database of a subset of students who have self-identified as Chicana/o/x, Latina/o/x, or Hispanic. Chicano Student Programs obtained this database through an information request from UCR Institutional Research. I opted not to request this list-serve from UCR Institutional Research and instead to work with a source trusted by the Chicano/Latino undergraduate students (Comeaux et al., 2021) to disseminate the recruitment flyer and email. As a result, Chicano Student Programs sent the recruitment email and flyer to their list serve on my behalf. Additionally, the recruitment flyer was posted in the office of Chicano Student Programs, which has high Chicana/o/x, Latina/o/x and Hispanic-identified undergraduate student traffic, the participant population of interest in this study. The recruitment flyer was posted Fall 2021 and identified the purpose of the study, the co-researcher requirements and included a QR code to access the co-researcher pre-screening application.

*Co-Researcher Description*

The 12 co-researchers began our course meetings in the Fall 2021 quarter. Our course meetings were held once a week for 3 hours. Following the completion of the course, our research team meetings were 1-2 hours in length and held once a week. I recorded the meetings via Zoom, which generated audio and visual recordings. In addition, I transcribed each course and team meeting, including the pre-screening interview and post-interview, each 30 minutes in length. I chose to study the co-researchers as a collective; however, there were instances when the data collected was individual, such as pre and post-interviews as well as journal entries. Therefore, my analysis consisted of the co-researcher experience in relation to the course and the team.

The co-researchers ages ranged from 19-35 years of age. Although this study did not explore beyond racial/ethnic identity, it is vital to recognize the salient identities the co- researchers listed, which they each drew from in their development, analysis, and presentation of findings (action). Most co-researchers specified they started UCR following high school graduation, 2 were from Riverside County, 5 were from Los Angeles County, and 1 from Imperial County. 4 of the co-researchers identified as transfer students. Of the co-researchers who identified as transfer, 2 were locally transferred from Riverside County, 1 from San Diego County and 1 from Los Angeles County. The team included 2 mother scholars, both identified as primary caregivers with children ranging in ages 3-13.

Additionally, 2 co-researchers identified immigration status as salient, 1 co-researcher self-identified as "DACAmented"[22] and 2 co-researchers indicated they were from a mixed-status household.[23] Of the 12 co-researchers, 2 identified as system-impacted[24] with a close family member incarcerated at the time of our study. Most co-researchers identified as first-generation, or the first in their family to attend a four-year institution, 8 co-researchers identified as the first in their family to graduate high school. The gender identities varied, 2 co-researchers identified as male, 6 identified as female, and 2 identified as gender fluid. I use the co-researchers preferred gender pronouns when describing their experiences individually and collectively. I have assigned a pseudonym to each co-researcher to respect their privacy and maintain anonymity throughout the findings. Table 1 refers to the co-researchers, major, class standing, career aspirations, and self-reported race/ethnicity.

---

[22] DACAmented is term used to identify an undocumented person who has been granted Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) after meeting certain requirements. DACA is a temporary protection, that provides deferred action and eligibility for work authorization with the possibility of renewal for those who qualify every two years (American Immigration Council, 2021). DACA was announced in June 2012 under the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) by the Secretary of Homeland at the time Janet Napolitano who would leave DHS to become the President of the University of California in 2013.

[23] Mixed status household or also known as "mixed status family" refers to having a household or family members with various citizenship statuses (National Immigration Law Center, 2022)

[24] System impacted is defined as a person who is negatively affected by the incarceration or detention of a close relative. System impacted can also refer to someone who has been arrested but not incarcerated (Berkeley Underground Scholars, 2023)

**Table 1**

Co-Researcher Identity

| Name (Pseudonym) | Major | Class Standing | Career Aspiration | Self-reported Race/Ethnicity |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Amaru | Psychology and Education | Senior – 4th Year | Professor in Education | Chicano |
| Sandra | Sociology | Junior – 3rd Year | Professor in Sociology | Latina |
| Josefina | Neuroscience | Senior – 4th Year | Medical Doctor | Chicana |
| Rigo | Political Science | Senior – 4th Year | Lawyer | Latino |
| Eva | Creative Writing | Junior – 2nd Year | Author | Chicana |
| Mia | Public Policy and Education | Senior – 4th Year | Policy Analyst | Latina |
| Ximena | Liberal Studies | Senior – 4th Year | Teacher | Chicana |
| Belen | Anthropology | Senior – 5th Year | Medical Doctor | Chicana |
| Delfina | Sociology | Senior – 4th Year | Professor in Sociology | Latina |
| Alma | Spanish, Education, Psychology | Senior – 5th Year | Teacher | Chicanx |
| Berta | Ethnic Studies and Sustainability Studies | Senior – 5th Year | Environmental Researcher | Chicanx |
| Vera | Sociology | Junior – 3rd Year | Researcher | Chicana |

**Participants: Chicano/Latino Student Activists and Faculty of the 1960s-1970s**

The research team and I collected the testimonios of 3 participants, which

included 2 students who were full-time undergraduate students in the 1960s-1970s at

UCR and 1 faculty member within this time period. Participant requirements included 1)

Self Identify as Chicano, Latino, or Hispanic, the racial and ethnic perspectives we

sought to capture in this study, 2) Fluent in English, 3) Be 18 years or older, and 4)

Commit to a 2-hour group interview led by the co-researchers and I. My networks had

identified an initial participant pool of 5 community members. An email invitation was

sent to all 5 participants, 4 agreed to be interviewed. After planning the interviews and

completing the informed consent, 3 participants completed the interview. The co-

researchers and I recorded, transcribed, and hand-coded the interviews (Herr &

Anderson, 2015). Although participants were allowed to consent to using their legal name

or a pseudonym, all chose to use their legal names. Table 1.2 outlines the participants'

role(s), major or concentration, and their years active at UCR during the 1960s-1970s.

**Table 1.2**

Participant Description

| Participant | Role | Major or Concentration | Years Active at UCR during the 1960s-1970s |
|---|---|---|---|
| Ofelia Valdez Yeager | Undergraduate Student | Spanish | 1965-1969 |
| Alfredo Figueroa | Undergraduate Student | Mexican American Studies[25] | 1971-1975 |
| Dr. Carlos E. Cortés | Acting Assistant Professor | History Department | 1968-1969 |
| | Assistant Professor | History Department | 1969-1972 |
| | Department Chair | Latin American | 1969-1971 |
| | Assistant to the Vice Chancellor | Studies Academic Affairs | 1970-1972 |
| | Associate Professor | History Department | 1972-1976 |
| | Department Chair | Chicano Studies (formerly Mexican American Studies) | 1972 – 1979 |
| | Professor | History Department | 1976-1994 |

[25] Although Mexican American Studies was officially listed on his diploma, Alfredo Figueroa acknowledged that his focus was Chicano Studies however, the Registrar's office at UCR would not officially change it while the department was experiencing a name change. Furthermore, it should be noted that Alfredo Figueroa partook in the advocacy that eventually led to the name change in 1976 (A. Figueroa, personal communication, May 25, 2022).

**Course Speakers: Creating a Knowledge Community**

Course speakers were identified based on their expertise in a core research skill that complemented the curriculum. The course meetings led by a course speakers were outlined in the course syllabus. Most course speakers were pre-determined based on the course content. We invited additional course speakers based on our team's needs; for example, we included a team training on video editing in April. The course speakers were identified from my personal contacts and networks. Course speakers presented in person, with the opportunity to present via Zoom, dependent on the campus policy. Course speakers engaged with the co-researchers throughout this study. Several served as mentors and supported the co-researchers even after their course presentations. Course speaker requirements included: 1) fluent in English, 2) must be 18 years or older, 3) Have expertise on a principal research skill as indicated in the curriculum for this course and 4) Commit to attending a course meeting for 1-2 hours. I recorded and transcribed all presentations as part of the co-researcher data.

A pseudonym was assigned during the analysis and presentation of findings unless the course speaker chose to use their real name. The presentation context and co-researcher engagement during the course presentations were the primary focus of analysis during the course speaker presentations. An analysis of the course speakers' participation was outside this study's scope. I vetted each course speaker and prepared them for the study and course meeting. Throughout our course and research meetings, we had 10 course speakers, ranging from faculty, staff, graduate students, alumni, and community

members. Table 1.3 describes the course speakers, title, and expertise to provide an

overview of the community of experts we learned from throughout our project.

**Table 1.3**

Course Speaker Description[26]

| Participant's Name | Title | Expertise |
|---|---|---|
| Dr. Marcela Ramirez Stapleton | Business Owner and Consultant UCR Alumna | Archival Research, Higher Education, and cultural centers |
| Sandy Enriquez | Special Collections Public Services, Outreach & Community Engagement Librarian | Archival Research, Preservation, and Oral Histories |
| Steven Moreno-Terrill | Adjunct Professor and Public Historian | Archival Research in the Inland Empire, Collective Memory, and Chicanx Studies |
| Sandra Baltazar Martinez | Senior Public Information Officer UCR Alumna | Storytelling and Media Relations |
| Dr. Maria Rodriguez | Faculty | Latino and Latin American Studies |
| Yesenia Ortiz | Graduate Student | Latino and Latin American Studies |
| Gabriela Cruz | Graduate Student | Latino and Latin American Studies |
| Alice Chavez | Staff UCR Alumna | Student Affairs and Chicano/Latino Student Engagement |
| Estella Acuña | Staff UCR Alumna | Student Affairs and Chicano/Latino Student Engagement |
| Viviana Sandoval | Undergraduate Student | Videography and Editing |

---

[26] Course speakers who consented to use their legal name have been listed in this table. Those who did not consent were assigned a pseudonym. To respect privacy, I do not indicate who was assigned a pseudonym. The course speakers are also listed in the order of their participation in the course.

**Study Setting**

Our study took place at UCR, a Hispanic Serving Research Institution within the University of California system. In 2008, UC Riverside was designated an HSI with an enrollment of over 25% Chicano/Latino undergraduate students. Historically, UCR was founded in 1954 as a land-grant institution focused on agricultural science and research on the tribal lands of the Cahuilla, Luiseño, Serrano, and Tongva people. (Regents of the University of California, 2019). UCR ranks among the nation's top 25 comprehensive research universities (Regents of the University of California, 2019). In 2017, the Education Trust named UCR one of the top ten graduating institutions for Chicano/Latino students, with a 73% six-year graduation rate for Chicano/Latino undergraduate students compared to the national average of 54% (Nichols, 2017).

In 2018, The Washington Post featured UCR for its nationally prestigious graduation rates for both African American and Chicano/Latino students (Anderson, 2018). The article acknowledged several important demographic details for Chicano/Latino students at UCR, including 80% identified as first-generation, hundreds identified as undocumented, and two-thirds qualified for Pell Grants (Anderson, 2018; University of California Office of the President, 2019). According to the Washington Post, the support services, positive campus racial climate, institutional commitment to degree attainment, and engaged faculty and administrators contributed to Chicano/Latino student success (Anderson, 2018). The article also briefly acknowledged the Chicano/Latino activism of the 1960s-70s at UCR, concluding that this was foundational to UCR's culture of Chicano/Latino student success (Anderson, 2018). For our research project, we set to answer the following research questions: 1) How did the labor of

Chicano student activists, faculty, and staff create the conditions for higher education as a tool for Chicano/Latino liberation at UC Riverside? 2) What does it mean to engage Chicano/Latino undergraduate students in a critical recovery of the origins of serving from the 1960s-70s at UC Riverside, an HSRI? Nick Anderson (2018) noted, "Latino activism…runs deep here," referring to the structures embedded in the Chicano/Latino student success culture. These are the stories our research set to recover.

### *Course Setting: A Physical and Hybrid Classroom due to COVID-19*

My approach as an instructor was to serve as a bridge. I intended to disrupt the power dynamics of the classroom, beginning with our physical meeting locations. I opted for physical classroom spaces the co-researchers had already determined safe (Morales, 2018; Fine & Torre, 2021). The course and team meetings were held in Chicano Student Programs a cultural center on campus, the Tomás Rivera Library, and the School of Education conference room. I received permission to hold our course meetings and access the archives in Chicano Student Programs, a center trusted by Chicano/Latino students (Rodriguez, Cano Matute, Classen Thrush & Meza, In Progress; Yosso & Benavidez Lopez, 2010). We started our meetings in Chicano Student Programs and utilized their conference room, library, and archives for our initial research.

At the time of our study, there was a surge in positive COVID-19 cases due to the Omicron variant. As a result, additional campus approvals were required to conduct this study in person. I completed a work-specific site plan outlining the justification for a return to campus. Based on the UCR campus return criteria, the plan required that I detail several acceptable models of hybrid instruction and my incorporation of health and safety

throughout the course (UCR Campus Return, 2022). The site plan was submitted and approved by the Environmental Health and Safety division at UCR with a copy sent to UCR's Institutional Review Board. Two course sessions were held at the UCR Tomás Rivera Library Special Collections due to the preservation and special handling necessary of archival documents. Permission was acquired through a reservation with the UC Riverside Tomás Rivera Library and UCR Special Collections staff. Lastly, I requested permission to use the conference room in the School of Education to prepare for our oral history interviews in a larger space that would accommodate all co-researchers, myself and the participants. Permission was granted, and I was given access to the room during our approved course and meeting times. This room was used for the remainder of our course and team meetings.

The study took place in a hybrid format, including both an online platform via Zoom and in-person through meetings held in the Chicano Student Programs and the School of Education conference room. I followed all COVID-19 safety protocols and return-to-campus policies to ensure safety was maintained throughout the duration of the study (UCR Campus Return, 2022). At the time of the study, fall 2021 quarter, I was approved for in-person instruction; our meetings were in-person with strict social distancing. However, at the start of the Winter 2021 quarter, we were required to move our course online. I provided remote instruction during the first two weeks of the Winter 2021 quarter (UCR Campus Return, 2022).

The university policy outlined reasonable accommodations. It highlighted the compassionate clause for immunocompromised individuals or primary caregivers of

young children or immunocompromised individuals, determining requests be made to supervisors or instructors on record (UCR Campus Return, 2022). The campus updates, and policies were provided to the co-researchers throughout the course. I approved all requests for hybrid meetings or course accommodations throughout the duration of the project.

## Data Collection

This PAR study recovered the origins of serving at UCR from the 1960s-70s. The project focused on the origins of serving at a particular HSRI, thus contributing to the definition of what it means to serve Chicano/Latino students by centering this history and origin. The study also layered this project by understanding what it meant to recover the origins with a team of Chicano/Latino undergraduate students, my second research question. Table 2.1 outlines the data collected and analyzed to answer both research questions for this study. To answer the first research question, the co-researchers and I collected multiple sources of evidence to recover the origin story and triangulate the data. Together, the data told the counterstory, which challenged any assumptions or erasure of Chicano/Latino advocacy and presence in the initial building period of "servingness" at UCR.

I used triangulation to confirm my findings, in my presentation of data and analysis. Specifically, I analyzed archival research alongside participant observations, testimonios (oral histories), field notes, and interviews. For the second research question, I collected data to document co-researchers' experiences within the course, including participant observations, research team meetings, interviews, journals, and supplemental

material collected as part of the class. The next section will detail the data collected and

the data analysis.

**Table 2**

Overview of Data Collected and Analyzed

| Research Question | Data Collected | Analysis | Who conducted the analysis |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1) How did the labor of Chicano student activists, faculty, and staff create the conditions for higher education as a tool for Chicano/Latino liberation at UCR? | Archival research Testimonios (oral histories) Collective observations and field notes | Content analysis Narrative analysis | Participatory - With co-researchers |
| 2) What does it mean to engage Chicano/Latino undergraduate students in a critical recovery of the origins of serving from the 1960s – 1970s at UC Riverside, an HSRI? | Interviews: Pre and Post Journals Supplemental Course material Observations and field notes | Content analysis Narrative analysis | Individual - I conducted the analysis |

**Archival and Textual Material**

Our team determined which archival and textual material should be considered

based on the research questions of this study. Preliminarily, I identified textual material

based on the conceptual frameworks guiding this study. This included *El Plan de Santa*

*Barbara*, which outlines recruitment, support services, Chicano Studies, and Chicano

student organizations as necessary to Chicano/Latino student success. Similarly, the

Multidimensional Conceptual Framework for Understanding Servingness outlined

outcomes, experiences, internal organizational dimensions, and external influences as

measures of an institution's commitment to "servingness" (Garcia et al., 2019). Our

initial plan intended to evaluate official documents, including enrollment, recruitment,

support services, academic programs such as Chicano Studies, and graduation data from

the 1960s-1970s. However, the records we found and were given access too were

incomplete. They were not disaggregated, and the details we requested were not

available. Therefore, we had a limited understanding of the accurate enrollment and

graduation data of Chicano/Latino students at UCR during this time period. Our content

analysis relied on reviewing archival documents such as *Nuestra Cosa*, the self-published

Chicano Student Newspaper established in 1972, the Chicano Student Programs archive,

and the limited archives of Chicano student, staff, and faculty from the 1960s in UCR

Special Collections.

By examining these documents, we mapped the origins of serving at UCR and

honored the contributions and labor of the Chicano student activists, faculty, and staff

who contributed to a Chicano/Latino culture of success. Thus, challenging the dominant

ideology, a CRT tenet, by de-entering whiteness and making space for the counterhistory

(Yosso et al., 2009). According to Pete Farruggio (2009), a qualitative content analysis

intends to "make sense of participants' consciousness development" through a focused

review of textual data and written accounts (p.34). This systemic review of texts and

written accounts also allowed us to discover "categories of meaning," which led our team

to review additional sources, such as photographs from this period (Farruggio, 2009, pg.

34).

Our team aimed to preserve these documents and contribute to the existing *Collection on Race, Ethnicity, and Student Activism from the 1960s at UC Riverside* in the Tomás Rivera Special Collections Archive. We achieved this goal and established a new digital collection, the University of California, Riverside Chicana/o/x student newspapers,[27] made available in November 2022. The collection is now an open and accessible source for the community and scholars seeking to learn more about the Chicano/Latino presence, origins, and history at UCR from the perspective of Chicano/Latino students.

**Participant Observations**

Collaborative engagement with the co-researchers in the form of observations was conducted. Information was collected through field notes and recording responses through audio and video using Zoom. Carol Bailey (2007) emphasizes that it is important to consider what is not seen as you watch and record your observations. Conversely, an effective observer sees as much as possible. While in the field, "mapping the scenes" helped establish a basis from which I understood the connections and interactions among people in space (DeWalt et al., 2011). An initial mapping, with the use of archival data specifically, established the people and spaces connected to the origins of serving at UCR within the period of this study. Furthermore, through content analysis, I applied the tenets of Critical Race Theory in education to our initial mapping as I explored the social

---

[27] On December 13, 2022, the UCR Campus Newsletter shared the announcement of this digital collection which highlights our ESPARiTU team's collaboration with the Tomás Rivera Library staff. See UCR Newsletter https://insideucr.ucr.edu/stories/2022/12/13/historic- chicano-student-newspaper-made-available-online

relationships and interactions of Chicano/Latino students and their recognition of "political and economic power" within and outside of UCR shaping Chicano/Latino student experiences in the 1960s-70s (p. 83).

I observed the co-researchers throughout our course and team meeting. This data was analyzed to answer my second research question: What does it mean to engage Chicano/Latino undergraduate students in a critical recovery of the origins of serving, from the 1960s-70s at UC Riverside, an HSRI? Chicana Feminist Theory concepts were utilized to capture if and how the research process impacted the co-researchers' bodymindspirit. In addition, I utilized reflection exercises, journaling, and opportunities for dialogue within our course and throughout our meetings to capture participants' feedback and document their engagement in this project (Herr & Anderson, 2015).

**Interviews: Testimonios of Participants and Co-Researchers**

The study conducted in-depth semi-structured interviews utilizing testimonio as a data collection method. Testimonios has become a powerful tool within the field of education. The testimonio offers a new understanding of how marginalized communities react and resist inequity and systemic racism (Delgado Bernal et al., 2012). The testimonio is a tool that is both a creation and a progression of a story that is often connected to the silences of marginalized communities. Significantly, the testimonio is an intimate exchange rooted in Latin America's storytelling practices, which has been previously deployed by Latina scholars reflecting on their navigation through higher education institutions (e.g. Alba Acevedo et al., 2001). Alejandro Covarrubias and colleagues (2018) define the impact of intersectionality in the testimonio by

compounding the experiences of communities of color, which construct what members consider the policies and practices that institutionalize oppressive ideologies.

The testimonio method honored and validated the marginalized or silenced voices in the academy guided by the theoretical frameworks of this study. Thereby, aligned with Chicana Feminist Theory, what was exchanged in the testimonio was conocimiento (knowledge) gathered from the co-researcher and participant's spiritual, emotional, and physical senses (Delgado et al., 2019). In addition, I conducted pre-and post-interviews of the co-researchers to map their experience throughout the course. Collecting testimonios and incorporating the student's voice is an intentional weaving together of CRT in education and CFT, marking a theoretical and methodological departure from previous studies of HSIs.

**Oral Histories: Testimonios of the Past**

Oral histories are the lived experiences of a narrator or participant that describe time and place as a way to understand the past (Sommer & Qinlan, 2002). Oral histories conducted with a CRT and CFT framework can disrupt traditional and ahistorical ways of knowing (Delgado Bernal, 1998a). For our study, grounded in CRT and CFT, we conducted oral histories through a testimonio approach. Katheryn Blackmer Reyes and Julia Curry Rodriguez (2016) describe oral histories as the "methodological cousin" of the testimonio because an oral history can provide memories of the racialized lived experiences of the narrators (p. 169). Further, they assert that oral histories are testimonios when the oral history interview is "intentional and political" conducted to understand groups affected by racial discrimination (p. 168).

Similarly, Creel (2010) found when oral histories and testimonios are situated in the value of storytelling, this "can help blur this distinct line that exist between the two" (p. 90). Our study used oral history as a testimonio[28] to challenge majoritarian histories, which too often distort Chicano/Latino perspectives or omit them altogether. Tara J. Yosso (2006) emphasizes that counternarrative provides a critical reflection of the lived experiences of Chicana/os. She asserts that oral accounts are valid and valuable data to recover how our communities have been overlooked, even by an institution that now has a vested interest in our presence on campus. We reclaimed a counternarrative and counter history in this SPAR study addressing a gap in the literature by recovering the origins of serving at UCR from the 1960s-70s. Using testimonios as a tool to understand the participant's account of the history. Testimonios recognize the participant's agency when understanding their racialized lived experience and the ways they navigated systemic or institutionalized oppressive structures or practices (p. 165). Using Blackmer Reyes and Curry Rodriguez's claim of oral histories as testimonios, we relied on the oral accounts of the Chicano student activists and faculty who were part of the origins of serving at UCR from the 1960s-1970s.

Centering their oral history as testimonio draws on both PAR and CRT which ask scholars to shift our reliance on distorted majoritarian histories conducted in a manner that is not reciprocal (Dixon et al., 2019). Consistent with this SPAR study, the

---

[28] See examples, Creel, K.J. (2010). "This is our home!" Chicana oral histories: (Story)telling life, love and identity in the Midwest. (Ph.D., University of Minnesota) and Benmayor, R. (2002). Narrating cultural citizenship: Oral histories of first-generation college students of Mexican origin. Social Justice, 29(4), 96-121.

testimonio method to collecting oral histories created a shared power between the co-researchers, the participants and I, developing shared knowledge (Delgado Bernal et al., 2012; Fals-Borda, 1991). We asked open-ended questions derived from our analysis of the archives and literature review, with questions that were relevant to the time period of this study. The oral history as testimonio interview protocol was participatory and collaborative, co-constructed with the co-researchers (Herr & Anderson, 2015), and submitted to IRB as an amendment to this study. Considerations were made to ensure the study was ethical and IRB approval was achieved. Additionally, all informed consent forms were completed and retained for this study and the final approvals for study locations.

**Journaling and Supplemental Course Materials**

Co-researchers were each given a physical journal at the start of the course and asked to consider them as a personal reflective record of their experiences throughout the course and team meetings, observations, and field notes. Eliciting these reflections, I drew on the tenet of CRT in education, asserting the centrality of experiential knowledge (Yosso, 2006). This allowed me later to analyze the co-researchers' experiences in their voice and to log their journey throughout this process. Journal submissions were part of the course's weekly assignments, which included a 1-page typed submission sent to me via email at the end of each week. Throughout our course and team meetings, a time block was reserved at the end to write reflections. Journaling was also utilized as an ongoing form of collective data analysis (Herr & Anderson, 2015) co-researchers had

access to their journals throughout the study. The weekly journal submissions were used to answer the research questions guiding this study.

All supplemental material produced throughout this project from group meetings, training, mentorship, or discussions was collected and used to answer the research questions guiding this study. Within the course, which served as training for the co-researchers, I included several assignments collected as data. This included a mid-term project where co-researchers were paired in teams of two. They interviewed each other, transcribed the interviews, created primary codes from our pre-determined themes in this study, and submitted their transcription and codes as part of their mid-term assignment. I also included a mid-term evaluation to document the course (training) effectiveness and to determine if any changes should be made to our project timeline based on the co-researchers' feedback, consistent with the PAR methodology.

A core element of PAR is an action component; once knowledge is co-constructed, diffusing new knowledge is part of transformational change. A final paper and presentation were assigned to the co-researchers. This encompassed an overview of what had been learned throughout the course, including a summary of preliminary findings from the co-researchers' perspective. Much like this study, Michelle Fine and Maria Elena Torre (2021) found in their Community Participatory Action Research (CPAR) work that the space provided co-researchers and participants an opportunity to feel profoundly and collectively across generations. It was this spirit that ESPARiTU became a "cross-generational freedom dream," centering the counterstories and offering a place to heal and plan a "radical tomorrow" (p. 66). The final paper and the basis of the

co-researchers' presentation detailed an action recommendation for this project which highly encouraged creativity and freedom dreaming.

## Data Analysis: Cycles of Reflection & Action

Throughout this study, I followed a cycle of analysis that was reflective and action-oriented (Torre & Pine, 2021). The team and I understood data analysis as the "bloodline" of our project; it was both "aspirational and accountable" (Fine & Torre, 2021, p. 67). Due to the multifaceted design of this study, I outline the data collected and the analysis used to answer both of my research questions in Table 2.1. The study utilized horizontalization, the process of weighing the data equally (Merriam & Tisdale, 2016). In doing so, our analysis placed equal value on the data to center the lived experiences of the participants and the co-researchers (Ayala, 2018). To honor the stories collected through the archives and the testimonios, I used a multi-method approach using content and narrative analysis to answer the research questions. As a team, we began with content analysis of the textual material and interviews to understand their meaning (Patton, 2002), followed by narrative analysis as a more meaningful way to understand the participant's stories and gain insights to answer our research questions. As we engaged in analysis as a team, we ensured all co-researchers were part of this analysis and review; therefore, democratic validity was achieved (Herr & Anderson, 2015).

### Content & Narrative Analysis

Methodologically, SPAR is participatory and action-oriented; our multi-method approach was collaborative and centered on the participants' racialized lived experiences. Content analysis allowed us to understand meaning and experiences in a systematic way

that we classified into our pre-determined themes, making the data succinct (Schreier, 2012). Using the thematic model of narrative analysis allowed us to focus on the stories shared, keeping the testimonios intact as we categorized them into pre-determined themes (Riessman, 2008; Esin, 2011). This approach allowed us to focus our analysis on what was shared in the story rather than how the story was delivered or how often certain words/phrases were shared.
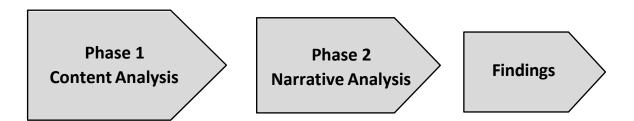
Our team was interested in a specific time period, therefore, the narratives captured a topical story of Chicano activists in 1960s-1970s at UCR and the Chicano/Latino undergraduate students engaged in a research project from 2021-2022 (Esin, 2011). This is an important distinction because the testimonios collected in this study do not encompass all of the participants' or co-researchers' lives. Although I mention important biographical information in my findings to further amplify their testimonios, their entire life story was not collected and is outside this project's scope.

This multi-method approach was divided into two phases, illustrated in Table 2.2, and allowed us to achieve the following: 1) To understand the meaning derived from the data and 2) understand the meanings with and between the testimonios shared. Furthermore, it placed equal value on the textual data and the testimonios (narratives) of the participants in this study. These methods were appropriate because we sought to understand the labor of Chicano activists from the 1960s-1970s. I also sought to understand the meaning of engaging Chicano/Latino undergraduate students in recovering a critical history.

**Table 2.2**

Illustration of Analysis

| Phase 1 Content Analysis | Phase 2 Narrative Analysis | Findings |

In our course, ESPARiTU, we engaged in cycles of action and reflection. We used journaling as a form of ongoing data analysis (Herr & Anderson, 2015). In addition, I cross-checked codes and transcripts with the research team throughout the project to ensure reliability and maintain process and democratic validity (Herr & Anderson, 2015). The codes were informed by themes in the conceptual frameworks *El Plan* (1969) and the Multidimensional Conceptual Framework for Understanding "Servingness" in Hispanic Serving Institutions (Garcia et al., 2019) illustrated by the Ollin model outlined in Chapter 3. Our pre-determined themes were: compositional diversity, culturally relevant curriculum and pedagogy, programs and services, and engagement with the community. Within these themes, we identified codes illustrated in the Ollin model. These themes effectively represented the concepts in the research questions for this study.

The question leading our collective analysis was, 1) How did the labor of Chicano student activists, faculty, and staff create the conditions for higher education as a tool for Chicano/Latino liberation at UC Riverside? Through reflection within ESPARiTU, the co- researchers and I had the opportunity to engage deeply with the data through group

meetings and course discussions (McIntyre, 1997). Once data was collected and transcribed to include audio and field notes, the data was analyzed using content analysis. The transcripts were hand-coded using deductive coding, with pre-determined themes based on the conceptual frameworks leading this study. Secondary coding was applied following emerging codes in the data derived from participant and co-researcher narratives.

 The second research question for this study: 2) What does it mean to engage Chicano/Latino undergraduate students in a critical recovery of the origins of serving from the 1960s – 1970s at UC Riverside, an HSRI? For the second research question, I hand-coded all the interview and meeting transcripts, journals, supplemental course material, and observational field notes based on the pre-determined themes of this study. Again, I probed pre-defined categories and found emerging sub-themes that did not fit within the categories initially set. Instead, these categories further defined the student presence in the Ollin model, which I detail in the co-researcher findings in Chapter 5. I organized the data in folders and subfolders, including the two participant groups the study focused on, the co-researchers and participants (narrators), followed by archival documents and links. Identifiable information in all data collection indicated in this study was replaced with a code or pseudonym for data analysis and presentation. The names of co-researchers and participants were collected in the application, audio recording, and photography for transcription and archival purposes unless otherwise indicated in the consent form. Data collected from the co-researchers was shared with them through member checking to ensure the accuracy of statements and validity.

## Validity

Herr and Anderson (2015) suggest that the validity criteria for a PAR project depend on the action research goal. This study used a transdisciplinary approach and intervention guided by the theoretical and conceptual frameworks. The data collected included reciprocal learning and validation. Our PAR project goals encompassed a recovery of the origins of serving at the UCR from the 1960s-70s while simultaneously understanding the key experiences of Chicano/Latino undergraduate students and co-researchers throughout this collaborative research project.

The course and research meetings, ESPARiTU, outlined process and democratic validity. We set to generate and diffuse new knowledge through consistent reflection and ongoing learning, achieving process validity. A PAR project should engage in a reflective cycle whereby co-researchers are involved in the ongoing learning (Herr & Anderson, 2015). To achieve democratic validity, defined as the degree to which the research is informative for all participants and creates action, the co-researchers were part of the data analysis (Herr & Anderson, 2015). Through our course readings, meetings, development, and data analysis, our collective understanding of our team's contributions and vulnerabilities as well as our collective goals and plans of action, were established. We had weekly meetings to check in with each other throughout the project. We established and maintained trust, accountability, and validity through our course.

Triangulation of multiple data sources, including archival research, participant observations, testimonios (oral histories), field notes and interviews, was used to confirm my findings in the presentation of data and analysis. Atkinson and Delamont (2005)

define triangulation as a standard of a good qualitative study through a researcher's use of

multiple methods and multiple data sources to provide valid and corroborated data. In

addition, triangulation provides a holistic representation of the research that recognizes

"multiple social orders and principles of structuring" (p. 832). Lastly, accounting for

yourself as a researcher is considered a standard of validity and an indication of a good

qualitative study (Marecek, 2003). A reflexive analysis is a process of reflection that

accounts for the researcher's personal history and values and how they have influenced a

research project. In this chapter, I have indicated my purpose, presence, and role in this

PAR project. As a reflexive scholar, I accounted for myself in the data presentation and

analysis. Moreover, I shared my intentionality and presence in this study with my co-

researchers and participants.

## Addressing Challenges

The goal of PAR is community transformation, to co-create a pathway towards

liberation through collective knowledge and power (Akom, 2011). PAR challenges this

traditional relationship and limits the project's dependency on academic research.

Instead, it intends to help people develop consciousness (Gaventa, 1993). In doing so, the

research centers the people as the experts in the co-creation of knowledge. As a result, the

project is an "authentic commitment" to the people because it is created by the people

(Fals-Borda & Rahman, 1991, p. 7). However, arriving at this co-creation of knowledge

is a process, and like any process, there may be challenges and limitations throughout.

The challenges I will address in this section include power, research skills, and

challenging the status quo. Although I acknowledge there may be various other

challenges encountered throughout this process, I have intentionally chosen to focus on these three as they address key concepts in our research inquiry of the origins of serving at UCR.

**Developing People's Power**

It is of immense importance that the collective comes together through a shared purpose to achieve a collective pursuit (Fals-Borda, 1991). Thus, co-constructing shared solutions that address our research questions: 1) How did the labor of Chicano student activists, faculty, and staff create the conditions for higher education as a tool for Chicano/Latino liberation at UC Riverside? 2) What does it mean to engage Chicano/Latino undergraduate students in a critical recovery of the origins of serving, from the 1960s – 1970s at UC Riverside, an HSRI? Our SPAR project included 12 Chicano/Latino self-identified undergraduate co-researchers at UCR, an HSRI, and I.

Disrupting the power hierarchy must begin with mutual respect, trust, and shared power. Gonzalez (2018) illustrates the positive impact of co-researchers when there is "genuine trust and care" within the group. In his PAR project, he found that the relationships established came from a significant and personal understanding of the work they were creating together (Gonzalez, 2018, p. 185). Similarly, I organized the decision-making processes in the project by ensuring all research members had an equal voice in the decision with multiple opportunities to participate, such as meetings, group projects, and journaling. This allowed for the process and project to be collaborative, democratic, and transparent. Establishing this at the beginning required a clear articulation of the process as well as immediately ensuring the integrity and value of their voice,

knowledge, and experiences. Lastly, accountability helped us all maintain integrity

throughout this process. Therefore, in our initial course meeting, we established

community principles detailed in Chapter 5. These principles ensured that our meetings

remained respectful, productive, and equal.

**Developing a People's Science**

A people's science, the development of knowledge that comes from the people

more concretely from marginalized (oppressed) groups begins with what Fals-Borda

(1991) considers a sociopolitical thought process. Building one's consciousness is both a

privilege and a critical step in co-creating knowledge. This development is a

revolutionary act that begins with the individual and follows the collective group. This

process is the decolonizing/desocializing of the mind to develop liberation through social

justice. Fals-Borda (1991) found when people learn to "know and recognize themselves,"

this is the creation of a people's power (p. 7). I recognized the co-researchers had their

own experiences within higher education and curriculum, some may or may not have

been exposed to Chicano/Latino histories. Therefore, we began our ESPARiTU course

with engaging activities that provided an introduction and understanding of the historical

and systemic institutional structures of serving at UCR and Chicano/Latino history in

Riverside, CA. We also had opportunities for discussion and collective reflection, which

served as a check-in to support the collective development of our team.

It was essential to ensure the co-researchers knew their contributions mattered.

We had several opportunities to share throughout our course and research meetings

(Rendon, 2009). The inductive building of a knowledge base begins by creating a

formation for directing knowledge to and with the community (Cordova, 2005). Our

discussions provided co-researchers with a common ground or a base, which established

bonds of shared experiences and understanding in the group. Borrowing from Gonzalez

(2018), when his co-research team had this intimate opportunity to grow and learn

together through critical multicultural curriculum, they "were able to see historical and

contemporary similarities between themselves and their peers" (p. 185). The team was

able to see and name their oppression and as a result, begin to deconstruct it and

ultimately challenge it.

**A Threat to the Privileged**

When challenging oppressors or systems of oppression, or both, it creates a threat

to the privileged. This is aligned with CRT tenet two, a challenge to dominant ideology

by de-centering whiteness and the maintenance of white supremacy (Yosso et al., 2009).

Since PAR's goal is one of liberating knowledge and political power, it is a 'threat' to

those who benefit from the oppression of others as it seeks to challenge what is

considered legitimate knowledge and disrupt the status quo (Brown & Rodriguez, 2009;

Fals-Borda, 1991). This study centralizes the 1960s -1970s because this period

encapsulates the origins of serving at UC Riverside, recovering a historic moment, the

creation of foundational programs, initiatives, departments, and leaders that birthed/built

a culture of Chicano/Latino success. This study contributes to the body of literature

attempting to conceptualize what it means to serve Chicano/Latino students at a Hispanic

Serving Institution (HSI). The study challenged the status quo in two ways: 1) it

recognized Chicano student activists and allies as instrumental to this origin, and 2) it

involved Chicano/Latino undergraduate students in defining what "servingness" means to them at an HSRI. Therefore, this may result in scrutiny to hold UCR, an HSRI, accountable for the erasure of these critical contributions that, throughout history, have created the conditions for UCR to become a top-performing HSRI. As well as an examination of the present-day operationalization of "servingness."

The project was multifaceted to understand the origins of serving and the labor of Chicano student activists, faculty, and staff of the 1960s-1970s. Chapter 4 will summarize our findings from the archival research and oral histories as testimonios. Unique to this SPAR study is the weaving of the co-researchers' reflections from their journals and course meetings at the beginning of Chapter 4 to further elaborate our analysis. In Chapter 5, I share what it meant to do this work alongside them, narrating their journey of transformation. Finally, I conclude with Chapter 6, sharing the limitations and implications.

**Chapter 4**
**A Critical Recovery of History**

> The process of decolonization is not to recover the silenced voices by using hegemonic categories of analysis but to change the methodological tools and categories to reclaim those neglected voices (Elenes, 2011, p. 60)

As a critical researcher, I intentionally use the pronoun "we"" throughout this chapter. Although I am writing this dissertation, the analysis for this chapter was conducted by our research team. Our collective analysis is referenced when I refer to "we," thus, purposefully decentering myself. In this chapter, I begin by bringing the reader through the co-researcher's process of recovering the archives, the first phase of our analysis, to demonstrate how central the transformation process was for the co-researchers throughout this study. This is followed by a weaving of the archival research and testimonios from our participants to recover the counterstory, a counterhistory.

I was first introduced to archiving as decolonial praxis (Elenes, 2011; Garcia, 2019b); the process of dismantling colonial power merged with a reflective approach of taking action in Dr. Tara J. Yosso's qualitative research methodology course. She urged us to dismantle inaccurate and ahistorical perceived realities of minoritized communities. Instead, she encouraged us to find the hidden histories, the stories that are either forgotten or intentionally left out (Garcia & Yosso, 2020). I conducted my first oral history interview with Dr. Carlos E. Cortés, Edward A. Dickson Emeritus Professor of History at UCR in this course. Through his testimonio, I learned of his over 50-year career at UCR and about the genesis of the Chicano movement on campus. He shared so much promise

and care, that I left wanting to learn more. It was with that same promise and care that I embarked on this research project.

In traditional educational research, historical research methods are seldom utilized (Aguilar, 2013). Moreover, doctoral programs do not always include historical research methods in our training. Through the courses with Dr. Yosso, I learned how to apply a history lens and recognized how integral historical research methods are. My dissertation project is interdisciplinary, connecting Chicana/o Studies, Education and History guided by theoretical frameworks centering race, overtly challenging white supremacy. My conceptual frameworks encompass a Chicano manifesto for higher education written by Chicano students in 1969 and a conceptual framework developed to understand servingness written 50 years later, in 2019. This was by design; it was intentional.

Mapping the Chicano/Latino origins and evolution at UCR began by learning who the activists of the 1960s-70s were and recovering their story, thus honoring their labor. To achieve this, the co-researchers and I conducted archival research followed by oral history interviews that captured the testimonios of Chicano students and faculty at UCR in the 1960s – 1970s. Our initial archival research and analysis aided in our overall understanding of the UCR Chicano/Latino origin story. This helped us finalize our oral history interview protocol (Yow, 2005). We accessed institutional archives, departmental archives and newspapers for this study. The archives were our initial primary sources for the course. Our archival analysis began our critical recovery and provided a timeline paralleling the testimonios we collected. The next sections include the co-researchers' archival research and collective analysis process, their voices. The chapter concludes

with a summary of our findings, our critical recovery of history. We weave the archives and oral accounts to tell the origin story. The archives and testimonios complement and speak to one another, addressing the silence and producing the counterstory (Solórzano & Yosso, 2001; Yosso, 2006).

## Preparing Our Team: A Process of Unlearning

We started our research course, ESPARiTU, with the first PAR technique of this study, collective research. We established shared meaning and common language, recognizing that knowledge is co-constructed. Through our review of the readings in ESPARiTU, we began to understand our own positionality and scholar/researcher lens. We consider our epistemologies and how we came to our conocimiento (Delgado Bernal et al., 2019). Our project set to extend and, in this case, build from the stories we knew existed. The first step, however, was finding the stories and sharing them. Of the 12 co-researchers, half had indicated in their application and pre-interview that they had conducted research as an undergraduate student. Of those who indicated they had conducted research, 2 of the 6 stated that they had conducted research in their Community College,[29] not at UCR. Additionally, most of the co-researchers were not familiar with historical research methods, only 3 had heard of or were familiar with archives or oral histories.

We set the tone in the first course meetings, reviewed the readings, and completed our first journal entries. We invited course speaker Dr. Marcela Ramirez-Stapleton, a

---

[29] One of the co-researcher requirements was to be a either a junior or senior in the Fall of 2021, if the student was a transfer student to UCR during this time period they must have attended a California Community College designated as a Hispanic Serving Institution.

120

UCR alumna to share her experience as a Queer Chicana scholar in the archives. Her presentation gave us insight into the limited yet powerful archives in UCR. She described historical research as a practice of "nourishing your soul," and inviting the bodymindspirit to your work (M. Ramirez Stapleton, personal communication, November 30, 2021). Her shirt endorsed this and resonated with many of the co-researchers, it stated, "Never learn your ancestral ways from those who benefit from your ancestors' pain" (Nalgona Positivity Pride Shop, May 5, 2021, https://www.nalgonapositivitypride.com/).[30] She referred to this assertion throughout her dissertation project, which shared the counterstories of staff in cultural centers at UCR[31] and encouraged us to consider it. During our first meeting, the co-researchers read and discussed the seminal pieces by Gloria Anzaldúa[32] and Aurora Levins Morales.[33] The concepts and processes of self-reflection and the possibilities of learning the origins, our origins, of Chicano/Latino presence and evolution at UCR is something the co-researchers awaited. Before we could continue, we had to recognize how each of us was situated and connected to the work, thus establishing a shared goal and plan to *nourish our soul*.[34]

---

[30] Nalgona Positivity Pride is a body-positive organization, centering community and discussing issues of eating disorders within the BIPOC community. The founder, Gloria Lucas is a native of Riverside, CA, whose work in the community is fostered through a Xicana feminism.

[31] See Ramirez, M. (2018). Schoolhouse of resistance: Critical counterstories of grassroots organizers and campus change agents in California cultural centers (Doctoral dissertation, UC Riverside).

[32] Anzaldúa, G. (1987). *How to tame a wild tongue*. n.a.

[33] Morales, A. L. (1998). The historian as curandera. *Women in Culture: An Intersectional Anthology for Gender and Women's Studies*, 134-47.

[34] Italicized for emphases, this is connected to the theoretical frameworks of this study, Chicana Feminist Theory seeks to understand using our mind, body and spirit therefore nourishing our soul encompasses the senses, our institution and asks of us to consider our work in the highest regards.

**Bringing our wholeness to the work: Establishing a Shared Goal**

In those first weeks, we established trust guided by our own stories and reflections. We did this through our readings, course discussions, and archival research to "make absences visible" (Morales, 1998). It was a very vulnerable process, but it was concurrently one of empowerment. We established and valued our wholeness as we got to know each other we forged our research team identity, goals, and mission (Rendon, 2009). The following excerpts indicate these initial stages as told by the co-researchers starting with a compelling poem[35] Alma wrote in their first journal entry. Alma shares why they chose to be a part of this research project and their purpose for doing this work, sharing what this study means to them:

> Con pasos y escalones (With steps and stairs), some higher than others,
> some in moments when I was carrying more weight on me,
> but it has been:
> A PROCESS

> When I applied to this research study, I knew I would share a vulnerable space with other
> community members where the stories, voces, y vidas de nosotres se compartirian, como
> el pan en casa (our voices and lives would be shared like bread at home) <3

> My "WHY" is centered en MUCHOS LUGARES (Many places)
> . . .
> my "WHY"
> is rooted in love
> familia (family)
> sisterhood
> lucha (struggle)
> sudor (sweat)

---

[35] This is an excerpt from Alma's poem, where they share their "why" narrating their own experiences and understanding their why is part of their purpose and what has grounded them. I have removed identifiable information they included in this excerpt to protect their identity. Also, I maintained their formatting, punctuation to respect their artistic style and intended publication. I translated the poem, but maintained their chosen use of Spanglish.

calor (heat)
maiz (corn)
comida ancestral (ancestral food)
educación (education)
RESISTENCIA (resistance)

my "WHY"
is rooted in ME
porque donde sea que mi camino me lleve (because wherever my journey takes me),
I keep carrying my WHY with me

Berta reflects on this initial preparation period in her journal entry later in the course. She states how she came to understand the project's overall purpose was centered in love and wholeness:

> Going back to the very beginning of this project we talked about how historians are curanderas, and how healing/love and respecting one another is central to the work we do. We are guided by our love and desire to validate the lived and embodied experiences of our community. I feel that without these methodologies centered in love and wholeness we wouldn't even be ESPARiTU. As scholars, we can continue to incorporate these principles in ESPARiTU and other research projects by keeping love and healing for ourselves and others at the center of all this work. The love behind this project is what makes its connections so special, and its direct connection to its effect on us and our loved ones (Week 7 Journal Entry, February 4, 2022).

Belen shared how she found it challenging to sit with the truth and the process of unlearning in preparation for the project, and she also supported the methods we would be using in this study:

> The first reading about our origins in the Historian as Curandera was difficult to read because I was having to unlearn all the colonialized ideas and beliefs, I was taught growing up in school. I enjoyed reading the piece, but it was hard to read the truth that was coming out before my eyes. While I know that the truth needs to be heard, I am finding it hard to sit with it when all this time I have been fed lies about who Amerikkka[36] really is. The part about testimonios touched a part of my heart because I am living proof of it. I am witnessing it with my family, ancestors, and the generations to come. I have lived testimonials. I have seen them in flesh (Week 1 Journal Entry, November 19, 2021).

Ximena also reflected on the process of unlearning in these initial weeks in ESPARiTU. She felt validated. I was most struck with how Ximena and her peers gravitated to the work. She wrote:

> Today I feel heard, validated, seen. For so many years of my life I feel that I have been instilled *calladita te vez mas bonita*.[37] Although this has been a "cultural" thing that has been drilled in my heart [...] Now that I have been fortunate enough to have this co- researcher position, I am opening my mind, body, and soul to

---

[36] Belen chose the term Amerikkka with three k's to reference the racism in this country, the spelling is a reference to the existence of the Ku Klux Klan a white supremacist and terrorist organization with a violent history that remains active in the United States.

[37] This translates to, you are prettier when you are quiet. Ximena included this common gendered saying, often said to women and girls, to challenge silencing tactics used within the Chicano/Latino culture and home or family dynamics.

becoming more and more critically conscious. Gloria Anzaldúa's reading was a complete revolt against *calladita te vez mas bonita*. This reading opened my voice. I had no idea such a powerful and valuable piece of literature existed before I became a student at UCR. I was "sheltered." I believe that Gloria Anzaldúa's work was a piece of literature that I have lived through. Reading Anzaldúa's, *How to Tame a Wild Tongue* I feel empowered to shout from the mountain tops that I am a proud ORGULLOSA Chicana. I am here in this journey of self-love and self-acceptance, and I will not let a "dominant narrative" tell me otherwise (Week 1 Journal Entry, November 16, 2021).

Another co-researcher reflected on Anzaldúa's *How to Tame a Wild Tongue* in relation to power and legitimization during our class discussion:

Also, thinking of how tongues are tamed reminded me of my dad who immigrated to the US with limited English. His intelligence has always been mocked by institutions that don't care for and delegitimize Spanish. Reading Anzaldua's piece reminded me that all forms of speaking, knowledge, and translating is valid, and its systems of power/domination that limit us from being compassionate and understanding why not all people speak the same tongues. (Berta, personal communication, November 18, 2021)

Several co-researchers connected their personal experiences of family, schooling and navigating obstacles in their educational journeys. Many shared the pain they experienced in schools as young children or witnessing injustices towards family. The co-researchers were emotional in their recollections, and it was a reminder that ESPARiTU meetings

125

were a safe, courageous, and transformative counterspace (Yosso et al., 2009; Morales, 2017). Herr and Anderson (2015) recognize PAR can lead to group discussions that are either "empowering or painful" in this study; as highlighted in the excerpts above, our discussions were both (p. 129). Several co-researchers contextualized the readings and this research project to further understand their own lived experiences in relation to the historical and present-day inequities for Chicanos (Elenes, 2011; Morales, 1998).

A part of the development of PAR participants is learning how to "recognize themselves as a means of creating people power" (Ayala et al., 2018, p. 7). For this study, recognizing themselves in connection to history, we understood how the past holds valuable tools and strategies which may be applied in the present day (Fals-Borda, 1991). I witnessed the co- researchers understand their past through their testimonios, and we began to see the distortions of minoritized communities within majoritarian histories (Garcia & Yosso, 2020). I was reminded of the tensions of our academic training and treatment that have normalized this distortion for many of us. Dolores Delgado Bernal shares that this is often a struggle of collision when we reach this point in our scholarship "Our struggle to legitimize the stories of our theoretical mothers and grandmothers collides with our academic grooming" (2006, pg. 65). The process of unlearning was intense and impactful, the archives grounded us during this initial stage of conocimiento, as we established shared meanings, and began to co-construct knowledge in preparation for the oral histories.

We reviewed documents from the UCR *Collection on Race, Ethnicity & Student Activism* prior to our physical visit to the archives. We reviewed the material from the

126

United Mexican- American Students (UMAS) a UCR branch of the national student organization. My preliminary research reviewed this collection, and I was familiar with its content. The collection contains archives of UCR from the late 1960s. My systematic review of the literature for this project highlighted UMAS as an integral college/university organization in the Chicano movement. In their book, *Making Aztlan: Ideology and Culture of the Chicana and Chicano Movement, 1966 – 1977*, Juan Gómez-Quiñones and Irene Vásquez emphasize that the student movement grew substantially in 1968-1969, and Riverside-San Bernardino was considered one of the major places of strong student activism (2014). Of the 84 documents in the digital collection, 9 items contained information about UMAS de UCR from 1968-1969. One of the documents reviewed was a flyer sponsored by UMAS de UCR and the Associated Students at UCR (ASUCR) inviting students to a lecture on Mexican American Liberation featuring Chicano historian Juan Gómez- Quiñones professor at San Diego State University at the time[38] (UMAS de UCR flyer, January 13, 1969).

We were "explicitly seeking out" these stories to make their presence known (Morales, 1998). Despite its limited material, what we did find was telling of the resolute presence of Chicano leaders at this time. Their activism ranged from efforts of recruitment, retention, cultural validation on campus, and advocacy. We understood that archives are not neutral (Vogt, Gardner & Haeffele, 2012). The archives are constructed,

---

[38] Dr. Juan Gómez-Quiñones (QPD), was a renowned Chicano historian and activist. He was an alumnus of the University of California system, receiving his Bachelor's, Master's and Ph.D. at UCLA where he would teach for the remainder of his career, which expanded to a 50-year legacy. He was on the editorial board of *El Plan de Santa Barbara: A Chicano plan for higher education* (CCCHE, 1969), a conceptual framework used in this study (See, https://chavez.ucla.edu/2020/11/23/remembering-professor-juan-gomez-quinones/)

and what is missing is often the under-told stories of minoritized communities (Morales, 1998; Garcia & Yosso, 2020). Consequently, archives often uphold white supremacist structures and must actively seek to change this (Farmer, 2018). In problematizing Anzaldúa's text, we discussed "the tradition of silence," the silencing or taming our tongues by criticizing our language and expression (p. 34). We related the tradition of silence in the archives and majoritarian history. Our class discussions led us to wonder: How many of our ancestors, elders, or Chicano/Latino students at UCR had their tongues cut out before they had a chance to share their stories (Anzaldúa, 1987)? (Class discussion, November 12, 2021). Taking our cues from Chicana feminist authors, Anzaldúa (1987) and Morales (1998), we made our way to the archives to find our stories, "to touch, see, and feel what our people wrote...to invite the Chicano activists of the 60s and 70s into ESPARiTU" (A. Cano Matute, personal communication, November 12, 2021).

**Visiting the Archives: Being Present with our Past**

We visited the archives as part of a workshop with UCR Special Collections Public Services, Outreach & Community Engagement Librarian Sandy Enriquez, an integral partner throughout this project. Sandy was the second course speaker who joined our class meetings. She and I collaborated on the workshop details and decided to host this course meeting in the Special Collections University Archives (SCUA) on the 4th floor of the Tomás Rivera library. The workshop included an introduction to SCUA, care and handling tips, content and context discussion, and a tour of the SCUA archives. Sandy was aware of the study scope and research questions. She curated a tour of

materials representative of local Chicano/a/x student and community activism from the 1960s-1980s (S. Enriquez, personal communication, December 3, 2021). She put the material in the reading room, where our workshop was held. Due to the material's nature and sensitivity, the items could only be reviewed in this room and could not be checked out.

Our team reviewed printed material, including a first edition of *El Plan de Santa Barbara: A Chicano plan for higher education* (1969). We pointed to UC Riverside's participation in the Chicano Coordinating Committee on Higher Education. We found UMAS de UCR representative Pedro Lopez listed as a contributor to the "Campus Organization" workshop (p. 84) and student Lorenzo Martin Campbell listed as a UC Riverside student, on the "Organizing and Institutionalizing Chicano Programs" workshop (p. 90). Other material included flyers, photographs, and the Chicano student Newspaper *Nuestra Cosa*. We primarily focused on three collections the *Collection on Race, Ethnicity and Student Activism*, the *Nuestra Cosa* student newspapers, and the Chicano Student Programs archives. The archives were one of two methods we used to tell the story.

The material that was available was limited, and some was not categorized at the time of this study. To fully document the origins of serving from the 1960s-1970s at UCR would require time and resources. Additionally, our findings confirm, this also requires collaboration with the period's experts (students, staff, alumni, and faculty) and an institutional financial commitment. However, what we did find, our team categorized . This provided us with enough material to outline the base of the story.

Select documents were analyzed based on the study scope. In our analysis, we identified themes and connections to understand how the labor of Chicano student activists, faculty, and staff created the conditions for higher education as a tool for Chicano/Latino liberation at UCR. Table 3.1 outlines the archival material analyzed. We were concise in analyzing items related to our research question, 1) How did the labor of Chicano student activists, faculty, and staff create the conditions for higher education as a tool for Chicano/Latino liberation at UC Riverside?

**Table 3**

Archive and Textual material analyzed

| Archive or Text Name | Location | Material Included | Material Analyzed |
|---|---|---|---|
| UA 133: Collection on Race, Ethnicity, and Student Activism (0.42 linear feet (1 box) | Tomás Rivera Library<br><br>Online materials available on Calisphere (84 items) | Newspaper clippings, flyers, posters, and letters related to race and ethnicity in the late 1960s | 80 Items reviewed |
| *Nuestra Cosa*: Chicano Student Newspaper | Tomás Rivera Library Chicano Student Programs | Chicano student newspaper | 21 Items reviewed |
| Chicano Student Programs Archive *Archive not cataloged* | Chicano Student Programs, 145 Costo Hall<br><br>Digital collection on Calisphere[39] (94 items) | *Nuestra Cosa:* Chicano Student Newspaper Event Programs Photographs | 21 Items reviewed<br><br>10 Programs Reviewed<br><br>50 Photographs reviewed |
| City of Riverside Latino Historic Context Statement | Howell-Ardila, Debi. "City of Riverside Latino Historic Context Statement." August 2018. (345 Pages) | Context-based summary of Latino-related history in the City of Riverside from the 1840s – 2015 | Not Applicable |
| Riverside Mexican Americans Folder | Riverside Public Library Archives | Newspaper clippings from the Press Enterprise on Mexican Americans in the 1960s-1970s | 10 Clippings reviewed |

[39] The *Nuestra Cosa* collection was digitized due to a collective effort by the ESPARiTU team members in this project, Chicano Student Programs and the UCR Library staff. Collection was published in November 2022

**Understanding Testimonios of the Past**

For this SPAR study, the archives and oral histories were part of a critical recovery of history. They served as an action, an intervention to make absences visible and disrupt the silence. Delgado Bernal (1998a) finds oral histories are a necessity when seeking to understand the lived experiences of those often excluded from history and are a tool in transforming "lived experiences into written history" (p.115). After reviewing the archives, the co-researchers and I prepared the interview protocol with what we had learned (Yow, 2005). I confirmed the narrators, and our team began preliminary research on their backgrounds, explicitly reviewing the years they were active at UCR relative to this study.

We prepared for our oral history as testimonio interviews by interviewing each other. PAR is iterative, and the phases build on one another in a consistent cycle of reflection, learning, and action (Ayala et al., 2014; Torre & Fina, 2021). This activity was insightful and further strengthened our team's research skills. Consistent with our SPAR methodology, this process included all members in the ongoing learning and processes of the study (Herr & Anderson, 2015). As a result, co-researchers understood the method selected for the study. Ximena shared that testimonios are a raw, or transformed, form of oral history:

> Since I heard the word "testimonio" I assumed it was a story that one shared. I
> accepted that definition. However, it is more than a story. The word "testimonio"
> means it is a treasure and an oral history or histories of people who will describe

their personal life. It is a raw form of oral history (personal communication,

January 7, 2022).

Belen's reflection on the oral histories as a method for this project challenges power

dynamics, which many also expressed throughout their journal entries and course

discussions:

The oral history method reminded me about the power of sharing and

documenting what we know so that when we become the ancestors of the new

generations, our memories and stories can long live and serve our communities

(personal communication, January 4, 2022).

Josefina understood the testimonios collected from the participants and those shared

throughout the course as the best way to hear students. In her journal entry below, she

began to write an action proposal that would later be actualized in our *Nuestra Cosa*

Anniversary Zine project, which I detail in Chapter 5:

Students' voices are best heard through testimonios that can be honored and

shared for everyone to read. UCR needs to have student testimonios available for

staff and faculty to read or listen to. I feel like this needs to be a regular thing on

campus, so professors know what their student population needs are (personal

communication, April 29, 2022).

The testimonios also became forms of healing, or *remedios* (remedies)[40] (Morales, 1998;

Delgado Bernal et al., 2016), to tell the personal story when done with intent. Berta

disclosed her distrust of sharing her personal story in academic settings, given her

---

[40] Italicized for emphasis.

experiences of misuse and distortions of her story by UCR staff and faculty. We discussed this at length, recognizing that minoritized communities have shared similar mistrust from academic institutions and scholars who do research on minoritized communities and not with them (Deeb-Sosa, 2019; Freire, 2018; Fine & Torre, 2021). This was a unique and essential distinction of our study. We explicitly decided to research with our community to co-construct knowledge, establish shared power and center their voice. The participants recognized this distinction as well; we asked our participants during their interviews why they chose to share their stories. All said because it was *our team*[41] ESPARiTU, that asked. Each elaborated, but the source of their answer was that they trusted us with their story. The participants knew our study's intent, and they believed in our project. Berta shares:

> With testimonios and oral histories, I feel that connection and community are necessary to validate the experiences and histories they tell. Consent and transparency are central to these processes. When doing community driven organizing, oral histories and testimonios are signs of trust, love, and safety [...] the people who are sharing their experiences, thoughts, and feelings are the ones in control of their narratives. (personal communication, January 7, 2022).

To summarize, our preparation for the critical recovery of history for this SPAR project began by establishing our team and engaging in collective research. This research started with our course meetings, readings, and archival research. This espoused our shared

---

[41] Italicized for emphasis, also demonstrating how others in this case the participants recognized the team and valued our potential contributions to the work. Furthermore, in my own observations, it signaled to me the trust each of the participants had.

meanings and communal goals (Fine and Torre, 2021). Once this was established, we

collected oral histories as testimonios, inviting our narrators to share their testimonios

with us in ESPARiTU,[42] the counterspace we had conscientiously and diligently created.

**Recovering the Stories: Our Collective Analysis**

      The archives and oral accounts are woven together to establish the UCR origins of

serving and detail the labor of Chicano student activists and faculty from the 1960s-

1970s. Together the archives and oral histories tell the counterstory. Our qualitative

content and narrative analysis made sense of the participant's consciousness

development, and we categorized our data through a focused review of the material. We

assigned codes based on our pre-determined themes derived from the conceptual

frameworks of this study and illustrated in the Ollin model outlined in Chapter 3

(Farruggio, 2009, p. 34). This was a purposive sampling; the material chosen was specific

examples related to our study.

      We divided our material into units of coding based on the 4 themes:

compositional diversity, culturally relevant curriculum and pedagogy, programs and

services, and engagement with the community. We analyzed our findings for consistency

and reliability, assessing the quality of our data (Shreier, 2012). Through the archives and

testimonios, we recovered the story and contributions of Chicano activists at UCR within

this time period. We comprehend that gaps may exist given the collections and material

---

[42] At this point in our research team meetings, ESPARiTU was a motto and our spirit guide rooted in love, cariño (care), and possibilities that we infused in our research. The co-researchers and I designed a logo and many of them had included the logo in their email signatures (A. Cano Matute, personal communication, April 20, 2022).

we reviewed. We also recognize that biases exist based on the perspectives of the participants and curators of these collections. However, the three participants are explicitly named in the archives as leaders of this time period. Further, their oral accounts parallel the key findings in the archives.

Chicano student activists and faculty at UCR are featured most prominently in the archives in the years 1968 – 1979, this doesn't signify that activism prior to this period did not exist; however, this period is consistent with the years of significant Chicano activist foundation building at UCR which resembled the strong Chicano student activism across Southern California (Gómez-Quiñones & Vásquez, 2014). Importantly, this demonstrates the 1960s- 1970s, the period of inquiry for this study, is a critical time for Chicano student activists, staff and faculty at UCR. The archives and oral histories illustrate a period of substantial and consistent Chicano student activism. Recovering history is also an act of reclamation by understanding the ways power and knowledge create history. We provide meaning in our construction of a counter-history by centering the voices often silenced, in this case the Chicano activists of this time (Delgado Bernal, 1998a).

### Oral History as Testimonios

The remainder of this chapter will weave the archival research and testimonios from our participants to recover the counterstory based on the central themes of this study. Our findings confirm that the Chicano student activists and faculty at UCR were deliberate and purposeful in implementing the five steps outlined in *El Plan de Santa Barbara: A Chicano plan for higher education* (CCCHE, 1969). These themes included:

compositional diversity, culturally relevant curriculum and pedagogy, programs and services for Chicano/Latinos, and engagement with the Chicano/Latino community. However, their implementation was also an organic reflection of who they were and what was happening in Riverside, CA, at the time. As a result, we found three principal sub-themes that were also salient to the Chicano student activists and faculty at UCR: creating a Chicano community at UCR, building infrastructure, and sustaining the foundation. The findings highlight key moments of Chicano activism at UCR that created the conditions for higher education as a tool for Chicano/Latino liberation; these include creating a Chicano Community at UCR, which served as the driving force that established interventions on and off campus.

Our findings are based on the overarching themes and consistent with the order of events as told by the participants. The commitment of a determined group of Chicano activists at UCR created a nexus from which they could collectively establish a strong presence and institutionalize the Chicano movement at UCR. However, this did not come without sacrifice and challenges. This chapter concludes with an overview of the Chicano activists' efforts to sustain the foundation they built during this time period. In their established Chicano community, they found solace, strategized, and organized to keep moving forward. As a result, what they built in this time period, still stands today. In the following section, I briefly introduce the three participants, sharing how they arrived at UCR followed by our findings.

**Ofelia Valdez-Yeager**

We scheduled three interviews with the participants. Our first interview was with
Ofelia Valdez-Yeager, an undergraduate student from 1965-1969. She graduated with a
Bachelor's degree in Spanish in 1969. She arrived at UCR in 1965 from Montebello,
California, after receiving a scholarship from the Early Academic Outreach Program
(EOP).[43] She was a first-generation student born in Mexico and the eldest of 6 six
children (O. Valdez-Yeager, personal communication, May 11, 2022). She decided to
live in Casa Hispanica during her first year in the Aberdeen-Inverness dormitory to
connect with Spanish-speaking peers. She became involved in tutoring programs and a
leading bilingual and bicultural research project founded at UCR. She later returned to
UCR for her teaching credential in the 1970s.

**Alfredo Figueroa**

Our second interview was with Alfredo Figueroa, an undergraduate student from
1971 – 1975. He initially majored in Political Science and later transitioned to Mexican
American Studies. He arrived at UCR in the summer of 1971 from Blythe, California. He
recounts, "Coming from Blythe, we were not expected to go anywhere" and credits his
parents for organizing college tours for local youth in the community. His parents worked
with the local Mexican American Political Association (MAPA) chapter to fund college
tours for the students of Blythe, exposing him and his peers to higher education (A.

---

[43] Dr. Eugene Cota-Robles directed EOP during this time, whom I referenced as integral in Chapter 1. He
was the first Chicano faculty at UCR, a microbiologist and founding director of EOP which he utilized as a
tool for recruitment and retention of Chicano students. Ofelia would later refer to Dr. Cota-Robles and his
work as invaluable (O. Valdez-Yeager, personal communication, May 11, 2022).

Figueroa, personal communication, May 25, 2022). His older brother was attending UCR at the time and had established a little community of Chicanos from Blythe and local regions who were attending colleges in southern California. Before starting UCR, he participated in the EOP summer program, where he connected with this community and met other Chicano scholars. Alfredo immediately became involved in Chicano activism, joining MEChA, *Nuestra Cosa* editing staff, and Teatro Quinto Sol, a Chicano art and activist organization.

**Dr. Carlos E. Cortés**

Our last participant was Dr. Carlos Cortés, whose presence at UCR has spanned over 50 years. He arrived in 1968 as the acting Assistant Professor in History after completing his doctoral research in Brazil. He played an integral role in creating and implementing Chicano Studies at UCR, serving as one of the founders. Additionally, he developed some of the first Chicano Studies courses and advocated for the creation of Chicano Student Programs in 1972. As I detail throughout this chapter, his presence at UCR and extensive career are critical to the Chicano history at UCR.

Much like Dr. Cortés, Alfredo and Ofelia have each maintained a strong presence at UCR for the past 50 years, respectively, and both credit their commitment to the critical consciousness, identity, and leadership development they established at UCR. I reintroduce Table 1.2 to provide an overview of the participants.

**Table 1.2**

Participant Description (reintroduced)

| Participant | Role | Major/Concentration | Years Active at UCR during the 1960s-1970s |
|---|---|---|---|
| Ofelia Valdez Yeager | Undergraduate Student | Spanish | 1965-1969 |
| Alfredo Figueroa | Undergraduate Student | Mexican American Studies[44] | 1971-1975 |
| Dr. Carlos E. Cortés | Acting Assistant Professor | History Department | 1968-1969 |
| | Assistant Professor | History Department | 1969-1972 |
| | Department Chair | Latin American | 1969-1971 |
| | Assistant to the Vice Chancellor | Studies Academic Affairs | 1970-1972 |
| | Associate Professor | History Department | 1972-1976 |
| | Department Chair | Chicano Studies (formerly Mexican American Studies) | 1972 – 1979 |
| | Professor | History Department | 1976-1994 |

---

[44] Although Mexican American Studies was officially listed on his diploma, Alfredo Figueroa acknowledged that his focus was Chicano Studies however, the Registrar's office at UCR would not officially change it while the department was experiencing a name change. Furthermore, it should be noted that Alfredo Figueroa partook in the advocacy that eventually led to the name change in 1976 (A. Figueroa, personal communication, May 25, 2022).

**Creating a Chicano Community at UCR**

Our archival research and participants confirmed institutional efforts for serving Chicanos during this period were non-existent. Ofelia shares that when she arrived at UCR in 1965, "There was nothing for just Chicano/Latinos" (personal communication, May 11, 2021). Apart from the Early Outreach Program, which I discuss in Chapter 1, no specific services were available for Chicanos. Sharing her first impression of campus, Ofelia felt like UCR was in the "boonies" what she defined as the middle of nowhere. It was a time of construction on the relatively new campus; the Bell Tower was being built in the center of campus, therefore, students had to walk on wood pallets to get around. In addition to feelings of being in the middle of nowhere and having to walk through the mud of an active construction site, Chicanos felt isolated being the only Chicanos on campus "you didn't know that there was a community out here" (O. Valdez-Yeager, personal communication, May 11, 2022).

One program that was mentioned was Casa Hispanica, a cultural living-learning community in the Aberdeen-Inverness dormitory at UCR. It was not exclusively for Chicanos, an article published in *Nuestra Cosa* in 1977, the Chicano self-published student newspaper at UCR, shared the mission of Casa Hispanica was, "a unique cultural-academic program [...] dedicated to the appreciation of the Spanish language and the cultures of Mexico, Mexican-American/Chicano, Latin America and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean Islands and Spain" (*Nuestra Cosa*, November 1977). Ofelia and her roommate, who was also Mexican American, made a conscious choice to live in Casa Hispanica:

141

I lived in Casa Hispanica. That's what it was called at the time,[45] and the reason

that my roommate and I lived there our first year [1965] is because they spoke

Spanish. [...]. She and I would bring menudo on Sundays to have our hallmates

taste it [...] it was like a family. So, I want to say that in lieu of Chicano Studies at

the time, that's what we had (O. Valdez-Yeager, personal communication, May

11, 2022).

The lack of a Chicano presence was significant to Ofelia in those initial years prior to the

creation of formal Chicano programs and services. It was an immediate reality and the

few Chicano students at the time began initiating counterpaces such as in Casa Hispanica

and their Sunday dinners. It was a way to address their isolation and ultimately their

survival:

Getting here, it was noticeable if you looked around, you did not see anybody that

looked like you. It was just before Chicano Studies was created; it was a different

time. If I walked on campus and saw somebody that looked like me, I looked" (O.

Valdez- Yeager, personal communication, May 11, 2022).

By the time Dr. Carlos Cortés arrived at UCR in 1968, he was one of two Chicano

faculty, and it became clear that this had to change. Dr. Cortés acknowledged all the labor

of his colleague Dr. Cota-Robles in creating an initial Chicano community at UCR

through EOP; however, EOP was not exclusively Chicano. Although Dr. Cota-Robles

utilized EOP as tool for change and was strategic in supporting Chicanos the mission of

---

[45] Ofelia is referencing the current cultural living-learning community in the Residence Halls, which was re- established in the fall of 2003 as MUNDO hall located in Pentland Hills Dormitory. At the time of this study, MUNDO hall was being relocated to the Lothian Hall. The mission of the residence hall expanded to include academic development and cultural awareness, see https://csp.ucr.edu/programs/mundo

EOP, supported all low-income and minority students. In 1968, EOP were the only institutional program set-up for minority students. Deciding whether to join Dr. Cota-Robles' efforts was something that weighed heavily on Dr. Cortés. He was a conditional hire and given until the end of 1969 to complete his dissertation or he would be let go for his faculty position. He was hesitant to get involved on campus but ultimately decided to do so. As the only two Chicano faculty at UCR, Dr. Cortés and Dr. Cota-Robles were committed to the success of their students beyond their assigned job duties because it was the right thing to do. When Dr. Cota-Robles reached out to him, Dr. Cortés said:

> I had done all my research and was completing my dissertation. I was teaching a full load and designing all new classes. And now [Dr. Cota-Robles] asks me to get involved in this Educational Opportunity Program? A smart answer would have been no but I said yes (personal communication, June 8, 2022).

Despite his hesitation, he knew the importance of leading and creating a robust community early on. Most significantly, however, he realized what it meant to be only one of two Chicano faculty on campus; his decision to join Dr. Cota-Robles was a conscious one:

> Gene [Eugene Cota Robles] said to me, you are the second professor of Mexican descent on campus. Number two! Before me, he was the only one. Today, you may have two or three Chicanos in one department; I was the second on campus (C. Cortés, personal communication, June 8, 2022).

All participants shared that this early creation of a Chicano community at UCR would fuel a movement and build an infrastructure on campus. Although the community

was small in numbers and they were navigating a sense of belonging during an intense

political climate, there was a level of commitment that was unmatched. It was the

relationships, the *familia* (family), they created at UCR that would carry them through.

The labor of this critical group created and sustained the Chicano movement at UCR in

this early decade. It was how they endured, according to Ofelia, "The way people

survived [at UCR] was based on the relationships that they had" (personal

communication, May 11, 2022). Dr. Cortés shares that there was a sense of belonging

when they were in community, however, they were constantly circling the edge of

belonging when met with institutional barriers and climate:

> [UCR] was a great place to be, however, I started meeting with the Chicano
>
> students and immediately noticed their sense of marginality. They questioned how
>
> well or how much they belonged (personal communication, June 8, 2022).

> Within the Chicano community at UCR, students and faculty felt that they

belonged, however this was not the case in the larger campus community. Students

especially found themselves at the edge of belonging in the institution. Alfredo shares

that the institution was not a welcoming space during his time as a student from 1971-

1975, nor did they try to be one:

> The message was never, hey welcome you are part of us. No, it has always been a
>
> struggle to get things to move in a positive direction (personal communication,
>
> May 25, 2022)

> Instead, the Chicano faculty, staff, and students came together to become the

welcoming space they sought. Consistent with the literature, it was a small but powerful

group of people who established a Chicano community at UCR, a counterspace (Doran & Medina, 2017; Yosso et al., 2009). This small group of Chicano student activists were doing the work of advocacy, recruitment and retention for the entire campus. Of the 100 Chicano students on campus at the time the small group of activists consisted of 20-30 students (C. Cortés, personal communication, June 8, 2022).

Once the *familia* (family) was formed on campus, they did more than survive. Grounded in their critique of social oppression and motivated by social justice (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001), they established people power (Fals Borda, 1991):

> There was a little bit of us, but we began to realize what kind of power we had
>
> and what we could do (A. Figueroa, personal communication, May 25, 2022).

It was these individuals, the Chicano faculty, staff, and students who created change at UCR:

> We had individuals who would take on the University. We would tell campus
>
> administration that we wanted resources to support the community, and we
>
> wanted programs aimed at Chicano students (A. Figueroa, personal
>
> communication, May 25, 2022).

**Establishing a Chicano Identity at UCR**

The racialized experiences of the Chicano leaders at UCR during this time give us a glimpse of their identity formation and the overall race conversations. Each participant defined their identity in the 1960s-1970s. Ofelia was born in Mexico and came to the United States at a young age. She identified as a Mexicana when she came to UCR in 1965. She states, "So as a Mexicana, it was difficult for me to say Chicana. I didn't know

145

what that was" (personal communication, May 11, 2022). She remembers working for the

tutorial program and serving as a tutor in a local middle school in 1969. One of her

students asked her how she identified when she said she was Mexican American:

> He said, No! You're a Chicana! But you know I didn't relate to that. I will never
>
> forget the passion that this little kid...he was always in trouble, but he latched on
>
> to the Chicano thing, so that was positive" (personal communication, May 11,
>
> 2022).

Ofelia's response bears witness to the Chicano identity spreading as a result of the

intense activism of the time, a middle school student in Riverside, CA, was coming to

understand Chicanismo "a composite of politicized identity, ethnic pride, and civil-rights

articulations" (Gómez-Quiñones & Vásquez, 2014, p. 69). However, according to Dr.

Cortés, the students at UCR did not all agree on Chicano:

> There were only about 100 students of Mexican descent on campus. They did not
>
> all identify as Chicano, some of them detested the word[46] (personal
>
> communication, June 8, 2022).

Dr. Cortés reflected on his racialized experience and identity, negotiating his own sense

of belonging as a guero[47] Chicano professor. He had to demonstrate his commitment to

---

[46] In the archives, *Nuestra Cosa* specifically you see Chicano used as the primary identifier starting with the first publication in 1972, prior to this the first self-published Chicano student newspaper *Adelante* also uses Chicano primarily throughout its headlines. The first several issues of Nuestra Cosa, however, reference Mexican American. Based on the comment made by Dr. Cortés, we can infer that Chicano students at UCR where just beginning to understand Chicano and Chicanismo.

[47] Emphasized for effect. Guero is Spanish for white, often a colloquial way of referring to a lighter skinned Chicano. The language of this time differentiated between Guero a term of endearment and Gabacho, used in this context referring to white-settlers or Anglos, See, *Nuestra Cosa*, January 1975.

the Chicano students on several occasions. In class, he shares how he would walk in, and the students were not always sure what to make of his presence:

> They're [Chicano students] sitting in class. I walk in and announce I'm Carlos Cortés. The vibes in the classroom are all over the place. Some students questioned, how can he talk about the Chicano experience with that light skin? And on the other end, there were students who were simply relieved to have a Chicano professor who could teach the class. I got mixed signals (personal communication, June 8, 2022).

He shares that this experience was a process of proving his legitimacy. He did not have the same life experience as the Chicanos in his class or in MECHA, who were predominantly from southern California. Dr. Cortés grew up in Kansas City, Missouri, and attended a segregated elementary and high school. His father was Mexican, and his mother was Austrian Ukrainian.[48] Growing up, there were no other Mexican Americans in his middle-class neighborhood:

> I could not speak from [their] experience and I had to be honest about it. I would tell them, this is me. I can only offer what I am, and I am going to do my best (personal communication, June 8, 2022).

His response details the authenticity of the Chicano community at UCR. Coming to terms with who they were and how they chose to call themselves was an act of self-determination made possible by their surroundings and the support they received. By the

---

[48] Dr. Carlos E. Cortés wrote a memoir detailing his experience growing in in a multicultural home with his parents in Kansas City, Missouri in the 1940s which provides insight to his upbringing and identity development. See, Cortés, C. E. (2017). *Rose Hill: An intermarriage before its time.* Heyday

time Alfredo arrived in 1971, his experience was different. Alfredo came to find his sense

of identity while involved in his community of Blythe, CA, with his family,[49] who were

community organizers. He identified as a Chicano and proudly boasting, "I didn't want to

be a hyphenated American. I wanted to be a first-class Chicano" (personal

communication, May 25, 2022). According to *El Plan de Santa Barbara* (1969),

Chicanismo integrates self-awareness and cultural identity towards a political

consciousness (p. 3). All three participants demonstrated this distinction, one of

politicization and a deep understanding of Chicanos' historical and present racialized

experiences. Furthermore, Chicanismo is an ongoing commitment to social justice.

What was especially salient in the data was the self-identification of Chicano. For

example, Chicano is the primary identifier in Adelante's first self-printed newspaper,

consistent throughout this period (see Figure 2). The paper's purpose, and later included

in the mission of *Nuestra Cosa*, was to inform Chicanos on issues relevant to Chicanos

and fulfill *La Causa*.[50] Also, in this print, the editors take the time to define "Chicano and

La Causa," including an editorial from a recently graduated high school student. Her

article shared her experience taking a summer seminar in Mexican American History in

1969 at UCR with UCR students and thirty teachers from Riverside and San Bernardino.

This immersive seminar was a community learning space where they discussed "[...] the

problems of the Chicano people and their history and culture, which I knew little about

---
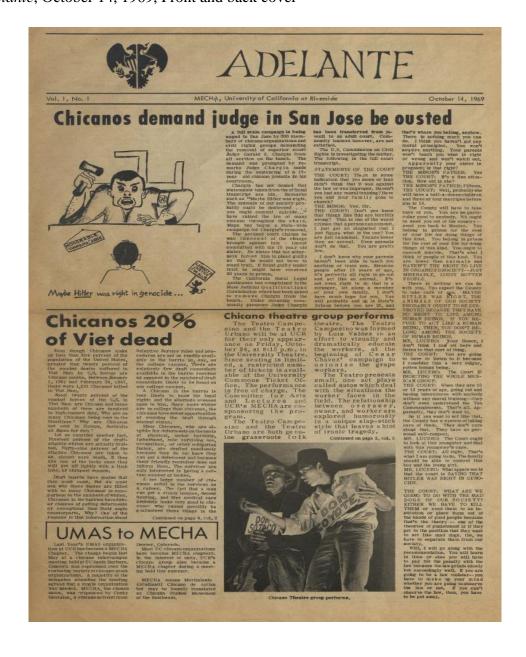
[49] Alfredo Figueroa is named after his Tio Alfredo Acosta Figueroa who has been a Chicano leader, singer, and activists in Blythe, CA, which he refers to as La Cuna de Aztlan or the lost Aztec homeland. He wrote a self- published book, *Ancient Footprints of the Colorado River: La Cuna de Aztlan* (See, Figueroa, A. A. (2002). *Ancient Footprints of the Colorado River: La Cuna de Aztlan*. Aztec Printing Company).
[50] Emphasized for effect. La causa translates to "the cause" or a common purpose and goal, in reference to the Chicano movement and subsequent work towards Chicano liberation.

(p. 4). The article concludes with her self-affirmation "I found the identification I had

lost, and I found my people" (*Adelante*, October 14, 1969).

**Figure 2**

*Adelante*, October 14, 1969, Front and back cover

## ADELANTE

Vol. 1, No. 1          MEChA, University of California at Riverside          October 14, 1969

### Chicanos demand judge in San Jose be ousted

Maybe *Hitler* was right in genocide...

### Chicanos 20% of Viet dead

### UMAS to MECHA

### Chicano theatre group performs

Chicano Theatre group performs.

149

### A search for a heritage

### Chicano and La Causa clarified

#### Chicano money-makers

Rubén Gomez, second from left, with members of Chicano Moneymakers as they work on project.

#### Vietnam deaths . . .

#### Theatre group . . .

## Memorial de agravios para los señores industriales de la guerra

#### FOOD PROGRAM . . .

Note. This image is of the inaugural issue for *Adelante*, the Chicano student newspaper preceding *Nuestra Cosa*, which was founded in 1972. Image is reprinted with permission from UCR Chicano Student Programs.

This critical consciousness was a part of MEChA de UCR's goals, infused in all their work. Defining Chicano in these early issues of the Chicano student newspaper was significant in two ways 1) To empower their community and 2) to steward Chicanismo. An example of the second point is also seen in this first print; that very same article narrating the high school student's experience in the seminar had an editor's introduction (see Figure 2), which states, "These are her impressions of the course and its effects on her self-concept. Perhaps this will silence critics of Chicano Studies" (*Adelante*, October 14, 1969). In defining Chicanos and La Causa, the editors write:

> The restoration of dignity to all Chicanos as human beings is called La Causa. La
> Causa is our fight against bigotry and discrimination in all phases of life-
> education, housing, employment, etc. All Chicanos must become involved in their
> cause. No one else will do the fighting for us (*Adelante*, October 14, 1969).

Chicano activists at UCR were involved in this work because they chose to be. They were committed to fighting for La Causa. These leaders included faculty, staff, and students, each playing an essential role in forming and sustaining the Chicano community, *la familia*,[51] at UCR.

## The Commitment of Chicano Faculty & Staff

The Chicano faculty and staff at UCR were instrumental in creating infrastructural change for Chicano student success within this time period. In addition to

---

[51] Emphasized for effect. la familia, is Spanish for the family. The Chicano faculty and staff refer to themselves as La familia in most of the outreach material. For example, the Chicano Community College Day Transfer Conference, established in 1972 (See, Recruitment of Chicanos paragraph), printed programs from 1972-1982 list Chicano faculty and staff as "La Familia". See, Chicano Student Programs archive.

the faculty course load and research obligations, the Chicano faculty were committed to the Chicano students and community. As demonstrated in the leadership of Dr. Eugene Cota-Robles and Dr. Carlos Cortés in Chapter 1, their initial presence and leadership established institutional structures for Chicano success. Director of the Early Opportunity Program, Dr. Cota-Robles was devoted to the students beyond his administrative role. Alfredo and Ofelia were EOP students and shared how integral this program was in their transition and retention at UCR. Ofelia, who arrived in 1965 because of an EOP scholarship, recounts meeting with Dr. Cota-Robles on several occasions and looking up to him because he was advocating for Chicanos:

> Dr. Eugene Cota-Robles was a professor with a conscious. The story is that [...] that the Latino graduates (students who were graduating at UCR) brought to his attention, you know - look at the list of graduates and there weren't any Latinos and so he made it a point to establish a scholarship along with Dr. Christina S. [non-Chicana], who was a dance professor. They were the two people that I looked up to because they got us here (O. Valdez-Yeager, personal communication, May 11, 2022).

Dr. Cota-Robles made the time to meet with the students. Ofelia shared that he validated her presence when she questioned her campus belonging. Ofelia describes Dr. Cota-Robles' initial efforts in these early years as establishing a nucleus because the administration and campus were unaware of Chicanos' needs. They did not know what to do with the Chicano students on campus:

152

I would want to say that the efforts of Dr. Cota Robles provided the basis, the

nucleus. Why is it that we are now, well it's because a lot of seeds were planted.

He (Dr. Cota Robles) certainly jumps out, he's responsible for me being here (O.

Valdez-Yeager, personal communication, May 11, 2022).
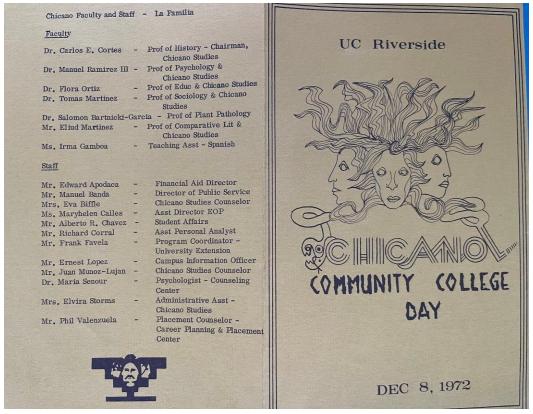
The Chicano faculty planted the seeds, and the number of Chicano faculty grew, up to

eight in 1980 (Chicano Community College Day Program, November 1980), they each

got involved in various ways. Dr. Cortés also credits Dr. Cota-Robles for being his

"Chicano guide" on campus and serving as a friend and mentor, which he found in many

of the Chicano leaders of this time, including Tomás Rivera who would become

Chancellor of UCR in 1979, the first Chicano Chancellor of the UC system (personal

communication, June 8, 2022).

UCR was a campus of many firsts. The faculty were leaders in their field, and

they were part of "La Familia" in the first Chicano Community College Day Conference,

a conference organized by MECHA de UCR and sponsored by Chicano Studies, the

program lists "Chicano Faculty and Staff – La Familia" (See, Figure 3) with 7 Chicano

faculty and 12 Chicano staff. The formation of la familia was strategic:

Chicanos at UCR never isolated themselves, they were also involved in broader

campus issues, building bridges. It was a UCR way of doing things. We hosted

several Ethnic Studies and Chicano Studies conferences on campus. On many

other campuses, Chicanos felt isolated (C. Cortés, personal communication, June

8, 2022).

153

**Figure 3**

"La Familia"



Note. The is a program of the inaugural Chicano Community College Day at UCR. Program is reprinted with permission from UCR Chicano Student Programs.

Throughout the archives, I found professional conferences led by or established by Chicano faculty at UCR that paralleled and complimented the work of the Chicano student activists sat the time. Their efforts were strategic and an example of their commitment to Chicano liberation. An example of such an occurrence was in 1969, UMAS de UCR held a High School conference on February 1, 1969, with Keynote speaker Dr. Eugene Cota-Robles (UMAS High School Conference Program, February 1, 1969). 500 Chicano high school youth attended the conference, featuring workshops on

Chicano ideology, identity, and admissions (Henry Perez, personal communication, May 13, 1969). On March 2, 1969, a month after the Chicano high school students visited UCR, the UCR Department of History, American Historical Association, and Riverside-San Bernardino County Council for Social Studies held a "Black History/Chicano History" conference at UCR. One of the keynotes was Dr. Carlos Cortés who addressed the history of Chicanos and the Schools. Local social science high school teachers attended to develop Ethnic Studies programs and create a plan to "involve educators and students in constructive change through community involvement" (UCR Black History/Chicano History announcement, March 2, 1969, p. 1). This level of engagement from the faculty was unparalleled. Astoundingly Dr. Cortés's name was printed in most programs I found in the Chicano Student Programs archive from 1968-1979. He was listed as a keynote speaker, planning committee member, interviewed for *Nuestra Cosa* articles, and even had a birthday shout-out by the *Nuestra Cosa* staff (April 1974, p. 5). He was invested in the Chicano community at UCR, and so was "La familia."

The participants shared, the Chicano faculty at UCR were committed to Chicano students. Dr. Flora Ortiz,[52] the only Chicana faculty in the School of Education. Dr. Ortiz had a joint appointment in the School of Education and Chicano Studies. In the first issue of *Nuestra Cosa* on December 7, 1972, the authors introduce the Chicano Studies faculty and staff, including Dr. Ortiz. They write, "Since coming to Riverside, Dr. Ortiz has been

---

[52] Dr. Flora Ida Ortiz was a Professor in the UCR School of Education from 1972-2004. Her research focused on women and minoritized communities in school administration and school leadership positions. The Flora Ortiz Endowed Scholarship in the School of Education was established in her honor and awarded to students whose research focuses on Latina educational administrators and Latino student success. See: UCR Foundations, Scholarships, Fellowships & Awards, https://advancementservices.ucr.edu/Scholarship/ScholarshipFundInfo.aspx?fund=600114)

quite active in community affairs" (p. 10). Dr. Ortiz worked closely with Dr. Cortés to

"establish courses and a curriculum for Chicanos" (A. Figueroa, personal

communication, May 25, 2022). The authors of this issue introduced all the Chicano

faculty and staff, which included Dr. Eluid Martinez,[53] professor of Comparative

Literature and Chicano Studies. Dr. Martinez introduced Alfredo to Chicano Literature:

> He was the first one that introduced me to a book that was written by somebody
>
> like me. I went to school, never reading a Chicano novel (A. Figueroa, personal
>
> communication, May 25, 2022).

All the participants shared the courses and academic programs led by Chicano faculty,

which were the first of their kind at UCR. Many also established programs for Chicanos

in the community. The Chicano faculty commitment extended beyond UCR; they were

also involved in community affairs to support Chicanos throughout the educational

pipeline.

**The Chicano Staff**

The Chicano staff within Chicano Studies and other departments are intentionally

and consistently listed in the "La Familia" section of the Chicano Community College

Day program from 1972 (Figure 3) through 1980 (Chicano Student Programs Archive). It

demonstrates the growth of the Chicano institutional leaders and signaled to the Chicano

---

[53] Dr. Eluid Martinez was a Professor of Comparative Literature and Chicano studies who joined the faculty in 1972 at UCR. He would spend his career at UCR until his retirement in 1994. He was chair of Chicano Studies in the 1970s, created the first Chicano literature course, initiated the annual Tomas Rivera Conference series and helped establish UCR's Creative Writing Department. In his honor, the UCR Creative Writing Department established the Eluid Martinez Endowed Scholarship Fund in Creative Writing to support undergraduate students majoring in Creative Writing who demonstrate a commitment to the Chicana/o/x and Latina/o/x communities. See, University of California, Academic Senate, n.d., https://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu/in-memoriam/files/eliud-martinez.html)

students that a robust community was ready to serve them. Ofelia shares how the staff

supported Chicano students beyond academics but emotionally as well (personal

communication, May 11, 2022). Alfredo recognized how critical the Chicano staff and

faculty were in the retention and belonging of Chicano students. He shares that the

Chicano staff and faculty had to be everything to the Chicano students at that time:

> They had to know financial aid, housing, admissions, and they had to know their
>
> community. They had to mothers and fathers supporting all [Chicano students].
>
> No other office outside of the ethnic-related programs did that. [...] You have to
>
> be everything to everybody. And you have to do it well, because our community
>
> knows really quick, whether you're jive turkey or you are real, *ellos se dan cuenta*
>
> (They find out) (personal communication, May 25, 2022).

The sense of being "everything to everybody" was evident when the authors of

*Nuestra Cosa* interviewed the EOP Administrative Assistant Esperanza "Hope" Delgado

in the June 1974[54] issue. She stated her primary responsibility was to help the students

complete forms and answer questions regarding admissions; however, when they asked

what her 'informal' duties were, she replied:

> Usually, people don't go directly to the offices related, they come to our office
>
> and ask questions. My informal duties are basically house cleaning. [...] you

---

[54] This issue was a special Chicana issue of *Nuestra Cosa*, the first of its kind in the Chicano self-published newspaper. The articles focused on Chicanas and issues of importance intersecting race and gender. Furthermore, this was significant because it was a collaboration of MECHA de UCR and a committee of Chicanas from MECHA de UCR following a class they took in Winter 1974 entitled La Chicana. They call on the Chicano community to recognize the contributions of Chicanas to Chicano liberation rendering Chicano liberation incomplete if it does not consider the issues relevant to Chicanas. Although this study did not explore gender explicitly, this is an important observation as identity development evolves in the UCR Chicano community. See *Nuestra Cosa*, June 1974.

would be surprised how many people go in there [EOP office] to ask questions (*Nuestra Cosa*, June 1974, p. 6).

These multiple roles are also listed in the *Nuestra Cosa* feature of the Chicano staff of Chicano Studies in their December 1972 issue, which they wrote in Spanish, and I have translated for this study. They highlight Elvira Hernandez Storms, an administrative assistant, a native Riverside resident from Casa Blanca. In addition to supporting the Chicano Studies Chair, Dr. Carlos E. Cortés at the time, she counseled students, staff, and faculty. In addition, they noted Elvira's involvement on broader campus committees such as the Chancellor's Committee on the Status of Women and served on the Advisory Committee for Chicano Studies (p. 11).

Many staff were involved in Chicano liberation before arriving at UCR. Eva Enriquez Biffle from San Bernardino, CA ran a children's center in Watsonville and was a part of the Latino Project, a cooperative of various Chicano interests prior to her appointment in Chicano Studies. Native of Riverside, Alberto Chavez served the Chicano community since 1967 and was involved in the Community Action Group of Casa Blanca[55] and the Educational Task Force before his appointment to UCR as the Assistant to the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs (*Nuestra Cosa*, December 7, 1972). The authors of *Nuestra Cosa* list Alberto as an ally, working with MECHA de UCR on programs such

---

[55] 48 The Community Action Group of Casa Blanca, known as C.A.G. has a long history of political activism in the Chicano community. Predominantly a Chicano community, the families of Casa Blanca have been involved in political action for decades, pushing from the desegregation of the Casa Blanca school, established in 1913. They have been involved in issues of education, police brutality, elections and safety, See City of Riverside Historic Latino Context Statement, 2018. Throughout the archives I found references to C.A.G. where members of MECHA de UCR and Chicano faculty, such as Dr. Alfredo Mirande (Chicano Studies) participated.

as Chicano Orientation and Community College Day (see, Figure 3). Although his role was non-academic affairs, he "served the Chicano student in everything necessary" (p. 11). All the participants spoke highly of the Chicano staff and faculty and their overall commitment to Chicanos at UCR:

> They could do it all because they had to and because they wanted to. They knew they had to do it for their survival, for their community's survival, for *your*[56] survival (A. Figueroa, personal communication, May 25, 2022).

### The Chicano Student Activists

In 1968 the United Mexican American Students (UMAS) de UCR was founded. Gómez- Quiñones and Vásquez (2014) assert that the UMAS chapter at UCR was vital. Within this year, UMAS, composed of a few students, was committed to Chicano success at UCR. The *City of Riverside Latino Historic Context Statement* recognized UMAS de UCR was involved in local Chicano political actions; however, their primary objective was education at this time, recruiting Chicano high school youth (2018). This addressed the second step of *El Plan*, the recruitment and admissions of Chicanos, and the authors' goal of Chicano community self-determination. We found several archives of programs they created focused on outreach efforts and working with university leaders to create change for Chicanos on campus. These included outreach conferences and advocacy,

---

[56] Emphasized for effect. Alfredo referenced the co-researchers, current Chicano/Latino students at UCR, when making this last statement. He made a distinct and important connection of how far-reaching the Chicano activists' goals were, survival then meant the survival of future generations of Chicano/Latino scholars at UCR. The opportunity to have Alfredo at the table and in conversation with current UCR Chicano/Latino students, the beneficiaries of this goal, was truly memorable.

listing their support and involvement in the Grape Boycott[57] from 1968-1969 (UMAS

Meeting Flyers, 1968-1969). Alfredo recognizes these early Chicano student activists, his

predecessors, which includes our participant Ofelia Valdez Yeager:

> Ofelia and others were here in the late 60s. They were here before us. They
>
> established a lot of different things. Henry Perez[58] was here at that time and
>
> started a group called UMAS, United Mexican American Students, which was the
>
> predecessor of MEChA on our campus. They were much more diplomatic than
>
> some of the stuff that we did. They were working within the system trying to do
>
> things (personal communication, May 25, 2022).

Dr. Cortés recounts his involvement in the creation of UMAS at UCR along with

Dr. Cota- Robles, who again called him to join this effort:

> Over the summer [1968] ... Gene called me again, he said [...] I have Chicano
>
> students who want to start an organization on campus, would you join us to get
>
> started? We met on campus and in our first meeting we establish the United
>
> Mexican American students, there was no MEChA at that point. There was about
>
> a dozen students sitting around disorganized.[59]

---

[57] In 1968 UMAS de UCR was involved in the Grape Boycott and continued their support of the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee, which would become the United Farm Works or UFW in 1970, throughout the years. Following the organizational efforts of Filipino and Chicano farm works in Delano, CA and Coachella, CA respectively, the communities which formed the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee, and the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), came together to call for a larger boycott of California table grapes and the stores which carried non-union grapes in an effort to negotiate fair wages and bargain collectively with employers. See, Farmworker Organizing Flyers, 1968-1969, Calisphere and UMAS Meeting Flyers, 1968 – 1969.

[58] Henry Perez, an undergraduate student, was President of UMAS de UCR in 1968, he served various student leadership positions throughout his tenure at UCR, including serving as the Editor of Nuestra Cosa in 1973-1974, See Chicano Student Programs Archive.

[59] It was important to highlight the collaboration of Chicano faculty, staff and students to build the tools needed to organize. There was a committed Chicano community of leaders helping the students build these

The identity of the student activists of this time would evolve within a year. From the recruitment flyers we found in the archives, ranging from October 1968 – June 1969, UMAS de UCR experiences a shift in identity. The earliest mention of Chicano as an identifier is found on January 16, 1969, the flyer concludes with "See you all there, Chicanos!" (UMAS Meeting Flyer, 1968-1969), followed by April 3, 1969, the sign-off includes "Viva la Causa" and finally a flyer on May 17, 1969, states "Be a part of the Chicano Movement! Viva la Causa" (UMAS Flyers, 1968-1969). A Chicano ideology was included in their advocacy and outreach efforts, later in their conference and program themes. For example, the theme of their high school outreach conference on February 1, 1969, states:

> Today, Chicano High School students all over California are engaged in a life
> struggle for freedom. The purpose of this conference is to motivate you- the high
> school students to continue that struggle, through education. Viva la Revolución
> (UMAS High School Conference Program, February 1, 1969).

This ideological shift was consistent with the Chicano student activism of this time period, where we see a more attuned focus on a critique of social oppression motivated by social justice (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 1998). This shift reverberated across college campuses, which would be the basis of the unification of Chicano student campus organizations. The Chapters UMAS de UCR changed (see Figure 2) to

---

skills, and this was also a reciprocal relationship where the Chicano students' activists were also involved in the development of Chicano faculty and staff. It is unclear prior to the founding of UMAS de UCR whether students involved in UMAS had experience in organizing. In the archives, we begin to see a shift in their organizing and ideology towards a stronger critique of social oppression throughout UMAS de UCR and eventually leading to the founding of MECHA de UCR in 1969.

*Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan* (MEChA) de UCR following the call to unify

Chicano organizations on college campuses outlined in *El Plan de Santa Barbara*

(CCCHE, 1969). The creation of the first Chicano self-published newspaper *Adelante,*

established by MEChA de UCR documents this change in their first publication on

October 14, 1969. UMAS de UCR participated in the "Chicano intercampus meeting at

UC Santa Barbara"[60] in 1969, where most Chicano student organizations agreed to this

unification, including UC Riverside. The UCR chapter stated, "In the interest of unity,

UCR's Chicano group also became a MECHA[61] chapter during a meeting held in this

summer. MECHA means *Movimiento* Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan[62] (*Adelante*, October

14, 1969).

    In a UC MECHA statewide conference held at UCR in 1973, the campuses passed

a resolution on the ideology of UC MECHAs in addition to other vital resolutions such as

political strategy, the political and philosophical function of Chicano Studies, and the

university at the Chicano (*Nuestra Cosa*, December 1973). On the ideology of UC

MECHA, the campuses agreed, "MECHA members see our role as one promoting the

national liberation of our people stemming from the local, regional, to national, to

international (p.3). The ways that each campus implemented and promoted Chicano

---

[60] I include the UC Chicano Conference at UC Santa Barbara of 1969 in the literature review of this study as an example of Chicano student activism and the institutionalization of the Chicano movement in higher education. The conference attendees would draft *El Plan de Santa Barbara: A Chicano plan for higher education*. See, Chapter 2.

[61] The archives list MECHA in all capital letters. The literature lists other capitalizations such as MEChA. For continuity, I will reference the capitalization of the sources I am citing.

[62] Aztlán is a reference to *El Plan Espiritual de Aztlán* (Spiritual Plan of Aztlan) drafted by attendees of the Chicano Youth Liberation Conference of 1968 in Colorado, led by the Crusade for Justice and Corky Gonzales a Chicano activists. This event is also included in my literature review as key events of the Chicano student movement. We can see the connections to the larger Chicano movement and the ways they were actualized at UCR. See, Chapter 2.

liberation is outside this study's scope; however, the next section will share how UCR

MECHA implemented and infused Chicano liberation in their work. Creation of Chicano

student newspaper at UCR

According to MECHA, the purpose of *Adelante* was to "serve the Chicano in the

community and in the school," apprising them of pertinent issues with an overall

commitment to La Causa.[63] The Chicano Student Newspaper, *Nuestra Cosa*, founded in

1972, was considered an "alternative community newspaper" following tensions between

the Chicano student community and the Highlander campus newspaper. It is important to

note prior to *Nuestra Cosa*, there was a concerted group of Chicano journalists in the

Highlander, including the first Chicana editor, Irene Morales[64] (Gallardo), from 1970-

1971. Irene and colleagues "covered campus activities and critical community events

[including] the city-wide Chicano youth student walk- out protest for a better education"

(Chicano Student Programs Homecoming Gala Program, November 17, 2018, p. 5).

MECHA decided to create its own self-published newspaper.

*Adelante* featured articles on politics such as the Vietnam War[65] and its impact on

the Chicano community. Further, the publication date of this first issue was the day

---

[63] Emphasized for effect. La causa translates to the cause in reference to the Chicano movement's common purpose or goal: Chicano liberation.
[64] Irene Morales (Gallardo), class of 1971, was the first Mexican American/Sociology graduate in the UC system. On November 17, 2018, she was recognized at the 5th Annual UCR Chicano Latino Alumni Homecoming Gala, where she received the Chicano Latino Alumni Award for her dedication, support, and commitment to the Chicano Latino community alongside her husband, Danny Morales, also a UCR alumni class of 1977 who graduated with a Master's degree in Political Science. Irene received her Juris Doctorate degree from UCLA Law School and returned to the Riverside and San Bernardino areas to establish important programs such as co-founding the Inland Empire Latino Lawyers Association (See https://iella.org/). Irene and Danny remain active in Riverside and San Bernardino County. See, UCR Chicano Student Programs Archive, UCR Chicano Latino Homecoming Gala Program November 17, 2018.
[65] The authors of *Adelante* highlight the disproportionate number of Chicanos in the front lines of the war. The authors questioned the enlisting of a high number of Chicanos to meet the quotes of recruitment

before the first Chicano moratorium[66] held on October 15, 1969. The authors ask

Chicanos at UCR to honor the Moratorium and not attend their courses, "*Adelante* feels

compelled to support the students and people of the community who are against this

unjust and undeclared war. [...] Our youth are being sent to die senselessly" (*Adelante*,

October 14, 1969). In addition to political pieces, local and national Chicano community

issues, *Adelante* included pieces on Chicano identity and Mexican American studies at

UCR. With the creation of *Nuestra Cosa* in 1972, the Chicano self-published newspaper

included all the key elements of *Adelante* in addition to art, poetry, pictures, and pieces

on Chicano campus life.[67] Consistent in the Chicano student newspaper at UCR was a

political firmness reflective of the times. The authors of *Nuestra Cosa* reported on issues

of great importance to Chicanos within UCR and in the community. Alfredo, a member

of *Nuestra Cosa* and MECHA de UCR states:

> You have to realize that we came at a time when the Chicano movement was
>
> moving forward. The United Farm workers[68] was going on, Reies Lopez

---

officers where "forty-nine percent of the eligible Chicanos are taken to an almost sure death" in comparison to nineteen percent of eligible draftees that are white, See, *Adelante*, October 14, 1969.

[66] The Chicano moratorium was a shift in the Chicano movement primarily because it was organized, strategic and demonstrated the vastness of Chicano activists (Gómez-Quiñones and Vásquez, 2014). The Chicano moratorium would be a turning point for the Chicano movement after the murder of Chicanos following the moratorium protest in March 1970, the most recognized is Chicano journalist for Los Angeles times Ruben Salazar. The march was attended by thirty-thousand persons and "stressed the resistance against the draft, commitment to social justice and Chicana and Chicano rights within the United States" (p. 199). It would ignite the fight against police brutality and the military industrial complex. See, Gómez-Quiñones and Vásquez, 2014.

[67] This observation was consistent with the expansion of the Chicano community at UCR where we began to see more photos with Chicanos smiling and the authors sharing their work and impacts of the programs they were leading.

[68] The United Farm Workers was a farmworkers organization, union and advocacy movement created following years of organizing for farmworker rights from Filipino, Chicano and other minoritized groups. See, UFW History www.ufw.org/research/history

Tijerina[69] was going on to recognize the land grants. We knew why we were here

[at UCR]! I was here to get an education for my community and my family. That's

what it was all about (personal communication, March 25, 2022).

**The UCR Chicano Advisory Committee**

The Chicano community at UCR was intentional, coordinated, and active. They

created a *comunidad* (community) on campus, where the Chicano student activists

planted and harvested seeds. They held each other accountable by creating advisory

committees and including each other in the discussions. They established a central

committee, the Chicano advisory committee, which included Chicano Studies, Chicano

Student Programs (founded in 1972), and Chicano students. The formation of this

committee at UCR was consistent with the first step of *El Plan*, which detailed the

formation of a central organizing committee composed of Chicano faculty, staff, and

students to provide institutional advocacy and challenge the institution's power agents.

Dr. Cortés notes how important these meetings were, which he continued throughout his

time as the Chair of Chicano Studies:

Every Wednesday at noon Chicano Student Programs and Chicano Studies would

have a joint meeting. We would open the meeting to all Chicanos on campus. I

---

[69] In 1969, Reies Lopez Tijerina, came to speak at UCR as part of the Convocation Series on Race
Relations organized by the Student Undergrad Education Committee and Black Student Union with support
from Chancellor Ivan Hideraker, See Reies Tijerina Flyer, 1969. Reies Lopez Tijerina was a Chicano
activists and leader of the Federal Alliance of Land Grants took part in more militant actions calling the
United States government to honor the land rights of Mexicans living in the territories that would become
the United States, following the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo of 1848 signaling the end of the war between
the United States and Mexico, See Oropeza, Lorena. *The King of Adobe: Reies López Tijerina, lost prophet
of the Chicano movement*. UNC Press Books, 2019. For the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, See, National
Archives, Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo www.archives.gov/milestonedocuments/treatyofguadalupehidalgo

wanted to be completely transparent and open. There were a couple of Chicano

Studies faculty that we're not terribly happy with it. They wanted more private

meetings. I said, we will have faculty-only meetings on some things, such as

personnel. For the most part, I want this to be open. I want this to be a Chicano

*familia*. I want it to be the *comunidad* that comes together. We met every

Wednesday during my seven years as chair and we had 20-40 people that would

pack the meeting at noon and talk about things happening all over campus

(personal communication, June 8, 2022).

These meetings were also incorporated in Chicano faculty job talks to reiterate the

meeting's importance and transparency. Dr. Cortés expressed a time when a Chicano

student activist asked a difficult question during one of the job talks. A couple of Chicano

faculty took issue with the students' questioning. However, Dr. Cortés' response

demonstrated the trust and commitment the *comunidad* had in each other:

I'm not about to stop questions. It was not a question I would have asked. It was a

question that was asked by a student and the faculty candidate gave a good

answer. In fact, we ended up hiring him. I told our faculty, if you can't handle the

questions you shouldn't be a Chicano Studies professor (personal communication,

June 8, 2022).

The Chicano Advisory Committee meeting[70] (Figure 4) met in Library South,[71] where the

Chicano offices were located. This was a fundamental physical location for the Chicano

---

[70] Figure 4 includes Dr. Carlos Cortés in the photo behind a mural in one of the Chicano offices.
[71] Renamed the Tomás Rivera Library in 1985, in honor of UCR Chancellor and Chicano literary leader, author and advocate. See, History of Rivera Library at www.library.ucr.edu/libriaries/tomasriveralibrary

community at UCR, which was also part of the community's strategy to centralize their

efforts and continue supporting each other. As a result, the Chicano activist community

was united. Alfredo remembers how significant *comunidad* was in these formative years,

an ethos he would continue in his career:

> I spent my entire life at UCR,[72] and it became my community. I have a sense of
>
> *familia,* and I know that I belong here.There is a real strong *comunidad*, a real
>
> strong effort to make sure that you continue. Not everybody experiences that
>
> (personal communication, May 25, 2022).

**Figure 4**

Chicano Advisory Meeting



---

[72] Alfredo Figueroa continued his commitment to the Chicano community after he graduated UCR, serving as the Chicano Studies Counselor in 1976, in 1981 he served as an Early Outreach Program/Student Affirmative Action (SAA) Recruiter and Counselor. In 1989 he served as the Director of Chicano Student Programs. He continued as Director of Chicano Student Programs for 15 years before becoming the Assistant Dean of Students in 2004 and retiring in 2013. (A. Figueroa, personal communication, May 25, 2022).

Note. The image is of the Chicano Advisory Committee on page 2 of Nuestra Cosa, published November 1975. The image is reprinted with permission from UCR Chicano Student Programs.

## Recruitment of Chicanos: Expanding the Familia

In 1960 the California Master Plan established a three-segmented system composed of community colleges, state universities, and research universities. The Master Plan intended to provide local access for all and utilize higher education as an engine for economic development. The plan established the University of California system as the research segment responsible for knowledge production, accepting the top 12.9% of graduating high school students (St. John et al., 2018). President Lyndon B. Johnson's administration instituted affirmative action policies in the 1960s to expand opportunities for minoritized populations. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibited the discrimination of minoritized populations in several settings, including public schools and public colleges.[73] These policies supported the participation of Chicanos in higher education, specifically the Higher Education Act of 1965, which created financial assistance (Moreno, 1999). In line with the second step in *El Plan*, recruiting Chicanos was one of many priorities for Chicano leaders on UC campuses in 1969 (CCCHE, 1969).

---

[73] In 1978 Regents of the *University of California v. Bakke*, the plaintiff argued that affirmative action policies, namely racial admissions quotas, were discriminatory. The supreme court decision upheld affirmative action but banned admission racial quotas. In 1996, the State of California would once again be the center of attention on affirmative action with the passing of Proposition 209 which banned affirmative action, concluding race, sex, color, ethnicity or national origin can be considered in admissions or hiring practices. See, St. John et al., 2018.

The University of California Chicano Steering Committee (CSC)[74] was established, composed of Chicano administrators, faculty, staff, and students across the UC system. CSC, which included Dr. Cortés and other UCR Chicano leaders, found that Chicanos represented 3% of the overall UC undergraduate population compared to the state population, were Chicanos composed 17.5% in 1974 (*Nuestra Cosa*, November 1974). The CSC would later publish a report in 1975 addressing the discrimination Chicanos faced in the University of California system, including unequal access to the UC. At UCR, the Chicano student activists consistently organized to expand Chicano access to higher education. Dr. Cortés notes, "In the 70s, universities were just beginning to recruit students of color. At UCR, Chicano students helped lead the way. They were organized, active and committed" (personal communication, June 8, 2022).

**Chicano Student-Initiated Outreach efforts**

In 1968 UMAS de UCR created one of the first high school outreach conferences at UCR, which I detail in Chapter 1. They established precedence for recruitment efforts which became the priority of MECHA de UCR, among other issues in the community. However, for the Chicano activists, it was more than recruitment. The workshops included admissions, financial aid information, and special interests workshops focused on Chicano identity, literature, and political issues. Furthermore, the conference included the Chicano community, with speakers from Chicano Studies, EOP, and Chicanos from other departments showing the strength of the *comunidad* at UCR.

---

[74] The Chicano Steering committee was established in the Spring of 1969. They worked with the UC Office of the President to establish a system-wide Chicano Task force. In January 1975 the published a report on the status of Chicanos in the UC system (See, *Report / of the President's Task Force on Chicanos and the University of California.* University of California; 1975).

The Chicano student activists also utilized their outreach efforts to organize with the local community, specifically parents and youth. For example, in 1969, they held their second annual UMAS de UCR high school conference at UCR in February and in May, merely three months later, they co-sponsored the "Action-Chicano-Education" conference at a high school in Indio, CA. The Action-Chicano-Education conference, which featured a keynote by Chancellor Ivan Hinderaker,[75] passed several resolutions, including the implementation of Chicano Studies courses in high schools as well as supporting Chicanos throughout the educational pipeline with the hiring of Chicano staff and the support of Chicano teachers and school board members (Action Chicano Education conference, press release, May 11, 1969).

Recruitment was also discussed at the state-wide level. For example, at a UC MECHA conference held at UC Riverside in October 1973, the students passed a resolution on the "university at the Chicano," calling for a review of the Chicano's role within the UC System. The MEChistas attributed their "failure" to implement *El Plan de Santa Barbara* strategies to their unsuccessful penetration of the UC bureaucracy (*Nuestra Cosa*, December 1973). Although the MECHA chapters were very critical of their progress since the 1969 publication of *El Plan*, their resolutions aimed to revisit and implement these strategies on their campuses. At UCR, the MECHA chapter president Jess Valenzuela makes a statement on their plans:

---

[75] Chancellor Ivan Hinderaker was at UCR from 1964-1979, he was participatory in many of the outreach efforts sponsored by UMAS, he is either a keynote or invited speaker. Based on our review of the archives we surmise this was strategic to ensure an administrator was invested in the community. In our interview with Dr. Cortés, his testimonio names Chancellor Hinderaker as a supporter of Chicanos during this period, one specific example is in the creation of Mexican American studies in 1964.

In a time when the gabacho[76] society is advancing both in technology and education, it is critical that the Chicano have in-put into every segment of the society which rules and molds our lives. It is imperative that WE as Chicanos in education seek to understand the institutions which serve to advance society. [...] MECHA strives to set an example of what the Chicano student can do for the Chicano student. [...] We must look at all of the children as belonging to all of us (*Nuestra Cosa*, December 1973, p. 1).

*Nuestra Cosa* reprinted the Mexican American Educational Series report created by the United States Commission on Civil Rights (1971) in one of their issues. The print included the report's findings which listed disparities for Chicano youth in California and several other states along the Southwest. The report detailed how the school system was failing Chicanos. Compared to their Anglo peers, Chicanos faced poorer reading levels, had less participation in extracurricular activities, and were more likely to be older when compared to students at grade level, what they termed as over-ageness[77] (*Nuestra Cosa*, December 1975, p. 2). Although only the findings were included in this reprint, the authors of *Nuestra Cosa* were well aware of what led to these conditions—a history of subpar and segregated education and a lack of opportunities. The public school system was not preparing Chicanos, and school administrators were not addressing racial inequalities or providing community interventions. Therefore, Chicano activists took it

---

[76] Gabacho, used in this context referring to white-settlers, or white supremacy.
[77] Defined in the report as students who are older in age in comparison to their peers at grade-level. According to the report, this as a factor in grade repetition and found Chicanos were seven times more likely to be overage in comparison to their peers. What was also alarming was that of these overage Chicano students, 42% leave school before completing high school. See, *Nuestra Cosa*, December 1973.

upon themselves to create interventions. Despite the alarming statistics reported, Chicano

student activists at UCR stayed abreast of this data by reprinting similar reports in

*Nuestra Cosa* and utilizing these findings to help them plan and prepare interventions.

Outreach was also the Chicano student activist's bridge to the community and working

with Chicano children and youth. Ofelia, who was involved in the tutorial program,

would tutor students in the local schools. This program would go to the Eastside[78] of

Riverside and would also bring those students to campus, "...that was our connection to

the community at the time, and they made you feel like you had something to offer"

(personal communication, May 11, 2022).

    The Eastside, a predominantly Chicano community, was largely disregarded by

UCR despite being down the street from the university:

> We had *Chicanitos*[79] that lived in the Eastside, right down the street, who had
>
> never been on this campus. They didn't even know UCR existed. Bringing them
>
> here and exposing them, that's the whole idea. That's what we were trying to do in
>
> the 70s, we wanted to open UCR to a community that didn't even know it [UCR]
>
> was here and show the community that we [UCR] had a lot to offer (A. personal
>
> communication, May 25, 2022).

    The Chicano student population at UCR was less than 1,000 in the 1970s, yet

MECHA de UCR set an ambitious goal of enrolling 1,000 Chicano students at UCR (A.

Figueroa, personal communication, May 25, 2022). According to MECHA leaders,

---

[78] A predominantly Chicano community down the street from UC Riverside.
[79] Italicized for emphasis. Chicanitos refers to Chicano youth, a term of endearment.

increasing Chicano student numbers in higher education would lead to more

opportunities for Chicanos. MECHA's goal, Alfredo describes, "was to make UCR a

place where Raza could feel at home and be here. That is was what we did all that time"

(personal communication, May 25, 2022). The made Chicanos at UCR feel at home by

serving as a bridge, creating conferences and programs for Chicano youth and

prospective UCR students:

> In 1972 we started the youth conferences, Chicano Community College Day (See,
>
> Figure 3), and we started bringing elementary school-aged students on campus.
>
> All of that happened in the 70s and beyond. That is when we started letting Raza
>
> communities know that UCR was not a place out in Mars or something. It was
>
> local, and they belonged here (A. personal communication, May 25, 2022).

The following sections highlight three of the many programs MECHA de UCR created at

this time.

### *Chicano Community College Day: Transfer Conference*

The Chicano Community College Day[80] was created by MECHA de UCR in

1972. In addition to the high school conferences, MECHA de UCR created a conference

for junior college students. The intent was to build a pipeline for higher education

throughout the K-14 system. With this conference, they aimed to support the transfer of

Chicanos to four-year institutions. Featured on the front page of *Nuestra Cosa* on

December 1973 is an overview of the second annual Chicano Community College Day:

---

[80] In 2022 the Chicano Community College; Transfer Conference was recognized as a long-standing outreach effort of the UCR Chicano community, celebrating its 50th year. The conference is now led by the office of Chicano Student Programs with support from Chicano/Latino student organizations. The purpose and structure remain the same. See, Chicano Student Programs www.csp.ucr.edu

Transfer Conference. The conference was attended by hundreds of students with

workshops on college admissions and college major advising led by Chicano students

(*Nuestra Cosa*, December 1973). In addition, we found photos of the Chicano

Community College Day: Transfer Conference[81] from the 1970s (Figure 5), which further

illustrate the force and scope of the Chicano student leaders at this time.

**Figure 5**

Chicano Community College Day, Pictures from the 1970s



---

[81] In Figure 5 there are pictures from the Chicano Student Programs Archive, these were found in a photo album entitled Chicano Community College Day from the 1970s, however it was unclear which year these photos were taken.

Note. The photos are from the Chicano Community College Day 1970s photo album, the exact year is not listed. The images are reprinted with permission from UCR Chicano Student Programs.

The program agenda included presentations from Chicano faculty and staff at UCR. The sessions stayed the same from 1972-1980. They include admissions, financial aid, EOP, career planning and placement, the Chicano Studies program, and MECHA (Chicano Student Programs Archive). The agenda includes a light breakfast, lunch, campus tours, entertainment, and a film to close the event. The entertainment was usually a musical or *teatro*[82] performance during lunch, featuring information tables from Chicano student organizations ranging from 7-13 organizations from 1972-1980

---

[82] Teatro is Spanish for theater troupe, the first UCR student teatro group was Teatro Quinto Sol founded in the 1973-1974 school year from MECHA de UCR, who would lead performances on Chicano political issues on campus including performing for the community at outreach events.

(Chicano Student Programs Archive). In several volumes of *Nuestra Cosa*, we see special

editions of the Chicano student newspaper published to share at the Chicano Community

College conference, offering a welcome to the students attending the conference and

providing the conference agenda. The attendance ranged from 100-300 students from

local junior colleges (*Nuestra Cosa*, Winter 1977). For the first several years of this

conference, Chicano Studies, EOP and the Vice Chancellor on Student Affairs and

Relations with schools are listed as sponsors of the conference.

*High School Visits Program*

MECHA also created a school visit program,[83] the earliest mention of the

program was in 1975 when they hosted a local high school for a visit on January 15,

1975. The school visitation consisted of a "small get-together with hot chocolate and pan

Mexicano" (*Nuestra Cosa*, January 1975, p. 1). It included information on MECHA de

UCR and the various Chicano student organizations active at the time. The visit also

included a campus tour and concluded with a stop of Library South for a presentation

from Chicano Student Programs, EOP, and Chicano Studies (*Nuestra Cosa*, January

1975). The article concludes by listing all the forthcoming visits, including local

community high schools, Rubidoux High School, Barstow Jr. College, and Poly High

School. In 1977, UCR MECHA mentioned their outreach efforts in an article in *Nuestra*

*Cosa* entitled MEChA: More than an organization; they share how the members are

devoted to Chicano liberation and committed to their local community working in the

---

[83] Like the Chicano Community College Day conference, the school visitation program continues today. The program is run by Chicano Student Programs with volunteers from the Chicano/Latino registered student organizations on campus. See, Chicano Student Programs www.csp.ucr.edu

Inland Empire[84] to bring Chicano youth on campus so they can "acquaint themselves with a university. It also stresses continuing their education, whether it be at a university or local community college level" (*Nuestra Cosa*, November 1977, p. 2). This resonated in Alfredo's testimonio, he shares:

> We used to go out and recruit. The MEChistas would go to the admissions office, pick up material, and visit local schools. We would tell the youth, *ey*[85] look what we got over here [at UCR] you might want to come here (personal communication, May 25, 2022).

The Chicano students initiated this work. It was not a campus charge or funded by the campus. Instead, they took it upon themselves to address the desolate numbers of Chicanos in higher education, starting with their local community. They focused specifically on the most underserved areas of Riverside with high concentrations of Chicanos, like the Eastside and Casa Blanca.

### Mentorship Programs: Carnalitos and Las Primas

Mentorship was also part of the outreach efforts for the Chicano student activists. They created several programs to support Chicano youth in the community. One early program was the Chicano money-makers program of 1968, where Chicano males sold tamales and floral arrangements to raise funds and invest in projects for their community (*Adelante*, October 1969). Led by UMAS de UCR, chaired by President Henry Perez, the

---

[84] Refers to the surrounding areas of Riverside, Jurapa, and San Bernardino.
[85] Emphasized for effect. The translation of the Spanish colloquial word *ey,* is hey. In this sentence, the participant was translanguaging as a way to connect shared experience and language with the youth. See, García, O., & Leiva, C. (2014). Theorizing and enacting translanguaging for social justice. *Heteroglossia as practice and pedagogy*, 199-216.

Chicano money-makers received a grant from the UC Agricultural Extension Service in 1969 to invest in trips of interest for the students involved. This program infused mentorship and early financial and investment literacy for Chicano youth. Two other programs focused on mentorship included the Carnalito[86] program and Las Primas.[87]

The Carnalito program focused its efforts on working with Chicanos from the barrio. A recruitment ad in the November 1973 volume of *Nuestra Cosa* stated that Chicano students "who have not forgotten the barrio" were wanted to support Carnalitos in the local public schools. According to the ad, only those who have understood the struggles faced by the educational system in the barrios would relate to the populations they intended to serve, which were youth who have been "abused, oppressed, and busted because the system did not want to accept their barrio lifestyle, or their language and culture" (p. 8). The ad claimed the Chicanos who had come to UCR from the barrio made it and, therefore, could share their experiences and mentor others as an example for the barrio (*Nuestra Cosa*, November 1973).

Similarly, Las Chicanas, a Chicana-centered student organization founded in 1973 by MECHA de UCR, created a mentorship program focused on Chicana youth. In 1979, Las Chicanas announced the Prima program in an article in *Nuestra Cosa*. The article highlighted the low educational attainment rates for Chicanas, stating that the average education level achieved was 10th grade. As a result, Chicanas did not have access to higher-paying jobs and were often placed in the "lowest rungs of the occupational ladder"

---

[86] Carnalito is Spanish colloquial term for younger brother, usually used as a term on endearment. Brother or sister does not limit to biological family, carnalito or carnalita in this case references mentees.
[87] Primas in Spanish refers to one's female cousin. In this context the Chicano student activists intended to build a family with their mentees and were intentional in choosing the names for their programs.

(p. 7). With urgency, they shared that there was a scarcity of Chicanas in higher

education. The Prima program served as an intervention, providing mentorship and

services to Chicana girls and women. Las Chicanas expressed that the gap was widened

due to inadequate or unavailable services; therefore, the program sought to fill this gap

and change the conditions for Chicanas.

According to Alfredo, MECHA de UCR's outreach efforts aimed to expose

Chicanos to college and provide them with the tools to pursue higher education. For most

of the Chicano youth who participated in the conferences or other outreach efforts, this

was their first time on a college campus, and what was more striking was that the campus

was right down the street. Another program they hosted was Chicano Tutorial, a tutoring

program led by MECHA in the local schools. They would take Chicano youth on field

trips and expose them to other experiences. He shares:

> Nobody was doing presentations to the elementary kids until we started. People
>
> were like, what are you doing? We said these kids are going to be here [at UCR],
>
> that's what we're doing. We would share our experiences with the youth because
>
> we wanted them to know college was possible. We would have field trips and
>
> take them to the ocean; they had never been to the ocean. We would take them to
>
> [UCR] so they could see it. Those are experiences that the youth will remember
>
> (personal communication, May 25, 2022).
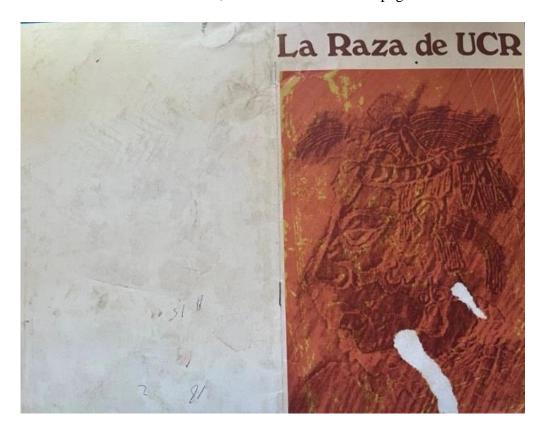
Dr. Cortés attests to the outreach efforts of the Chicano activists, concluding that the

Chicano students led recruitment efforts of Chicano students at UCR. They were

organized and set recruitment as a priority, one that continues to be a priority for Chicano

180

organizations at UCR today who participate in the annual Community College Day

Conference and School Visitation program founded in the 1970s.

## Programs and Services for Chicanos

The programs and services in the 1960s were primarily from the EOP office,

including tutoring, counseling, and financial aid. As the Chicano *familia* grew on campus,

they expanded the programs and services available, focusing on exclusively serving

Chicanos. The third step in *El Plan* (1969) was the creation and implementation of

support programs for Chicanos. The authors urged that these programs should do more

than support the Chicano student transition to college. Instead, the programs should

provide a "stable academic, political and financial base for Chicano students" (CCCHE,

p. 30). A recruitment booklet published in 1971, La Raza de UCR, was a 12-page

document (Figure 6) that described the programs and services available for Chicanos at

UCR. The goal of the booklet is to familiarize Chicanos students with the Chicano

movement at UCR (La Raza de UCR, 1971, p. 1).

**Figure 6**

La Raza de UCR Booklet 1971, Cover and Introduction page

## INTRODUCTION

The University of California at Riverside is a growing campus, in every respect. As UCR strives to reach its growth plan goal by bringing 12,000 students to the campus, so have the Chicanos here endeavored to rightfully bring at least 1500 Chicano students.

Such a goal is feasible because the very existence of the University is dependent upon the communities in its service area, and is not the Chicano community an important part of the whole community? The Chicano students on this campus demand no more of the University of California than it has already committed itself to. What it has promised is to research, analyze, and aid in alleviating social and environmental problems when it could. This is why such programs as University Extension were created. It deals specifically with the community, and the Chicano community is not to be excluded. We understand that it must not, because then the University of California would be reneging from its self-proclaimed duties. The University is rooted in the community and it must be always at the disposal of every part of the community.

With this in mind then, it is understandable that we must all reciprocate. The University will profit from a growing Chicano Student community as will the Chicano community itself. This is why we have worked to implement programs such as Upward Bound for high school students, and the Educational Opportunity Program for college students. In our development as a minority, organizing and working to attain social and political equality we have realized that our struggle begins in the schools. Until we have developed our talents and acquired degrees so that they may be used for the benefit of our people, we must take advantage of every educational program.

As we have already mentioned EOP, we so must also mention the Chicano Studies Program. It is also very much a part of the Chicano community on this campus; staff, faculty, and students alike, must work together. Chicano Studies is a unique center, because it deals with the wide spectrum of the Chicano community academically. Every course offered by Chicano Studies is comparable in academic excellence to any other course offered in any other department, we would have it no less. Because all of our students were admitted for their potential success so do we offer courses that will help them through good work and relevance.

This is why we must all work so hard to enjoy success. We feel it is our duty to aid the University in understanding and dealing with the Chicano community. Then hopefully by bringing students from the Chicano community to the campus, and helping them with EOP or Financial Aid, these young Chicanos will finally graduate to become professionals in their field for the good of their respective community.

This idea has motivated many of us to stay in school thereby returning home to work for our people. We hope that through reading this, you may become better acquainted with the Chicano movement on the college campuses. This is why we hope that the students who consider coming here will become involved; WITH the understanding that studies and good grades always come first. We extend the invitation to the prospective student and his family to visit EOP, Chicano Studies, and MECHA on the campus.

Note. The booklet is 12 pages in length, this figure includes the cover and the introduction page. The image is reprinted with permission from UCR Chicano Student Programs.

The booklet featured MECHA, Chicano Studies, EOP, and Chicano Tutorial (La Raza de UCR brochure, 1971). Chicano Tutorial was an outreach and tutoring program for Chicano youth in the local schools. However, it was featured in the brochure, emphasizing how UCR Chicanos could give back to the community. The brochure also stated their ambitious goals; the introduction detailed that MECHA, in partnership with Chicano Studies, aimed to recruit 1,500 Chicanos in response to UCR's 12,000 student

growth plan (p. 2). Descriptions and contact information for programs such as EOP,

MECHA, and critical campus services, such as employment, counseling services, and

career placement, were included. Lastly, the brochure featured Chicano faculty and staff

at UCR. Throughout *Nuestra Cosa* from 1972-1979, ads promoting these programs

would appear in the issues, encouraging Chicanos to participate. We reviewed several

programs and services established during this period, including programs focused on

leadership development, civic engagement, politics, lectures, socials, and cultural plays

and concerts. The next section highlights a few of the programs aimed at providing a

stable base for Chicanos.

**Graduate Preparation Programs**

Chicano Studies also established academically focused programs for Chicanos,

which included graduate preparation workshops. A significant finding for our team was

the inclusion of graduate preparation programs for Chicano students in the 1970s,

creating a pipeline for Chicanos to pursue terminal degrees by creating programs. The

Chicano Studies counselors outline the graduate school process in *Nuestra Cosa*'s

February 1975 issue. The article entitled, "Graduate School ¡Se Puede!" provides a step-

by-step introduction beginning with reviewing graduate programs, explaining the various

graduate entrance examinations and the recommendation letters required, followed by

financial aid information and a suggested timeline for the application cycle (*Nuestra

Cosa*, February 1975).

In 1976, former Chicano Studies counselor at UCR, Juan Lujan, became the

Graduate Advancement Program Coordinator, a position established at UCR based on the

UC efforts to increase graduate student enrollment as recommended by the Coordinating

Committee on Graduate and Professional Advancement[88] (*Nuestra Cosa*, October 1977).

His responsibilities included recruiting graduate students, promoting UCR graduate

programs, counseling for graduate preparation, and increasing minority representation in

graduate programs. In the same issue, the authors of *Nuestra Cosa* note that successful

recruitment efforts have led to an increase in Chicano graduate students. In 1977, there

were 55 Chicanos in graduate programs, 4% of the graduate students at UCR (p. 2).

**Chicano Orientation: Welcome to the UCR Familia**

The third step in *El Plan de Santa Barbara* (1969) was creating and implementing

support programs for Chicanos. One of the examples listed was the creation of orientation

programs that infused cultural identity in academics and achievement (p. 30). MECHA de

UCR created an orientation program that included this infusion in partnership with

Chicano Studies. Chicano Orientation was established in 1972 to welcome students to

UCR in their first year.

Chicano Orientation was established in 1972 and held in Library South. The

orientation was "the first activity of UCR Chicanos" featuring welcome addresses by

Chancellor Hinderaker and Chicano Studies Chair Dr. Cortés, who introduced the

Chicano faculty and the Chicano Studies academic counselors to the students (*Nuestra

Cosa*, November 1975, p. 1). The orientation also includes a welcome from the MECHA

---

[88] This committee is currently known as the Coordinating Committee on Graduate Affairs, See University
of California Academic Senate, https://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu/ccga

leadership. *Nuestra Cosa* highlights the 4th Annual Chicano Orientation[89] held in

September 1975, reporting the attendance included 75 faculty, staff, and students, with

Chancellor Hinderaker sharing "strong points of Chicanos on Campus" (November 1975,

p. 1). Establishing a sense of *familia* early in the Chicano student transition to UCR was

the aim of this program, according to Alfredo:

> We do everything as a *familia* because that's the most important thing.
>
> Unfortunately, some of us don't get that support. So, we need to let them [Chicano
>
> students] know that they are important. That's why we have Raza Grad, we started
>
> that in 1972 (personal communication, May 25, 2022).

**Chicano Senior Dinner: An Annual Celebration**

In 1972, Chicano Senior Dinner was created to celebrate the Chicanos graduating

at UCR. The dinner was an intimate and culturally affirming celebration, including

Chicano student, staff, and faculty speakers. The dinner also included a dance with live

Chicano bands hosted on the UCR campus. Chicano Senior Dinner at UCR, also known

as Raza Grad, is one of the first Raza Graduations in the UC system, Alfredo shares:

> It started in 1972 because we thought it was important that our community get an
>
> opportunity to celebrate those graduating from a university. It was important for
>
> us [MEChA de UCR] that people see that. When we did our first one in 1972, the
>
> program had one *pagina* (page), one page. There was nothing on the backside of
>
> the program, just the front side with the names of those that were graduating. We

---

[89] UCR Chicano Student Programs continues to host this annual Chicano Orientation, the event has extended to a week and concludes with a large welcome celebration ¡Bienvenida! See, UCR Chicano Student Programs, Events: Fall https://csp.ucr.edu/events

did it at a local restaurant downtown. Alberto Chavez's [Director of Chicano

Student Programs], mother-in-law was Sra. Lozano, she opened her home so we

could celebrate our graduation in her backyard. That's how we started (personal

communication, May 25, 2022).

The Chicano Senior Dinner program in 1978, lists 61[90] Chicano graduates: 59

undergraduates, 3 Master's students, and 3 Ph.D. students (UCR Chicano Student

Programs Archive). It was a lively and special celebration for the UCR Chicano *familia.*

Alfredo shared that the celebration's intent was not to compete with UCR commencement

but to complement it, where the families and graduates could feel validated in their

languages, music, and regalia. The organizers of the Chicano senior dinner, MECHA and

Chicano Student Programs, encouraged graduating students to attend the dinner and UCR

commencement:

> We want people to see brown faces in that [UCR Commencement] crowd. We
>
> want you to walk with your sarape sashes so that everyone knows that we are
>
> there. We also want our community to be able to come together and celebrate,
>
> show the pride that we have. I've seen parents, you tell them a limit of 5, they
>
> bring 15 because they're proud of this accomplishment (A. Figueroa, personal
>
> communication, May 25, 2022).

Reflecting on the programs and services established during this period, Alfredo

shares that the programs were largely successful because the Chicano student activists,

---

[90] It is unclear if all graduating Chicano students participated in Chicano Senior Dinner but the programs found in the archive indicate that all graduating Chicano student names and degrees were printed in the program. See, Chicano Student Programs archive.

faculty, and staff were united. The physical location was intentional; all the offices were in Library South and in constant communication and collaboration. As a result, there was a great deal of synergy; everyone played a critical role and had a common cause, *La Causa*.

## Building the Infrastructure at UCR

Chicano enrollment numbers grew steadily because of the efforts by Chicano student activists, staff, and faculty. Alfredo concludes this was a result of the foundation established at the start of the 70s:

> We started a movement that just picked up because our numbers started to swell. Once our numbers started to swell, we were able to do much more, we were able to reach out to many more communities" (personal communication, May 25, 2022).

UCR went from 100 Chicanos in 1968 to 278 Chicanos in 1972 (Matute, 2022). The resources established in the late 60s and early 70s became impacted. Chicano Studies became overwhelmed navigating academic, personal, student leadership, and developmental issues at UCR and UC-wide. At the time, Chicano Studies was the only Chicano-specific office or department. Everything Chicano-related was funneled through Chicano Studies:

> One of the Chicano Studies program assistants dealt with nothing but student issues, not just student academic issues. For example, if a student got arrested for participating in a protest march. Chicano Studies was being sidetracked into doing all kinds of this other stuff (C. Cortés, personal communication, June 8, 2022).

Dr. Cortés had received an offer from two other universities, which he was considering until a group of Chicano students came to his home and talked with him:

> We sat down and talked. They said, you helped to start something, please stick around and be chair of Chicano Studies. They were so convincing that I decided to stay and become chair of Chicano Studies[91] from 1972 to 1979.

Dr. Cortés understood the infrastructure needed to grow. The department was already overwhelmed and beyond capacity. Chancellor Hinderaker also wanted Dr. Cortés to stay, so Dr. Cortés negotiated and set his conditions for staying:

> I went to the Chancellor at UCR. I said to Ivan, I'll stay but you have to do one thing. Take the assistant full-time position in Chicano Studies and give it to Student Affairs. Set it up as a separate office underneath Student Affairs but keep the offices [Chicano Studies and this new office] next to each other. Ivan agreed. As my condition for becoming chair, Chicano Student Programs was established (personal communication, June 8, 2022).

**Chicano Student Programs: A Home**

Chicano Student Programs[92] was founded in 1972 in Library South next to Chicano Studies. Alberto Richard Chavez became the inaugural Director. He had previously served in the Office of the Vice Chancellor, been involved with Chicano

---

[91] Dr. Alfredo Castañeda, Chair of Chicano Studies from 1970- 1972 had accepted a position in Stanford during the Spring of 1972.

[92] Chicano Student Programs celebrated its 50th Anniversary in November 2022 on campus. The program has built a legacy of Chicano Latino student, staff and faculty success established in 1972 by the Chicano activists of the time. The inaugural Director, Alberto R. Chavez served in this role for fifteen years, from 1972-1986 (Chicano Student Programs website, 2023). See, *Sembraron Semillas, Crecieron Raices/They Planted Seeds, We Grew Roots Celebrating 50 Years of Chicano Student Programs* at https://news.ucr.edu/ucr-magazine/winter-2022

Studies, and worked with MECHA on several outreach efforts and actions. What was one central Chicano office became two, and each supported the other. Chicano Studies, Chicano Student Programs, and MECHA were all part of the Chicano Advisory Committee. They came together through weekly meetings established by Dr. Cortés in 1972.

In *Nuestra Cosa*, the MEChistas refer to Chicano Student Programs as the MECHA Cultural Center, signifying its strong affiliation to the center. Following the establishment of Chicano Student Programs, several issues of *Nuestra Cosa* list Alberto Chavez as a second contact to programs founded or co-founded by MECHA such as the School Visitation Program (*Nuestra Cosa*, January 1975), and Chicano Community College Day (*Nuestra Cosa*, Fall 1976). The newspaper also lists Alberto Chavez as the main contact for the Chicano Senior Dinner, a collaborative effort on behalf of MECHA and Chicano Student Programs that would become the first Chicano Latino graduation ceremony in the UC system (A. Figueroa, personal communication, May 25, 2022).

Alfredo maintains that Chicano Student Programs was a significant retention tool for Chicanos on campus that ensured the Chicano community needs were met. The Chicano Student Programs office was a small physical space but a potent force on campus:

> We had an office that was eight by eight. [...] It was just two of us in there. There was one desk one way and another desk for the student assistant and the director. Right across from the office was Chicano Studies (A. Figueroa, personal communication, May 25, 2022).

190

Chicano Student Programs and the MEChistas began to turn the office into a home with

art and music:

> We just had too. That is part of our *cultura* (culture), you put murals up, you put
>
> your *pinturas* (paintings) up, and you make it home. And they [Campus
>
> administration] had to get used to that. We were going to have our *comidas*
>
> (food), our taco sales, our *música* (music), because that is who we are (A.
>
> Figueroa, personal communication, May 25, 2022).

A permanent symbol of the Chicano presence at UCR was painted on the wall of Chicano

Student Programs in 1976 by Daniel "Chano" Gonzales,[93] a prominent local muralist of

the 1970s (*Nuestra Cosa*, Fall 1976). According to the authors of *Nuestra Cosa*, it took

Chano two weeks to complete. When they interviewed him for their story, he shared:

> The struggle belongs to everybody, whether they claim it or not. They say that 'la
>
> Raza' is fatalistic, but really it is not. If you are afraid to die, you are afraid to
>
> live. If you are not afraid to die, you are not afraid to live. [...] Ever since I
>
> decided to be myself, that was the best decision I ever made in my life. You
>
> breathe better! You think clearer. [...] What is bad is not being aware of the world
>
> and time (Chano Gonzales, quoted in *Nuestra Cosa*, Fall 1976, p. 8).

Chicano Student Programs and Chicano Studies united, strengthening the Chicano

*comunidad* with two central offices focused on Chicano liberation.

---

[93] See Professor Phil Gonzales, nephew of Chano Gonzales, share his exhibit *Murales de Mi Tio* at Fresno
State University at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n2vgqMMitYg

**The Chicano Complex: Three Spaces in Library South**

As they built the branches, they were purposeful in ensuring the roots remained intact. Their physical location in Library South is an example of this. Dr. Cortés called this the "Chicano complex" at UCR. The complex comprised three spaces: Chicano Studies, Chicano Student Programs, and the Cultural Center. The Chicano Studies space included a small suite with offices for the Chair, Administrative Assistant, and Counselor. Transversely, Chicano Student Programs was one office with two desks, one for the director and the other for the student assistant (A. Figueroa, personal communication, May 25, 2022). Lastly, the Cultural Center was right next to Chicano Student Programs. The Chicano community needed a space to meet and organize that was welcoming, "We wanted a space to come to that was comfortable. So, they gave the [Cultural Center] to us" (A. Figueroa, personal communication, May 25, 2022).

Chicano Studies, Chicano Student Programs, and MEChA de UCR shared the Cultural Center. *Nuestra Cosa* referred to the Cultural Center as the MECHA Cultural Center and would often reference this as the unofficial name of this third space (Nuestra Cosa, January 1975). We surmise this reference resulted from the Chicano students' sense of connection to the physical location regarding the Chicano complex as a physical home on campus. A significant finding is the shared ownership of the complex. Chicano students, staff, and faculty shared the space, each with a stake in its usage. Based on our findings, this space was referenced by many names, often given by the student leaders, to establish their presence. For example, MECHA referenced the Cultural Center as the MECHA office in the printed Community College Day Programs from 1972 through

1982. In a January 1975 issue of *Nuestra Cosa*, MECHA hosted a high school visit in this

space and referenced it as the MECHA Cultural Center (p. 1). However, in the same

issue, the authors of *Nuestra Cosa* listed this space as the Chicano Cultural Center while

promoting meeting space availability and sharing that the purpose of the space was to

coordinate Chicano activities and house the Chicano student organizations (Nuestra Cosa,

January 1975, p. 2).

The three spaces would come together every Wednesday for a meeting in the

Cultural Center, initiated by Dr. Cortés. These three spaces served as the physical home

of the Chicano student activists, faculty, and staff. It was symbolic but also strategic:

> We were able to establish ourselves so well because we were all together in
>
> library south. We had Chicano Studies and Chicano Student programs with
>
> Chicano professors and staff all around us (A. Figueroa, personal communication,
>
> May 25, 2022).

### Establishing Chicano Studies & Culturally Relevant Curriculum

1969 was a "crazy time" across college campuses, according to Dr. Cortés.

Chancellor Hinderaker realized the turbulence was coming to UCR and decided to get

ahead of it. He called the only four faculty of color on campus at the time, two Chicano

faculty Dr. Cortés and Dr. Cota-Robles, and two Black faculty Dr. Maurice Jackson[94]

---

[94] Dr. Maurice Jackson started as a lecturer in the Sociology department July 1965 at UCR, along with Dr. Bovell he would establish Black Studies in 1972 and become full professor in 1980. He was recognized internationally for his work in eradicating racism in society. The UCR Department of Sociology established the Professor Maurice Jackson Endowed Scholarship to support Black graduate students, women or graduate students with financial need to pursue a graduate degree at UCR. See, UCR Advancement at https://advancementservices.ucr.edu/Scholarship/ScholarshipFundInfo.aspx?fund=600276

(Sociology) and Dr. Carlton Rowland Bovell[95] (Biology), to establish an Ethnic Studies program at UCR. Instead, the four faculty set a precedent for solidarity at UCR, and they decided to create two programs Black Studies and Mexican American studies:

> The four of us looked around at what was happening on other college campuses. At some places administrations would set up an Ethnic Studies program, put all the ethnic faculty together, give them one professorial position and let them fight about it. An Ethnic Studies, divide and conquer strategy. [...] So, we looked at each other and said we can't let this happen at UCR. So we decided on separate Black and Chicano Studies. It was a strategic decision the four of us made. We went back to the general committee, and the four of us were a united front saying, we don't want Ethnic Studies. We want Black and Chicano Studies, which went against the grain of what the committee was discussing (personal communication, June 8, 2022).

The committee saw the solidarity of the four faculty, the only faculty of color on campus, and moved forward with the motion for two programs. Chancellor Hinderaker established two committees, Black and Mexican American Studies, and in the spring of 1969, the programs were created and approved by the academic senate. In 1972, with the creation of Chicano Student Programs, the MEChistas wanted Mexican American Studies

---

[95] Dr. Bovell was a professor in the Biology department starting in 1954. He was the first tenured Black professor at UCR, and within the first Black tenured professors in the UC system. He was the first Chair of Black Studies in 1972 and served various administrator roles. He was Assistant Vice President – Academic Planning and Program review UC systemwide in 1978 and returned to UCR in 1980 as the Vice Chancellor. See, UCR College of Natural and Agricultural Sciences In Memoriam, https://cnas.ucr.edu/news/2019/04/11/remembering-professor-carlton-r-bovell

to change to Chicano Studies. They took over Dr. Cortés' office in Library South and announced they would not leave until the name was changed. Dr. Cortés recalled this moment. It was an example of the passion of Chicano activists at this time. Dr. Cortés sat in the outer office, while the MEChistas reiterated they would not leave until this change was done. He told them:

> Then you'll be in there for the rest of your life, because I can't change it alone. I
> don't have the power change it. However, if you come to our meeting next
> Wednesday, bring up the name change, and I'll support you. But I don't want just
> a group of students demanding, I want the whole group of UCR Chicanos
> demanding it, staff, faculty and students. I want everyone on board saying we
> want to change the name to Chicano Studies. Then, I can go to the Chancellor and
> say, everybody is putting pressure on me. The students vacated the office, came to
> the meeting, and it was unanimous, we changed the name (personal
> communication, June 8, 2022).

The name was changed to Chicano Studies, the archives refer to Chicano Studies as early as 1972, however the name change in the course catalog materialized in 1976. Dr. Cortés would serve as chair for seven years, working with the UCR Chicano community to create change, including establishing the first Chicano courses at UCR. The institutionalization of a "relevant educational experience" was regarded by CCCHE as one of the most critical steps of *El Plan* de Santa Barbra (1969). At UCR, the creation of Chicano Studies was followed by the development of Chicano courses in line with the fourth step of *El Plan*. When Chicano student activists asked for more courses, including

one on history, he created one. He launched Chicano history in winter quarter of 1970,

the first Chicano history course at UCR. He spoke at length about the impact this course

had on the students:

> I wanted every student to write their own family history.[96] Some of them ran into
>
> problems with their families because their families said, we don't have a story.
>
> We work, we are immigrants. The students had to convince their parents that their
>
> stories were important. Once they got started talking to the parents, the uncles,
>
> and aunts, and *primos* would join the conversation. It was such a great experience
>
> for me to see the students really connect and include their families in their
>
> education process. The families needed to feel that they were part of history as
>
> well as what was going on at UCR (personal communication, June 8, 2022).

This excerpt demonstrates the positive impact of culturally relevant curriculum and

pedagogical practices. Consistent with the literature, culturally relevant curriculum and

pedagogical practices, in this case, the creation of Chicano Studies and the courses

implemented as a result, created culturally enhancing spaces and validated

Chicano/Latino students at UCR (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Yosso et al., 2009; Yosso &

Lopez, 2001; Garcia et al., 2019).

---

[96] The ESPARiTU course was inspired in large part by Dr. Corts. His Chicano History course and his Inland Empire Chicano Cooperative History Project (CHICOP) which he led alongside five UCR student researchers in 1970, was a framework I reviewed to design my course. which was published in Aztlan Magazine where they did a historical review of Chicanos in the Inland Empire. See, Aztlan: Journal of Chicano Studies, Volume 1, Number 2, October 1970, p. 1-14.

**Expanding Chicano Studies**

Dr. Cortés created partnerships with other academic departments to continue building culturally relevant courses on campus. The reality of offering the only Chicano Studies courses also overwhelmed the department. The only way to grow the curriculum was to expand it. There were already dual Chicano faculty appointments in a few departments, and the Chicano students wanted graduate degrees in Chicano Studies. However, the department did not have the capacity to do more. Dr. Cortés met with the Dean of the School of Education whom he had established a relationship with, and together they created a joint Master's program in Education and Chicano Studies:

> We designed the program where students could take half of the courses in Education and half in Chicano Studies. We got it approved and began to produce MAs. We expanded our bandwidth by being able to connect with another department (personal communication, June 8, 2022).

Establishing relationships with other academic departments was a strategy of survival and expansion for Chicano Studies. Having a close relationship with department leaders would lead to another significant milestone for Chicano Studies, shifting the curriculum at UCR. During his time as chair, Dr. Cortés led the movement to create the Ethnic and Area Studies requirement for his college. It was one of the first Ethnic Studies graduation requirements in California. At that time, there were four colleges at UCR, each with its own set of graduation requirements in addition to campus-wide requirements. Dr. Cortés had to get support from colleagues in the other departments:

I proposed the requirement and we discussed it at a meeting of our college

faculty. We won by one vote. We got Ethnic and Area Studies to be a

requirement, by one vote! I wrote the requirement, notice the order, Ethnic and

Area Studies, not Area and Ethnic Studies. When the requirement was put in the

catalog, the first thing students saw was Ethnic. It increased enrollment in our

classes, which was one of my goals (personal communication, June 8, 2022).

**Community Engagement & Advocacy**

The work Chicano activists were doing on campus was not in silo; they were a

part of community advocacy in Riverside and surrounding cities. *El Plan* de Santa

Barabra (1969) proclaimed that the self-determination of the Chicano comunity was the

"essence of Chicano commitment," and education would be a tool to realize that

determination (p. 1). Aligned with *El Plan*, the MEChistas led outreach efforts and were

organizing in the community. The Riverside Latino Historic Context Statement (2018)

lists MECHA de UCR's involvement in the grape boycott and its support of the United

Farmworkers Movement. The report lists the two campus visits from the UFW co-

founder Cesár E. Chavéz, sponsored by MECHA de UCR. A visit in November 1968

during the grape boycotts and October 1972 when Chávez spoke in opposition to

Proposition 22, an anti-organizing initiative (p. 200). The MEChistas supported several

UFW efforts in the Coachella and Imperial Valley, in solidarity with the farmworker

movement.  They participating in various actions, including boycotting carries of non-

union grapes and in 1970, lettuce. Most of the *Nuestra Cosa* issues of this time period

included the UFW eagle (logo), Support Farm Workers, or the UFW union label. Alfredo recounts an action on campus in support of the UFW:
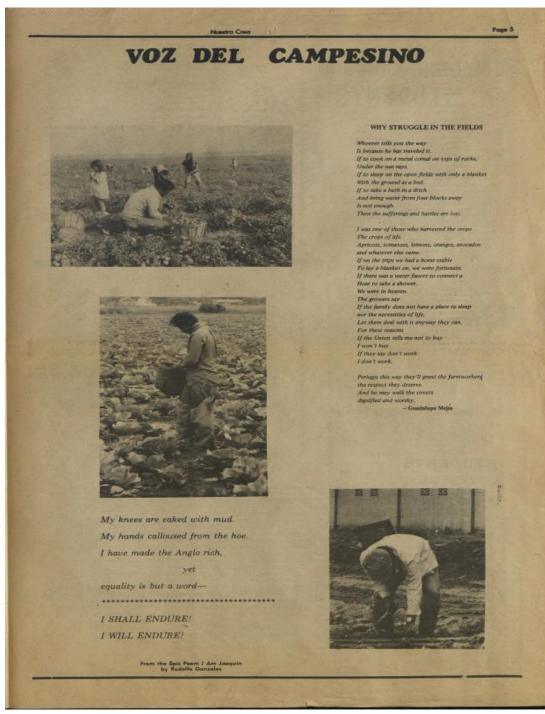
> I can remember clearly in 1972, MEChA boycotted the cafeteria on campus. Students were telling us, how do you expect us to support you, when we don't have another place to eat? There is no alternative. And we didn't think of that, we just did a boycott because the cafeteria was selling non-union lettuce. We decided to provide food outside the cafeteria for free so people wouldn't eat in the cafeteria. The cafeteria finally decided, we better get some union lettuce, and they brought in the Union lettuce because of our action (personal communication, May 25, 2022).

Many Chicano student activists lived in family housing, they had spouses and some had young children. They often brought their families to actions or events. When the MEChistas boycotted, the members who lived in family housing came together to supply food so students would not cross the picket line. The Chicano activists supported each other and put pressure on the university to create change. Further, the Chicano student activist consistently advocated for Chicanos on and off campus. Reflecting on the boycott, Alfredo shares that they were "right in the middle of it, wanting to change things and we did [change things]" (personal communication, May 25, 2022). In Figure 7, you see the volumes of *Nuestra Cosa* supporting the farmworker movement.

**Figure 7**

Supporting the Campesinos, Various articles from *Nuestra Cosa*



Note. *Nuestra Cosa,* February 1974. Image is reprinted with permission from UCR Chicano Student Programs.

# VOZ DEL CAMPESINO

**WHY STRUGGLE IN THE FIELDS**

Whoever tells you the way
Is because he has traveled it.
If to cook on a metal comal on tops of rocks,
Under the sun rays.
If to sleep on the open fields with only a blanket
With the ground as a bed.
If to take a bath in a ditch
And bring water from four blocks away
Is not enough.
Then the sufferings and battles are lost.

I was one of those who harvested the crops
The crops of life.
Apricots, tomatoes, lemons, oranges, avocados
and whatever else came.
If on the trips we had a horse stable
To lay a blanket on, we were fortunate.
If there was a water faucet to connect a
Hose to take a shower,
We were in heaven.
The growers say
If the family does not have a place to sleep
nor the necessities of life,
Let them deal with it anyway they can.
For these reasons
If the Union tells me not to buy
I won't buy.
If they say don't work
I don't work.

Perhaps this way they'll grant the farmworkers
the respect they deserve.
And he may walk the streets
dignified and worthy.
    – Guadalupe Mejia

My knees are caked with mud.
My hands calloused from the hoe.
I have made the Anglo rich,
      yet
equality is but a word—
**************************************
I SHALL ENDURE!
I WILL ENDURE!

From the Epic Poem I Am Joaquin
by Rudolfo Gonzales

Note. *Nuestra Cosa*, November 1977. Image is reprinted with permission from UCR Chicano Student Programs.

Note. *Nuestra Cosa*, November 1979. Image is reprinted with permission from UCR Chicano Student Programs.

Alfredo recalls another occasion when the community came together demanding change. The UCR administration offered MEChA money to white-wash[97] the mural in the Chicano Student Programs office following the move of Chicano Student Programs to another location:

> Raza was out of the office, but the mural was still there. They offered MEChA $5,000 to whitewash it. MEChA said, no, we go our mural goes! The administration had to cut out the wall and move it to our new place. [98] That is the kind of *poder* (power) that we had at the time, we could do those kinds of things (personal communication, May 25, 2022).

---

[97] Whitewash means to paint over something in white paint. In this context, it means to intentionally paint over images/mural of depicting non-white imagery or created by a person of color, for the purpose of removing the art leaving only white paint and thus controlling the narrative as if the art was never there. See, Our history is being whitewashed. Literally in https://projectpulso.org/2020/01/29/chicano-murals/
[98] The Mural has moved with Chicano Student Programs to four different locations, it currently is in the center of the office in 145 Costo Hall, the physical wall is encased and tells the story of the past, a history of Chicano students at UCR. See, Chicano Student Program, Origins of CSP at https://csp.ucr.edu/

Chicano faculty and student activists were deeply involved in community affairs; they established close relationships with the community because of their recruitment and organizing efforts. They were also involved in national Chicano political actions such as the Moratorium and actions against the attack on affirmative action. The Chicano faculty was also leading efforts in the community:

> Faculty were getting involved with the Community Action Group in Casa Blanca. Dr. Ray Garza, who was in psychology, became a board member of the Community Settlement Association[99] and brought students. That's how we felt that we would make a change in higher education (A. Figueroa, personal communication, May 25, 2022).

The Chicano faculty served as advisors to Chicano student organizations and mentored the Chicano student activists. Mentors, either peers or Chicano faculty, were especially salient for all three participants. Ofelia joined the Follow Through Program when she returned to UCR for her teaching credential in 1971. The project was led by Dr. Alfredo Castañeda[100] and Dr. Manuel Ramirez III,[101] who mentored her throughout the project. The project was based in Rancho Cucamonga, CA:

---

[99] The Community Settlement Association was founded in 1911, supporting families in Riverside, CA on a variety of issues including health and civic engagement. See, Community Settlement Association at https://csariverside.org/

[100] Dr. Alfredo Castañeda was chair of Chicano Studies (formerly Mexican American Studies) at UCR from 1970 – 1972, following Dr. Eugene Cota-Robles who was chair during its founding 1969-1970. Dr. Castaneda was a renowned Psychologist and profession in education, he went on to teach at Stanford developing the bilingual/multicultural education program. See, In Memoriam Alfredo Castañeda at https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/073998638100300201

[101] Dr. Manuel Ramirez III was a professor in Psychology at UCR, his almost 50-year career includes pioneering the development of Chicanx/Latinx psychology and multicultural psychology. He retired from the University of Texas at Austin in 2020 after 40 years. See, Professor Manual Ramirez II will Retire in Fall 2020 at https://liberalarts.utexas.edu/psychology/news/professor-manuel-ramirez-iii-will-retire-after-fall-2020-semester- following-a-40-year-tenure-at-ut

I came back [to UCR] and did my teaching credential. I worked with Dr. Alfredo

Castañeda and Dr. Manuel Ramirez, who were doing a project it's a follow-up to

Head Start it was called the "Follow Through Program" (O. Valdez-Yeager,

personal communication, May 11, 2022).

When interviewed by *Nuestra Cosa* in December 1972, Dr. Ramirez shared that

the program was a multifaceted bilingual, bicultural program that provided a more asset-

framed transition for Spanish-speaking children and their families in the local school

district—with funding from the U.S. Office of Education, a partnership between UCR

and Rancho Cucamonga school district led to a three-year project in 9 elementary

schools. The innovative program would be a cornerstone for the English as a Second

Language (ESL) and Dual Language Immersion (DLI) curriculum. [102] Following the

decision in *Lau v. Nichols*,[103] Dr. Ramirez established the Chicano Education Digest,

which included articles on Chicano Studies and Bilingual Bicultural Education (*Nuestra*

*Cosa*, February 1974).

The Chicano community at UCR was fighting oppression on various levels on

campus, pushing for Chicano courses and recruiting Chicano students, staff, and faculty.

---

[102] Dual Language Immersion programs were created in 1973 following the Bilingual Multicultural Education Act which provided funds to school districts for the implementation of bilingual or multilingual programs. The dual immersion aims to have students learn a second language and develop an appreciation for the language's home culture. See, Kim, Y. K., Hutchison, L. A., & Winsler, A. (2015). *Bilingual education in the United States: A historical overview and examination of two-way immersion*. Educational Review, 67(2), 236-252.

[103] In January 1974 the Supreme Court reversed a decision in the lower courts and declared the Civil Rights act of 1964 had been violated when the San Francisco School District did not offer special programs for Chinese students who did not speak English. As a result of this decision, English as a Second Language (ESL) programs were established to support the transition of non-native English speakers to the K-12 curriculum. Furthermore, the decision changed the perception of ESL students and how they were treated in public schools. See, Chen, M. Y. (1975). Lau vs. Nichols: Landmark in Bilingual Education. Bridge, 3(4), 3-6.

In 1969, the murder of Jesse Salcedo, a local 17-year-old Chicano, prompted community action, including a march off campus against police brutality. The Chicano peace rally was held in a local park, and MECHA representatives, including Dr. Cota-Robles, were among some speakers. At the national level, discussions reviewed the decade since the nationwide Chicano student marches, and many organizers questioned whether progress had been made. A conference held in Ontario, CA, on January 13, 1977, led by Dr. Armando Navarro,[104] discussed the lack of a national Chicano organization. UCR MECHA and Chicano faculty attended the conference. The political and economic implications were also discussed. Education was also discussed, and several attendees concurred that Chicano students remained a target. The participants concluded that the division of Chicanos in the movement and the lack of a solid national Chicano organization were the primary reasons for the lack of progress in the 1970s.

They recognized that both progress and mistakes had been made and aimed to come together to find a solution to address these failures, "We have to tap our resources, the Chicano population (there are currently 10-12 million Chicanos living in the United States, Hispanics, Puerto Ricans, Cubans, Central and South Americans [.  ] a whole generation of Chicanos have been educated. We have to continue to get Chicanos in schools" (p. 1). The committee pointed to the *Regents of the University of California v.*

---

[104] Dr. Armando Navarro was a prolific author, leader, and historian of the Chicano movement. He was a UCR alumni receiving his Ph.D. in Political Science in 1974, he joined the faculty at UCR where he retired in 2015 but continued to be heavily involved in Chicano/Latino politics. Dr. Navarro is considered one of the most influential Chicano leaders of the Inland Empire. See, Honoring Dr. Armando Navarro at https://www.pressenterprise.com/2022/04/16/honoring-the-life-of-armando-navarro-scholar-activist-and-chicano- leader/

*Bakke* as an example of the need for a solid organization that can combat racism on all levels, even the courts. The 1978 *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* banned the use of racial quotas in admissions but upheld affirmative action. The Chicano student activists would continue to challenge attacks on affirmative action policies made even more apparent after *Bakke*.

## Sustaining the Foundation at UCR

The UCR Chicano activists of the 1960s-1970s were a powerful force. They were visibly transformative leaders in the community. They were strong because they chose to be and often because they had to be. They were the first, as Ofelia notes, "We were so involved, we were the first of a lot of things (personal communication, May 11, 2022). at UCR had to be everything to everyone. They served the students, staff, faculty, and the community often simultaneously. Dr. Cortés recognized early that this was not sustainable. When he became Chair of Chicano Studies in 1972, he realized he could not be the "Chair of all Chicano Things" (personal communication, April 30, 2020). However, our findings indicate that sustaining the founding took much capacity. They had to be strategic and build institutionalized structures that would withstand the graduations and career changes of the Chicano activists before them. Nevertheless, as they built the branches, they were purposeful in ensuring the roots remained intact. Their physical location in Library South is an example of this. All their offices were together; it was symbolic but also strategic:

> These programs were all programs that were developed during that time. We were able to establish ourselves so well because we were all together in library south.

You had Chicano Studies, you had Chicano Student Programs, we had the

Chicano professors all around us (A. Figueroa, personal communication, May 25,

2022).

What was preserved in the UCR archives tells a version of a militant and head-strong

force without any context regarding what it took to get there. However, *Nuestra Cosa*, the

Chicano self-published newspaper, documented their own stories, expressing moments of

triumph and joy but also of pain and loss. It was this duality that told the overall story of

their labor. According to Dr. Cortés, there were around 20-30 active Chicano students

and no more than 7 Chicano faculty and 4-8 Chicano staff on average throughout 1972-

1979, out of a campus of almost 300 Chicanos in 1972 (personal communication, June 8,

2022). Despite being a small critical mass making change on campus, they created a

legacy at UCR. Dr. Cortés shared that the faculty who were invested in Chicano

liberation at this time were distinct "It takes a special kind of faculty member to be active

both on campus and in the community. Most are not trained that way" (C. Cortés,

personal communication, April 30, 2020).

Chicano liberation is implemented and sustained by the people, and it is only as

powerful as the people leading this change. Chicano activists at UCR established

impressive Chicano student organizations, created a K-14 pipeline for higher education,

programs, and services for Chicanos, provided mentorship, and established Chicano

Studies, all while serving the local community. Ofelia recognized during her tenure at

UCR from 1965-1969 when the infrastructure was just being built, that change would be

gradual, but she always remembered how she got here:

I never lost sight of the fact that I received a fifteen hundred dollar [EOP]

scholarship that paid for everything. My father could have never afforded it. I was

one of eight and the first to go to college. It is difficult, the first time, because you

don't know how you're going to navigate. Then the second and third time it gets

easier and you find places that are yours (personal communication, May 11,

2022).

There was no time for rest; to build such a legacy meant the activists had to keep going,

"We knew we had to keep fighting. If we let our guard down, we would lose for good"

(C. Cortés, personal communication, June 8, 2022). They had to keep their guard up all

the time, which often took a toll on the Chicano leaders. Dr. Cortés shared two important

occasions that exhibited this constant fight mode from which they were operating. The

first was after the passing of the Ethnic and Area Studies requirement; there were several

efforts to get rid of it:

People were so furious the Ethnic and Area Studies requirement was passed. They

tried to get it rescinded twice. We pulled everybody together, got them to the

meeting to vote, and kept it going (personal communication, June 8, 2022).

The second occasion was hiring the first Chicano Chancellor in the UC system, Tomás

Rivera. The hiring of Chancellor Rivera was a moment of affirmation for the Chicano

activists at UCR; they had finally punctured the UC bureaucracy. The authors of *Nuestra

Cosa* penned an open letter to Chancellor Rivera in the November 1979 issue. They

indicate how the hiring of a Chicano Chancellor is not lost in translation to them. They

knew the significance of his presence at UCR, expressed MECHA's support, and

208

welcomed him to campus (p.5). Chancellor Rivera received overwhelming student support, according to Dr. Cortés:

> That meant that Tomás was a Chancellor, unlike anyone we have ever had or probably will ever have. He was almost like the Princess Diana of Chancellors. He was someone that the young people could absolutely identify with. He was not the guy on the fourth floor [Hinderaker Hall]. He was a human being who was constantly out on the campus, talking to students and meeting with them (C. Cortés, personal communication, June 8, 2022).

The students pushed for Rivera:

> Tomás was the first Chicano we had ever seen in a position like that. Not everyone was happy about this, some people made comments, uh oh here comes the Mexicans, I guess we're going to have a lot of people living in there [Chancellor's house] because you know [Chicanos] bring their families with them. They said those things about him (A. Figueroa, personal communication, May 25, 2022).

Opposition to the hiring of Tomás was also evident and, again, another reminder of this continual fighting. Even with a Chicano Chancellor leading the university, Chicanos at UCR kept their guard up. Dr. Cortés defined the hiring of Chancellor Rivera as a probationary period, not just for Tomás but also for the Chicano community at UCR. The opposition capitalized on these feelings of uneasiness to strike down some of the progress that was made:

209

That poured over into problems on campus, particularly in 1984. When the faculty

voted to get rid of Chicano Studies. Some of the faculty that voted to get rid of

Chicano Studies felt like they were getting back at Tomás. The battle that started

in 1968, when UMAS was established, was still part of the ongoing struggle in

1984[105] and I was in the middle of it (personal communication, June 8, 2022).

The Chicano student activists also felt this tension. A clear indication of the CRT tenet,

the permeance of racism, was palpable with the opposition. Those who were opposed to

Tomás were threatened that his success would lead to more Chicanos in administration,

in leadership, and on campus:

Although we were making progress, we weren't making progress. Tomás always

used to tell me, Alfredo, I feel like a *mosca en leche* (fly in milk) in every meeting

that I go to. Meaning he was the only person who was not white in the room (A.

Figueroa, personal communication, May 25, 2022).

It was a constant battle to ensure their survival, with oppositional forces

upholding standards of white supremacy. With few allies, such as Chancellor Hinderaker,

partnerships with some academic departments, and community leaders, the Chicano

community at UCR relied on each other. This level of commitment required a developed

critical consciousness, self-determination, and people power (Fals Borda, 1991; CCCHE,

1969). The Chicano activists created a foundation of Chicano success at UCR with

---

[105] In 1984 the Academic Senate at UCR voted to combine Chicano and Black studies into Ethnic Studies. Dr. Cortés shares, "All of the Chicano and Black Studies faculty were opposed. But the political climate had changed since 68. And the faculty voted to send the ballot out to a silent vote" (personal communication, June 8, 2022).

people power. All the participants expressed this throughout their interviews. They were well-organized, committed, and profound:

> We were making sure that Raza does not get thrown away, just because people don't feel that they're worth something. That is why all of this is at UCR. This is what it's all about. You're here to make that difference. You're here to make sure that it doesn't happen to anybody else (A. Figueroa, personal communication, May 25, 2022).
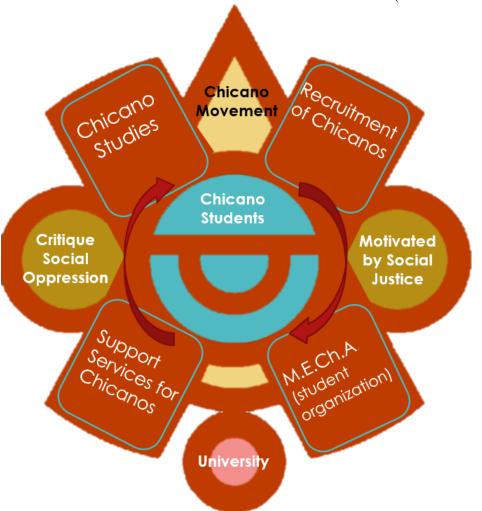
` In summary, to understand the conditions created by Chicano activists of the 1960s-70s, this SPAR study recovered the critical history, the counternarrative of the Chicano origins at UCR through archival research and oral histories as testimonio. With a team of Chicano/Latino undergraduate students at UCR, we documented the Chicano presence and the roots of serving at UCR. Our findings confirm that Chicano student activists, staff, and faculty of the 60s-70s created the conditions for higher education as a tool for Chicano/Latino liberation and UCR achieving many of the steps outlined in *El Plan de Santa Barbara: A Chicano plan for higher education* (1969). The authors of *El Plan* asserted that programs established must be "an extension of the Chicano struggle for liberation" and serve as a culturally affirming and relevant curriculum and spaces (p. 22).

UCR Chicano student activists and allies established a robust UCR Chicano community and built an infrastructure within the university to serve Chicano students, staff, and faculty, a counterspace (Yosso et al., 2009; Morales, 2017). I revisit Figure 1, the Ollin Model – Transformational Chicano Student Resistance introduced in Chapter 3, to further illustrate our findings. Consistent with the literature and conceptual models

leading this study, UCR Chicano student activists and faculty were transformational.

They were part of the collaborative authorship of *El Plan de Santa Barbara: A Chicano plan for higher education,* published in 1969 (*Adelante*, October 14, 1969) and led the implementation at UCR. Illustrated in Figure 1, the five steps of *El Plan* are categorized in four directions, which must be in association with each other for the university to serve as a tool for change and liberation. Our findings conclude that the Chicano student activists and faculty successfully institutionalized the Chicano movement at UCR in the 1960s-1970s. The Chicano student activists at UCR were motivated by social justice and a critique of social oppression (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001). Furthermore, their labor led to the creation and sustenance of these four structures of serving at UCR: Support Programs and Services, Chicano Studies, Recruitment of Chicanos, and the creation of MECHA de UCR in 1969 (*Adelante*, October 14, 1969).

**Figure 1**

Ollin Model – Transformational Chicano Student Resistance (Reintroduced)



Through grassroots activism, the conditions they created led UCR to become a

national leader in Chicano/Latino success (Anderson, 2018; Matute, 2022). Today, UCR

is considered a grassroots Hispanic Serving Research Institution and boasts the highest

graduation rates for Chicano/Latino students in the nation, ranked one of the top 10

public universities (Matute, 2022; Doran & Medina, 2017; Nichols, 2017). Our critical

recovery of this history was done with current Chicano/Latino undergraduate students. Chapter 5 summarizes the co- researcher findings to answer the second research question leading this SPAR study.

## Chapter 5 Co-Researcher Findings El Corazón de ESPARiTU

> By researching ourselves first and opening ourselves up to the process of inquiry, we become reflective researchers and vulnerable observers who are able to put down the pen, open our hearts, and gain insights into the soul of the story. As the narratives unfold and the divisions between us begin to transcend, we become more fully human(e) to one another and ourselves. (Watson, 2019, p.85).

In the fall of 2021, UCR enrolled 9,494 Chicano/Latino undergraduates. It continues to boost the largest Chicano/Latino undergraduate enrollment in the UC system (UCR Institutional Research, 2021). A grassroots Hispanic Serving Research Institution, the first in the UC system, UCR is considered a national leader in Chicano/Latino student success (Matute, 2022; Nichols, 2017; Excelencia in Education, 2021). Of the 9,494 Chicano/Latino undergraduate students enrolled at UCR in fall 2021, 12 joined me as co-researchers in this Student Participatory Action Research (SPAR) study. Our study was collective and transformative, spanning ten months of weekly meetings, dialogue, and action. Through encuentros, defined as spaces of engagement (Ayala et al., 2018), and testimonios, an intimate exchange rooted in Latin American storytelling practices, we formed the Encuentros, Student Participatory Action Research, and Testimonios (ESPARiTU)[106] research team.

ESPARiTU, our research team, co-led a study that allowed us to feel profoundly and collectively across generations (Fine & Torre, 2021). Chapter 4 summarizes the participant findings from our collective critical historical recovery of the origins of serving at UCR, derived from the archives and oral history as testimonio of Chicano

---

[106] Encuentros, Student Participatory Action Research, and Testimonios (ESPARiTU), a play on the Spanish word for spirit.

student activists and faculty from the 1960s-1970s. Conducting this study alongside the 12 Chicano/Latino undergraduate students was a transformative experience. This chapter summarizes the co-researcher narratives and lived experiences to answer the second research question leading this SPAR study: 2) What does it mean to engage Chicano/Latino undergraduate students in a critical recovery of the origins of serving from the 1960s-1970s at UC Riverside, an HSRI?

This chapter summarizes findings from 160 journal entries,[107] 33 meetings[108] that ranged from 2-3 hours, and over 30 hours[109] of one-on-one interviews. This project was collaborative, participatory, and action-oriented. The co-researchers and I established people power (Fals Borda, 1991), a sharing of power and the collective construction of knowledge that valued and applied the Chicano/Latino voice. Engaging the co-researchers of Chicano/Latino undergraduate students in a critical recovery of their counterhistory resulted in individual self-determination and collective people power achieved throughout the project in three phases: 1) *conocimiento[110]* (knowledge production), 2) *comunidad*[111] (establishing a collaborative knowledge community), and 3) *cambio[112]* (change) thus defining more explicitly the role of the student in the Ollin

---

[107] I include these data points to highlight the duration of the project within and outside the meetings held. Furthermore this provides readers with an idea of the labor of the facilitator and researcher to conduct a SPAR study of this caliber.

[108] This figure merges our course and subsequent co-researcher meetings.

[109] This only list the co-researcher pre and post interviews, it does not include the 35 pre-interviews conducted prior to selection of the co-researcher position or the office hours held in the duration of this project, which were not recorded as data.

[110] Italicized for effect. Conocimiento is the Spanish word for knowledge to knowing. Also, conocimiento is a key concept of Chicana Feminist Theory, a theoretical framework guiding this study.

[111] Italicized for effect. Comunidad is the Spanish word for community.

[112] Italicized for effect. Cambio is the Spanish word for change. A core of PAR, is action, this phase list the co- researcher's development and the ways they created actions from our study findings.

model illustrated in chapter 3. This chapter begins with a reintroduction of the two PAR techniques applied to understand the co-researchers' engagement, followed by the three ESPARiTU co- researcher phases, including sub-themes from the findings.

**Value and Application of the Chicano/Latino Voice**

Centering the knowledge of Chicano/Latino undergraduate students, their experience, and voice and including them as co-researchers in this project is a central tenet of CRT, the centrality of experiential knowledge (Solórzano, 1998) and PAR (Ayala et al., 2018). Working alongside Chicano/Latino undergraduate co-researchers was intentional. It affirmed my commitment to social justice by utilizing social justice education throughout our training and practice in ESPARiTU, a third tenet of CRT in education (Solórzano, 1998). Chicana Feminist Theory key concepts infused in the co-researcher course and meetings led to the co-researcher's self- determination. Throughout the course and discussions, we recognized each other's bodymindspirit (Rendon, 2009) and established conocimiento (Anzaldúa, 2013). We conducted this SPAR research study in a methodological nepantla (Anzaldúa, 2005) weaving CRT and CFT.

The project centralized the student's voices. In our first meeting, we established community agreements, which we reviewed and developed throughout our course. The final list was:

ESPARiTU Community Agreements:

1. Take space, make space - be mindful of introverts, extroverts, ambiverts

2. One mic - respecting when someone is speaking

3. Respecting Silence - being comfortable with silence and reflection

4.      Bubbles - Reach out when further explanation is needed

5.      Flexibility - No need to apologize for asking for flexibility

6.      What we say here stays here

7.      Snaps are okay

8.      Eating in the conference room and outside is okay[113]

Creating community agreements was the first tangible step in becoming a co-researching team and sharing power. The co-researchers were the heart of this project. They found a sacred space in our ESPARiTU meetings through mutual respect, care, love, and cambio (change). The co-researchers completed a twelve-week course, journaling their experiences as ongoing data analysis and sharing their findings through course assignments and later meeting goals. In addition, they completed a critical historical recovery and reclamation project, as part of this dissertation study, through archival research and conducting oral histories as testimonios. Throughout the process, they engaged meaningfully and committed deeply to this work, establishing people power.

**Establishing People Power**

When a group comes together to mobilize for a common purpose to create change, this is the start of people power (Fals-Borda, 1991). The co-researchers collaborated, established goals, and recovered a critical history at UCR. They were authentically committed throughout the project. Fals-Borda (1991) defines people power

---

[113] This community agreement was a result of the COVID-19 policies at UCR. Initially, we were not allowed to eat or drink in the physical space. After January 2022 this was updated, and food/drink was allowed per the participant's agreement. See, UCR Campus Return, 2022.

as empowering the oppressed. However, our study shifts this language away from victimization and instead uses empowering language to tell our stories. The Chicano/Latino students, the co-researchers in this study, are not powerless. They are powerful. They became agents of change with a critique of social oppression and were motivated by social justice (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001).

Kathryn Herr and Gary L. Anderson (2015) find PAR is effective only when the research prompts action and is informative for those involved in the study. The ESPARiTU co-researchers established people power; they mobilized for a common purpose producing and diffusing new knowledge on the origins of serving at UCR. The process was informative and reflective and produced several actions. The following section details the three phases, sharing the co- researcher narratives and experiences.

**Phase One: Conocimiento**

Conocimiento is the formation of knowledge gathered from the body, mind, and spirit (Anzaldúa, 1993). The construction of this knowledge leads to critical consciousness. The first phase for the ESPARiTU co-researchers was conocimiento, which led to self-determination. They became reflective of their journeys in higher education in connection to the readings and archival research we generated as part of the project. Vajra Watson (2019) posits that knowing oneself first leads to a scholar that is more reflective, vulnerable, and able to understand the "soul of the story" (p. 85). Although SPAR aimed to understand a critical counter story, the co- researchers' process of self-reflection was vital to their meaningful engagement in our course meetings, data collection, and data analysis. The co-researchers went beyond self-reflection. This

process led to self-determination, which *El Plan* defines as the "only acceptable mandate for social and political action; it is the essence of Chicano commitment" (CCCHE, 1969, p. 9). Furthermore, according to the Multidimensional Conceptual Framework for Understanding Servingness, validating experiences for Chicano/Latino students at HSIs include interactions with same-race peers, cultural validation, mentoring, and support groups (Garcia et al., 2019), all of which were part of this study and emphasized throughout the meetings.

**Journey to ESPARiTU: Pre-Interviews**

Each of the co-researchers completed a pre-interview before selection. Each shared their research experience and why they were interested in this project. Additionally, I asked how they defined research and their knowledge of Hispanic Serving Institutions. I utilized their responses to adjust the course syllabus. Their answers provide a baseline for their journey to ESPARiTU. In addition, I recorded how they gained self-determination and people power from these initial starting points. Most co-researchers were seniors planning to graduate in June 2022. The co-researchers mainly were humanities or social science majors, apart from 3 who were pre- med/pre-health.[114] Half the group was involved with the Chicano/Latino community on campus, either through a club, organization, or program, and several held leadership positions. The co- researchers who were involved had some context of the Chicano/Latino community at UCR due to their experience. However, most of the team was unfamiliar with the Chicano/Latino

---

[114] Chapter 3 provides additional descriptive details of the co-researchers. See, Table 1

origin story or the Hispanic Serving Institution designation at UCR. This finding was consistent with the literature; most students do not associate HSIs with any meaning (Garcia & Zaragoza, 2020). Although this was not required, many co-researchers did not have research experience. Only 4 of them had conducted research with a professor, a research team, or in a lab at UCR. The reasons for their interest in the project were very insightful. They were drawn to this study because of its focus on the Chicano/Latino community. Eva shared:

> This study is the accumulation of everything I'm interested in. It's at the intersection of my identity, my goals, everything that I value. It's my identity as a Chicana. And what that means, and how I'm going to apply that, hopefully as a future educator going into the field of academia, just thinking about what my presence could mean. And the fact that there are institutions that are specifically serving my community (personal communication, November 2, 2021).

Alma applied because they saw this as an opportunity to serve the Chicano/Latino community. She defined this project as closure for them as a fifth year at UCR, and they hoped the study would inspire future research in this area:

> Why, specifically, your research Arlene? Because I feel that it's important. It's important as a UC research institution, or whatever it's called, because there's not much of that experience. There's not a lot of opportunities for Chicanx students to be involved in research. But specifically, research about us research that represents the student life, the student movement to get us where we are. I find it a complete circle as a fifth year to do this research, where I started in my first year,

specifically in Chicano Student Programs.[115] So, for me, it is like closure. And a way to give back, to plant a semilla (seed), hoping that other folks get encouraged to do something like this. To visualize themselves as researchers (personal communication, November 5, 2021).

Vera also mentioned the importance of seeing oneself as a researcher:

I want to go to grad school to be someone like you. As soon as I read the description, I said this is for me! I've been looking for something exactly like this. I'm excited to be mentored by somebody that I look up to (personal communication, November 5, 2021).

Josefina, a pre-med student, shared how this study could help her learn more about her culture and provide her with skills she could utilize as a physician in the future:

As a first-generation Latina/Chicana student, I want to learn more about how my culture at a higher [education] institution started the initial movements for advocacy. I want to be part of the research that documents and continues to advocate for our communities. I hope to learn skill sets the will allow me to carry this research to medical school. So that I can extend this knowledge into my future and apply what I learn to my future career as a doctor (personal communication, November 2, 2021).

Most of the co-researchers aspired to go graduate school. Still, they did not all visualize themselves as researchers, nor did they have mentorship from Chicano/Latino faculty or

---

[115] Alma was a mentee in the volunteer peer mentor program through the Chicano Student Programs center in their first year and continued to be a part of the resource center as a student staff member.

graduate students at UCR or in general. In the fall of 2021, the Chicano/Latino full-time

ladder-rank faculty[116] at UCR was 8%, with Chicano/Latino graduate students at 19.2%

(UCR Institutional Research, 2021). These numbers are consistent with the UC system,

Chicano/Latino ladder-rank faculty was 8%, and Chicano/Latino graduate students were

17.3% in the fall of 2021 (UC Accountability Report, 2022). It is evident from the data

that the Chicano/Latino faculty and the graduate population at UCR and in the UC system

do not reflect the student population or the diversity in California. Based on the co-

researchers' responses, the lack of compositional diversity in the faculty and graduate

students had a negative impact on the graduate socialization of the Chicano/Latinos

students in this study. They do not see themselves reflected in the faculty or the graduate

students.

Another significant finding, undoubtedly connected to their limited graduate

school preparation and socialization opportunities, was their understanding of research.

Most of the co- researchers understood research as primarily scientific. Several co-

researchers pursued this study precisely because it centered on Chicano/Latinos. It was

through our training that the co- researchers were exposed to decolonial research

practices centered on humanity. Others questioned the limited research they had been

exposed to. At UCR, Amaru navigated a research laboratory that "wasn't really created

for folks like me, especially a Latino male in higher education. Navigating the

environment of a lab [...] I was definitely triggered" (personal communication, October

[116] Ladder-rank defined as faculty who are tenured or tenure-eligible. See, UC Accountability Report
https://accountability.universityofcalifornia.edu/2022/chapters/chapter-7.html

31, 2021). Although he learned several skills during his psychology research internship at UCR, he still found the research in psychology to be "gatekeeping knowledge." Belen initially hesitated to pursue any research project, "I used to think research was scary, especially because I was never really introduced to it" (personal communication, November 11, 2021). She was selected to be part of a research program through her community college; however, after the program, she still was unsure about research:

> I feel like there was so much more to research. I mean, if you asked me now what I think research is, I think it's an opportunity for researchers to help in a specific area. So, for example, like this research study [ESPARiTU] that I'm interviewing for, I think it's so beneficial, and it's so needed, especially for individuals who identify as Chicanx/Latinx or are people of color, because we not only need representation, but we need the resources (personal communication, November 4th, 2021).

All co-researchers were interested in this study because it could benefit the Chicano/Latino community. Additionally, all anticipated research could be more than their limited introductions. For example, Alma shared the following when asked how they defined research:

> *Aye*, research, I feel is really complicated. As a psychology major, I bumped into many research articles that even though the goal is to better humanity, the intentions, procedures, and methods are not done with the intention of really helping people. They're like, let me get these numbers on this paper. I find a disconnect, there's *no puente* (bridge), there is no connection between the results

224

of the study, and how it benefits the community that they're doing the study on.

You know there is a missing piece in research sometimes, the human part, or the

heart aspect of research (personal communication, November 5, 2021).

Alma compared their prior research experience to this study and articulated how it

differed from other work they have done. Furthermore, they expressed how they trusted

me[117] to lead this study:

Why do I know this research is done with love? Well, because I've been working

with you for a while and know that everything you do, it's with a reason *tiene*

*sentido* (has meaning). Todo lo *que haces* (everything you do), it's centering

community putting us as students *en frente de tus prioridades* (at the top of your

priorities). I feel that this research project is the cherry on top of all the work.

More than anything, this is just *los frutos de todo que se ha heco desde el 1972*[118]

*y hasta ahorita and y como se va seguir haciendo* (the fruits of everything that has

been done since 1972 to today and how it will continue) (personal

communication, November 5, 2022).

Many of their responses had a sense of urgency to know the Chicano/Latino

history at UCR. Most co-researchers connected this history to their current reality of

---

[117] I insert this purposefully to emphasize the importance of intentionally facilitating and leading a study. Furthermore, this illustrates the significance of building, investing, and sustaining relationships with the community, and for this study, especially with the students. This is something that I personally hold in high regard, this affirmation from Alma reminded me that it absolutely matters who is leading or setting a study up, what their values are and how they centering the community in their scholarship and praxis. A researcher's presence shapes the research purpose, practice and findings (Kondo, 1990; Villenas, 1996). In PAR especially, self-reflection and community building are essential in establishing a collaborative research project, trust is vital in achieving this goal (Fine & Torre, 2021).
[118] They are referring to the founding of Chicano Student Programs, which was established in 1972.

being a Chicano/Latino undergraduate student at UCR, an HSRI. Berta shared that she understood that serving Chicano/Latino students at UCR was not new, and in learning about the history, the university could be a transformative place:

> Serving was done years ago when Hispanic, Chicano, Latino students were starting out at the university because this university obviously wasn't made for them. And so, I think, being a part of this project, looking at the history then and now gives us a really interesting lens to look at transformative serving and transformative futures, where we can continue to advocate beyond just the university and into the greater Riverside community, apart from just like the bubble of UCR[119] (Berta, personal communication, November 5, 2021).

In summary, several of the co-researchers had social justice-oriented responses. Most understood that the project differed from their prior research experience or understanding of research. Several shared their interests in learning research skills and their graduate school aspirations. All co-researchers recognized this study centered on Chicano/Latino students and the Chicano/Latino origins at UCR, which was one of the primary reasons they chose to become a co-researcher. Lastly, most of the responses had a sense of urgency to conduct this research. This urgency propelled many co-researchers into critical discussions about race and identity throughout our course. It was the basis for their self-reflection and succeeding self- determination.

---

[119] This comment connects to poignantly with the efforts of MEChitas at UCR of the 1960s-1970s

**Self-Reflection: Understanding Our Histories**

In the first weeks of our course, we discussed our racialized experiences in education to *grasp the soul of our own stories*[120] before we could do so with the testimonios and archives we would be reviewing (Ayala et al., 2018; Watson, 2019). To ensure we had the environment to immerse ourselves in the discussion, I introduced several tools, including journaling as self- reflection and data analysis. In addition, co-researchers had the opportunity to co-facilitate team meetings and submit weekly questions based on the course readings. As a result, the co- researchers engaged profoundly with the tasks. Lastly, they had the opportunity to interview each other as part of this first phase of conocimiento. Bringing CFT to the course meetings, I encouraged the co-researchers to lead with their bodymindspirit through their journal submissions, class engagement and discussions. Rendon (2009) describes this as a practice of Sentipensante pedagogy, where instructors value the students' wholeness, defined as their "intellectual, social, emotional, and spiritual" presence (p. 135).

A Sentipensante pedagogy was applied throughout the course and class meetings, aligning with the theoretical frameworks guiding this study. This pedagogical framework is participatory and aligned with the methodology of this project, PAR. Sentipensante pedagogy aims to cultivate *personas educadas*,[121] co-constructing knowledge that

---

[120] Vajara Watson (2019) defines this process as a deep reflection of our own presence in the work, a necessary step for transformative research. She also recognizes that this form of inquiry serves as a direct threat to white supremacy challenging traditional white standards of knowledge production. See, Watson, V. (2019). Liberating methodologies: Reclaiming research as a site for radical inquiry and transformation. In Community-Based Participatory Research (p. 70). University of Arizona Press.

[121] Italicized for effect. This Spanish phrase translates to educated people, however in this context an educated person is one whose knowledge derives from life experience, often outside the classroom and formal education.

challenges the power constructions in the academy by developing life-long learners

committed to equality and social change (Rendon, 2009). This pedagogy gave us the

tools to reflect and engage more intentionally. Additionally, because we met in the office

of Chicano Student Programs during this period, the environment allowed for deeper self-

reflection surrounded by the histories of Chicano/Latino students at UCR, such as the

Chicano Student Program's mural painted in 1974 (see, Figure 8). As a result, we co-

constructed a counterspace where they felt comfortable sharing, healing, and reflecting

meaningfully (Yosso et al., 2009; Morales, 2017; Torre & Fine, 2021).

**Figure 8**

Photo of an ESPARiTU Meeting in Chicano Student Programs



Note. This picture was taken during our course meetings in the office of Chicano Student
Programs at UC Riverside. Reprinted with permission.

**Developing Conocimiento**

Several co-researchers expressed overcoming obstacles throughout their K-12

experience because of language, citizenship status, income, and other factors. They

understood their identity as Chicana/o/x or Latina/o/x at UCR and the critical moments of their past that either inspired them to pursue higher education or motivated them to continue. Most of them disclosed very personal reflections of family. Mia shared how she was motived by her parents and her upbringing. She grew up in a mixed status household with constant fear of police violence and deportation:

> My interests in education first of all is because of my parents. They didn't get an education pass the third-grade level. They are street vendors, and growing up they told me, *si no quieres vender así o que te persiga la policía* (if you don't want to street vend or be chased by the police), you better get your education you better pursue higher education. My parents, instilled in me, education kind of liberates you, or gives you freedom. Basing it on my experience growing up with them street vending, I've seen them as my role models (personal communication, November 12, 2021).

Amaru defined these initial weeks as the "process of becoming a co-researcher" and many of them brought their families, present trepidations, and aspirations for the future to our discussions:

> This process of becoming a co-researcher has been personal and intentional in every aspect. I think it has made me really think about what I wanted to do. Who I want to be. I enter these spaces of academia with many identities: Brown, queer, first-generation, product of immigrants, ADHD, artist, *pero primeramente soy hijo de* (first and foremost, I am the son of) Maria y Juan Martinez,[122] in every

---

space I enter. When I think my 'why' my answer is my mother. My mother was

my first advocate and educator within the educational pipeline. She is my first

inspiration (personal communication, November 14, 2022).

For Delfina, this process of self-reflection in our course meetings finally made her feel

safe and accepted at UCR:

It [ESPARiTU] is a different feeling of a class environment, knowing I share

similar beliefs and values with the other co-researchers, while also knowing that

they can relate [to] what is means to be a first-generation student and the

hardships that come along with being raised in a country that is not friendly to

immigrants. I have enjoyed the different readings on our history like the Chicano

movement and other important critical readings. You have given me a great sense

of who I want to become one day, one thing I carry with me is how you stated 'if

you can't find it, create it' those few simple words have impacted my life (personal

reflection, November 29th, 2022)

I also introduced art, every course meeting would start with a graphic art poster

from the Dignidad Rebelde[123] collection featuring various inspirational quotes from

Chicano/Latino, Black, and Indigenous leaders. The posters connected to the week's

course reading themes. I often used this art as a springboard for our discussion and wove

the readings throughout as a visual synthesis of our learning. Fine and Torre (2021) share

it is important to provide a variety of creative engagement opportunities for co-researcher

---

[123] Dignidad Rebelde is a graphic arts collaboration of two Xicanx artists, Melanie Cervantes and Jesus Barraza. They aim at documenting the stories of resilience through graphic art and sharing this art with the community. See, https://dignidadrebelde.com/

development to ensure everyone can participate, using art in addition to the other tools was one way that I did this. One of the art posters, included a quote from Vine Deloria Jr.,[124] "Every society needs sacred places. A society that cannot remember its past, and honor it, is in peril of losing its soul" (Dignidad Rebelde, 2018). I asked the team to reflect on their sacred space, "What/were/who is your sacred space? How do you define this?" (personal communication, January 18, 2022). The responses detail the co-researchers' conocimiento, their self-reflection leading to critical consciousness. Belen defined a sacred space as a place where she can exist, rest, and meet her needs "where I can speak my truth" (personal communication, January 19th, 2022). Vero shared that she would no longer be silenced and declared that one of her goals in life would be to aid women of color to end the cycle of silence. Lastly, Berta powerfully declared:

> I am sacred. I love saying it to the open, sky, space, universe, room (even if its empty) that I am loved, sacred, important, real, valid, feeling, and I should never apologize for any of those things (personal communication, January 21st, 2022).

> In January 2022, the campus required all instruction to be online for the first four weeks of the quarter due to a surge of the COVID-19 Omicron variant (UCR Return to Campus, 2022). Several co-researchers faced loss due to the COVID-19 pandemic[125] and referenced their loved ones throughout the course. Together we recognized that grief and pain were also part of our team's immediate reality coming back to in-person instruction

---

[124] Vine Deloria Jr. was a lawyer and activist who advocated for the rights of Native Americans. He was a Standing Rock Sioux and published several books on Native American self-determination. He was a faculty member at the University of Arizona from 1978-1990 followed by the University of Colorado Boulder where he retired in 2000. See, https://www.colorado.edu/law/2023/02/06/vine-deloria-jr-70

[125] Three of the co-researchers lost a close friend or family member due to COVID-19.

during a global pandemic. Therefore, our meetings pivoted to online instruction. As a

class, we proceeded with co- researcher interviews, where the team conducted an oral

history as a testimonio interview in pairs. Up to this point, the co-researchers had

primarily engaged in self-reflection and conducted preliminary archival research in the

Tomás Rivera library, which I described in Chapter 4. The co-researcher interviews led

our group to the second phase, *comunidad*.

## Phase Two: Comunidad

The PAR methodology is collaborative, reciprocal, and intentional. PAR aims to

engage participants in a research study meaningfully, establishing connections that will

conclude with an action that aligns with the community's needs. Our team was

collaborative from the inception, we set clear goals, and everyone was an authentic

participant. I did not expect the close bond this study would establish; our team became a

*comunidad*. This was beyond the expectations set for the co-researchers; it was an

organic development because of our critical time together. This was the second phase of

our project; our collaborative research study became a *comunidad*. When interviewing

each other, the co-researchers shared how significant this time was in their own

understanding of each other. The counterstories exchanged facilitated a transformation

that built a community and nurtured the community cultural wealth of the co-researchers

(Yosso, 2006). Ximena shared how deeply she connected to her fellow co-researcher

because of the co- researcher interview assignment:

I must admit that when I started sharing my interviewee's answers, I was

emotional it was heartfelt. I wanted to cry. I had a knot in my throat because there

232

was a woman in front of me that was disclosing personal things about her and her

family. For that moment in time, I could imagine the story she was telling me. I

feel truly honored she allowed me to hear a glimpse of her life. We spoke this

unspoken language to each other. The vulnerability was there, and so was the

rawness. We are two mujeres that are striving to be the best version of ourselves.

The sense of familia is there within each of us and we want to heal from traumas

but highlight our successes (personal communication, January 31, 2022).

**Reciprocity in the Comunidad: In Lak'Ech: Tú Eres Mi Otro Yo**

Engaging in active listening is part of the reciprocity of testimonios. A testimonio

is a person's account of their racialized and politicized lived experiences; it is also the act

of recovery that can be powerful for both the storyteller and the listener (Delgado Bernal

et al., 2016). For example, in the poem *Pensamiento Serpenitino* by renowned Chicano

playwright Luis Valdez[126] (1990), he includes the Mayan philosophy of In Lak'Ech. The

poem narrates the duality of a movement for change; essentially, there can be social

justice where there is injustice. I shared this with the class to further contextualize their

testimonios and the responsibilities of bearing witness to each other's stories. As they

analyzed the testimonios, the co-researchers did so with this philosophy in mind, "If I

love and respect you, I love and respect myself" (p. 4). Introducing this poem to co-

researchers was another way I incorporated creative tools for engagement and further

analysis (Fine & Torre, 2021).

---

[126] Luis Valdez founded Teatro Campesino in 1965, a Chicano theater group whose plays focused on farm worker struggle and resistance. Furthermore, it practiced the merging of art and activism, artivismo. See, Mundel, I. (2007). *Performing (r) evolution: The story of el teatro campesino.* Postcolonial Text, 3(1).

By incorporating culturally-centered teaching tools, I became attuned to my use of words and concepts ingrained in my academic training. Introducing In Lak'Ech, as well as the purposefully selected readings and ideas in the course syllabus, was my attempt to establish "everybody's language," what Yow (2005) defines as the researcher's ability to understand the participant's language and disrupt the academic jargon that might hinder connection. Thus, establishing people's power began with our connection to the readings, discussions, preliminary research, and each other. Mia made the connection between this philosophy, our study, and the creation of our *comunidad* in ESPARiTU:

> To me, this poem is inspirational. While the words may be simple, the message is about making strides towards dismantling the barriers that too often divide humanity, destroying the connection we have as people. I see this poem in this research as our project focuses on what comes from the heart. [...] Through this project, we are building community with respect, appreciation and admiration (personal communication, February 12, 2022).

Similarly, Sandra shared the ways ESPARiTU contributes to the larger *comunidad* and the appreciation of each other's stories and presence:

> Feelings and stories are very important in our class and the research study overall. [...] We are contributing to the community through this work by not only learning about our culture but essentially conducting research and giving this information back to the community. When we speak of our experiences, we listen (personal communication, February 22nd, 2022).

234

**Establishing a Comunidad: "Para la Gente, By la Gente" (For the people, by the people)**

Our course was more than a training, and our meetings were more than just a time to plan the project; we shared and listened to one another. We created a nexus like the UCR Chicano activists in the 1960s-70s. The co-researchers set the tone as we build a student-led and student- centered participatory action research project. They pushed the confines of traditional research by engaging in critical dialogue leading with their bodymindspirit (Rendon, 2009). Our final presentations and papers for the course affirmed this *comunidad.* Each co-researcher so eloquently shared their reflection on the course and the community we established. Belen recognized their transformation naming the critical points in the course meetings that led to this:

> ESPARiTU is *para la gente, by la gente* (for the people, by the people). These past ten weeks of journaling, *encuentors*, critical discussions, and holding space to reflect, learn, and unlearn colonialized ways of thinking and living have been enriching. ESPARiTU has enriched the minds of young research scholars like myself to further immerse ourselves in research that decenters the dominant white culture by centering the past, present, and future experiences of Chicanx/Latinx students (March 18, 2022).

All co-researchers shared final presentations at the end of the course. These included songs, art, and graphics with the ultimate goal of Chicanx/Latinx liberation at UCR and in the community. This was a significant finding consistent with the self-deterministic orientation of Chicanos in the 1960s-1970s, who aspired to create change in the Chicano

community as outlined in *El Plan* and various articles in *Nuestra Cosa* at UCR (CCCHE, 1969: Garcia, 2022). Their presentations also included several ideas for the dissemination of our findings. Mia recommended establishing a center where SPAR could continue:

> UC Riverside is a reflection of the Chicano movement and the pursuit of Chicano liberation on a local, state, and national level during the 1960s and 1970s, where higher education was an important component. [...] The mission of a Hispanic Serving Institution goes beyond the numbers it produces; it is about the legacy its students leave behind. It is essential for the establishment of a space where students can contribute to the legacy through informed research and participatory action (Mia, personal communication, March 22, 2022).

While listening to her colleagues share their final presentations in class, Eva claimed that ESPARiTU is an example of a transformative educational experience:

> Some presentations were just so thorough and graceful throughout; they filled me with so much pride and hope for the future of education. I want scholarship to look like what everyone on the ESPARiTU team brings to it, because I admire and respect everyone so much and am so grateful to learn from them (Eva, personal communication, March 11, 2022).

> Our ESPARiTU meetings were an exchange of stories, histories, and dreams.

Alma referred to this in their first journal entry as sharing *pan en casa*[127] (bread at home). In their final paper, Alma shares a short poem referring to our collaborative research and

---

[127] In Chapter 4, I start with Alma's poem of her first weeks in ESPARiTU, were she references our discussions in the class are so intimately and lovingly shared like a bread basket at home.

critical recovery of history as the pan (bread) we created in ESPARiTU. The new

knowledge produced, the counterstories recovered (Fals Borda, 1991; Yosso, 2006), just

like bread, are meant to be shared with the people:

> ESPARiTU's goal is to fill in those gaps and search for those stories that have
>
> been silenced, *que mejor que compartir* (what is better than sharing) these
>
> findings *en vivo y a color* (live and in color) with everyone.
>
> *El Arte y el Pan son iguales*, (Art and Bread are the same)
>
> *es hecho por y para la gente.* (They are made for and by the people)
>
> *Por ellos, se debe de siempre compartir con todxs* (For them, we should always
>
> share with others)
>
> (Alma, Journal Entry, March 15, 2022).

PAR allows us to "stand together in solidarity, bear witness in the community,

engaging in freedom struggles, and produce research with humility, research that dares to

tell a different story" (Fine & Torre, 2021, p. 78). A *comunidad* was solidified and we

became the ESPARiTU research team. SPAR is both a methodology and a praxis. As co-

researchers, we witness the community we are co-creating, sharing our stories and

learning from one another along with the course materials. We understand our

responsibility to the larger community. The following section discusses how the

*comunidad* of ESPARiTU led to action, *cambio.*

## Phase Three: Cambio

The role of a SPAR researcher is to engage initially in self-reflection and,

ultimately, self-determination that challenges widely accepted traditional research

methods. Paulo Freire (2006) defines this process of unlearning as the process of desocialization. Ira Shor (1993) states this process challenges "learned anti-intellectualism" and contests the "myths" and "values" learned in mass culture (p. 31-32). When Chicano/Latino students are not satisfied with the campus racial climate or perceive the environment as hostile, they build communities that represent and reflect the cultural wealth of their home communities (Yosso, 2005; Yosso et al., 2009). These spaces, like ESPARiTU, become social and academic counterspace for Chicano/Latino students because of their rejection on campus (Yosso et al., 2009). In this phase, the co-researchers expressed their frustrations as Chicano/Latinos in higher education. Many shared their critiques of social oppression and were motivated by social justice (Solórzano and Delgado Bernal, 2001). The following excerpt is an example of this shift; because it discloses immigration status, I will leave as anonymous. However, it is especially poignant to illustrate the transformation of this co-researcher:

> As many of us grow up internalizing *que los trapos susios, se lavan en la casa*[128] it can be challenging to engage with an activity like this one and I am guilty of that because for a long time, I didn't know how to share my story because I wasn't allowed to mainly because of my immigration status. It was always about making sure I did not make myself an easy target, so for a long time, I learned how to stay silent for the safety and protection of myself and my undocumented family. [...] When we become the ancestors of the new generations, our memories and stories

---

[128] This is a phrase in Spanish which translates to "the dirty rags are washed at home," it resembles the English phrase do not air your dirty laundry in public referring to family secrets should remain at home and those with these secrets, in this context due to fear or guilt are silenced.

can long live and serve our communities (Anonymous, personal communication, n.d).

Many co-researchers also shared their trepidations with the HSI designation and identity at UCR. Following our discussions on HSIs throughout the year, they were able to grasp the federal policies and grant structure. Additionally, due to our critical historical recovery, they could map the grassroots HSI identity where the Chicano student activists and faculty of the 1960s-1970s "strove for a Hispanic-serving identity prior to the creation of the federal designation" (Doran & Medina, 2017, p. 45). On April 6, 2022,[129] ESPARiTU participated in a statewide webinar hosted by the UC Chicanx/Latinx Resource Centers featuring Dr. Gina Garcia, whose HSI scholarship was included in our course reading and discussions. The webinar focused on building solidarity and racial justice among UC Chicanx/Latinx students and leaders.

The first slide in Dr. Garcia's presentation was the UCR Chicano Student Program's mural. In her introduction, Dr. Garcia highlighted UCR's grassroots identity and long-time commitment to Chicanx/Latinx student success. She recognized UCR, specifically Chicano Student Programs, and how the center has set a foundation and a model for "servingness" in the UC system. This validation on a national scale from a renowned HSI scholar was a significant moment for our team. They felt affirmed and validated their findings, the labor they recovered from the archives, and their research on the Chicano student activists and faculty created the conditions for UCR to emerge a

---

[129] UCR Chancellor Kim Wilcox published an opinion piece in Inside Higher Ed was on March 2, 2022, regarding HSIs. See, Super HSIs: Recognizing a New Tier of Institutions https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2022/03/03/funding-should-be-targeted-super-hsis-opinion

national model for Chicano/Latino student success. However, they also recognized that the work for Chicano liberation must continue at UCR. Alma shared they felt seen as a Chicanx/Latinx community in Dr. Garcia's presentation, but also recognized gaps remain:

> Her *platica* guided me to meditate on the work that we are doing en ESPARiTU as a collective but also individually. First off, I felt hella appreciated by the representation of the mural in *Proferosa* Garcia's presentation! I also felt SEEN when she mentioned that the ETST departments and student centers like CSP have been doing this work for a while. [...] I appreciate my role in CSP and *la neta es un privilegio trabajar y SERVIR aqui* (in truth, it is a privilege to work and serve here) BUT I remember sharing my thoughts *con mucho coraje* (a lot of anger) because our school does not appreciate the efforts, the centers at Costo Hall *se rifan (*they do a great job) (personal communication, April 8, 2022).

Rigo shared that the webinar excited him to listen to the oral histories as testimonios. However, he questioned the designation itself following UCR's loss of designation in 2020:

> After listening to Dr. Garcia, I am more excited and looking forward to the interviews we will be conducting in the coming weeks. I am left reminiscing about all the work that has been done in my 4 years at UCR and the movements that have occurred since I started coming to school. We have had marches and strikes for unions, equal pay, and call to action for the importance of Black lives.

We even had a backlash from the student population when UCR lost its HSI[130]

standing and it's always interesting to me how much has occurred since then. We

fought for a title that really doesn't do much, but it was about the principle of how

UCR treats its student population (personal communication, April 11, 2022).

Josefina left the webinar, reviewing the readings and meeting discussions, questioning

whether UCR is doing enough:

Dr. Garcia's presentation made me realize HSIs have more issues than I thought.

Being in ESPARiTU has opened my eyes and made me realize the truth about

HSIs. I was aware of the injustices towards the Latinx/Chicanx community at

UCR. However, when Dr. Garcia brought up the funding that HSIs receive I was

shocked because many of the Ethnic and Gender offices here at UCR require

more funding than they receive. Dr. Garcia talked about her three main points;

inequitable outcomes for people of color, people of color not being empowered,

and that funding for HSIs is based on white standards. Like many others that

attend, I was also curious on what UCR has done to fulfill their role as an HSI.

Who can we hold accountable? (personal communication, April 11, 2022).

Amaru declared that the structures created at UCR in the 1960s-1970s by Chicano

student activists, staff, and faculty are the only physical spaces that demonstrate

"servingness," this, he shared, must change:

---

[130] In Fall 2020 UCR lost its federal HSI designation after missing the filing deadline, after advocacy from student, staff, and campus leadership the designation was reinstated by US Department of Education in March 2021. See, UCR Regains Federal Designation as an HSI
https://www.highlandernews.org/82124/ucrs-regains-federal- designation-as-a-hispanic-serving-institution/

241

The spirit of serving Chicanx/Latinx students resides in the office of Chicano

Student Programs [and formerly Chicano Studies] not on the outside. We [UCR]

are not serving our students and its time to stop these performative titles. It's time

for the administration building to transform into a building of servingness and

advocacy (personal communication, April 6, 2022).

Reflecting on the co-researcher role in preparation for the interviews with Chicano

students and faculty of the 1960s and 1970s, Eva shared the ESPARiTU co-researchers

are members of the larger community first and scholars or researchers second. The co-

researchers recognized they *were*[131] researchers, "ESPARiTU gave me the knowledge to

believe I could be everything I thought I couldn't be" (Belen, personal communication,

March 18, 2022). Amaru proclaimed that he is a scholar and part of the Chicano legacy at

UCR with a poem:

Before I leave UCR, remember me this way:

As an *Hermano* (brother) who only wanted the best for his *familia* (family)

Remember me as someone who did it all on his own terms choosing himself above all

Remember me as someone who found themselves in a world and culture that did nothing

but tell me who I should be.

Remember me as someone who did what they had to do to survive.

Remember me not by titles but by *corázon* (heart)

---

[131] Italicized for effect. I am emphasizing this word because the co-researchers embodied this identity, it was a transition from the first weeks in our course meetings when they were unsure what research could be and did not necessarily see visualize themselves as scholars. Now, in the third phase, cambio they proclaimed they were scholars and more.
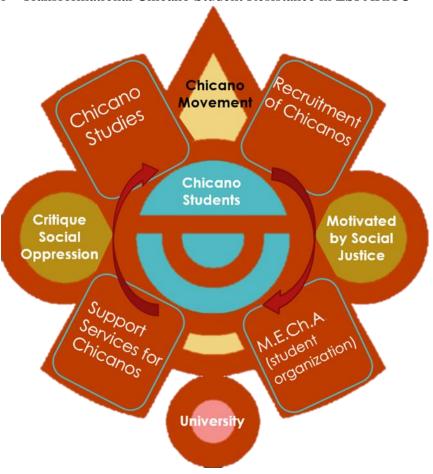
That is the legacy I leave behind and the legacy I will continue further to the newest

horizon.

This is where I am

I build on Figure 1. The Ollin Model – Transformational Chicano Student

Resistance to visualize and understand the Chicano/Latino undergraduate co-researcher

findings. Reintroduced in Figure 1.2 *Ollin Model – Transformational Chicano Student*

*Resistance in ESPARiTU* illustrates how our critical recovery of history resulted in the

co-researcher's individual self-determination and collective people power achieved

throughout the study in three phases: 1) *conocimiento* (knowledge production), 2)

*comunidad* (establishing a collaborative knowledge community), and 3) *cambio* (change)

thus defining more explicitly the role of the student in the Ollin Model within the four

directions, or structures, created by UCR Chicano student activists and faculty in the

1960s-1970s.

**Figure 1.2**

Ollin Model – Transformational Chicano Student Resistance in ESPARiTU



**A Critical Recovery of History: The Co-Researcher's Perspective**

When oral histories are "intentional and political" conducted to understand groups affected by racial discrimination, the oral history is a testimonio (Blackmer Reyes & Curry Rodriguez, 2016, p. 168). Our oral history as testimonio interviews began in the last months of our ten-month study. It was part of phase three, cambio. The co-researchers co-constructed the semi-structured interview protocol following our collaborative research design (Yow, 2005). We conducted group interviews with the

participants from May – June 2022. The co-researchers were divided into three teams.

These teams would lead the transcription and analysis of one of the three participants.

They had the choice of which participant team they wanted to be a part of, and it was up

to the team to make sure they took copious observation notes during the group interview.

We interviewed three participants, and our findings are summarized in Chapter 4. This

section shares the co-researchers experience conducting and analyzing the oral history as

testimonios. I incorporate this section to highlight how the testimonio was a "process,

product, and a way of teaching and learning" (Delgado Bernal et al., 2016, p. 2). As a

result, the process of recovering the oral history as testimonio was also a finding and

attributed to the co- researchers' *cambio*, the third phase.

 The first participant we interviewed was Ofelia; of the three participants, she was

the first at UCR in 1965. When she walked into our meeting room, she shared how she

passed the current buildings and took a moment to reflect on her time at UCR over 50

years ago. She started her interview by sharing how powerful memories are:

> Your mind goes back to what you were feeling, who was here. I come to campus,
>
> close my eyes, and tell you what was there. I come now and it's all hidden
>
> because of all the [buildings]" (personal communication, May 11, 2022).

>  This statement weighed heavily on all of us. We, ESPARiTU, were there to

recover the hidden story and make this absence visible. As curadera/o/x historians, we

were there to recover our history and "restore [our] dehistoricized sense of identity and

possibility" (Morales, 1998, p.135). Berta reflects on how trusting and open Ofelia was

with her testimonio:

I feel that often in academia we are pushed into bubbles based on "success" and

people are taught to normalize leaving people behind. It hurt me to hear about

Ofelia's realization of what her dad meant when he said it would be the last time

they would be able to speak to each other because once she went to UCR.[132] But, I

feel that her mentioning that conversation and that unspoken gap/bridge that she

had to learn to navigate speaks volumes as to what many people experience when

bubbles [are] formed between what we learn in Higher Ed and what our loved

ones know (personal communication, May 17, 2022).

All the testimonios built on one another, affirming the Chicano student activists

and faculty were united and prevailed in the 1960s-1970s. The co-researchers and I

noticed how they also mentioned the other. For example, Alfredo shared how he

recognized Ofelia and others were building this infrastructure before his arrival.

Likewise, Ofelia regarded Alfredo so highly as a friend and leader in the community.

When asked if he had a mentor at UCR, Dr. Cortés shared that Dr. Eugene Cota-Robles

was his guide and that Chancellor Rivera became his friend. This level of connection,

especially when you are the only one or the first of something, the case for most of the

leaders interviewed, was a profound realization for our group. Berta noted these

friendships were sustained and often grounded the Chicano students in the 60s-70s

---

[132] Ofelia shared that her father believed her leaving to UCR, to university, would mean that she could not associate herself with him or her family anymore, she reflected on the impact this had on her and how she realized later what he meant, "He told me "Mija" and this is the tear jerker for me, always, but he said, 'You're going to go and we are not going to be able to talk to you anymore,' and I didn't get it initially but you know what he meant 'Cause you're going to be so much more educated than us that we are not going to be able to talk.'

(personal communication, May 17, 2022). The emotions were very present and

reverberated in each of the testimonios we received; as Delgado Bernal et al. (2016) find,

testimonios serve as a bridge by connecting "generations of displaced and

disenfranchised communities across time" (p. 3).

To preserve and reclaim the counterstory, we transcribed the interviews. For

many of the co-researchers, this study was their first time with transcription and analysis.

During our class co-researcher interviews, they each completed transcriptions and some

coding; therefore, were familiar with the expectations. The transcriptions were paused

and finished in the summer to celebrate graduations[133] and the end of the year.

Nevertheless, in the summer, we completed the transcriptions and some analysis.[134] I

asked the co-researchers about their experience transcribing and interviewing the

participants in their post-interviews. Ximena transcribed Ofelia's interview and shared

how each of the testimonios transported her to the 1960s-1970s at UCR:

> I could see it like I'm there in the 1960s, you know. I was living that, seeing all
>
> these things. Even when Alfredo Figueroa was talking about it. And Dr. Carlos
>
> Cortés, everybody, it just painted UCR in this way of like, shoot, we have been
>
> here for a long time (personal communication, August 5, 2022).

Ximena added how the participants felt so comfortable in the space we created:

> When Alfredo Figueroa was talking about his daughter. And he started to cry.
>
> Because again, in my culture you don't see that a lot. You don't see men become

---

[133] 8 of our co-researchers in ESPARiTU graduated and most of them participated in the Raza Grad
ceremony at UCR, the 50th Annual Raza Grad Celebration in June 2022.
[134] Unfortunately, because this was completed after July 2022 the end of the co-researcher commitment, not
all the co-researchers completed the transcription and analysis.

so vulnerable, but he did with us students, you know, with us. Someone else

would have been like oh, you know, they [the co-researchers] don't know

anything. But Alfredo took it seriously. And he valued our time. We had so much

respect for that. And I admired that (personal communication, August 5, 2022).

Hearing Alfredo's testimonio allowed Eva to make the connections between the archives,

our discussions, the course readings, and her personal life:

I remember specifically Alfredo's interview, just like I was hearing things. [...]

just making those connections. I feel like throughout the process, I think the

connections between research and work and academic study and just my own

personal life was strengthened. So, now I try to bring, you know, the people that

came before me into everything so that they're not forgotten (personal

communication, July 21, 2022).

Dr. Cortés's solidarity with the Chicano students and with his colleagues in Black studies

resonated with Amaru:

We must stand in solidarity with each other. Like Dr. Carlos Cortés was talking

about, like Black and Chicano Studies happening together, that fight was

happening together. And obviously, they made a strategic decision not to do

Ethnic Studies. Those were the movements that happened, and we wouldn't be

here if it wasn't for them. And that's why I went into ESPARiTU look for that

definition of why education, why HSIs, and that's what I found at the end of the

day (personal communication July 14, 2022).

Sandra shared how she was moved by the testimonios, as a method and a practice:

248

With the focus on testimonios and personal history that we had in this study, that specific aspect of it has really resonated with me. The interviews helped like a lot, especially with Dr. Carlos Cortés, I don't know why but his interview really resonated with me. I used to think that research is more kind of like, based off like numbers, just like from the hard sciences. But now with this project. The qualitative research has, like, just stuck with me more, I would like to do that type of research. Based on my upbringing, emotions, and everything now I value a lot of like people's stories, and it's just powerful (personal communication, August 4, 2022).

Like Sandra, many of the co-researchers shared how much they valued the historical research methods. Josefina shared:

I feel more familiar with them, especially with oral histories. I didn't know that was even a thing. So just hearing about it and being able to experience it and practice it was, I think one of my favorite parts of the research. I think it was the oral histories that just kind of like, blew my mind, I didn't even know that it counted [as research] (personal community, September 22, 2022).

The participants also encouraged the co-researchers they concluded each of their testimonios, expressing gratitude to the team for documenting this critical origin story at UCR and offering consejos (advice). Dr. Cortés said how proud he was to be interviewed by the co- researchers, the current Chicano/Latino undergraduates at UCR. He proclaimed, "my story is stronger because it is part of your larger story" (personal communication, June 8, 2022). The participants reminded us so caringly that we, too, are

part of this story of the evolution of Chicanos at UCR. It struck a powerful chord with all

of us. As I watched the co-researchers take this in, I too, was proud of them. We led the

interviews with CRT and CFT as our theoretical guide grounded by the Mayan

philosophy of In Lak Ech, "tu eres me otro yo/you are my other me" (Valdez, 1991). Our

collaborative research demonstrated the utmost respect and care. Alma confirmed,

"Documenting through oral histories la palabra (the stories) from our elders / Alumni

who were student activists in their years as students, [was] an act of care and preserving

the efforts of '*mi otro yo' (*personal communication, n.d.).

## Production and Diffusion of New Knowledge

We set out to produce and diffuse new knowledge, and as a result, we recovered

the counterhistory, our origin story (Morales, 1998). We recovered the counterstories of

labor and activism on the journey toward Chicano liberation at UCR. Methodologically

in PAR, the collective research process should lead to an activity or action with the intent

of creating change (Herr & Anderson, 2015). The engagement of Chicano/Latino

undergraduate students in our SPAR project resulted in conocimiento, comunidad, and

cambio. Documenting the origins of serving at UCR and learning counterstories shared

from the Chicano student activists and faculty who created those origins transformed the

co-researchers and I. We connected the vital labor and advocacy of the activists of the

60s-70s to the present-day accolades received at UCR result of their significant work.

This SPAR study was intergenerational, centering on Chicano/Latino students of the past

and the present. Through our diffusion of new knowledge, we institutionalized and

transmitted knowledge from the generation who established the origins of serving at UCR

250

to the current generation who recovered and reclaimed it (Fals-Borda, 1991, 151). The final section details the actions ESPARiTU accomplished in diffusing new knowledge.

**ESPARiTU Logo**

SPAR is a political statement, ESPARiTU is an act of solidarity, and the co-researchers created a symbol to memorialize it. As a team, we created a logo to reflect this (see, Figure 9). The logo art honors the 50th anniversary of the initial structures of serving found in our research, Chicano Student Programs and Chicano Studies, both established in 1972. The art includes a sacred heart held by the *estudiantes* (students), the group this study centered. Below the heart were the *semillas* (seeds) planted in the 60s-70s and continue to be planted today, with roots embedded deeply in the words of our research team, ESPARiTU, at the bottom. The flame illuminates the fifty years. Quetzalcóatl Aztec god of knowledge and learning outlines the heart at the logo's center. Amaru illustrated the artwork with input from all the co-researchers. We included the ESPARiTU logo (see, Figure 9) in all the marketing for our actions.

**Nuestra Cosita Zine**

Inspired by *Nuestra Cosa* authors of the past, we decided to produce an anniversary zine[135] to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Chicano self-published newspaper and to share our findings with the community. Although the newspaper is no longer produced due to staffing and funding, the zine honored its legacy. ESPARiTU

---

[135] Zines using various forms of printed storytelling techniques that are blended together and usually self-published. In this context, zines are also a form of counterstorytelling bridging our archival research and the co-researcher's present stories together. See, Carpio, G. (2022). "Not on a Hill but Underground": Relocating Expert Knowledge and Democratic Practice in the History Classroom. Journal of American History, 108(4), 794-801.

created a collaborative zine in partnership with Chicano Student Programs and Teatro Quinto Sol (TQS)[136] to celebrate the "Community Alternative Newspaper" that reported the stories often under-told or forgotten (*Nuestra Cosa*, November 1979). TQS established Nuestra Cosita in 2018 and has produced an annual zine since its founding. We worked together to create, edit, print, and distribute the anniversary zine. Our zine was thematically divided into past, present, and future sections. The section on the past featured ESPARiTU members and some of archival research findings. The section on the present included poetry, photos, and graphic art created by members of ESPARiTU and TQS.[137] Lastly, the section on the future featured an interview with Chicano Student Program's staff conducted by ESPARiTU co-researchers. The zine was printed through a donation by Chicano Student Programs, copies were made available at the spring poetry event hosted by TQS. Berta shares her reflection on the publication and dissemination of the zine at the TQS Spring poetry event, Poesía Peligrosa,[138] in May 2022:

> We were able to see the finalized version of the 50th anniversary special edition of *Nuestra Cosa*/Cosita! When skimming through all the pictures, art, writing pieces, and poems in the journal, one of the most important things I thought about was how all of this- past, present, and future - was all done with intentions of love, and we can see that love resonates even after all these years. The distribution

---

[136] Stemming from MEChA de UCR, Teatro Quinto Sol is a student organization established at UCR in 1974 that fuses art and activism to share visual and performing art focused on the Chicanx/Latinx community.
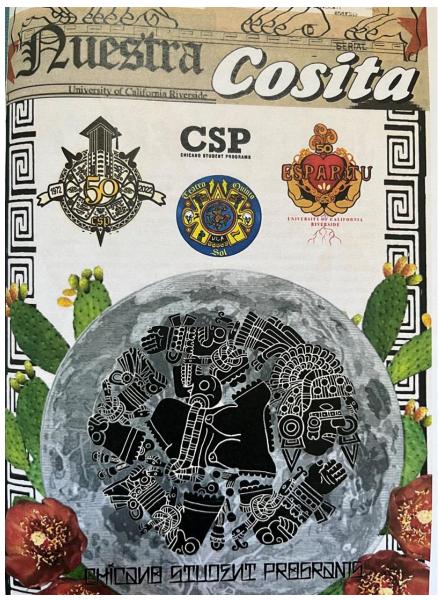[137] Some of the co-researchers were also part of Teatro Quinto Sol.
[138] Poesía Peligrosa (Dangerous Poetry) is a quarterly poetry event led by Teatro Quinto Sol and Chicano Student Programs

of the zines during Poesía Peligrosa showed how special and essential it is to have

this history preserved and easily accessible to our community. How else are we

going to know who has been historically advocating for us, if we don't let each

other know? I also feel it was such a beautiful and special space for us to see and

recognize all the little *semillas* we nurture and nurture us in return (

Berta, personal communication, May 20, 2022).

We completed *Nuestra Cosita* (see, Figure 9) while working meticulously to digitize all

the publications of *Nuestra Cosa* discussed in the next section.

**Figure 9**

Nuestra Cosita Zine Cover



Note. This zine was a collaboration between ESPARiTU, Teatro Quinto Sol and Chicano Student Programs in recognition of the 50th anniversary of *Nuestra Cosa*.

***Nuestra Cosa* Archive: A New Digitial Collection**

When we first reviewed the archives, we all felt the weight of the past. Eva shares

her analysis of the stories found in *Nuestra Cosa* and the other archival material we

found:

> It's a bit depressing how much students are tasked with the responsibility of
>
> inciting change, and how we have to revert to violence or conflict to receive it.
>
> [...] It's a lot of responsibility to bear the weight of presenting someone's life to
>
> the rest of the world (Eva, personal communication, December 4, 2022)

While completing the initial proposal for this dissertation, I established a strong

partnership with the Special Collections Librarians in the Tomás Rivera library. This

partnership led to their involvement in the course meetings as speakers and their critical

collaboration in this digitization project. The co-researchers and I worked with the library

staff to accomplish this vital action. Utilizing the archives in Chicano Student Programs

and UCR Special Collections, we cataloged all the available newspapers and recovered

94 issues of the Chicano self-published newspaper from 1969 to 2012.[139] The final digital

collection, University of California, Riverside Chicana/o/x student newspapers,[140] was

published on Calisphere[141] on November 2022. The digital collection includes all the

*Nuestra Cosa* issues and one issue from *Adelante*, the first newspaper established by

MECHA, pre-dating *Nuestra Cosa*. In addition, the digital collection contains a joint

---

[139] The *Nuestra Cosa* collection was digitized due to a collective effort by the ESPARiTU team members in
this project, Chicano Student Programs and the UCR Library staff. Collection was published in November
2022

[140] See, https://calisphere.org/collections/27876/

[141] Calisphere: University of California, is a free access website that holds various archives from all 10 UC
campuses.

statement from ESPARiTU, TQS, and Chicano Student Programs, also included in the

Nuestra Cosita Zine, connecting both efforts as part of our action in this study. The

following is an excerpt from this statement:

> *Nuestra Cosa* infuses the words of the comunidad on campus and beyond
>
> University Avenue. *Nuestra Cosa* translated in English means Our Thing, it is our
>
> stories. It was created in a time of tension reflective of the sociopolitical climate.
>
> *Nuestra Cosa* was a reflection of a thriving Chicana/o/x movement at UCR, a
>
> labor rooted in collectivity led by the estudiantes who believed the pen was a
>
> mighty force and that photographs of our existence were worthy and necessary to
>
> fill the pages of this literary timeline of our presence and now our history on
>
> campus. [...] In the early volumes, the authors of *Nuestra Cosa* are called
>
> *trabajadores.* Each author understood the work, *el trabajo*, was liberation and
>
> what we read in *Nuestra Cosa* from 1972 to recent articles continue to be the
>
> stories that are often untold, written by the community; by us, our thing always.

The complete statement can be found in the Calisphere website.[142] Moving forward, I

will serve as the point of contact for this digital collection and continue our partnership

with the library team to build the Chicano/Latino archives at UCR.

**Documenting Artivismo: A Meeting with the Gonzales Family**

On April 22, 2022, ESPARiTU co-researchers joined the Cultural Resilience and

Motivation Lab (CRML), a research team in the Psychology Department, for  in a

---

[142] See, https://calisphere.org/collections/27876/

meeting with the family of Daniel "Chano" Gonzales, who created the Chicano Student

Program's mural in 1974 discussed in Chapter 4. Chano Gonzales' nephew, Professor

Phil Gonzales has documented Chano's murals throughout Riverside and surrounding

areas leading to an exhibit in 2019 at Fresno State University entitled *Murales de Mi Tio*.

Several members of ESPARiTU participated in this meeting, which was held in the CRM

Lab and ended in Chicano Student Programs. It was significant for the co-researchers to

listen to the testimonios of the Chano's family and learn about Chano's work as a Chicano

muralist in the barrios of Riverside to aid in our analysis.

Furthermore, this meeting was the first time Chano's son had seen the CSP mural.

This moment was extraordinary and emotional for the family. The co-researchers also

shared their findings with the family and an archived interview of Chano we found in

*Nuestra Cosa* from the 1970s. Josefina was honored to have met the family:

> We had a conversation about the history of the CSP Mural with the muralist's
>
> family. I have a better understanding of the mural and what went into it. I was
>
> beyond amazed and so honored to have been part of this. It really made me think
>
> about my own art work, it made me think about ESPARiTU, and overall it made
>
> me think about how crucial it is to archive our Latinx/Chicanx community
>
> history. I still need time to process all of this and find the right words to express
>
> this new growth I feel (personal communication, April 22, 2022).

Belen was reminded of the power of testimonios throughout ESPARiTU. With this

opportunity, she connected the archival research with the stories from the Gonzales

family:

It was such a privileging moment to have met the family. Throughout the day, I

kept thinking about the power of telling our stories and how beautiful it was to

witness [the family] show the love and appreciation they had and still have for

Chano's art, like the mural at CSP. In observing them, I kept connecting dots

about how storytelling is a form of healing and how that can help our grief move.

Because the reality is that as they uncover more and more of Chano's work and try

to find where his art is located, the grief will resurface, the pain, and the memories

(good and bad) will resurface. I sensed and noticed the grief in their eyes, in fact,

[his son] mentioned it throughout, which I felt was a powerful moment (personal

communication, April 22, 2022)

**ESPARiTU Display at the 50th Anniversary Gala of Chicano Student Programs**

On November 18, 2022, ESPARiTU collaborated with Chicano Student Programs

to curate a display featuring several of the archives found in our study (see Figure 10).

The display included several volumes of *Nuestra Cosa* from our collection, newly

digitized on Calisphere. It also had archived photos and programs we found in the

Chicano Student Programs archive, which we catalogued as part of our archival research

efforts. The gala was a special moment for ESPARiTU because we had the opportunity to

share our findings with the community. Several of the co-researchers were part of the

curatorial planning, helped with the set-up and were present to answer questions about

the exhibit.  The event acknowledged outstanding Chicano/Latino alumni who had

demonstrated a commitment to the Chicano/Latino community. One of the award

recipients was the founding Director of Chicano Student Programs, Alberto "Al" Richard

Chavez for this leadership. Our archival research found Mr. Chavez worked diligently to support Chicano students at UCR as early as the 1970s. He collaborated with MECHA to establish Chicano Community College Day in 1972, a premiere outreach conference in our study period, as well as the Chicano Senior Dinner in 1972, one of the first Raza Grad in the UC system. The first Raza Grad was held in the backyard of his mother-in-law's home (A. Figueroa, personal communication, May 25, 2022).

Both events are detailed in Chapter 4 as examples of the structures of serving for Chicanos in the 1970s. Dr. Cortés introduced and awarded Mr. Chavez. He spoke to the audience about the founding of Chicano Student Programs and the strong Chicano comunidad they established in the 1960s-1970s at UCR. Alumni Jesse Valenzuela, class of 1977, was also recognized. He was an EOP student in the 1970s, and an author in *Nuestra Cosa*. He served as President of MECHA de UCR from 1973-1974, working closely with the MEChistas during the lettuce boycott at UCR and helped establish MECHA's Farm Worker's Committee in 1968. It was an honor to meet these distinguished Chicano student activists and staff whom we had researched extensively throughout this study. We had the chance to share our findings and discuss our project with them and many other alums of this crucial period that established the foundation we stand on today. It was an honor to collaborate with Chicano Student Programs and diffuse our knowledge while being in community and celebrating with the founders of this legacy.

**Figure 10**

ESPARiTU Display at the 50th Anniversary Gala of Chicano Student
Programs



Note. This public display includes some of the archives Nuestra Cosa volumes, photos
and art we found in the Chicano Student Programs archive and center. Reprinted with
permission from UCR Chicano Student Programs.

## Post-Interviews: ESPARiTU Continua (Continues)

In his pre-interview, Amaru shared a quote we revisited several times throughout

our meetings, "*De la raíz, hasta la flor"* (From the root, to the flower) a song by

Argentina singer Miguel Anel Morelli regarded as the poet of the people (Amaru,

personal communication, October 31, 2021). ESPARiTU led a transformational study

that recovered the root of the Chicano/Latino origins at UCR. The flower has bloomed

because of all the seeds planted by the Chicano activists in the 1960s-1970s. This was

depicted visually by Josefina in her final project, she painted a sunflower representing

ESPARiTU which included the co-researchers as the petals and her daughters holding the

stem (see Figure 11).

**Figure 11**

ESPARiTU Sunflower, painted by Josefina



Note. This was Josefina's final project submission, March 2022. Josefina included
all the co- researcher names and her children in the petals. I have removed the
names to protect the co- researcher identities.

In our post-interviews, the co-researchers shared how ESPARiTU helped them bloom. I conclude this chapter with what they shared. Perhaps most significantly, I share how they proclaimed they would carry the knowledge, or the spirit (ESPARiTU), acquired in this study in their future endeavors. As Amaru prepared for graduate school, he shared:

> I'm going to continue taking that spirit into every space I enter. I'm entering my graduate program right now and what I'm looking at is that I'm the only Latino male in my program. So ESPARiTU will allow me to continue this work forward of not just challenging, but also making sure that, you know, we're intentionally serving students (personal communication, July 14, 2022).

An aspiring Chicana professor, Eva, shared that she will advocate ensuring others are served:

> Wherever I go, I want to keep that intention with me especially within the academic space. And just always remember, the people that these systems are made for, because they're made for us. And they should serve us and I want to be a part of making sure that that happens in the future. I think this experience has given me the proper motivation to do so (Eva, personal communication, July 15, 2022).

Ximena, a future elementary school teacher, will carry ESPARiTU in her classroom:

> I want to incorporate all these themes and spirit in my classroom. I hope to do it in any space. I feel that I need to center myself and say, like, no you're a Chingona

262

and you've got this, especially when I'm tired or I question why I'm here;

ESPARiTU reminds me why (personal communication, August 5, 2022).

The power of memory, testimonios, and connection is something Berta will carry:

This study shaped the way I see the power of memory, just Chicano Latino

activism in history, in general. I feel like, I'll carry it everywhere I go. I feel like I

can't, I won't forget it. ESPARiTU and I are woven together, I feel like all of us

co-researchers are woven together. It is really beautiful (personal communication,

September 16, 2022)

Lastly, Belen shares ESPARiTU will continue in her work because it is for everyone:

ESPARiTU is exactly how it sounds, *Es Para Ti* (It is for you), it is for everyone.

I know that no matter what it is that I do in this lifetime, I'm always gonna go

back to that. Because it wasn't just like learning, it was so much more than that.

That will be my way of carrying it, knowing what I know now and sharing it

(personal communication, August 25, 2022).

Our work continues; many co-researchers utilized the skills and knowledge they

learned in their future endeavors after our study concluded. I co-presented with several

co-researchers at national conferences, including the Mujeres Activas en Letras y

Cambios Sociales (MALCS)[143] in July 2022 and the Hispanic Association of Colleges

and Universities (HACU)[144] in October 2022. At each conference, we shared our

---

[143] A professional organization founded in 1983 composed of students, activists and researchers who self-identify as Chicana, Latina, Native American/Indígenas or gender non-confirming. The purpose of MALCS is to build inclusion within and throughout the education pipeline. See, https://malcs.org/about/
[144] Established in 1986, HACU is a leading organization aimed at supporting the success of Hispanic, Latino, Chicano students in higher education. HACU was instrumental in advocating for federal

preliminary findings with colleagues at HSIs and emerging HSIs. Josefina, Delfina, Berta, Ximena, and I founded a youth-mentorship program modeled after MEChA de UCR's Carnalito Program of the 1970s.[145] The program will launch in Fall 2023 in partnership with the City of Riverside. Alma, Belen, Berta, I, and our partners in the Tomás Rivera Library, specifically Sandy Enriquez, created the inaugural UCR Chicana/Latina Memory Exhibit as part of Women's History Month in March 2023. The exhibit featured UCR mujeres of the 1960s-2022, including several of our findings from the archives. Sandra, Vera, and Rigo are all applying for graduate programs this cycle, while others are preparing to apply in the next year. I have served as a mentor and provided letters of recommendation for several co- researchers pursuing graduate school. Ximena and Amaru started graduate school in fall 2022. Lastly, Alma established a Dual Language Immersion afterschool program in fall 2022 at a local elementary school in Riverside with the curriculum modeling our ESPARiTU course.

We are *flores* (flowers) with firm roots now. In summary, Chapter 4 provided the findings from our collaborative critical historical recovery of the origins of serving at UCR. The archives and oral histories established a critical counterstory restored and honored by the co- researchers in this study who self-identified as Chicano/Latino undergraduate students at UCR. Chapter 5 summarized the co-researcher narratives and their transformational journey through three phases in this multifaceted study. In the final

---

designation of HSIs in the 90s and continues to be an advocate of Hispanic student success. See, https://hacu.net

[145] I summarize the Carnalito Program in Chapter 4, part of the Mentorship programs founded by MECHA de UCR in the 1970s.

chapter, I provide an analytical discussion with recommendations for higher education

leaders committed to serving Chicano/Latino students.

**Chapter 6 Conclusion**

> If we, as scholars, hope to build a body of Chicano historical knowledge, it will take a major effort now. Although we can only lament the loss of that part of the past that already has disappeared, we must make a commitment to see that this eradication of a heritage is ended. The challenge of Chicano history is a vigorous one, and it must be met with energy, imagination, and cooperation in order to compensate for the many lost decades of scholarship. (Cortés, 1970, p. 12)

In 1970, Dr. Carlos Cortés led a history project with five student researchers at UCR, three years after he became the second Chicano faculty on campus. He created the Inland Empire Chicano Cooperate History Project (CHICOP) as a firm commitment to building "a body of Chicano historical knowledge" (Cortés, 1970, p. 12). This study contributed to Chicano historical knowledge and affirmed my commitment to preserving our stories. I worked alongside Chicano/Latino undergraduate students as co-researchers to excavate and retrace the initial structures of Chicano/Latino student success as the origins of serving at UC Riverside. We engaged in a Participatory Action Research (PAR) process, centering the student voice, history, and presence throughout this study, establishing a Student Participatory Action Research methodology (SPAR). Our collective research recovered a critical history. The Chicano student activists and faculty of the 1960s-1970s contributed the conditions for UCR to emerge as a top-performing and award-winning Hispanic Serving Research Institution (HSRI), enrolling over 41% Chicano/Latino undergraduate students (Education Trust, 2017; Matute, 2022). This study was cross-generational and multifaceted. I examined the experiences of the UCR Chicano/Latino undergraduate co-researchers to understand their perspectives on this process and get a sense of key experiences that have shaped their own academic success

at an HSRI. My analysis placed the primary sources and the undergraduate experiences in conversation and mapped continuities and contestations across time. This study advances our knowledge of HSRIs by recovering the critical Chicano history at UCR with a research team of UCR Chicano/Latino undergraduate students. The following research questions guided the study:

1.  How did the labor of Chicano student activists, faculty, and staff create the conditions for higher education as a tool for Chicano/Latino liberation at UC Riverside?

2.  What does it mean to engage Chicano/Latino undergraduate students in a critical recovery of the origins of serving from the 1960s – 1970s at UC Riverside, an HSRI?

We sought to recover the origins of serving at UCR and reclaim this history by diffusing the new knowledge acquired from our collective findings. Our recovery of this critical history was informed by layers of people, places, and key moments in time. In 1968, there were 4,500 undergraduates at UCR, and the Chicano/Latino population numbered less than 100 (Baltazar- Martinez, 2020, para.1). From those 100 Chicano/Latino students, 20-30 were active on campus, creating change alongside the only two Chicano faculty at the time Dr. Carlos E. Cortés and Dr. Eugene Cota-Robles (C. Cortés, personal communication, June 8, 2022). This critical mass of Chicano activists established a Chicano *comunidad*, a *familia*, leaving a legacy of Chicano/Latino student success. They built structures of serving aimed at Chicano liberation,

implementing the five steps outlined in *El Plan de Santa Barbara: A Chicano plan for higher education* (CCCHE, 1969).

Together, they created the first Chicano/Latino recruitment, retention, and cultural empowerment programs at UCR. Structurally, they established the center of Chicano Student Programs and strengthened Chicano Studies. In addition, their reach extended to the community. They partnered with the Chicano community of Riverside and Riverside County on various political and educational advocacy campaigns, establishing a precedent for working with the Chicano/Latino community upheld in Chicano Student Programs today. Also essential to this recovery was the transformation of the co-researchers conducting this SPAR study with me. Engaging the Chicano/Latino undergraduate students as co-researchers resulted in individual self-determination and collective people power achieved throughout the study in three phases: 1) *conocimiento* (knowledge production), 2) *comunidad* (establishing a collaborative knowledge community), and 3) *cambio* (change). In addition, the purposeful inclusion of Chicano/Latino undergraduate students as co-researchers in this study addressed a vital gap in the literature by centering the student voice, experience, and definition of servingness in HSI and HSRI scholarship both historically and presently.

## Theoretical Frameworks Revisited

Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Chicana Feminist Theory (CFT) were the theoretical frameworks applied in this study. CRT tenets have been widely cited in higher education research of Chicano/Latino students (e.g., Solórzano & Bernal, 2001; Yosso, 2006; Yosso et al., 2009). When applied to higher education, CRT allows scholars to

understand the systemic and perpetuation of dominant racial structures within higher education institutions (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). Furthermore, CRT seeks solutions to address educational inequities rooted in race and racism (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Solórzano (1998) identifies the following five tenets, and the next section revisits how they were applied in this study:

1. The centrality and intersection of race and racism;

2. The challenging of dominant ideology;

3. The commitment to social justice;

4. The centrality of experiential knowledge; and

5. The interdisciplinary perspective

The first tenet considers how multiple identities such as gender, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation intersects with race. This study centered on the Chicano and Chicano/Latino identity, I separate the two here to depict the various and often complex definitions of identity across time. The findings indicate that students in the 1960s-1970s preferred Chicano, a political ideology. The co-researchers in this study preferred Chicano/Latino or Chicanx/Latinx, which for them referred to the diaspora of Latin America and affirmed gender non-conforming identities. In Chapter 4 and 5, I explicitly include any intersecting identities found in the archives, oral histories and shared by the co-researchers. Although further analysis is needed, I recognize these were central to understanding the experiences of the participants and co-researchers of this study; however, this analysis was outside the study's scope.

This study de-centered whiteness and challenged the maintenance of whiteness in the archives. It provided a historically grounded understanding of what led UCR to emerge as a top- performing and award-winning Hispanic Serving Research Institution (HSRI) (Matute, 2022). Too often, the historical contributions and labor of Chicano/Latino activists, who established programs and departments contributing to the recruitment and retention of Chicano/Latinos, are disregarded, erased, co-opted, and challenged (Aguirre, 2005; Garcia & Okhidoi, 2015; Ramirez, 2018). Our recovery of the origins of serving centered on the Chicano student activists, staff, and faculty from the 1960s-1970s who founded this legacy at UCR. Thus, our study challenged the dominant ideology, tenet two, of a UCR history that did not include this vital period and actors by uplifting the counterhistory. Watson (2019) maintains that community- centered epistemologies threaten white supremacy. This SPAR study restored an ahistorical account of the history of servingness at UCR, thus challenging the status quo in two ways: 1) recognizing the Chicano student activists and allies as instrumental to this origin and 2) including Chicano/Latino undergraduate students in defining what it means to them to recover this history of their campus.

Action is at the core of PAR. Methodologically, the collective research process should lead to an activity or action with the intent of creating change (Herr & Anderson, 2015). The engagement of Chicano/Latino undergraduate students in this SPAR study resulted in their navigation through three phases: *conocimiento, comunidad,* and *cambio.* While each phase built on the other, the co-researchers developed a social justice orientation that led to self- determination and, ultimately, people power (Fals-Borda,

1991). The third tenet, the commitment to social justice, was achieved through our course trainings and meetings in ESPARiTU. Furthermore, the actions achieved in this project disrupted the maintenance of whiteness by creating an archival repository of the Chicano/Latino presence at UCR. This disruption of the status quo established a new archival digital collection of the self-published Chicano student newspaper established in 1972. Through our collective research we recovered, catalogued, and digitized 94 issues of the newspaper *Nuestra Cosa*, from 1972-2012. As of November 2022, this is now a permanent open-access digital collection on Calisphere managed by the University of California, the UCR Tomás Rivera Library and I.

Particularly central to this SPAR study was the intellectual foundations of CRT, which intended to compensate for historical wrongs (Delgado & Stefanicic, 2017). A revisionist history challenges the majoritarian story and captures the lived experiences of minoritized communities (Yosso, 2006; Garcia & Yosso, 2020). We applied tenet four in this study by centering on the experiential knowledge and histories of Chicano/Latinos at UCR across time. Most importantly, this study provided a rare opportunity for these counterstories to be in community with each other. UCR Chicano student activists and faculty of the 1960s-1970s shared their testimonio with UCR Chicano/Latino undergraduate students of 2021-2022, creating a powerful counterspace for a more meaningful, collective, and transformative experience across generations. Existing in this methodological nepantla (Anzaldua, 1994), a key concept in Chicana Feminist Theory, allowed both the elders and the current students of this study to heal from the omissions of their roles in the legacy of Chicano/Latino success at UCR. Therefore, our study was

271

very much a *remedio* (remedy), what Morales (1998) defines as the practice of overtly

seeking out the under-told stories or histories to restore our sense of self, and for the co-

researchers as shared in Chapter 5, established a sense of purpose.

Lastly, tenet five, the interdisciplinary perspective, incorporates the analysis of

race and racism in an interdisciplinary and historical context (Solórzano, 1998). This

interdisciplinary study derives from Chicana/o Studies, Education, and History guided by

theoretical frameworks centering race and overtly challenging white supremacy. The

conceptual frameworks include *El Plan*, a Chicano manifesto for higher education written

by Chicano students in 1969, including UCR Chicano student activists, as well as a

conceptual framework developed to understand "servingness" written 50 years later in

2019. This interdisciplinary design is intentional.

ESPARiTU was a critical race praxis, a manifestation of CRT and CFT guided by

the conceptual frameworks in this study. ESPARiTU became a social and academic

counterspace for the Chicano/Latino co-researchers. They were trained and led

interdisciplinary historical and intentional research methods to recover a critical history.

Through the fundamental concepts of CFT, bodymindspirit, developing conocimiento,

operating from a methodological nepantla (the in-between) and understanding *sitios and*

*lenguas* (spaces and discourse) that can cultivate people power, the co-researchers shared,

healed, reflected, and ultimately were transformed by as a result of their participation in

this study (Fine & Torre, 2021; Ayala et al., 2018).

The findings from our critical historical recovery confirm the vital role Chicano

student activists and leaders had in creating the initial structures of serving at UCR and

the institutionalized programs and services serving Chicano scholars. The oral histories are purposely presented as testimonios to uplift the Chicano student activist voice further. They established a robust Chicano community, a *familia.* The Chicano student activists and leaders of the 1960s and 1970s at UC Riverside responded to structural and systematic racism in higher education and the community by realizing higher education as a tool for Chicano liberation (Acuña, 1972; CCHE, 1969; Doran & Medina, 2017). Many seeds were planted in the 1960s-1970s for Chicanos, with the ambitious goal of Chicano liberation. The goal was disruptive and foundational; it was a commitment to serve Chicanos long before the HSI federal designation at UCR (C. Cortés, personal communication, April 30, 20220). As summarized in my findings, the commitment continues. Their legacy remains in the programs and community they created, the center they founded, the curriculum they advocated for, and the precedence they set in working with the Chicano/Latino community.

### Reflection: Complicating HSIs

This study sought to establish a more holistic and historicized HSI identity, not necessarily to reproduce the potential harm of an idle federal designation. Whether institutions are federally recognized or not, our commitment to serve Chicano/Latino students and by extension the Chicano/Latino community should anchor and guide us. Through this study and my work as a practitioner and alumna from UCR, I committed to understanding how we became a national leader in Chicano/Latino student success. Before my contribution, Chicano/Latino success was often connected to when UCR was designated an HSI in 2008. However, this study and my practice as a student affairs

leader at UCR confronted this ahistorical perpetuation of our success story. My advocacy

has shifted our understanding of how UCR became an HSI. The UCR origins of serving

are now recognized because of this collaborative research project (Baltazar Martinez,

2020; Matute, 2022). Furthermore, our origins are now permanently archived in a digital

open-access collection and the Tomás Rivera Library.

On October 29, 2021, UCR earned the coveted SEAL of Excelencia certification

by Excelencia in Education, a national expert on Chicano/Latinos in higher education. I

served as co-author of UCR's application for this certification, detailing our efforts and

history of Chicanx/Latinx success. The national certification is based on an institution's

demonstrated data, practice, and leadership intentionally serving Chicanx/Latinx

students. My research and praxis as the Assistant Director of Chicano Student Programs,

established in 1972 by the Chicano student activists and faculty who shared their

testimonios in this study, was woven into our application. As a top-performing and

award-winning HSI, UCR's origin of Chicanx/Latinx student success is attributed to and

sustained by the formal and informal structures of serving established in the 1960s-1970s

which continue today. This honor recognized our intentional and grassroots efforts that

began before our designation in 2008. I joined my colleagues in Washington D.C. to

receive this certification; we were one of 10 campuses awarded. That evening I returned

to my hotel room overjoyed by the recognition, but as I opened my laptop, the positive

response to my co- researcher recruitment call moved me intensely. I received 77

applications for 10 co-researcher positions. The Chicano/Latino undergraduate students at

UCR answered the call to join this collaborative research study. However, I also learned

from their applications that gaps remain. This study was the first Chicanx/Latinx-focused research project most of the applicants had encountered in their several years at UCR, a newly SEAL-certified HSRI. Additionally, after interviewing 35 applicants who had made it to the second round of the application cycle, I learned that many did not see themselves as researchers.

The second research question of this study was 2) What does it mean to engage Chicano/Latino undergraduate students in a critical recovery of the origins of serving from the 1960s-1970s at UC Riverside an HSRI? My findings detail three vital phases that led the co- researchers to self-determination and collective power (Fals-Borda, 1991). First, this study was grounded and moved forward by the experiential knowledge of Chicano/Latinos at UCR, tenet two of CRT. The *conocimiento* developed the co-researchers agency and racialized sense of self (Anzaldúa, 2013; Rendon, 2009; Garcia et al., 2019). I celebrate the completion of this multifaceted cross-generational SPAR study and highlight the actions achieved due to our labor and that of the Chicano/Latino activists before me. However, I also reflect on the 65 other Chicano/Latino co-researcher applicants and the over 9,000 Chicano/Latino students at UCR. Finally, I consider the selected 12 Chicano/Latino co-researcher applicants and their limited understanding of an HSRI. Those who provided concrete examples of servingness at UCR stated the office of Chicano Student Programs or a specific Chicano/Latino faculty/staff who supported them. However, they all shared with great conviction what they believed an HSI should be.

Guided by Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Chicana Feminist Theory, this SPAR study addressed a gap in the HSI literature where few studies involve Chicano/Latino students in determining what serving means to them (Garcia & Zaragoza, 2020). This study challenged the dominant ideology of servingness and centered the experiential knowledge of Chicano/Latino students from the 1960s-1970s and today, creating a cross-generational definition of servingness. Aligned with the conceptual frameworks leading this study, *El Plan de Santa Barbara: A Chicano plan for higher education* (CCCHE, 1969) and the Multidimensional Conceptual Framework for Understanding Servingness at Hispanic Serving Institutions (Garcia et al., 2019), the Chicano/Latino activist of the 1960s-1970s enacted servingness, while the co-researchers in this study defined servingness both within the following four themes from our findings: compositional diversity, culturally relevant curriculum and pedagogy, programs and services for Chicano/Latinos, and engagement with the Chicano/Latino community.

## Recommendations

Based on these themes, I weave the co-researchers' definition of "servingness" with my recommendations to further center their voice. Eva shares servingness includes programs and services for Chicanos. She also shares how she has shifted her understanding of who leads servingness on HSIs:

> I've learned it is to de-center the institution and the administration and place that power into the students and the staff like yourself, who have these programs that I feel like truly do try to connect us or just connect us in general. So my

276

understanding of serving as a researcher has shifted who I understand the drivers

of servingness are (personal communication, July 21, 2022).

**A Community Definition of Servingness**

Servingness should be defined and enacted by the institutional community,

encompassing all key stakeholders such as the Chicano/Latino students, staff, faculty,

alumni, and community at HSIs and emerging HSIs. I deliberately emphasize servingness

and de-centering HSI. By doing so, we prioritize servingness. For example, UCR's

longstanding Chancellor's Advisory Committee for Chicano/Latino Affairs was

established in the 1980s. Although this is not an explicitly HSI-focused committee, it

demonstrates the Chicano activists have continued to advocate for structures of serving

before the designation, as both Ofelia and Alfredo have served as committee members. If

there are committees that are currently in place should continue to expand their

membership to include the stakeholders mentioned if not currently in place.

Furthermore, learning from the students, staff, and faculty leading these efforts centering

their expertise and experiential knowledge, creates a more robust and well-rounded

community of leaders.

Focusing on the significance of both culturally affirming curriculum and

pedagogy as well as programs for Chicano/Latino students, such as the cultural

graduation ceremony, Ximena shares:

Servingness comes from US. From this research! I was affirmed that I am a

Chicana and a scholar. I feel that an HSI should create these spaces for students to

feel this way, that is what servingness means to me. I participated in Raza Grad, it

was amazing, but the students and CSP created it, not the administration (personal communication, August 5, 2022).

**ESPARiTU – A High Impact Practice Model for the Academic Socialization of Chicano/Latino Students**

According to the Association of American Colleges and Universities (2021), high-impact practices (HIPs) are active and engaging learning practices that can lead to deep student knowledge. To qualify as a HIP, the AAC&U emphasizes that practices must satisfy the following three definitions: achieve deep learning, have high engagement, and have a positive impact on minorized students (Kuh & O'Donnell, 2013). The ESPARiTU course/project is an example of a HIP, meeting all three of the AAC&U definitions. ESPARiTU centers a culturally relevant curriculum and pedagogy (Garcia et al., 2019), and fosters both academic and graduate school socialization (Behar-Horenstein et al., 2016) by reinforcing Chicano/Latino students' experiential knowledge (Delgado Bernal, 1998; Yosso, 2006). Furthermore, this course gave Chicano/Latino undergraduate students critical tools and research experience to pursue graduate degrees.

Belen shared a critical reflection on the student labor often having to fill the gaps of serving at HSIs. She acknowledges that student-initiated recruitment and retention efforts often lead to the enrollment numbers required of HSIs, as Chicano student activists did in the 1960s- 1970s at UCR. Furthermore, she pushes us to consider the impact of this labor on the Chicano/Latino students, who are often also first-generation and low-income students navigating the institution with limited support:

Hispanic Serving Institutions should be more than a title, more than a designation.

I feel like a lot of the time, there is a gap in serving, and students typically fill that

gap. This is where students build movement, where students build organizations

on and off campus, which leads to the student taking on the labor. Why? Because

there's a need. But that should not be the case. Everyone should be putting in

enough effort so that people are not burned out or pushed out. So that people can

show up to their class, show up to work, and be able to be on top of that and take

care of themselves mentally (personal communication, August 25, 2022).

**Institutional Investment in Student-Led Servingness Efforts**

Our findings confirm that Chicano student activists in the 1960s-1970s led most

of the Chicano/Latino success efforts at UCR. This has been the case historically and

presently not just at UCR but in many higher education institutions; there is a rich history

of student-initiated recruitment and retention efforts (Yosso et al., 2006; Solórzano and

Delgado Bernal, 1998). Chicano/Latino student leadership is purposeful as they often

have a full grasp of the immediate needs of Chicano/Latino students. However, they

might not always have the resources or infrastructure within the university to achieve

their goals (Ramirez, 2018; CCCHE, 1969) and thus resulting in unintended outcomes

such as burnout or being pushed-out, as referenced by Belen. Therefore, institutional

investment in student-led servingness efforts should include funding, professional

development opportunities, and reviewing the current policies that create unnecessary

obstacles for Chicano/Latino student organizations to lead their programs successfully.

Furthermore, I caution that this investment be a partnership and not a cooptation of these

critical student-led efforts that provide peer mentorship, role modeling and further affirm the community cultural wealth of Chicano/Latinos in higher education (Yosso, 2006).

The engagement with the community as well as understanding the histories of HSIs, is how Berta defines serving:

> What I see is the students, staff, and faculty connected to the community. They are trying to advocate for the students, resources, and funding. We should all care about HSI work, not only when it benefits us. It has been the students at UC Riverside who have done the work. We need to be more intentional about the meaning and history behind HSIs (personal communication, September 16, 2022)

**Institutional investment in documenting and preserving Chicana/o/x and Latina/o/x Histories**

Institutions must commit to preserving the Chicanx/Latinx histories on their campus and make a concerted effort to know the Chicanx/Latinx histories of the local community. Without this investment, they risk operating an ahistorical understanding of their Chicanx/Latinx students and further perpetuate a distorted history that maintains white supremacy (Garcia & Yosso, 2020). Specifically, for HSIs, there must be an institutional commitment and investment in building the Chicanx/Latinx archives. This study models how this can be done through a community-centered and critical race praxis. The role of preservation should not fall only on the Chicanx/Latinx students or alumni. Institutional resources should support and maintain it.

However, this should be done in partnership with the Chicanx/Latinx community. They can provide the necessary context to ensure the archive accurately depicts their

stories and experience. At the same time, institutional partners, such as university archivists and librarians, can support the formalization of archives and oral histories. Chicano/Latino scholars at HSIs should see themselves in their campus histories. If Chicano/Latino students do not see themselves on campus, we need to unpack our legacies of exclusion by remedying and building the Chicano/Latino historical knowledge on our HSI campus (e.g. Cortés, 1970; Morales, 1998; Hurtado et al., 1998).

In the 1960s-1970s, UCR Chicanos built a legacy with the goal of Chicano liberation. Ofelia, Alfredo, and Dr. Cortés trusted our team with their stories. They detailed a Chicano/Latino legacy at UCR that has advanced the Chicano/Latino community at UCR for the past 50 years despite numerous attacks to diminish its contributions. It is precisely those relationships that fueled the UCR Chicano *comunidad* in the 1960s-1970s. UCR is a national model of Chicano/Latino success; we are a campus of many firsts for Chicano/Latinos within the UC system (Matute, 2022; Nichols, 2017). This study filled a critical gap by restoring our dehistoricized knowledge of the Chicano/Latino presence and evolution at UCR (Morales, 1998). When asked how he defines "servingness," Amaru shares a poem to articulate what he sees when HSIs truly serve Chicano/Latino students:

> I see the sun hit my melanated skin as I walk onto campus
>
> I see colors on the walls, buildings, and sidewalks
>
> I see libraries filled with wisdom of forgotten activists, authors, community members
>
> I see a dining hall that feeds the community without any limitation of access

I see lecture halls filled with murals and artistic pedagogy

I do not see a building of administration, but a building of servingness and

advocacy

I see more than an HSI

I see a paradise of possibilities

(Journal entry, April 6, 2022).

This SPAR study was intentionally designed and restored a sense of self, purpose, and possibilities for the co-researchers and me (Morales, 1998). As a national leader, UCR provides a unique lens to define and model "servingness" further. Leading with intention, guided by the origins of serving, the Chicano/Latino students and community, we can (and will) set a course for the next 50 years.

## Significance of the Study

Chicano/Latinos will account for a quarter of the total population in the United States by 2060 (Frey, 2020). The younger labor force, 30 and under, will be 30% Chicano/Latino by 2060 (Frey, 2020). Despite this projected growth, in 2021, a large percentage, 79%, of Chicano/Latinos 25 and older did not have a bachelor's degree (Mora, 2022). The United States aims to be a knowledge-based economy, defined as a workforce with vastly developed knowledge and skills (Shuaily et al., 2017). As the Chicano/Latino population is set to become a large percentage of this knowledge economy, higher education institutions play a critical role in developing this highly skilled labor force. HSIs enroll the majority of Chicano/Latino undergraduate students. However, enrolling Chicano/Latino undergraduates is not enough, and several scholars

caution that the HSI designation is idle if we are not meaningfully serving them (Garcia, 2018; Garcia, 2023).

Some of the earliest examples of serving Chicano/Latino students in higher education institutions date back to the 1960s-1970s, led by Chicano student activists. Scholars and activists have advocated for higher education institutions to serve them meaningfully. In recovering the origins of serving, this study asserts that Chicano/Latino student activists and leaders of the 60s and 70s at UC Riverside responded to structural and systematic racism in higher education and the community by realizing higher education as a tool for Chicano/Latino liberation (Acuña, 1972; CCHE, 1969; Doran & Medina, 2017). This ambitious goal, it was disruptive and foundational. As a result, they demonstrated a commitment to serve Chicano/Latino students long before the federal designation at UC Riverside (C. Cortés, personal communication, April 30, 2020). This dissertation advances our knowledge of HSRIs by recovering the practices and tools used to promote a culture of Chicano/Latino student success and liberation at UC Riverside, originating in the 1960s – 1970s, to operationalize a historical and thus holistic understanding of serving.

**Limitations**

UCR Chicano student activists and faculty of the 1960s-1970s were one of the primary focuses of this study, analyzing archival documents and conducting oral histories to recover the origins of serving at UCR. This study was done alongside a team Chicano/Latino undergraduate student as co-researchers. Their involvement was examined to understand their perspectives of this process and to understand key

experiences at UCR. Given this study's scale and depth, there were limitations. Although every effort was made to ensure an accurate portrayal of Chicano/Latinos and their labor in the 1960s-1970s the archival material was limited. It is important to note, two of the available collections were not cataloged. Prior to our study, the *Nuestra Cosa* newspaper and Chicano Student Programs archive remained in boxes without any systematic catalog or time marker.

Additionally, in our visit to the Special Collections at UCR, when reviewing the limited archives on Chicano/Latinos at UCR in the 1960s our team worked with the library staff to provide further context. To fully document the origins of the Chicano presence at UCR would require an investment of time, resources, a collaboration with experts of this period. The co-researchers and I spent a lot of our time filling these gaps. Thus, a more thorough documentation of this history is needed.

I triangulated the oral accounts with what was available in the archives and what our research team could catalog. A small, intimate group allows personal experiences to be shared (Kim, 2019), we planned to interview 5 participants. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 and the rise in the Omicron virus during the time of our study we prioritized the health and safety of our participants. We interviewed 3 participants, all of whom were listed extensively in the archives as Chicano student activists and faculty of this period. Developing people power takes considerable time and investment, especially through a community-centered Participatory Action Research project (Herr & Anderson, 2015). The process of conocimiento included a progression of unlearning. Our study timeline shifted to prioritize this first phase. Therefore, our collective analysis was impacted. The

full team did not analyze our findings as the analysis was completed after their required commitment. However, several co-researchers who graduated continued this last portion of the project up to fall 2022.

Lastly, I focused on the structures of serving at an HSRI, UCR, this is not a generalization of all HSRIs, this is a unique study of an award-winning HSRI with some generalizable recommendations. Furthermore, other salient identities were not explored and would merit further study as many of the co-researchers identified as Chicana/Latinas it would be essential to consider how gender and race intersect in their experience at an HSRI. Additionally, this study focused on Chicano/Latino undergraduate students. Therefore, graduate students were not analyzed in this study. Future research should focus on the Chicano/Latino graduate students, as there were Chicano graduate activists in this period at UCR found in the oral accounts of the participants. Lastly, a prospective study should include the impact the establishment of Mexican American studies, later renamed to Chicano Studies in 1972, had on Chicano students in the 1960s-1970s. However, we include Chicano Studies as a structure of serving in this study. It merits further exploration, especially after the 1984 vote by the Academic Senate at UCR to combine Chicano and Black studies into Ethnic Studies.

## Conclusion

This Student Participatory Action Research (SPAR) study excavated the origins of serving at UCR, with a team of Chicano/Latino undergraduate students as co-researchers. We analyzed archival documents and conducted oral histories of Chicano/Latino students and faculty of the 1960s – 1970s. Our findings identified some

origins of Chicano/Latino student success at UCR, tracing the university's trajectory to becoming an award-winning HSI (Matute, 2022). Additionally, I examined the experiences of the Chicano/Latino undergraduate co- researchers to understand their perspectives on this process and to get a sense of the necessary experiences that have shaped their academic success at UCR.

My findings placed the primary sources and the undergraduate experiences in conversation to map continuities and contestations across time, illustrated in Figure 1.2 Ollin Model – Transformational Chicano Student Resistance in ESPARiTU. The study concluded that UCR Chicano student activists, staff, and faculty created structures of serving that originated in the 1960s-1970s, creating the conditions for Chicano liberation at UCR. Decades later, UCR was the first UC designated as an HSI in 2008 and one of the first Hispanic Serving Research Institutions (HSRIs). In 2021, UCR was one of 10 campuses recognized nationally as a thriving HSI and became a SEAL of Excelencia-certified institution (Excelencia in Education, 2021).

Furthermore, this study fills a critical gap by centering and honoring the Chicano/Latino student voice throughout this study. Co-researchers navigated three phases leading to individual self-determination and collective people power (Fals-Borda, 1991). This study's findings provide a unique and historical lens to attribute to the growing HSI scholarship, *de la raíz, hasta la flor*. I am honored to have carried the stories and wisdom of two generations of Chicano/Latino students at UCR. Despite the 50 years between them, one thing remains clear: the community is powerful, sacred, and will not be silenced.

Appendix A: Archives Cited

Chicano Student Programs Archive, *Adelante* Folder. University of California, Riverside

Chicano Student Programs Archive, *Nuestra Cosa* Folder. University of California, Riverside

Chicano Student Programs Archive, Community College Day Folder. University of California, Riverside

University of California, Riverside Chicana/o/x student newspapers Digital Collection on Calisphere

UA 133: Collection on Race, Ethnicity, and Student Activism (0.42 linear feet, 1 box) Special Collections & University Archives, University of California, Riverside

# References

About this Issue (1974, June). *Nuestra Cosa,* p. 1. Chicano Student Programs Archive, University of California, Riverside

Acuña, R. (1972). *Occupied America. The Chicano's Struggle Toward Liberation.* San Francisco: Canfield Press

Acuña, R. (2011). *The making of Chicana/o studies: In the trenches of academe*. Rutgers University Press

Aguilar-Smith, S. (2021). Seeking to serve or $erve? Hispanic-serving institutions' race-evasive pursuit of racialized funding. AERA Open, 7, 23328584211057097.

del Alba Acevedo, L., Alarcon, N., Alvarez, C., Behar, R., Benmayor, R., Cantú, N. E., ... & Zavella, P. (Eds.). (2001). *Telling to live: Latina feminist testimonios*. Duke University Press.

Akom, A. A. (2011). Black emancipatory action research: integrating a theory of structural racialization into ethnographic and participatory action research methods. *Ethnography and Education*, 6(1), 113-131.

American Psychological Association. (2023). Cultural deprivation definition. https://dictionary.apa.org/cultural-deprivation

Anderson N. December 18, 2018. Historic Latino student wave reshapes many colleges. But access is uneven. *The Washington Post*. https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/historic-latino-student-wave-reshapes-many-colleges-but-access-is-uneven/2018/12/17/86cc113c-c65e-11e8-b1ed-1d2d65b86d0c_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.451d0ba73790

Anzaldúa, G. (1987). *Borderlands/La Frontera: The new mestiza.* San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books.

Atkinson, P. & Delamont, S. (2005). Analytic perspectives. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage Handbook of qualitative research (*821 - 840). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Arana, R., Castaneda-Sound, C., Blanchard, S., & Aguilar, T. E. (2011). Indicators of persistence for Hispanic undergraduate achievement: Towards an ecological model. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education,* 10(3), 237-251.

Arbona, C., & Nora, A. (2007). The influence of academic and environmental factors on Hispanic college degree attainment. *The Review of Higher Education*, 30(3), 247-269.

A search for heritage (1969, October 14). *Adelante*, p. 4. Chicano Student Programs Archive, University of California, Riverside.

Ayala, J., Cammarota, J., Berta-Avila, M., Rivera, M., Rodriguez, L.F., Torre, M. (2018). *PAR Entremundos: A Pedagogy of the Americas.* New York: Peter Lang.

Bailey, C. A. (2007). *A guide to qualitative field research.* Sage Publications.

Baltazar Martinez, S. (2020, September 21). *How UCR became a national leader in enrolling Chicanx/Latinx students*. https://news.ucr.edu/articles/2020/09/16/how-ucr-became-national-leader-enrolling-chicanxlatinx-students

Behar-Horenstein, L. S., Isaac, N., Southwell, C. N., Hudson-Vassell, M. E., Niu, L., Pratto, M., & Zafar, M. A. (2016). Promoting Academic Socialization through Service Learning Experiences. International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, 28(2), 158-167.

Bell Jr, Derrick A. "Brown v. Board of Education and the interest-convergence dilemma." *Harvard Law Review* (1980): 518-533.

Berta-Ávila, M., Rivera, M., Ayala, J., & Cammarota, J. (2020). Living Praxes and Principles in PAR EntreMundos. In *Liberatory Practices for Learning* (pp. 19-45). Springer International Publishing.

Blackmer Reyes, K., & Curry Rodriguez, J. (2017). Testimonio: Origins, Terms, and Resources. In, Delgado Bernal D., Burciaga, R., & Carmona, J. F. (Eds.). (2017). *Chicana/Latina testimonios as pedagogical, methodological, and activist approaches to social justice*. Routledge.

Blackwell, M. (2011). *¡Chicana Power!: Contested Histories of Feminism in the Chicano Movement.* Austin: University of Texas Press.

Brown, T. M., & Rodriguez, L. F. (2009). Editor's Notes. *New Directions for Youth Development*, Fall 2009, 1-9

Bogdan, R., & Biklen, S. K. (1997). *Qualitative research for education*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Bobo, L. D. (2017). Racism in Trump's America: reflections on culture, sociology, and the 2016 US presidential election. *The British Journal of Sociology*, 68, S85-S104.

Cabrera, N. L. (2018). *White guys on campus: Racism, White immunity, and the myth of" post- racial" higher education*. Rutgers University Press.

Carspecken, F. P. (2013). *Critical ethnography in educational research: A theoretical and practical guide.* Routledge.

Carta abierta a Tomás Rivera (1979, November). Nuestra Cosa, p. 5. Chicano Student Programs Archive, University of California, Riverside

Cahill, C., Rios-Moore, I., & Threatts, T. (2008). Different eyes/open eyes: Community-based participatory action research. In J. Cammarota & M. Fine (Eds.), *Revolutionizing education: Youth participatory action research in motion* (pp. 89-124). New York: Routledge.

Chang, M. J. (2011). *Quality matters: Achieving benefits associated with racial diversity*. Columbus: Kirwin Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, The Ohio State University.

Chicano Coordinating Council on Higher Education. (1969). *El Plan de Santa Bárbara: a Chicano plan for higher education*. La Causa Publications.

Chicano Community College Day (1977, Winter). *Nuestra Cosa,* p. 1. Chicano Student Programs Archive, University of California, Riverside

Chicano Student Programs Homecoming Gala, Event Program. November 17, 2018. Chicano Student Programs Archive. University of California, Riverside

Chicano Studies (1972, December 7) *Nuestra Cosa,* p. 10- 11. Chicano Student Programs Archive, University of California, Riverside

Chicano Education Digest (1974, February) *Nuestra Cosa*, p. 6. Chicano Student Programs Archive, University of California, Riverside

Chicano Orientation (1975, November). *Nuestra Cosa*, p. 1. Chicano Student Programs Archive, University of California, Riverside

Chicano Students Take Advantage of Graduate Opportunities at UCR (1977, Winter). *Nuestra Cosa*, p. 2. Chicano Student Programs Archive, University of California, Riverside

Christenson, C. G. (2017). " A New Weapon-A New Monster-The Walkout": The East Los Angeles Student Walkouts of 1968.

Contreras, F. (2019). Becoming "Latinx Responsive": Raising institutional and systemic consciousness in California's HSIs. Washington, D.C. *American Council on Education*, Equity in Higher Education.

Córdova, T. (2015). Plugging the brain drain: Bringing our education back home. In *Latino social policy* (pp. 25-54). Routledge.

Cornell Law School (n.d.). *20 U.S. Code Part A - Hispanic Serving Institutions*. Cornell Law School: Legal Information Institute. https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/20/chapter-28/subchapter-V/part-A

Cortés, C. (2020, April 30). Interview by A. Cano Matute. Riverside, CA. University of California, Riverside

Cottrell J. and Smith C. (2019). Designation as an Eligible Institution for Titles III & V Programs Office of Postsecondary Education. *Department of Education United States of America*. [PowerPoint Slides]. https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/idues/eligibilityslides.pdf

Covarrubias, A., Nava, P. E., Lara, A., Burciaga, R., Vélez, V. N., & Solórzano, D. G. (2018). Critical race quantitative intersections: A testimonio analysis. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 21(2), 253-273.

Crenshaw, K. (1991). Race, gender, and sexual harassment. *Southern California Law Review*, 65, 1467-1476

Crisp, G., Reyes, N., & Doran, E. (2014). *Predicting successful remediation among Latino students*. Paper presented at meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Philadelphia, PA.

Cuellar, M. (2015). Latina/o student characteristics and outcomes at four-year Hispanic-serving Institutions (HSIs), emerging HSIs, and non-HSIs. In A. -M. Núñez, S. Hurtado & E. C. Galdeano (Eds.), *Hispanic-serving institutions: Advancing research and transformative practice* (pp. 101-120). New York, NY: Routledge.

Cuellar, M. G., Segundo, V., & Muñoz, Y. (2017). Assessing empowerment at HSIs: An adapted inputs-environments-outcomes model. *Association of Mexican American Educators Journal*, 11(3), 84-108.

de Brey, C., Musu, L., McFarland, J., Wilkinson-Flicker, S., Diliberti, M., Zhang, A., Branstetter, C., and Wang, X. (2019). *Status and Trends in the Education of Racial and Ethnic Groups 2018 (*NCES 2019-038). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. https://nces.ed.gov/ pubsearch/.

Deeb-Sossa, N. (Ed.). (2019). *Community-Based Participatory Research: Testimonios from Chicana/o Studies*. University of Arizona Press.

Delgado, R., & Stefancic, J. (2017). *Critical race theory: An introduction* (Vol. 20). NYU press.

Delgado Bernal, D. (1998a). Grassroots Leadership Reconceptualized: Chicana Oral Histories and the 1968 East Los Angeles School Blowouts. *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies*, 19(2), 113-142. 155

Delgado Bernal, D. (1998b). Using a Chicana feminist epistemology in educational research. *Harvard Educational Review*, 68(4), 555-579.

Delgado Bernal, D. (1999). Chicana/o education from the civil rights era to the present. *The elusive quest for equality*, 150, 77-108.

Delgado Bernal. D. (2002). Critical race theory, Latino critical theory, and critical raced-gendered epistemologies: Recognizing students of color as holders and creators of knowledge. *Qualitative inquiry*, 8(1), 105-126.

Delgado Bernal. D., Huber, L. P., & Malagón, M. C. (2018). Bridging Theories to Name and Claim a Critical Race Feminista Methodology. *In Understanding Critical Race Research Methods and Methodologies* (pp. 109-121). Routledge.

DeWalt, K. M., & DeWalt, B. R. (2011). *Participant Observation: A Guide for Fieldworkers*. Rowman Altamira.

Doran, E. E., & Medina, O. (2017). The intentional and the grassroots Hispanic-Serving Institutions: A critical history of two universities. *Association of Mexican American Educators Journal*, 11(3).

Dr. Ramirez Heads Project follow-through (1972, December 7). *Nuestra Cosa,* p. 3. Chicano Student Programs Archive, University of California, Riverside

Egerton, J. (1969). *State Universities and Black Americans*, May 1969.

Esin, C. (2011). Narrative analysis approaches. *Qualitative research methods in psychology: Combining core approaches*, 92-117.

*El Chicano Newsletter* (1967) (UC Riverside Extension) as cited in Howell-Ardila, Debi. "City of Riverside Latino Historic Context Statement." August 2018. Prepared by Rincon Consultants, Inc., Los Angeles, CA. Rincon Consultants Project No. 18-05607. Prepared for the City of Riverside Community and Economic Development Department, Riverside, CA.

*Excelencia* in Education, 2019. Hispanic Serving Institution Data. https://www.edexcelencia.org/research/series/hsi-2015-2016

*Excelencia* in Education. (March 17, 2022). New Data Shows Decrease in the Number of Hispanic-Serving Institutions for the First Time in 20 Years, but Significant Increase in Emerging HSIs. https://www.edexcelencia.org/press-releases/new-data-decrease-number-hispanic-serving-institutions-increase-emerging-hsis .

*Excelencia* in Education. (April 11, 2022). Latino College Enrollment: Past, Current and Projections. https://www.edexcelencia.org/research/fact-sheets/latino-college-enrollment-past-current-and-projections

*Excelencia* in Education. (March 2023). Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs): 2022-2021. https://www.edexcelencia.org/sites/default/files/Hispanic%20Serving-Institutions%202021-22%20-%20Fast%20Facts.png

Fals-Borda, O. (1991). Some basic ingredients. In Fals-Borda, O., & Rahman, M.A. (1991). *Action and knowledge: breaking the monopoly with participatory action-research*. New York: Intermediate Technology Pubs/Apex Press.

Fals-Borda, O. (1991). Remaking Knowledge. In Fals-Borda, O., & Rahman, M.A. (1991). *Action and knowledge: breaking the monopoly with participatory action-research.* New York: Intermediate Technology Pubs/Apex Press.

Fals-Borda, O. (1995). Research for social justice: Some north-south convergences. Keynote speech, *Southern Sociology Conference*, Atlanta, Georgia.

Farmworker organizing fliers and documents, 1968-169. (Box 1, Folder 15) University of California, Riverside, Collection on Race, Ethnicity and Student Activism (UA 133). Special Collections & University Archives, University of California, Riverside

Fine, M., & Torre, M. E. (2021). *Essentials of critical participatory action research*. American Psychological Association.

Flores, A. September 18, 2017. How the U.S. Hispanic Population is changing. *Pew Research Center*. http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/09/18/how-the-u-s-hispanic- population-is-changing/

Foulis, E. (2018). Participatory pedagogy: Oral history in the service-learning classroom. *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement,* 22(3), 119-134.

Franco, M. A., & Hernández, S. (2018). Assessing the capacity of Hispanic serving institutions to serve Latinx students: Moving beyond compositional diversity. *New Directions for Institutional Research,* 2018(177), 57-71.

Freire, P. (2006). *Pedagogy of the oppressed. New* York: The Continuum International Publishing Group Ltd.

Frey, W. H. February 19, 2020. Reducing Immigration will not stop America's rising diversity, Census projections show. *Brookings Institution.* https://www.brookings.edu/research/reducing-immigration-will-not-stop-americas-rising- diversity-census-projections-show/

García, M. T. (Ed.). (2014). *The Chicano Movement: Perspectives from the Twenty-first Century.* Routledge.

García, D. G., & Yosso, T. J. (2020). Recovering our past: A methodological reflection. *History of Education Quarterly*, 60(1), 59-72.

García, D. G. (2018). *Strategies of segregation: Race, residence, and the struggle for educational equality* (Vol. 47). Univ of California Press.

Garcia, G. A. (2016). Complicating a Latina/o- serving identity at a Hispanic Serving Institution. *The Review of Higher Education*, 40(1), 117-143.

Garcia, G. A. (2017). What Does it Mean to be Latinx-serving? Testing the Utility of the Typology of HSI Organizational Identities. *Association of Mexican American Educators* (AMME) Journal, Volume 11, Issue 3.

Garcia, G. A. (2018). Decolonizing Hispanic-serving institutions: A framework for organizing. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, 17(2), 132-147.

Garcia, G. A. (2019). *Becoming Hispanic-serving institutions: Opportunities for colleges and universities.* Johns Hopkins University Press.

Garcia, G. A. (2020). *Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) in practice: Defining "servingness" at HSIs*. Information Age.

Garcia, G., & Cuellar, M. (2018). Exploring curricular and cocurricular effects on civic engagement at emerging Hispanic-Serving Institutions. *Teachers College Record*, 120 (4), 1-36.

Garcia, G. A., & Cuellar, M. G. (2023). Advancing "Intersectional Servingness" in Research, Practice, and Policy with Hispanic-Serving Institutions. AERA Open, 9. https://doi.org/10.1177/23328584221148421

Garcia, G. A., Núñez, A. M., & Sansone, V. A. (2019). Toward a multidimensional conceptual framework for understanding "servingness" in Hispanic-Serving Institutions: A synthesis of the research. *Review of Educational Research*, 89(5), 745-784.

Garcia G. A. and Taylor M. September 18, 2017. A Closer Look at Hispanic-Serving Institutions. Higher Education Today, *American Council on Education*. https://www.higheredtoday.org/2017/09/18/closer-look-hispanic-serving-institutions/

Garcia, G. A. (2023). *Transforming Hispanic-serving institutions for equity and justice*. JHU Press.

Gaventa, J. (1993). The powerful, the powerless, and the experts: Knowledge struggles in an information age. In P. Park, M. Brydon-Miller, B. Hall & T. Jackson (Eds.), *Voices of change: Participatory research in the United States and Canada.*

Geiger A. September 7, 2018. 6 facts about America's students. *Pew Research Center.* http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/09/07/6-facts-about-americas-students/

Gómez-Quiñones, J. (1990). *Chicano politics: Reality and promise, 1940-1990.* UNM Press.

Gómez-Quiñones, J., & Vásquez, I. (2014). *Making Aztlán: Ideology and culture of the Chicana and Chicano movement, 1966-1977.* UNM Press.

Gonzalez, R. (2018). Students with Big Dreams that Just Need a Little Push. In Ayala, J., Cammarota, J., Berta-Avila, M., Rivera, M., Rodriguez, L.F., Torre, M. (2018). *PAR Entremundos: A Pedagogy of the Americas.* New York: Peter Lang.

Graduate School Opportunities (1977, Winter). *Nuestra Cosa,* p. 2. Chicano Student Programs Archive, University of California, Riverside

Graduate School ¡Se Puede! (1975, February-March). *Nuestra Cosa*, p. 3. Chicano Student Programs Archive, University of California, Riverside

History of UCR- 2020 Strategic Plan. (2020, March 1). https://strategicplan.ucr.edu/sites/g/files/rcwecm2701/files/2019-03/history_of_ucr.pdf

Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities. (n.d.). HACU's mission. http://www.hacu.net/hacu/Mission.asp

Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities. (2019). HACU Membership Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs). https://www.hacu.net/assnfe/CompanyDirectory.asp?STYLE=2&COMPANY_TYPE=1%2C5

Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities. (2023). 2023 Hispanic Higher Education and HSIs Facts. https://www.hacu.net/hacu/HSI_Fact_Sheet.asp

Herr, K. & G. Anderson. (2005). *The action research dissertation: A guide for student s and faculty.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Hernandez, John C. "Leaking pipeline: Issues impacting Latino/a college student retention." *Minority student retention* (2019): 99-122.

hooks, B. (1994). *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the practice of freedom*. London: Routledge, 1994.

hooks, B. (2003). *Teaching community: A pedagogy of hope* (Vol. 36). Psychology Press.

Homecoming Gala ProHuber, L. P. (2010). Challenging racist nativist framing: Acknowledging the community
cultural wealth of undocumented Chicana college students to reframe the immigration debate. *Harvard Educational Review,* 79(4), 704-730.

Hope: Interview – Mrs. Hope Delgado (1974, June). *Nuestra Cosa,* p. 6. Chicano Student Programs Archive, University of California, Riverside

Huber, L. P., & Cueva, B. M. (2012). Chicana/Latina testimonios on effects and responses to microaggressions. *Equity & Excellence in Education,* 45(3), 392-410.

Hurtado, S., & Alvarado, A. R. (2015) Realizing the Potential of Hispanic-Serving Institutions: Multiple Dimensions of Organizational Transformation in Nuñez, A. M., Hurtado, S., & Galdeano, E. C. (Eds.). (2015). *Hispanic-serving institutions: Advancing research and transformative practice*. Routledge.

Hurtado, S., Alvarez, C. L., Guillermo-Wann, C., Cuellar, M., & Arellano, L. (2012). A model for diverse learning environments. In *Higher education: Handbook of theory and research* (pp. 41-122). Springer, Dordrecht.

Hurtado, S., & Carter, D. F. (1997). Effects of college transition and perceptions of the campus racial climate on Latino college students' sense of belonging. *Sociology of education,* 324-345.

Hurtado, S., Clayton-Pedersen, A. R., Allen, W. R., & Milem, J. F. (1998). Enhancing campus climates for racial/ethnic diversity: Educational policy and practice. *The Review of Higher Education*, 21(3), 279-302.

Hurtado, S., & Ponjuan, L. (2005). Latino educational outcomes and the campus climate. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education,* 4(3), 235-251.

Ibarra-Mejia, G., Lusk, M., & Jeon, S. (2022). Stress, anxiety, and depression among Latinx university students during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Social Development Issues*, 43(1).

Jackson, C. F. (2009). *Chicana and Chicano Art: ProtestArte.* University of Arizona Press.

Jayakumar, U. (2008). Can higher education meet the needs of an increasingly diverse and global society? Campus diversity and cross-cultural workforce competencies. *Harvard Educational Review*, *78*(4), 615-651.

Jayakumar, U. M., & Museus, S. D. (2012). Mapping the intersection of campus cultures and equitable outcomes among racially diverse student populations. *Creating campus cultures: Fostering success among racially diverse student populations*, 1-27.

Kim, J. (2016). Youth involvement in participatory action research (PAR). Critical Social Work, 17(1).

Kitano, H., & Miller, D. (1970). An Assessment of Educational Opportunity Programs in California Higher Education.

Kondo, D. K. (1990). Crafting selves: Power, gender, and discourses of identity in a Japanese workplace. University of Chicago Press.

Kuh, G. D., & O'Donnell, K. (2013). Ensuring quality and taking high-impact practices to scale. Peer Review, 15(2), 32-33.

Laden, B. V. (2004). Hispanic-serving institutions: What are they? Where are they?. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 28(3), 181-198.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1998). Teaching in dangerous times: Culturally relevant approaches to teacher assessment. *Journal of Negro Education*, 255-267.

Ladson-Billings, G. (2006). From the achievement gap to the education debt: Understanding achievement in US schools. *Educational researcher,* 35(7), 3-12.

La Raza Booklet, 1971. Chicano Student Programs Archive, University of California, Riverside

Locks, Angela M., Sylvia Hurtado, Nicholas A. Bowman, and Leticia Oseguera. "Extending notions of campus climate and diversity to students' transition to college." *The Review of Higher Education* 31, no. 3 (2008): 257-285.

Lozano, A. (2010). Latina/o culture centers: Providing a sense of belonging and promoting student success. In *Culture centers in higher education* (pp. 3-25). Routledge.

Malcom-Piqueux, L. E., & Mara Bensimon, E. (2015). Design principles for equity and excellence at Hispanic-Serving Institutions. Perspectivas: *Issues in Higher Education Policy and Practice*.

Marecek, J. (2003). Dancing through minefields: Toward a qualitative stance in psychology. In P. M. Camic, J. E. Rhodes & L. Yardley (Eds.), *Qualitative research in psychology: Expanding perspectives in methodology and design* (49 - 69). Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association

Mares Tamayo, M. & Solórzano, D. (eds.). (2018). *The Chicana/o Education Pipeline: History, Institutional Critique, and Resistance.* Los Angeles, CA: UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center Press.

Marin, P., & Pereschica, P. (2017). Becoming a Hispanic-Serving Research Institution: Involving Graduate Students in Organizational Change. *Association of Mexican American Educators Journal,* 11(3), 154-175.

Marin, P. (2019). Is "business as usual" enough to be Hispanic-serving? Becoming a Hispanic- serving research institution. Journal of Hispanic Higher Education, 18(2), 165-181.

Mariscal, G. (2005). *Brown-eyed children of the sun: Lessons from the Chicano movement, 1965-1975.* UNM Press.

Matute, A. C. 2022. "Chicanx/Latinx Student Success at UC Riverside: Capturing the History of a Thriving Hispanic-Serving Institution". UC Hispanic-Serving Institutions Initiative. Oakland, CA.

MECHA UCR Conference (1973, December). *Nuestra Cosa,* p. 3. Chicano Student Programs Archive, University of California, Riverside

MEChA: More than an organization (1977, November) *Nuestra Cosa*, p. 2. Chicano Student Programs Archive, University of California, Riverside

Mendoza-Denton, N. (2014). *Homegirls: Language and cultural practice among Latina youth gangs.* John Wiley & Sons.

Monarrez, T., & Washington, K. (2020). Racial and Ethnic Representation in Postsecondary Education. Research Report. *Urban Institute*.

Mora. L. (2022). Hispanic enrollment reaches new high at four-year college in the U.S., but affordability remains an obstacle. *Pew Research Center.* https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2022/10/07/hispanic-enrollment-reaches-new- high-at-four-year-colleges-in-the-u-s-but-affordability-remains-an-obstacle/

Morales, A. L. (1998). The historian as curandera. *Women in Culture: An Intersectional Anthology for Gender and Women's Studies*, 134-47.

Muñoz, C. (2007). *Youth, identity, power: The Chicano movement*. Verso Books.

Muñoz, C. (2018). The Chicano Movement: Mexican American History and the Struggle for Equality. *Perspectives on Global Development and Technology*, 17(1-2), 31-52.

Nichols, A. (2017). A look at Latino student success. *The Education Trust*.

Nash, M. A. (2019). Entangled Pasts: Land-Grant Colleges and American Indian Dispossession. *History of Education Quarterly*, 59(4), 437-467.

New Mural in Library South! (1976, Fall). *Nuestra Cosa,* p. 8. Chicano Student Programs Archive, University of California, Riverside

Noe-Bustamante, L., Krogstad, J. M., & Lopez, M. H. (2021). For US Latinos, COVID-19 has taken a personal and financial toll. *Pew Research Center.*

Nuñez, A. M., Hurtado, S., & Galdeano, E. C. (Eds.). (2015). *Hispanic-serving institutions: Advancing research and transformative practice*. Routledge.

Pappamihiel, N. E., & Moreno, M. (2011). Retaining Latino students: Culturally responsive instruction in colleges and universities. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, 10(4), 331-344.

Paredes, A.D., Estrada, C., Venturanza, R.J., and Teranishi, R.T. 2021. "La Lucha Sigue: The University of California's Role as a Hispanic-Serving Research Institution System." *The Institute for Immigration, Globalization, and Education*. Los Angeles, CA.

Patton, L. D. (Ed.). (2010). *Culture centers in higher education: Administrative and practice-oriented issues for culture centers*. Stylus.

Perez, H. Correspondence, May 13, 1969. *University of California, Riverside, Collection on Race, Ethnicity and Student Activism* (UA 133). Special Collections & University Archives, University of California, Riverside.

Postsecondary National Policy Institute. (September 19, 2022). Latinos in Higher Education. https://pnpi.org/latino-students/

Randall, M. (1985). *Testimonios: A Guide to Oral History*. The Participatory Research Group. Ontario, Canada

Riessman, C. K. (2008). *Narrative methods for the human sciences*. Sage Publications.

Rendon, L. I. (1992). From the barrio to the academy: Revelations of a Mexican American "scholarship girl.". *New directions for community colleges*, 80(1), 55-64.

Rendon, L. I. (1994). Validating culturally diverse students: Toward a new model of learning and student development. *Innovative higher education*, 19(1), 33-51.

Rendon, L. I. (2009). *Sentipensante (sensing/thinking) pedagogy: Educating for wholeness. Social Justice, and Liberation.* Stylus Publishing, Sterling, VA, 2009.

Rangel, J. (2007). The educational legacy of El Plan de Santa Barbara: An interview with Reynaldo Macías. *Journal of Latinos and Education,* 6(2), 191-199.

Rios-Aguilar, C., & Kiyama, J. M. (2012). Funds of knowledge: An approach to studying Latina (o) students' transition to college. *Journal of Latinos and Education*, 11(1), 2-16.

Rodriguez, R. (1996). *The origins and history of the Chicano movement* (No. 7). Julian Samora Research Institute, Michigan State University.

Rodriguez, P. J., & Gonzales, R. M. (2020). Mentorship and cultural belonging for first generation and transfer students at an HSI in South Texas. In G.A. Garcia (3e.), *Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) in Practice: Defining "Servingness" at HSIs,* 295-312. Information Age Publishing.

Quaye, S. J., & Poon, T. (2008). Engaging Racial/Ethnic Minority Students in Predominantly White. *Student engagement in higher education: Theoretical perspectives and practical approaches for diverse populations*, 157-178.

Santiago, D. A. (2012). Public policy and Hispanic-serving institutions: From invention to accountability. *Journal of Latinos and Education*, 11(3), 163-167.

Santiago, D. A., Calderón, G., & Taylor, M. (2016). *From capacity to success: HSIs, Title V, and Latino students. Excelencia* in Education. http://ww.edexcelencia.org/research/capacity

School Visitations (1975, January). *Nuestra Cosa,* p. 1. Chicano Student Programs Archive, University of California, Riverside

Shor, I. (1993). *Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy*. Paulo Freire: A critical encounter, 23.

Schreier, M. (2012). *Qualitative content analysis in practice.* Sage publications.

Shuaily, Huda A., Cruz, Maria E., Singun, Armando P. Jr. (2017) A Framework for Mapping Knowledge-Based Economy with Graduate Attributes: An Educational Perspective. *Global Journal for Research Analysis*. September 2017, Vol. 6. No. 9.

Solórzano, D. G. (1998). Critical race theory, race and gender microaggressions, and the experience of Chicana and Chicano scholars. *International journal of qualitative studies in education,* 11(1), 121-136.

Solórzano, D. G., & Bernal, D. D. (2001). Examining transformational resistance through a critical race and LatCrit theory framework: Chicana and Chicano students in an urban context. *Urban education*, 36(3), 308-342.

Solórzano, D., Ceja, M., & Yosso, T. (2000). Critical race theory, racial microaggressions, and campus racial climate: The experiences of African American college students. *Journal of Negro education*, 60-73.

Solórzano, D. G., & Yosso, T. J. (2001). From racial stereotyping and deficit discourse toward a critical race theory in teacher education. *Multicultural education*, 9(1), 2.

Sommer, B. W., & Quinlan, M. K. (2002). *The Oral History Manual.* Rowman Altamira.

Stanton-Salazar, R. D., & Spina, S. U. (2000). The network orientations of highly

resilient urban minority youth: A network-analytic account of minority socialization and its educational implications. *The Urban Review*, 32, 227-261.

St. John, E. P., Daun-Barnett & Moronski-Chapman, K. M. (Eds.). (2018) *Public Policy and Higher Education: Reframing Strategies for Preparation, Access and College* Success. Rutledge.

Strayhorn, T. L. (2008). How college students' engagement affects personal and social learning outcomes. *Journal of College and Character*, 10(2), 1-16.

Tierney, W. G. (1999). Models of minority college-going and retention: Cultural integrity versus cultural suicide. *Journal of Negro education*, 80-91.

The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education (2019). About Carnegie classification. (April 3, 2019) from http://carnegieclassifications.iu.edu/

Unidos, U.S. (July, 2022). A Look into Latino Trends in Higher Education: Enrollment, Completion, & Student Debt. https://unidosus.org/publications/a-look-into-latino-trends-in-higher-education/

UC Regents of the University of California. (2019). https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/uc-system

University of California, Riverside (2021, October 29). *UCR earns Seal of Excelencia certification*. UCR News. https://news.ucr.edu/articles/2021/10/29/ucr-earns-seal-excelencia-certification

University of California (System). (1965). *University Bulletin: A Weekly Bulletin for the Staff of the University of California* (Vol. 14). Office of Official Publications, University of California.

University of California, Riverside Institutional Research (2021). https://ir.ucr.edu/stats/enroll/demographic

University of California, Riverside Undergraduate Experience Survey (UCUES) 2020 UCR Results – Highlights (2020). https://ucues.ucr.edu/results#2020-survey-results

UC Santa Barbara Chicana/o Studies Department (n.d.). About the Chicana/o Studies Department. http://www.chicst.ucsb.edu/about

United Mexican American Students at UCR (1969). (Box 1, Folder 11) University of California, Riverside, Collection on Race, Ethnicity and Student Activism (UA 133). Special Collections & University Archives, University of California, Riverside.

UMAS to MECHA (1969, October 14) *Adelante,* p. 1. Chicano Student Programs Archive, University of California, Riverside

UCR Black History/Chicano History Conference, March 2, 1969, (Box 1, Folder 16) University of California, Riverside, Collection on Race, Ethnicity and Student Activism (UA 133). Special Collections & University Archives, University of California, Riverside.

Valdez, L. (1990). *Luis Valdez Early Works: Actos, Pensamiento Serpentino and Bernabé.* Arte Publico Press.

Van der Meulen, E. (2011). Participatory and action-oriented dissertations: The challenges and importance of community-engaged graduate research. *Qualitative Report*, 16(5), 1291- 1303.

Vargas, N., Villa-Palomino, J., & Davis, E. (2020). Latinx faculty representation and resource allocation at Hispanic serving institutions. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 23(1), 39-54.

Velez, A. (2020). *A Critical Interpretation of the Hispanic Serving Institution Designation Effects on Institutional Identity*. Office of Community College Research and Leadership. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Villenas, S. (1996). The colonizer/colonized Chicana ethnographer: Identity, marginalization, and co-optation in the field. *Harvard Educational Review*, 66(4), 711-732.

Villalpando, O. (2010) Latinos in higher education: Eligibility, enrollment and educational attainment. In Murillo, E. G. (Ed.), *Handbook of Latinos and Education: Theory, Research and Practice.* New York: Routledge.

Watson, V. (2019). Liberating methodologies: Reclaiming research as a site for radical inquiry and transformation. *In Community-Based Participatory Research* (p. 70). University of Arizona Press.

Wanted! (1973, November). *Nuestra Cosa*, 8. Chicano Student Programs Archive, University of California, Riverside

Yosso, T. J. (2005). Whose culture has capital? A critical race theory discussion of community cultural wealth. *Race ethnicity and education,* 8(1), 69-91.

Yosso, T. J. (2006). *Critical race counterstories along the Chicana/Chicano educational pipeline*. Routledge.

Yosso, T. J., & Benavides Lopez, C. (2010). Counterspaces in a hostile place. In *Culture centers in higher education*: *Perspectives on identity, theory, and practice,* 83-104. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, LLC.

Yosso, T. J., & Solórzano, D. G. (2006). Leaks in the Chicana and Chicano Educational Pipeline. Latino Policy & Issues Brief. Number 13. *UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center* (NJ1).

Yosso, T., Smith, W., Ceja, M., & Solórzano, D. (2009). Critical race theory, racial microaggressions, and campus racial climate for Latina/o undergraduates. *Harvard Educational Review*, 79(4), 659-691.

Zarate, M. E., & Burciaga, R. (2010). Latinos and college access: Trends and future directions. *Journal of College Admission,* 209, 24-29.

Zumeta, W., Breneman, D. W., Callan, P. M., & Finney, J. E., (2012). *Financing American higher education in the era of globalization.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.