


Fall 2014

La Voz Fall 2014

El Instituto: Institute of Latina/o, Caribbean, and Latin American Studies

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El Instituto

Institute of Latina/o, Caribbean, and Latin American Studies



LAVOZ

September 2014

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Welcome back! I hope you've each had a restful and productive summer and are looking forward to the semester.

Starting our third year, El Instituto has benefitted from all your past and ongoing dynamic research, teaching, and service efforts and successes. Please be sure to share your summer news with Anne so we can celebrate our collective accomplishments.

This year, in addition to a growing body of students in our recently launched LLAS major, we are welcoming an outstanding cohort of graduate students, our new Instituto Predoctoral Fellow and a Visiting Assistant Professor. Be sure to regularly stop by y saludar a toda/os.

This semester also marks the beginning of our collaboration with La Comunidad Intelectual, an undergrad Learning Community directed by Diana Rios who also is starting as AAUP President.

Please join us at the annual Mead lecture in November where we will launch our latest initiative, CIROI: Caribbean Interdisciplinary Research and Outreach Initiative.

We are now home to the Secretariat of the New England Council of Latin American Studies (NECLAS) (formerly at Harvard's DRCLS) and will be hosting the New England Consortium of Latina/o Studies (NECLS) in 2015-16.

These and many other new initiatives on the horizon speak to all your continued hard work and innovation, making El Instituto a rich and productive academic space.

Un abrazo,



Mark Overmyer-Velázquez
Director

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EL INSTITUTO WELCOMES NEW FACULTY AFFILIATES

Dr. César Abadia comes to the University of Connecticut from Harvard University where he was a visiting professor in the Department of Global Health and Social Medicine since 2012. Prior to 2012, Dr. Abadia spent seven years at the National University of Colombia, in his native country. He currently holds a joint appointment teaching in the Department of Anthropology and Human Rights Institute, where he is collaborating with the Global Health & Human Rights research initiative.



Dr. Abadia earned a degree in Dentistry from the National University of Colombia in 1992 and later a Ph.D. in Medical Sciences from Harvard University in 2003, where his research focused on Medical Anthropology. Dr. Abadia's main interest is in the study of production and reproduction or transformation of health care inequalities, particularly in relationship to powerful historical structures such as Capitalism and Colonialism. He is now working on a collaborative ethnography with workers of Colombia's oldest child and maternity hospital. This hospital will be central to Dr. Abadia's new book project, which aims to narrate the story of medical care in Colombia. Dr. Abadia is also very involved in *Salud al Derecho*, an NGO which works to help Colombian citizens navigate their health care system.

Dr. Abadia sees El Instituto's interdisciplinary nature as one of the key characteristics that offer all those interested in the Latin American and Caribbean region an opportunity to examine contrasting data and perspectives. Dr. Abadia is excited about the opportunity to collaborate with El Instituto students and faculty.



Prof. Miguel de Figueiredo comes to the University of Connecticut from Northwestern University's School of Law. Prof. de Figueiredo has an appointment at the UConn School of Law, where he will be teaching Criminal Law this fall.

Prof. de Figueiredo earned his undergraduate B.A. in History from John Hopkins University, his M.A. in Social Science from the University of Chicago, and his J.D. from Yale Law School. Additionally, he is in the process of completing his Ph.D. in Political Science from U.C. Berkeley. His work focuses on the areas of law and development, comparative, criminal and international law, corruption and voting behavior. He is currently involved in a project in Brazil which explores the conditions under which voters punish (or reward) corrupt politicians, focusing on the mayoral elections of São Paulo. In addition, this work has led to the creation of a related survey which seeks to understand the tradeoffs voters make in evaluating politicians with corruption records.

Prof. de Figueiredo is particularly excited to begin participating in El Instituto's working groups, workshops, and conferences; teaching cross-listed courses; advising students interested in Latin America; and, collaborating informally with faculty, staff and students involved with El Instituto.

HIGHLIGHTS OF SUMMER ACADEMIC WORK & PROJECTS

FACULTY WORK HIGHLIGHTS

Professor Jorge Agüero, Assistant Professor (El Instituto and Economics)

Prof. Agüero recently launched a fieldwork project to examine violence against women in Peru. The project, sponsored by the Inter-American Development Bank (Washington DC) and Finca-Peru (a leading microcredit organization), uses a randomized controlled trial to test whether microfinance loans matched with a training module on female empowerment could help reduce the incidence of domestic violence in rural Peru. This past August, the baseline survey interviewed over 1,600 women in the rural districts of Ayacucho, Apurímac and Huancavelica and the intervention will start in September. The evaluation of the intervention will be analyzed in 18 months.

Professor Odette Casamayor-Cisneros (El Instituto and Department of Literatures, Cultures, and Languages)

Prof. Casamayor-Cisneros has been awarded the Wilbur Marvin Visiting Scholarship at the Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies at Harvard University. As a recipient of this fellowship, Prof. Casamayor-Cisneros will be at Harvard University during Spring 2015 to work on her book, *On Being Black: Challenging Hegemonic Knowledge Through Racial Self-identification in Post-Soviet Cuban Cultural Production*.

STUDENT WORK HIGHLIGHTS

Charlie Fuentes, M.A. candidate in Latino and Latin American Studies

During the summer, Charlie Fuentes successfully applied for and received Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval to conduct interviews in the Uruguayan community in Leominster, MA. Fuentes' research examines the connections made between the building of Uruguayan identity in the diaspora through Facebook and other social media.

Devon Goss, Ph.D. candidate in Sociology

In the Spring of 2014 El Instituto awarded Devon Goss funding through a Pre-Doctoral Fellowship to further her work on transracial adoptions. During the summer Devon put this award to good use as she used these funds to attend the American Sociological Association Annual Meeting held in San Francisco to present her paper "I Wasn't Supposed to Notice It: Transracial Adoption and Color-Blind Racism." In addition she continued her work, traveling to interview 12 additional transracial adoptees, including two who identified as Latin@.

Tyra Lewis, M.A. candidate in Latino and Latin American Studies

Tyra Lewis, who is studying in Puerto Rico and Cuba during Fall 2014, presented a paper entitled "Codeword: Libertad" at the 10th Biennial International/Interdisciplinary Research Conference of The Afro-Latin/American Research Association (ALARA) in Kingston, Jamaica in August 2014.

Jorell Meléndez-Badillo, Ph.D. candidate in History

This summer, Jorell Meléndez-Badillo applied for and received funding to carry out research in his native Puerto Rico. Working on turn-of-the-century labor movements, the funding allowed Meléndez-Badillo to access holdings at the Archivo General de Puerto Rico, the Rare Books Collection at the Lázaro Library at Río Piedras Campus of the University of Puerto Rico, the Centro de Investigaciones Históricas at the Río Piedras Campus, the Centro de Investigación e Historia Oral at the Metropolitan Campus of the Interamerican University of Puerto Rico, and the Centro de Documentación Obrera Santiago Iglesias Pantín at the Humacao Campus of the University of Puerto Rico. Through these collections, Meléndez-Badillo was able to find information about prominent labor figures like Felix Ojeda and César Andreu Iglesias. In his own words, Meléndez-Badillo credits the trip with allowing him to "explore the possibilities these archives offer in order to (re)write the history of the Puerto Rican labor movement from new perspectives."

Matthew Perse, M.A. candidate in Latino and Latin American Studies

Matthew Perse was one of three recipients of the Spring 2014 Whetten Award. With the funding, Perse was able to conduct a field research trip to Buenos Aires, Argentina, and Montevideo, Uruguay. While in Argentina, Perse became an accredited investigator at the Biblioteca Nacional. Additionally, he conducted an interview of Uruguayan rock legend Hugo Fattoruso during his visit to Montevideo.

From Mama Chica to Mama Grande's House: 30 Years of Learning and Family at UConn

Dr. Elizabeth Mahan has been a beloved colleague, leader, teacher and friend to countless faculty, staff and students at UConn during her 27-year tenure at the university. Prior to her recent retirement she held a variety of teaching and administrative positions, beginning in a visiting faculty role in 1986 and ending her tenure as the Executive Director of Global Affairs. Dr. Mahan also held many unofficial roles that were equally important to those lucky enough to work with her: she has been a warm and supportive mentor to countless young faculty members; an exacting and meticulous editor of both faculty and student work; a fiercely loyal friend; and a cheerleader for international collaborations and initiatives. She is known for her infectious enthusiasm, boundless curiosity, easy laughter, and incredible organizational skills; her patience and willingness to work long hours with masters students to make them better writers and thinkers; her unflagging support for all things Latin American; and her ability to lead via a combination of vision, common sense, budgetary skill, and gentle insistence. Dr. Mahan shaped Latin American Studies at UConn through her directorships of the Center for Latin American Studies, the Office of International Affairs, and the Office of Global Programs; her teaching and mentoring; the many grants she wrote to expand knowledge of the hemisphere throughout Connecticut, principally through K-12 outreach; and most recently, the fund she established in her name to support graduate work in Latin American and Latino Studies.



Dr. Mahan designed and taught INTS/LLAS 5000 for many years, a gateway course for incoming masters students in which she trained them to hone their interdisciplinary and critical thinking skills on a graduate level. She is known as a teacher who holds students to rigorous standards but who will commit to supporting students until they have reached their goals. For these many reasons, Dr. Mahan has earned the affectionate nickname of “Mama Grande” at UConn.

Recently, she sat down with El Instituto graduate student Matthew Perse for an interview to discuss her career, the scholarship she endowed, and what studying Latin America means to her.

Elizabeth greeted me at the door on a humid September night. “Want a beer?” she asked. She invited me to take a seat at her kitchen table, and before I could even begin the conversation, she was off and running, apologizing for not having photos with any of the many prominent figures of the field she had met dur-

ing her time at UConn. “Photos cost money back then,” she pointed out. “Not like today, where everyone has a digital camera!” A smile spread across her face, and she was unable to contain the contagious laughter that followed. So, no pictures, I thought. Though, with the way Elizabeth tells stories, I doubted that would be a problem. I was right, indeed.

La Voz: At what point did you get involved [with El Instituto]?

Elizabeth: I got a job at Yale in the Latin American Studies program as their outreach coordinator. And at that time, Yale and UConn shared a Title VI grant...So I actually met the UConn area studies people early in Sept of 1982...I had known of [UConn Latin American Historian] Hugh Hamill. And so, there he was at this reception at Yale in 1982, and I just really liked the folks from UConn. We did joint programming, and we used to share speakers who would be

driven half-way. We used to exchange the speakers in the Howard Johnson [restaurant]’s parking lot! [Laughter]

I became friends with UConn, in particular, with Jo Barstow. She was the real, original ‘Mama Grande’...and...we just hit it off. My first course was on human rights in Latin America, way before human rights were sexy at UConn. [It was timely] because in the 80s, you had the contra war, the civil war in el Salvador, and coming out of the Dirty War in Argentina...I loved teaching at UConn. I got to teach what I wanted. I developed a course on media-state relations in Latin America, taught popular

culture. And all the time I was doing that, during those first three years, I was really learning about K-12 education and working with teachers who were social studies teachers or Spanish teachers who wanted to integrate more of Latin America into their courses. That was really useful because I learned a lot from all these...secondary school teachers; what they were confronting in the classroom and what they did to motivate students. It made me much more conscious, I think, of what I was doing in the classroom, too. So it wasn’t just UConn ‘bestowing its gifts on students’...there was real reciprocity there, and some of us became friends...it was fun!

La Voz: So [before you were Mama Grande] you were the Mama Chica?

Elizabeth: Yeah, yeah [laughter]. And...then I went off to Texas for a year in 1987-88 to teach because my dissertation advisor was on leave, and they asked me to come back. And that’s where I met [Argentine sociologist] Pablo Vila... then I came back...Scott Cook

had become director [of the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies], and I think my position got upgraded – in title – to associate director.

La Voz: Tell me a bit about that time with Scott.

Elizabeth: He really gave the center an international preference. We entered a partnership with Simón Bolívar University in Caracas... one of the people who participated in that came and got his Ph.D. in political science still comes back to UConn every three years to do research in the summer. [That] made working in the center and working on these programs so fun...The university was more relaxed back then: we could help out with receptions after speakers. And Jo Barstow is a French bread baker, so we would offer to put on these receptions for speakers. And she would be schlepping French bread and brie and wine across campus in these big baskets, and setting up for a reception in the department or in some seminar room late in the day...that was really part of keeping the spirit of Latin American studies as a community.

La Voz: Making it a home?

Elizabeth: Yeah! And it was great, it really was lots of fun

La Voz: Well, it's still fun.

Elizabeth: It is – it is still fun, and it's built on this foundation that 'this is a community' and the function now of El Instituto is to see 'what can we do for the faculty and students affiliated with the institution'...and provide access to resources. And I think that's what really makes it — because as a...center, we were a little bit immune to some of the pressures of departments...So we could really focus all of our attention on Latin America.

La Voz: At what point did you become 'Mama Grande', then?

Elizabeth: Oh, I became director in...1992, and I was director through 2002. And the last year, because I became associate director of international affairs in 2001, I sort of...wore two hats that year...I became director in '92, after Scott stepped down. And, you know, just sort of soldiered on for the next ten years.

La Voz: All this is leading to the fund that you so generously established.

Elizabeth: Yeah, well, [current director of El Instituto] Mark [Overmyer-Velázquez] asked if I had thought about doing that. And I had, but not really in a concrete sort of way. So we met with...the Foundation. And what I decided to do is set up a bequest, so they actually have to wait until I'm dead to really benefit. [Laughter]

La Voz: So this has been a long time in the works?

Elizabeth: No, no. It's only been a couple of years. So, this is the "Elizabeth Mahan Fund" – they prevailed upon me to put my name on it. I hadn't thought about that – "for Graduate Studies in Latin American and Latino Studies." And therefore, it is a relatively unrestricted fund. And it can be used to support graduate studies however the current director deems appropriate. So it isn't necessarily a fellowship; it might be used to help graduate students pay to go give

conference papers, or for a research trip, or something like that...I wanted to have some shape to it, but I didn't want to hamstring future directors. And I figured that we would have graduate students working on Latin American and Latino studies, as master's students doing Latin American and Latino studies directly or in other departments. So that was the goal, was really to support that, because most of my work with students has been with the master's students in Latin American studies.




**"Latin American Studies
changed me..."**

La Voz: And one last thing I'd like to talk to you about is what your hopes for the future of El Instituto are.

Elizabeth: Because of the way that Latin American and Latino studies have evolved at UConn and have created this really strong community, I'm not worried about what's going to happen in the future. And, you know, I wouldn't even want to predict. Because I really think that, in many ways, I probably can't even imagine what direction it will go. But, Latin American Studies changed me...there was a lot of warmth, a lot of camaraderie, and interpersonal relations, and it helped me move a bit beyond that Irish Protestant reticence. Well – not entirely! Because I still don't dance! [Laughter]...I learned to reach out to my family, to ask for support, and receive support, and give support...so, and I say to people, 'Latin American studies made me a better person. It made me relate to people...family and friends in a different way than I was raised to do.'

La Voz: What do you miss most?

Elizabeth: What I do miss now that I've retired is teaching that introductory course, and working with students...that I think was one of the most rewarding things over the years...I have the most satisfaction working with students...and seeing them move on to the next phase, getting into that Ph.D. program or getting jobs and going on and having their careers and jobs...when students say, 'I loved your course,' I think, 'ok, you don't even need to pay me!' [Laughter]



For information about the Elizabeth Mahan Fund for Graduate Studies in Latin American and Latina/o Studies please contact :
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IN THEIR OWN WORDS: MIGRANT FARMWORKERS CLINIC SUMMER FELLOWS

Migrant Farm Worker Clinics run by UConn and Connecticut Area Health Education Centers attempt to bring health care services to migrant farm workers, who are considered at-risk populations. El Instituto is proud to report on two students' experiences with migrant farm workers in Connecticut.



Photo courtesy of <http://today.uconn.edu/blog/2011/01/carnegie-foundation-recognizes-uconn-for-public-outreach/>

As a child, I loved science and math. My family always supported and encouraged my curiosity. I had a chemistry lab in the basement of our house in Hartford and another lab in my grandparents' house in Puerto Rico, which I visited every summer. It seemed inevitable that I would enter a STEM field. This path, while seemingly clear, has not been as direct as I had once expected.

I entered the professional working environment as an educator. I used the field of education as my avenue to give back to my community and work with inner city youth. My 9 years in education had a significant impact on the person I am today. I was able to work with a community of parents and youth that made my own quest for knowledge grow ever deeper.

By working with my students to recognize that small daily actions lead to mastery over time, I began to practice all the things I wanted to excel in. I became literate in my native tongue, Spanish; I learned to play the piano and guitar; I traveled abroad and taught; I earned a 6th year certificate in Bilingual Education; I began to take biology, calculus, and chemistry courses at my local community college. I proved to myself that with daily effort I could be a doctor like I originally planned. I applied to the post-baccalaureate program at UConn and was then awarded this prestigious fellowship.

Coming back to UConn has been refreshing. I have sought any opportunity to reach out to the community and learn more about the medical field. The El Instituto Fellowship has been one of the most rewarding and honoring seats I have held. I was able to connect with the incredible staff at AHEC at UConn Medical Center and learn about services that I never knew were available to my community. This fellowship has exposed me to the health needs of a

community of which I was previously unaware.

Working with the migrant farm workers this summer was eye opening. The workers came from all different countries and had so much zest and love for life. Hearing how they were willing to be separated from families, face stressful situations with immigration and finances, learn a new language in a new country, and be adventurous with their daily lives gave me so much perspective of the privilege we have as Americans. The patients at the clinics reminded me of why I gave up my career as an educator and put all I had learned last year into context. We endure grueling amounts of work and years of training to be able to help others live a happier, healthier life. Simple luxuries as reading glasses, pain killers, and fresh, cold water reminded me how lucky I am to have easy access to these resources. While selling my home and car seemed so drastic, a sacrifice to follow my dream of becoming a doctor, compared with the sacrifice that these noble workers endure for their families make my cost seem null.

Through this experience I was able to connect with other UConn undergraduates and medical students that inspire me to do my best and keep working hard. I was able to shadow doctors, pharmacists, PA's, and physical therapists. Who exposed me to a wider view of how many disciplines within medicine interact and interrelate to provide the best service for their patients. Mostly, I realized that I am entering a field that is virtuous and caring. To be a physician means giving of yourself to those around you. All the volunteers at our clinics willingly gave of their time and energy to help a disenfranchised community. I wish that everyone could have this summer experience. A summer filled with work that seems like play and experiences that paint beautiful memories, forge new relationships, and reinforce the effort we make as life-long learners. I am now further on my path toward medicine. I know that I will be a better doctor as a result of the training and experience I received from my fellowship with El Instituto. Thank you AHEC and El Instituto- your positive energy and encouragement are appreciated! — Jillian Garcia



Photo courtesy of <http://jamaica-gleaner.com/gleaner/20120820/news/news1.html>

This summer I had the privilege of being a coordinator for the Migrant Farm worker clinics. My main responsibilities were to schedule volunteers for trainings, communicate with them through email about any questions, send important information to them, train the new volunteers, and serve as a lead undergrad coordinator during the clinics. I also served as an interpreter and was a research assistant for two students that were doing research on migrant farm workers. My duties were plenty, memorable, rewarding and I loved every second of it.

My experience was one of the reasons why this past summer was my favorite summer to date. I got to meet amazing people such as undergrad students from UCONN and other universities, high school students, UCONN med school students, physicians, the farm workers and more! Every day there was someone new to meet. I made new friendships, received advice from current med school students, and became more visible to the invisible population that we worked with.

Migrant farm workers are hardworking people who make sacrifices to be able to support their families and provide them with better lives, yet they lack the access to health care. It sounds crazy but that's the way it is and the reason why the migrant farm workers clinics are very important. Migrants work long hours in intense heat every single day, far away from their friends and families. They did not care though and were always happy to work. It made me laugh at how dumb I can be when I get upset about my first world problems. Their frame of mind is something I will definitely take with me. I had amazing conversations with many of the farm workers. They made me laugh, smile, learn and almost cry with their stories. I first wanted to volunteer for the clinics to help and learn about migrant farm workers but it turned out that they taught and helped me so much more. I will take their lessons and stories with me for the rest of my days.

— Christian Gonzalez

Additional information about UConn's Migrant Worker Clinics can be found at the Offices of Public Health, located at 195 Farmington Avenue, Ste. 204, Farmington, CT 06032.

For inquiries, please direct phone calls to (860) 679-8119, or visit their webpage, <http://www.publichealth.uconn.edu/migrant-farm-worker-clinics.html>

El Instituto Welcomes...

For the second year in a row, El Instituto has the privilege of hosting a Pre-Doctoral Fellow. In an effort to advance diversity in education, the Pre-Doctoral In-Residence Program supports a scholar from another university while they complete their dissertation. El Instituto is pleased to introduce Blanca Rincon as its 2014-15 Pre-Doctoral Fellow.

Ms. Rincon received her M.A. in Education Policy Studies from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign where she is currently working towards her doctorate in Education Policy Studies. Prior to her time at Urbana-Champaign, Ms. Rincon earned a B.A. in Sociology from U.C. Irvine, while earning minors in Education and Chicano-Latino Studies. Outside of her academic work, Ms. Rincon has been involved with various educational outreach efforts, which have served as motivation for her research highlighting issues in the Latin@ community in an effort to impact change.



Born in Mexico and raised in Southern California, Ms. Rincon has focused her academic work on racial minorities' access to and retention within higher education. Her doctoral thesis, "Creating A Climate for Success: Does Racial Composition Matter For Latino STEM Retention?" situates quantitative research within a critical approach to address questions of equity within the field where Latin@s are most underrepresented.

Ms. Rincon is co-teaching a year-long course in the Higher Education and Student Affairs Master's Degree Program in the Neag School of Education's Department of Educational Leadership with Milagros Castillo-Montoya. Ms. Rincon will also conduct guest lectures in several courses both in Education and Latina/o and Latin American Studies.

In addition to successfully preparing her dissertation and defense, Ms. Rincon hopes to get the most out of her opportunity to teach at the university level throughout this year. She is excited about the prospect of developing a lecture series around Latino education issues.

El Instituto wishes Ms. Rincon "buena suerte" throughout this very important year for her!



El Instituto also welcomes Luz Londoño Díaz as a 2014-15 Visiting Assistant Professor. Prof. Londoño Díaz received her M.S. and Ph.D. in Agricultural and Resource Economics from UConn in 2008 and 2010, respectively. A native of Acandí, Colombia, Prof. Londoño Díaz earned a B.S. in Economics and M.S. in Environmental and Resource Economics from the Universidad de los Andes (Colombia) prior to matriculating through UConn. Thanks in part to a scholarship provided by Colciencias (Colombia's National Science Agency) Prof. Londoño Díaz finds herself once again in Storrs, and is eager to continue her research and work with our students in the upcoming academic year.

Prof. Londoño Díaz's work focuses on the economics of coastal areas, including the economic valuation of marine ecosystems. Her academic focus and previous work within Colombia's Instituto de Investigaciones Marinas y Costeras (Institute of Marine and Coastal Research) aims at estimating monetary values for environmental services that could be used to inform policy making and management.

In Fall 2014, Prof. Londoño Díaz will be teaching a cross-referenced course for the Economics Department and Latino & Latin American Studies, (ECON3498/LLAS 3295- Economic Development in Latin America & the Caribbean), where she will strive to promote the importance of environmentally sustainable economic development in Latin America and the Caribbean. In Spring 2015, she plans to teach another ECON/LLAS course that will examine inequality, discrimination, and opportunity in Latin America and the Caribbean.

2014-15 EL INSTITUTO GRADUATE STUDENTS



Jihan Asher is a first year graduate student pursuing a Master of Arts in Latino and Latin American Studies. She received her B.A. in History from the University of Maryland, College Park in 2012, also graduating with an interdisciplinary certificate in Latin American Studies and notation in Writing Arts from the Jiménez-Porter Writer's House. She is fluent in Spanish and has been trained in interpreting for social justice and in teaching English as a second language. Her research interests include economic and social development in the Caribbean, migration and citizenship, corporate social responsibility, and the experiences of African-descended people in the Americas.



Pauline Batista is a first year graduate student pursuing a Master of Arts in Latino and Latin American Studies. She received her B.S. in Communications from Mitchell College in 2014. Her research interests include immigration and border studies and identity preservation through Film & Photography.



Charlie Fuentes is a second year graduate student pursuing a Master of Arts in Latino and Latin American Studies. He received his B.A. in Hispanic Studies and Economics from Trinity College. He spent four years as an upper school Spanish teacher at Worcester Academy in Worcester, MA. His work focuses on immigrant use of social media in the development and maintenance of a national identity while in the diaspora.



Alyssa Krinsky is a first year graduate student pursuing a Master of Arts in Latino and Latin American Studies. She received her B.A. in Geography from Southern Connecticut State University in 2014. Her research interests include economic, agricultural and environmental studies; geographic information systems, and human geography in the regions of South and Central America.



Tyra Lewis is a second year graduate student pursuing a Master of Arts in Latino and Latin American Studies. She received her B.A. in English Literature with a minor in Black Studies from Boston College and a M.A. in Spanish and Spanish American literature from the University of Missouri-Columbia. Her studies focus on contemporary Afro-Hispanic women writers of the Caribbean and Latin America.



Matthew Perse is a second year student from Hudson, Ohio. He attended Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, where he graduated in 2011. Matthew lived, worked, and took graduate seminars at the Universidad de Buenos Aires in Argentina for 14 months before starting his studies at UConn. He investigates the history of music in Latin America, especially music of the Afro-Latin diaspora in the Southern Cone during the modern era.



Hannah Reier is a first year graduate student pursuing a Masters of Arts in Latino and Latin American Studies. She received a B.A. in Anthropology from Wheaton College (MA) in 2014. Her interests include indigenous social movements in Latin America and the study of "gringoism" (that is, the upholding and performance of White monolingualism in majority Spanish-speaking environments).



Ilan Sánchez is a first year graduate student pursuing a Master of Arts in Latino and Latin American Studies. He received his B.A. in Social Communications from Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana in Mexico in 2012. His research interest include mass media control, violence against journalists, freedom of expression and photo/documentary in Latin America, specifically Mexico, Colombia and Brazil.

2014-2015 EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

Mead Lecture, November 6, 2014

3:30pm – 5pm, Student Union Building, Room 304B

This year's Mead lecture showcases Jossiana Arroyo-Martínez, Professor of Latin American and Caribbean Literatures and Cultures at the University of Texas at Austin. She holds a joint appointment with the Departments of Spanish and Portuguese and African and African Diaspora Studies. A prominent scholar, she has held teaching positions at the University of Michigan and UT-Austin since receiving her Ph.D. from the University of California-Berkeley. Her research focuses on "the relationships between literature, ethnographic and sociological discourses" in Latin America. In addition, her work deals with the intersection of race, gender, and sexuality. Her current project, loosely centered on the idea of "virtual Caribbean bodies," explores the "relationship between racialized bodies, media technologies, and globalization in contemporary Caribbean societies." Her contribution to the Mead Lecture Series, "Cities of the Dead: Performing Life in the Caribbean," is a reflection of this work, and should prove engaging and exciting.

Christina Ibarra, Filmmaker March 24-26, 2015

Christina Ibarra is a Chicana filmmaker who was born and raised on the U.S.-Mexico border. Growing up in El Paso, Texas, and Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, the border is not just a subject of exploration within her award winning independent films, but is also "home". Ibarra proclaims that "growing up on the border, [her] identity was formed by this **third space** that straddles two cultures and yet remains by-and-large outside of both the American and Mexican mainstream." Perhaps it is for that reason that she "constantly search[es] for ways to come home, looking for meaning in [her] culture clashed memories." Her work looks closely at life within this third space and as a result of her own "Spanglish" mixed identity; Ibarra chooses to use a variety of tools, mixing and matching, to create a new lens through which these spaces can be observed.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT CHRISTINA IBARRA VISIT:

WWW.CRISTINAIBARRA.COM

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2014-2015 WORKING GROUPS

El Instituto is pleased to announce three working groups for the 2014-2015 academic year.

Following El Instituto's mission of an interdisciplinary approach for creating new ways of thinking about the understanding of hemispheric Latina/o diasporas, U.S. Latina/os, Latin American and Caribbean societies and U.S./Latin American relations, each group will provide the opportunity for faculty, graduate, and undergraduate students to discuss a variety of topics concerning Latin American and Latino Studies through multiple disciplinary lenses.

TAULA (Dr. Mark Healey and Dr. Claudio Benzecry)

Taller Urbano de las Américas (Urban Workshop of the Americas) is a series of four free-standing seminars, with one presenter each, centered on discussion of a pre-circulated paper related to urban Latin America in the humanities and social sciences. For more information about this year's topics, presenters and dates, please contact: claudio.benzecry@uconn.edu

Theorizing Unfree Labor in the Americas (Dr. Jane Gordon and Dr. Sam Martinez)

This working group of UConn faculty and graduate students will seek to place the widely observed resurgence of un-free labor relations in today's world economy in historical context. In the article and chapter manuscripts and research proposal drafts that the participants circulate within the working group, the forms and contexts of contemporary and chattel slavery will be compared, and the enduring limits on the effective freedom of former slaves and their descendants across the Americas will be examined. For more information please contact: jane.gordon@uconn.edu

The Quiet Corner Interdisciplinary Literary Journal: Research Forum for a Graduate Student Interdisciplinary Online Review. (William Stark, PhD. Candidate in Literature, Cultures and Languages)

This group will research and discuss online journal ideas that lend themselves to an interdisciplinary platform for academic papers, creative writing, literary reviews, and blogging in multiple languages. The group links its research with discussions of published papers, conferences hosted by the Languages Graduate Student Association (LANGSA) and El Instituto: Institute of Latina/o, Caribbean, and Latin American Studies (ELIN), visiting speakers, and interviews. For more information please contact: william.stark@uconn.edu

LA COMUNIDAD INTELECTUAL

As part of UConn's Learning Communities, La Comunidad Intelectual (LCI) celebrates and critically examines Latina/o, Caribbean, and Latin American cultures and traditions as they exist at UConn and beyond. This interdisciplinary community nurtures a unique kind of intellectual diversity. LCI is sponsored by UConn organizations such as El Instituto and it also enjoys sponsorship and support from the historic Puerto Rican and Latin American Cultural Center (PRLACC). LCI students will integrate rigorous academic and community-based learning in collaboration with the state's growing Latino inhabitants.

LCI students will have opportunities to participate in cultural learning programs each semester and in LCI's leadership council. Students will be actively engaged in critical thinking exercises that will include self-discovery exercises, global engagement through projects, community service, study abroad and review of current events in the context of their current or anticipated majors, passions and skills. Throughout the term, LCI faculty will engage in reflective dialogue that helps students make sense of their experiences.

On a regular basis, LCI members will coordinate formal and informal activities including group dinners, speaker series and game nights. Student leaders will gain experience in organization skills, group dynamics, conflict resolution, and gain insights toward a cultural-global sense of citizenship.

For more information about La Comunidad Intelectual:

Visit: lc.uconn.edu/communities/lci/

Follow La Comunidad on Twitter: @lciuconn

Or contact Faculty Advisor: Prof. Diana Rios, diana.rios@uconn.edu



BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR....

BLUES WITHOUT BORDERS



Blues Without Borders is coming to a party near you!

This collection of UConn professors/musicians from all academic disciplines (including three El Instituto affiliates) will keep you on your feet as they jam out to classic beats and rhythms from around the world.

JOIN EL INSTITUTO ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Want to stay up to date with all El Insituito happenings?

For updates on events, workshops, visitors, guest lectures, news and much more join El Insituito as we expand our intellectual community and border crossing into social media.



Like us on Facebook:

El Instituto: Insitute of Latina/o, Caribbean and Latin American Studies

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AND DON'T FORGET TO HASHTAG...

#elin



El Instituto

Institute of Latina/o, Caribbean, and Latin American Studies

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS - Fall 2014

Sept. 15 – Dec. 15

Dodd Center

I Have No Right to Be Silent – commemorative exhibit of the social activism and human rights work of Rabbi Marshall Meyer.

Sept. 23, 4:30-6:00pm

Dodd Center, Konover Auditorium

Gender and History Lecture Series: Maylei Blackwell, University of Los Angeles Associate Professor Cesar E. Chavez Dept. of Chicana/o Studies and Women's Studies Dept. Followed by reception.

Sept. 24, 10:00-11:30am

Wood Hall Basement Lounge

Morning Seminar: Maylei Blackwell, Gender and History Lecturer

Sept. 25 11:00am-1:00pm

PRLACC, Student Union 4th floor

Authors Panel. Presentations by contributors to the book, *Tocando Fondo*. Critical analysis of the social, economic, political and cultural realities faced by Puerto Ricans.

Sept. 26, 5:00pm

Wood Hall Basement Lounge

Foreign Policy Seminar: "The Panama Canal Zone as US Imperial Borderland" by Michael Donoghue (Marquette – and UConn PhD). Refreshments at 4.30. Contact Frank Costigliola, History Department for more information.

Oct. 1, 3:00pm-6:00pm

Dodd Center, Konover Auditorium

Film screening and panel presentation: Blood Rising: Stories of the Quest for Justice For 438 Young Women Murdered in Juarez.

Oct. 1, 6:00pm-8:00pm

El Instituto, Ryan Bldg., 2nd floor

HACHA with Blood Rising panelists. HACHA: Alternative Hour for a Hospitable Community of Border-Crossing Academics. Informal graduate and faculty gathering to share research and experiences across disciplines.

Oct. 9, 9:30am-12:00pm

Gentry 144

Talk: Prof. H. Kenny Nienhusser "Undocumented Students' Postsecondary Education Access: The Role of Policies, Institutional Agents, and Structures in High Schools and Higher Education Institutions"

Oct. 20, 4:00pm-6:00pm

New Co-op Bookstore, Royce Circle

Booksigning: Magdalena Gomez *Shameless Woman*

Oct. 21, 4:00pm

PRLACC, Student Union 4th floor

"Photographing Latino Urban Landscapes," Pablo Delano, photographer and Professor of Fine Arts, Trinity College. Reception to follow.

Oct. 23, 4:00pm-6:00pm

Dodd Center, Konover Auditorium

"I Have No Right to Be Silent." Panel discussion on the social activism and human rights work of Rabbi Marshall Meyer. Reception to follow.

Nov. 5, 5:00pm – 7:00pm

El Instituto, Ryan Bldg., 2nd floor

HACHA: Alternative Hour for a Hospitable Community of Border-Crossing Academics. Informal graduate and faculty gathering to share research and experiences across disciplines.

Nov. 6, 3:30pm-5:00pm

Student Union Bldg., Room 304B

Mead Lecture: "Cities of the Dead: Performing Life in the Caribbean" by Jossiana Arroyo-Martínez, Prof. of Latin American and Caribbean Literatures and Cultures, University of Texas-Austin.

Nov. 20, 4:00pm

Homer Babbidge Library, Class of 1947 Room

Talk: "Public Health Challenges in an Ever-Changing Brazil" by Jose Ricardo de Carvalho Mesquita Ayres, MD, PhD, University of Sao Paolo.

Dec. 6, 5:00pm – 7:00pm

El Instituto, Ryan Bldg., 2nd floor

HACHA: Alternative Hour for a Hospitable Community of Border-Crossing Academics. Informal graduate and faculty gathering to share research and experiences across disciplines.

FOR MORE INFORMATION REGARDING EVENTS, PLEASE CONTACT:

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